

Gunnison County

Elk Mountain District (includes Sheep Mountain, Gothic, Crystal River/Rock Creek, Marble, Cinnamon, Copper Creek, Baldy Mountain, and Poverty Districts)

The Elk Mountain District was included by Henderson (1926) in his comprehensive list of Colorado mining districts. Dunn (2003) describes the district as comprising "much of the area near the border of Gunnison and Pitkin Counties." Hill (1912) called this the **Ruby District**, but we exclude that district south of the Elk Mountain. On our map, we enclose the Sheep Mountain, Crystal River (or Crystal)/Rock Creek, Marble, Cinnamon, Copper Creek Baldy Mountain, and Poverty Districts within the Elk Mountain. The Elk Mountain District also includes mineral resource locations that fall outside of these individual smaller districts. As a result, this description will summarize those smaller districts, but some information can be found in most of those individually.

Dunn (Ibid) states that the district existed and was active by 1880 and gradually expanded its boundaries to include the neighboring districts.

In the mineralized areas, Paleozoic and Cretaceous sediments are intruded by Tertiary igneous bodies - notably the Oligocene-age White Rock Pluton. Most of the production came from the upper Paleozoic clastics and carbonates.

Vanderwilt's (1947) general description notes veins with sphalerite, galena and chalcopyrite with some silver and gold content. Mineralization is widespread, but veins are generally small and irregular. Streufert (1999) and Gaskill et al. (1991) delineate three types of deposits within the Elk Mountain district: 1) Ag-Au -Pb-Cu-Zn veins in metasediments (with some skarn zones); 2) Ag ores in masses of pyritized rock in metasediments and rhyolite porphyry dikes; 3) contact metamorphic deposits of massive magnetite and iron sulfide, Fe-Cu sulfide and gold. Significant molybdenum mineralization occurs within the area.

Most famous within the district is the Yule Marble quarry at the west end of the district near the town of Marble. There, the Leadville Limestone has been metamorphosed into a beautiful marble, including some of the most pure white product known. Through the years, Yule Marble has been used for the Lincoln Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknowns, municipal buildings in New York, San Francisco and Denver and numerous other structures around the country (Eberhart, 1979).

Vanderwilt (1947) reported production during the period 1932-1945 coming from four lode mines and three placer mines at 188 oz. gold, 15,000 oz. silver, 18,700 lb. copper (in 1939), 36,000 lb. lead, and 10,000 lb. zinc.

A number of small towns grew up, their history chronicling the history of mining in District. Marble developed after the pure white marble was discovered in 1882, with some small gold and silver prospects also in the area. Crystal was the site of rich silver strikes in the 1880s in the Crystal/Rock Creek District. Elko was a short-lived town at the foot of Galena Mountain and Schofield grew up at the base of Schofield Pass - the earliest access road to the region.

The biggest and most famous town was Gothic. Rich gold and silver strikes at Gothic Mountain in June 1879 gave rise to a town that reached a population of 8,000 citizens at its peak. Eberhart (Ibid) describes the most significant mine in the Gothic area as the Silver Night Mine on Copper Creek, where rich pockets of silver (native and wire) assayed as much as 6,000 to 15,000 ounces per ton silver. The largest producer in the area of Gothic was the Sylvanite Mine, described by Gaskill et al. (1991) as containing 2,200 feet of tunnels, 1200 feet of vertical workings and extensively stoped areas.

Mines listed in the district (mindat.org; Dunn, 2003; Streufert, 1999; Gaskill et al., 1991*; Eberhart, 1969) include: (*Gaskill et al. (1991) contains an extensive list of mines with significant details in the Gothic Quadrangle.)

