



OLD RANGE COMPANY LLC

Rye Patch History

Pershing, County, Nevada





History

Rye Patch District History

The Rye Patch (Echo) Mining District, situated on the west flank of the Humboldt Range, was organized in 1862 under the United States Mining Laws of 1866 more properly titled “1866, July 26 - 14 Stat. 251, Act Granting Right of Way to Ditch and Canal Owners over Public Land”. As of * the Rye Patch District was the only silver district in Pershing County that had produced more than \$1,000,000. Couch and Carpenter in University of Nevada Bulletin No. 4, 1943 record total district wide production of 266,326 tons with a gross yield of \$1,343,959 mostly from silver, tungsten and antimony.

Rye Patch Mine History

Probably discovered around 1862, the Rye Patch Mine is developed by six (6) miles of underground workings ([Rye Patch Mine \(MRDS #10042525\) AG \(usgs.gov\)](#)) that extend northward from Rye Patch Canyon. Stoping is extensive throughout the accessible areas of the mine, extending from the surface to the deepest levels of the mine. The mine is the namesake of both the Rye Patch District and Rye Patch Canyon.

Importantly, the Rye Patch Mine, situated on the Alpha Patent was located under the Mining Laws of 1866. The “Mining Law of 1866” declared that mineral lands were open to occupation by all United States citizens or those declaring intention to become citizens, subject to U.S. regulations and local customs or rules of miners in mining districts. It set forth procedures and process for obtaining patent and perhaps most importantly, **Sec. 10 provided that owners had vested and accrued rights to use of water for mining, agricultural, manufacturing or other purposes and that those rights would be maintained and protected** and the right of way for the construction of ditches and canals for those purposes was acknowledged and confirmed.

Though there is no record of any production prior to 1869, in 1869 the mine sold to a British mining consortium for the sum of \$1,000,000 USD, approximately \$21.7 million US as of 2022. It is almost certain that production was underway prior to this sale otherwise the property could not have commanded such a high price. The British Company shipped ore to their mill at Lakes Crossing (Reno) during 1869 constructing a 10 stamp mill at the mine the following year. (Vanderberg, 1936) Other milling capacity was

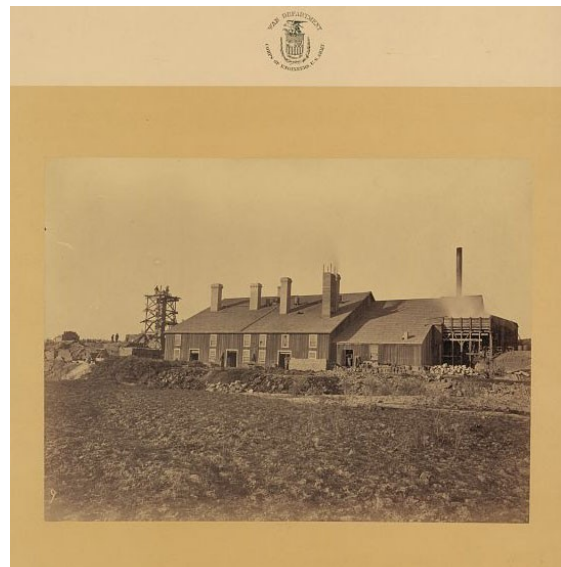


Figure 1. View of Oreana Mill and smelter circa 1870, note large slag pile in front.



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available nearby at a large nearby milling and smelting complex at Oreana, Nevada that was treating ores from the area during Clarence King's 1867 – 1872 Reconnaissance of the 40th Parallel, USGS Monograph 1. Mills at Unionville located a few miles away on the east side of the range were also treating ores nearly identical to those of the Rye Patch Mine and large mule trails still visible today at Rye Patch, indicate high-grade ore was probably sent to Unionville for treatment. It is likely that production from the Rye Patch Mine was shipped to the mills both at Oreana and Unionville with the recovered metals erroneously reported to those districts.



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In 1873 a mining consortium from San Francisco organized the Rye Patch Mining company and acquired the mine and mill, but the ore gave out the following year (Vanderberg, 1936). About this same time, the focus of development and mining appears to have changed from the steeply east dipping Alpha Vein and at least two other similar parallel veins to flat lying, generally west dipping structures. The continued decline in silver prices from a high of \$2.94 per ounce in 1864 to \$1.41 to \$1.42 in 1873 – 74 resulted in a general depression in most of Nevada's silver districts, a situation which likely contributed to the change in focus as a misguided means of reducing development and production costs.



