

## Clear Creek County

### Argentine District

The **Argentine District** (a.k.a. **Peru-Argentine District**) crosses the Continental Divide in southwest Clear Creek County into adjacent Summit County, mostly on Kelso and McClellan Mountains (Lovering & Goddard, 1950). The Belmont Lode was discovered in 1864, and contained less gold than silver. A number of mines developed and the district was organized. After 1888, activity became intermittent. Additional references are Eberhart (1969), Ellis and Ellis (1983), Goddard (1947), Lovering (1935) and Spurr (1908).

The geology is characterized by Silver Plume Granite and Tertiary quartz monzonite, rhyolite and dacite intrusions in the Idaho Springs Formation. Gold occurs in polymetallic veins of sphalerite-galena-pyrite-chalcopyrite + silver minerals (Lovering & Goddard, Ibid).

Famous lead-silver veins included the Argentine, the Kirtley (or Curtly) and the Colorado Central (Vanderwilt, 1947).

Mines listed in the district (mindat.org and others) include:

- [Argentine \(Wilcox; Montezuma\)](#)
- [Baker](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Big Stevens \(or Stevens\)](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Big Chief Mine](#)
- [Broken Handle](#)
- [Colorado Central](#)
- [Curtly](#)
- [Eagles Nest Occurrence](#)
- [Equator](#)
- [Independence \(Belmont; Santiago; Waldorf; Commonwealth; Centennial\)](#)
- [Josephine Mine \(Stevens Mine\)](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Levenworth Mountain](#)
- [Marshall](#)
- [McClellan Mountain](#)
- [Paymaster](#)
- [Pennsylvania](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Robinson](#)
- [Santiago-Commonwealth-Centennial](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Sidney Occurrence](#)
- [Sterling Silver Group](#)
- [Tilden](#)
- [Vidler Occurrence](#)
- [Waldorf](#)

Note: <sup>1</sup> Mines described in more detail in Lovering and Goddard, 1950.

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

<a href="#">Ankerite</a>	<a href="#">Hessite</a>	<a href="#">Quartz</a>
<a href="#">Cerussite</a> PbCO <sub>3</sub>	<a href="#">Limonite'</a>	<a href="#">Siderite</a>
<a href="#">Chalcopyrite</a>	<a href="#">Magnetite</a>	<a href="#">Silver</a>
<a href="#">Fluorite</a>	<a href="#">Malachite</a>	<a href="#">Sphalerite</a>
<a href="#">Galena</a>	<a href="#">Petzite</a>	<a href="#">Stephanite</a> Ag <sub>5</sub> SbS <sub>4</sub>
<a href="#">Gold</a>	<a href="#">Pyrite</a>	<a href="#">Stromeyerite</a> AgCuS

References:

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Ellis, E.H. and Ellis, C.S. 1983. *The Saga of Upper Clear Creek: A detailed History of an Old Mining Area, Its Past and Present*. Jende-Hagan Book Corp., Frederick, Colorado.

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[www.mindat.org](http://www.mindat.org), accessed July 2015.