

## Mineral County

### Creede District (aka Sunnyside District; King Solomon District)

The Creede District is named for the dominant town in the area, which was named for an early mine owner, N.C. Creede. He was a prospector and co-owner of the Holy Moses and Amethyst claims. Hill (1912) referred to the area as the Sunnyside District, as did Henderson (1926), who also used the term King Solomon District. The district's dimensions are about 4.5 miles wide by 5.75 miles long.

Miners and prospectors traversing the region made the first discovery in 1882, starting with the Bachelor claim (Henderson, 1926). More discoveries followed and a rush ensued. Nearby camps of Weaver, Willow and Sunnyside grew up during the boom (Eberhart, 1969).

This district produced silver, lead, gold, and zinc and was one of Mineral County's most important mining districts. The district was also one of the most productive in the United States (Dunn, 2003), producing nearly 5 million ounces of silver in 1892 alone. In total, Barton et al. (2000) reported a production of 2,400 metric tons of silver (79 million ounces) along with 4.7 metric tons (0.15 million ounces) of gold, 139,000 metric tons (305 million lbs) of lead, 2500 metric tons (5.5 million lbs) of copper, and 40,000 metric tons (90.3 million lbs.) of zinc.

The Creede district occurs within the Creede caldera of the San Juan Mountains volcanic complex. The Creede District and the general area of the western San Juans has been studied extensively. In fact the area was the subject of fourteen papers in a classic volume edited by Bethke and Hay in 2000. The volcanism is Oligocene in age, beginning with an andesitic base, followed by voluminous eruptions of silicic tuffs (Lipman, et al, 1978; Lipman, 1980; Steven and Lipman, 1976).

The Creede volcano erupted late in the history of the region and the caldera was formed by collapse after eruption of the Snowshoe Mountain tuff (Steven and Lipman, Ibid) at about 26.5 ma. The collapse was followed by the formation of a caldera lake and a complex sequence of sediment deposition, hydrothermal circulation, dome resurgence, complex mixing of waters that form the basis of the aforementioned GSA special paper (Bethke and Hay, Ibid.) The sequence of events developed a complex mineralogy (listed below) that is truly incredible (Rosemyer, 2010).

In general, the mineralization can be described as silver-lead veins in faults, fissures and fractured zones in rhyolite. Sphalerite, argentiferous galena, gold, pyrite and chalcopyrite occur in a gangue of quartz (often, and famously, amethyst), chlorite, barite and fluorite. Secondary enrichment contributed to the complex mineralogy.

Mines listed in the district (mindat.org; Emmons and Larsen, 1923) include:

- [Alpha Mine](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Amethyst Vein](#)
  - [Amethyst Mine](#)<sup>1,2</sup>
  - [Bachelor Mine](#)<sup>1,2</sup>
  - [Commodore Mine](#)<sup>1,2</sup>
    - [Commodore No. 5 Mine](#)
- [OH Vein](#)
- [P Vein](#)
  - [Happy Thoughts Mine](#)
  - [Last Chance Mine \(Del Monte Mine; New York Nine\)](#)<sup>1,2</sup>
  - [Nelson Tunnel](#)