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Production from the Rye Patch Mine, like many early mines across Nevada is poorly documented. Vanderberg, 1936 indicates production from the Rye Patch Mine from 1869 to 1874 exceeded \$1,000,000 and Couch and Carpenter (University of Nevada Bulletin No. 4, 1943) document production of 24,434 tons yielding \$634,388 from the Rye Patch Mine, mostly in silver for the period 1872 to 1881. Minor production totaling 33,900 ounces of silver is reported for the period 1931 through 1957 during which time silver ranged from \$0.25 to \$0.91 per troy ounce with an average of \$0.61 per troy ounce silver is documented in an undated, unsigned district summary obtained from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology files. During the two year period of overlap, 1872 to 1874 Couch and Carpenter indicate production of \$57,057 of bullion. Accounting for the overlap indicated production from the Rye Patch Mine from 1869 to 1957 exceeds \$1.6 million US dollars.



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While there are no production records prior to 1869, with the district having been organized in 1862, and the mine purchased in 1869 for \$1,000,000, it is virtually certain that at least some production had taken place as an unproven property would not have commanded such a large price at that time.



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Vanderberg 1936 also reports unsuccessful attempts at exploration and prospecting by American Mining and Exploration and unsuccessful attempts to cyanide tailings in 1914 and 1923.



Figure 2. Members of Clarence King's "Exploration of the 40th Parallel" party in foreground, circa 1870, Oreana Mill and Smelter in background. Note piles of cord wood for fuel to right center and wagons loaded with sacked ore in left center. Humboldt River in low lands beyond mill.



Figure 3. One of many large stope in multiple miles of mine workings, Rye Patch Mine, note flat lying nature of vein.



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In 1954 80 tons of high grade tungsten ore were produced from the area. Extensive antimony prospecting and limited production of high grade antimony was conducted in mines and prospects on and in the vicinity of the Property in the 1960's during a spike in antimony prices.

