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Item # 23
79SILVER BOW DISTRICT

LOCATION

Silver Bow is situated in the canyon of Breen Creek, on the west side of the central Kawich Range about 50 miles west of Tonopah, Nye County. Mines and prospects are located in the south half of Township 1 North, Range 49 East, and in the northern tier of sections of Township 1 South, Range 49 East. The district lies on the northern boundary of the Nellis Bombing Range and those properties in Township 1 South are within the bombing range.

HISTORY

The first locations at Silver Bow were made in November 1904 (Ball, 1907). By the summer of 1905, several hundred men were in the district, a townsite had been platted, and a number of shallow prospect holes had been sunk. The first shipments were made from the district in 1906 (Lincoln, 1923). Paher (1970) states that the district declined rapidly and had joined the ranks of dead towns by mid-year, 1906. Mining activity continued on an intermittent basis, however, as a 2-stamp mill was built in 1913, another mill was active in 1920-21 and, in 1929, a 50-ton flotation mill was built in the district (Lincoln, 1923; Kral, 1951). Ore was shipped from the district in 1941 (Kral, 1951) and there was activity by the Tickabo Mining and Milling Co. in 1964. The most recent activity in the district appears to be a large claim block staked by Amoco in June 1984. No evidence of work on this block of claims was seen in 1986. Total production of the district is estimated at between 100,000 and 1,000,000 ounces silver and between 1000 and 10,000 ounces gold (Cornwall, 1972).

GEOLOGIC SETTING

The entire Silver Bow district is underlain by Tertiary volcanic rocks, mainly welded ash-flow tuffs and rhyolite intrusions, related to the Kawich caldera. This caldera, which is centered in the Kawich Range north of the Silver Bow district, was the source for most of the tuff exposed in the northern part of the range. The center of the caldera is delimited by intracalderon tuffs and of crystal-rich rhyodacite domes and lava flows, surrounded by younger, ring fracture, rhyolitic intrusive bodies (Gardner and others, 1980). The southern margin of the Kawich caldera passes through the Silver Bow district.

ORE DEPOSITS

Silver-gold mineralization at Silver Bow occurs in silicified shear zones which cut welded ash-flow tuffs and in quartz veinlets which cut small rhyolite intrusive bodies. The trend of the mineralized zones, east-northeast, and east-west, generally parallels the Kawich caldera margin which is inferred to pass through the district.

The wall rocks are intensely silicified and kaolinized in the vicinity of the deposits. Veins and silicified zones within the shear zones range from a few inches up to a few feet in width and some veins can be traced in outcrop for several hundred feet along strike length. The veins are vuggy, brecciated,

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and stained with iron oxides. Ball (1907) observed some of the high-grade ore and described it as containing zonally grown crystals of quartz with finely divided silver sulfides dusting some of the bands of growth. Ore minerals included stephanite, ruby silver, silver chloride, and free gold. The only metallic minerals today visible in dump samples are pyrite and an unidentified gray sulfide.

GEOCHEMICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Geochemical results from ore samples collected in this district were very uniform. Gold values were high in some samples (up to 15 ppm) and silver values were all high (ranging from 15 to 3000 ppm). Arsenic was highly anomalous in all but four samples, antimony was anomalous in half of the samples taken. Barium values were low and all base metal values were low. Molybdenum was moderately high in six of the eleven deposits sampled.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- Ball, S. H. (1907) A geologic reconnaissance in southwestern Nevada and eastern California: USGS Bull. 308.
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