- Aburdix Occurrence¹
- American Eagle; Luona Occurrence¹
- Arrowhead Mine¹
- Aspen - Riverside Group¹
- Baltimore; Grandview; Mineral King; Virginia; W. Virginia¹
- Baroni Mine (John Baroni Mine)¹
- Belle of Titusville²
- Bennet Tunnel²
- Black Eagle^{2,3}
- Black Queen Shaft (McVey Tunnel; Fargo Claim; Black Queen Mine)^{2,3}
- Bonton²
- Brooklyn²
- Brush Creek Group¹
- Catalpa Mine^{2,3}
- Colorado Yule Marble Company quarries²
- Copper Queen⁴
- Crystal Peak¹
- Crystal Tunnel²
- Daisy
- Disc Shaft²
- Don No. 2²
- Ella; Ella C; Crown; Justice Occurrence
- Evening Star Occurrence²
- Garfield Mine (King Cole Mine)¹
- Gold Pan Vein Occurrence²
- Harris - Farley Tunnel²
- Hercules - Ajax¹
- High & Mighty Occurrence¹
- High Tide Tunnel²
- Horace Porter Mine¹
- Howard; Mysterious; Emma; Rustler; Spirit of the Times Occurrence¹
- Inez²
- Iron Dune; Copper Queen; Silver Bell; Copper Glance; Copper Extension Occurrence¹
- Iron King⁴
- Iron Swamp Occurrence (Old Iron Bog; Jerry No. 1)¹
- John Baroni Tunnel Occurrence²
- Lakeview
- Lead Bullet Prospect²
- Lead King Mine²
- Lead Queen³
- Lizard Lake²
- Low Tide²
- Lucky Boy²
- McVey Tunnel²
- M.S.; Cumberland; Silver King Occurrence¹
- Micawber¹
- Mt. Emmons/Crested Butte¹ (Chautauqua; Daisey; Daisey Mine; Mt. Emmons; Crested Butte)¹
- North Pole Mine¹
- North Star claims¹
- O. F. Lode Occurrence¹
- Out West Placer; Galena Park; Cleveland; Ajax; Hercules¹
- Patricia Lee Occurrence²
- Projects A B C D¹
- Puritan Group¹
- Schofield (Schofield)²
- Sheep Mountain Tunnel²

- Silver Bell; A. J. Warner; Jupiter; Iron King¹
- Silver Jewel; Gunnison Placer; McLoud Placer¹
- Silver Night³
- Silver Nugget Occurrence (Gothic Belle; Cleopatra; Kershaw; Monarch; Big Indian; Silver Crop; Leviathan; Catalpa-Tennessee)²
- Silver Queen
- Silver Spruce Mine¹
- Skyline Mine (Little Darling Mine; Wacker; Lead Bullet Occurrence)²
- Spotted Fawn Occurrence (Bonnie Bray; Bonanza; Izetta; Baltimore; Urzilla; James Blain)¹
- Strauss; Yule²
- Strauss Occurrence²
- Sylvanite⁴
- Tennessee²
- Treasure Mountain Dome¹
- Treasury Mountain¹
- Treasury Mountain granite¹
- Two Brothers Tunnel
- Virginia^{1,2}; Ophir¹; Ellas Wood¹; Virginia Basin¹; Frank¹; Mineral King¹; Valley; May Pioneer Occurrence²
- Whopper Lode²
- Washington Gulch¹
- Yule Creek Occurrence¹
- Yule Marble Quarry Various¹

Notes: ¹ indicates included by mind.org as part of the Elk Mountain District.

² indicates included by mind.org as part of the Marble District.

³ indicates included in Eberhart (1969).

⁴ indicates included in Gaskill (1991).

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

Acanthite	Erythrite	Owyheeite
Actinolite	Ferrimolybdate	Proustite
Anglesite	Fluorite	Pyrrargyrite
Aragonite	Freieslebenite	Pyrite
Arsenic	Galena	Pyrochlore Group
Arsenolite	Gold	Pyrrhotite
Azurite	Hedenbergite	Quartz var: Amethyst
Barite	Hematite	Rutile
'Biotite'	Hübnerite	Safflorite
Brochantite	Ilmenite	Siderite
Calcite	'K Feldspar'	Silver
Chalcopyrite	'Limonite'	Skutterudite var: Smaltite
'Chlorite Group'	Löllingite	Sphalerite
Chrysocolla	Magnetite	Stibarsen
Clinosafflorite	Marcasite	Ullmannite
Copper	Meta-autunite	Uraninite
Dolomite	Molybdenite	
Epidote	Muscovite var: Sericite	

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