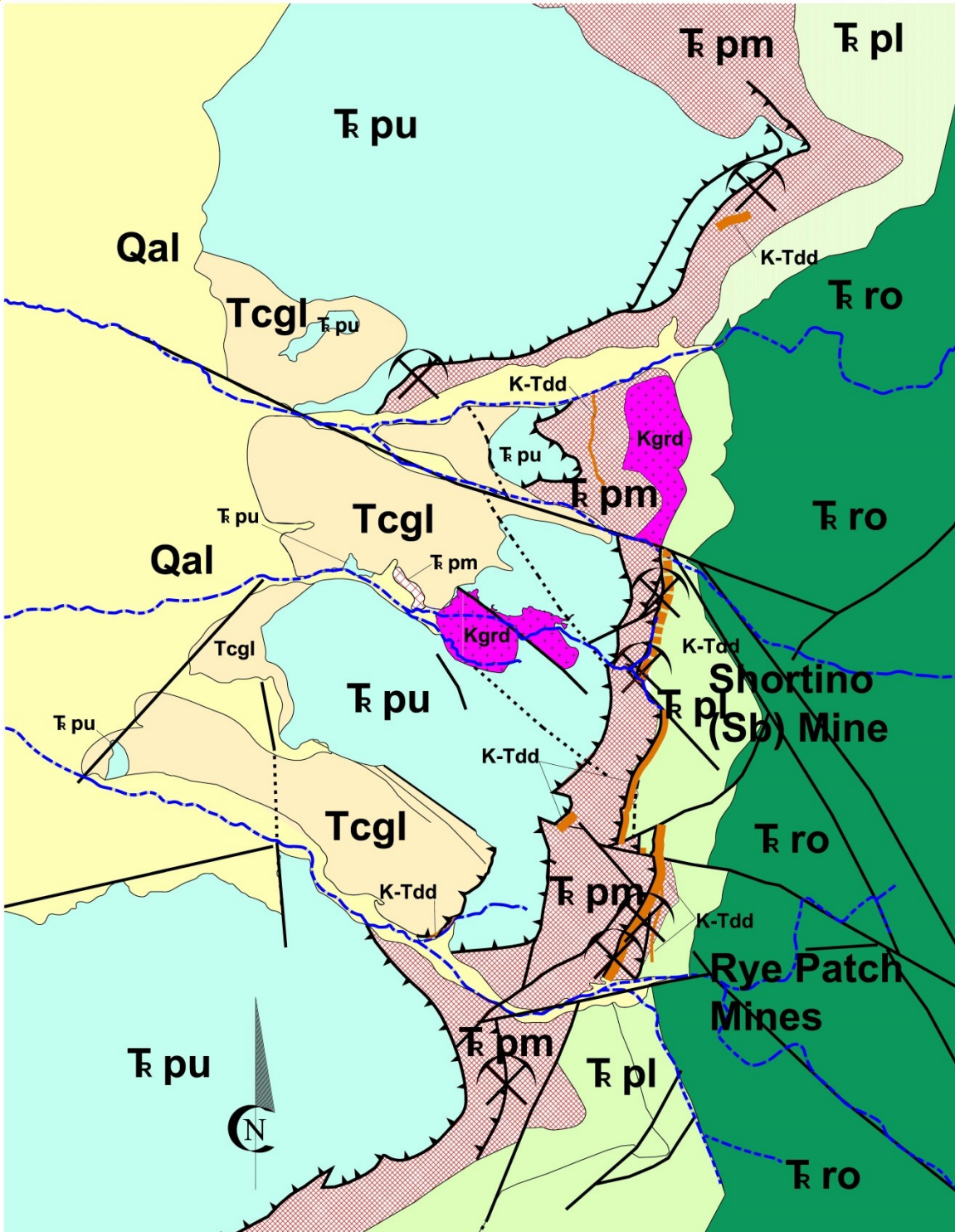


Plate 1. General Geology of Rye Patch district, Pershing County, Nevada

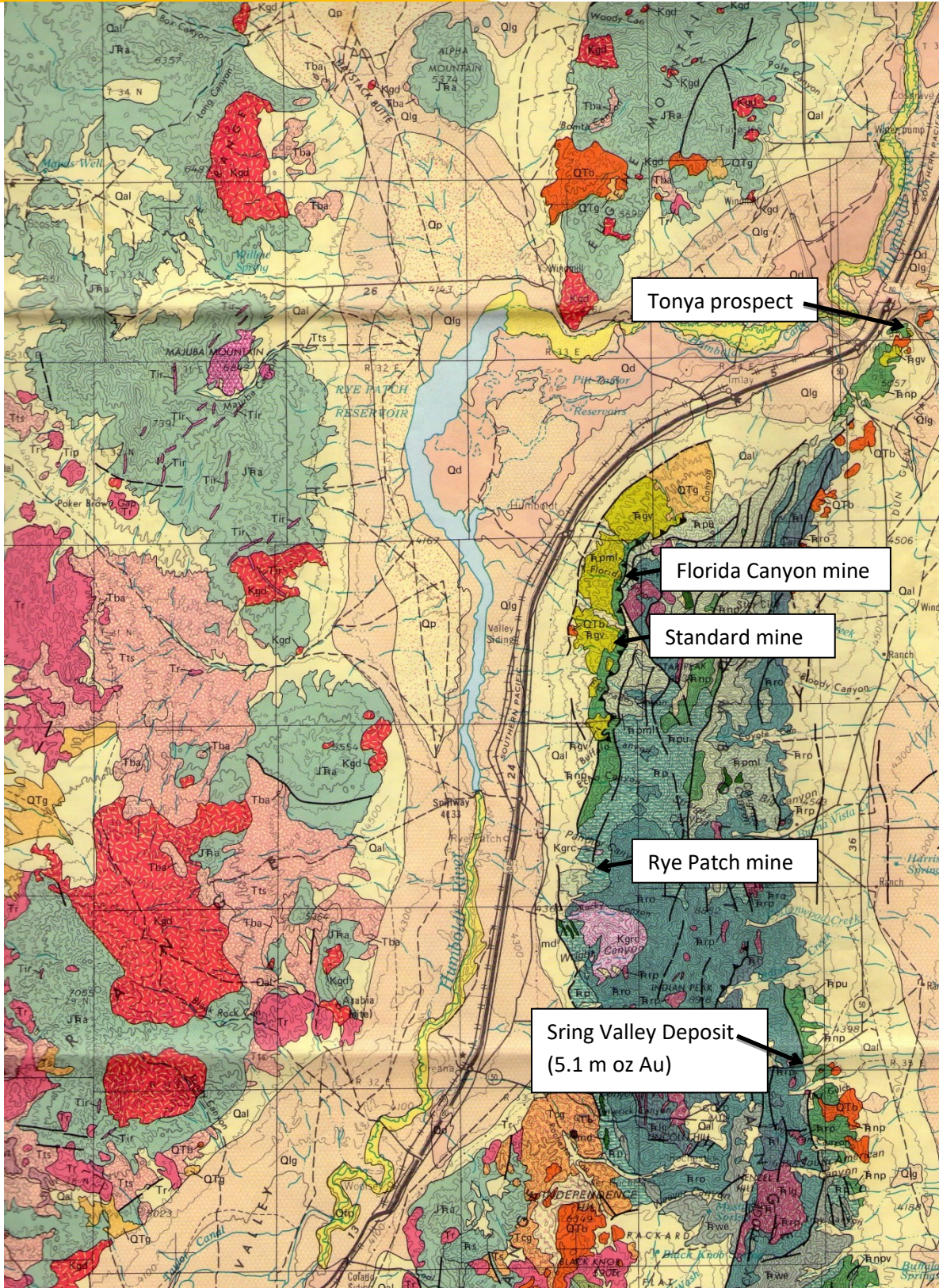


Plate 2. General Geology northern West Humboldt Range