- Park Regent Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Annabelle
- April Fool
- Bachelor Mountain rhyolite
- Berkshire Shaft
- Bethel Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Bulldog Mountain Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Captive Inca Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Carbonate Vein Occurrence (Ada Claims)<sup>1</sup>
- Casino Lease
- Chama
- Chance No. 2
- Cliff Shaft
- Colewood Tunnel Occurrence<sup>2</sup>
- Conejos No. 2 Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Copper Lode<sup>1</sup>
- Corsair Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Cowboy Johnson Adit Occurrence
- Creede
- Creede Formation
- Delaware Shaft<sup>1</sup>
- Diamond King Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Dolgooth Claims<sup>1</sup>
- Dora Belle Tunnels<sup>1</sup>
- Eclat Shaft Occurrence
- Emperius Mine (Emperious Mining Company; Del Monte Mining Company; Chance Mining Co; Bachelor Mine; Amethyst Mine; Commodore Mining Company; Last Chance and Pittsburg Mine Co; New York Mine; Creede Mines)<sup>1</sup>
- Equinox
- Equity Mine<sup>1,2</sup>
- Ethel Shaft
- Eunice Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Exchequer Tunnel Occurrence<sup>1</sup>
- Frazee
- Freeport Tunnel Prospect
- Gormax Mine (Gormax Mine No. 1; Gormax Tunnel)
- Grande Army Nos. 1-4
- Granite
- Holy Moses Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Homestake claim<sup>1</sup>
- Homestead No. 1
- Humphreys Tunnel
- Jack Pot Lode Occurrence<sup>1</sup>
- Jo Jo Tunnel Occurrence<sup>1</sup>
- Kanawha No. 1-4
- Kansas City Star Claim<sup>1</sup>
- King Solomon
  - Unknown Clay Occurrence (MRDS - 10016860)
- Kreutzer Mine (Kreutzer Sonata Mine)<sup>1</sup>
- Little Gold Dust Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Mallisa
- Mammoth Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Manhattan
- Manitoba<sup>2</sup>
- Mary Anderson
- Mexico
- Midwest Mine (Gateway Mine)
- Mollie S. Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Monon Mine (Monon Hill Mine)<sup>1,2</sup>
- Monte Carlo Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Mustang Tunnel<sup>1</sup>
- New York & Chance Mining Company<sup>1</sup>
- North Amethyst Vein
- North Star Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Oro Y Plata
- Outlet Tunnel<sup>1</sup>
- Overholt Lode<sup>1</sup>
- Oxford tunnel<sup>2</sup>
- Oxide Claims<sup>1</sup>
- P. & E. Tunnel
- Palo Alto Tunnel
- Paris Tunnel Occurrence<sup>1</sup>
- Phoenix Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Pipe Dream Claim<sup>1</sup>
- Pittsburgh Shaft
- Porphyry
- Puzzle Vein
- Reno Prospect<sup>1</sup>
- Resurrection Tunnel<sup>2</sup>
- Revenue Tunnel
- Ridge Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Rio Grande No. 2 Lode Occurrence<sup>1</sup>
- River View Tunnel
- Robinson
- Runaround

- Silver King
- Sloan Tunnel
- Solomon
  - Creede Formation (Bachelor Mountain)
- Solomon Mine (King Solomon)<sup>1</sup>
- Sulphur Beds (Sulphur Tunnel)
- Sunnyside tunnel<sup>1</sup>
- Syble R
- Tahrahathea claim<sup>1</sup>
- Teresa
- Texas Girl
- United Mines Shaft
- Volunteer
- Wedge
- White Star Mine<sup>1</sup>
- Windsor - Governor
- Windy Gulch
- Wooster Tunnel

Notes: <sup>1</sup>Details contained in Emmons and Larsen (1923).

<sup>2</sup>Details contained in Larsen (1929).

Minerals listed in the district (mindat.org) include:

Acanthite	Cristobalite	Melanterite
<i>Alabandite</i> ?	Cuprite var: Chalcotrichite	Miargyrite
Alunite	Cyanotrichite	Mimetite
Analcime	'Erionite'	Montmorillonite
Anglesite	Famatinite	Mordenite
Ankerite	Fluorite	Muscovite
Apjohnite	Galena	var: Illite
Aragonite	Gold var: Electrum	var: Sericite
Baryte	Goslarite	Nontronite
Beidellite	Greenockite	Opal var: Opal-CT
'Bentonite'	Gunningite	Orthoclase
Beudantite	Gypsum	Plumbojarosite
'Biotite'	Halotrichite	Polybasite
Bornite	Hematite	Proustite
Bournonite	Hemimorphite	'Psilomelane'
Brochantite	'Heulandite'	Pyrrargyrite
Bromargyrite	Inesite	Pyrite
Calcite	Jalpaite	Pyrolusite
Caryopillite	Jarosite	Pyromorphite
Cerussite	Kaolinite	Pyrostilpnite
Chalcanthite	'K Feldspar var: Adularia'	Pyroxmangite
Chalcocite	Ktenasite	Quartz
Chalcopyrite	Kutnohorite	var: Agate
Chamosite var: Thuringite	Langite	var: Amethyst
Chlorargyrite	Lepidocrocite	var: Jasper
'Chlorite Group'	'Limonite'	var: Rose Quartz
Chrysocolla	Magnetite	Rhodochrosite
'Chrysoprase'	Malachite	Rhodonite
'Clinoptilolite'	Manganite	Rosasite
Copper	Marcasite	Rozenite
Covellite	Mckinstryite	Serpierite

Siderite var: Manganoan  
Silver  
'Smectite Group'  
Smithsonite  
Sphalerite

Stephanite  
Stibnite  
Talc  
Tennantite  
Tetrahedrite

Turquoise  
Uytenbogaardtite  
'Wad'  
Wulfenite  
Xanthoconite

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