

## Boulder County

### Caribou-Grand Island District

In the fall of 1858, prospectors swarmed into the Boulder County area. Placer gold was discovered in Gold Run, leading to the Caribou-Grand Island District becoming the first named district in Colorado on March 7, 1859. It started out as the Mountain District Number 1 of Nebraska. Samuel Conger is credited with the first lode gold discovery in July of 1864 on the south flank of Caribou Hill. Conger also discovered silver southeast of Arapahoe Peak in the early 1860s (Kemp, 1960).

Most of the mines were closed in 1893 after the silver crash of 1893. Even at its peak, the mines of the Caribou-Grand Island District were not prolific producers. Mine production decreased even further as they went deeper (Moore, et al, 1957).

Lovering and Goddard (1950) associated the mineralization to the Caribou Stock, a composite porphyry intrusive consisting of gabbro, monzonite, quartz monzonite. The deposits consisted of veins of galena, argentite, silver halides, native silver and chalcopyrite in a largely quartz gangue. Uraninite (pitchblende) was discovered in the Caribou Mine in 1948 and the mine reopened to access that resource. Eight bodies of titaniferous magnetite, presumably of magmatic origin, occur in the Caribou Hill area. Noted by Bastin and Hill (1917) and Lovering and Goddard (1950), Harrer and Tesch (1959) estimated that they are too titanium-rich for use as iron ore.

Minerals identified in the Caribou - Grand Island District, as listed in Mindat.org are the following:

<u>Acanthite</u>	<u>Gersdorffite</u>	<u>Quartz</u>
<u>Cerussite</u>	<u>Gold</u>	<u>Siderite</u>
<u>Chalcopyrite</u>	<u>Jalpaite</u>	<u>Silver</u>
<u>Chlorargyrite</u>	<u>Pearceite</u>	<u>Sphalerite</u>
<u>Chrysotile</u>	<u>Polybasite</u>	<u>Stephanite</u>
<u>Covellite</u>	<u>Proustite</u>	<u>Stromeyerite</u>
<u>Dolomite</u>	<u>Pyrrargyrite</u>	<u>Tetrahedrite</u>
<u>Galena</u>	<u>Pyrite</u>	<u>Uraninite</u>

Mines in the district listed in Moore, et al, (1957) are

Silver Mines:

Caribou Group (Caribou, No Name, Poorman, Silver Dollar, Sherman, Columbia, Spencer & Socorro)

Comstock

Belcher

Native Silver

Isabel

Potosi

Cross

Seven Thirty

Wigwam

Great Northern.

Producing both gold and silver: Silver Point and Idaho.

Primarily gold: St Louis Mine.

[Mineral Resource Data System \(MRDS\) - Online Spatial Data – Grand Island-Caribou District](#)

Bastin, E.S. and Hill J.M., 1917, Economic Geology of Gilpin County and Adjacent Parts of Clear Creek and Boulder Counties, Colorado ; U.S. Geological Survey Prof. Paper 94.

Harrer, C.M. and Tesch, W. J., 1959, Reconnaissance of Iron Occurrences in Colorado; U.S. Bureau of Mines Information Circular 7918.

Kemp, Donald C., 1960, *Silver, Gold and Black Iron: A Story of the Grand Island Mining District of Boulder County, Colorado*; Sage Books, Missoula MT.

Lovering, T.S. and Goddard, E.N., 1950, Geology and Ore Deposits of the Front Range, Colorado; U.S.G.S. Professional Paper 223.

Mindat.org; accessed 14 July 2012.

Moore, F. B., Cavender, W.S., Kaiser, E.P., 1957, Geology and Uranium Deposits of the Caribou Area, Boulder County, Colorado; U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1030-N.