

Gilpin County

Nevada District

Gilpin is the second smallest county in Colorado but has the second highest gold production. Several months after the big discovery on Clear Creek, gold was discovered by John Gregory near Blackhawk in 1859. A few months later, the placers and veins in Russell Gulch initiated a major rush into this mountainous area. Early lode mining was restricted to oxidized ore, which normally reached 40- to 100-feet below the surface. The construction of the Hill smelter in Blackhawk in 1868 enabled extraction of metals from the unoxidized sulfide ores. Later, the completion of the railroad from Denver to Blackhawk spurred production again. Mining diminished early in the 20th century and has proceeded only sporadically since 1909. Vanderwilt (1947) notes that lode veins are much more numerous and persistent in this southern area than in the northern Gilpin districts. An additional reference is Parker (1974).

The first discoveries in the area occurred in Gamble Gulch in 1859 (Koschmann and Bergendahl, 1968). Stamp mills processed the oxidized ore and the level mining activity followed the same pattern as in Clear Creek County. Much placer activity occurred in the various gulches, especially near Rollinsville. The geology is much the same as in Clear Creek County, with Precambrian bedrock of the Idaho Springs Formation cut by Boulder Creek Granite with Tertiary intrusions of quartz monzonite and bostonite porphyries. Fissure fillings include pyritic gold that, where unweathered, is rather low grade, but has been enhanced by oxidation.

The Nevada District is now located within the larger **Central City District**. The Central City District is contiguous with, and so the same as, the Idaho Springs District in Clear Creek County. The basic geology includes interlayered Precambrian gneisses and schists, intruded by Precambrian granites of the Boulder Creek and Silver Plume family, with later Tertiary intrusions associated with mineralization.

The Nevada District, which was also called the New Nevada District, was one of the earliest districts organized in Gilpin County, with papers drawn up on September 28, 1860 (Marshall, 1920). The district was centered on Nevada Gulch, a tributary of North Clear Creek (Dunn, 2003).

The town of Nevada was formed several miles from Central City and named for the area in California. It was renamed Nevada City, but finally the name of the post office was changed to Nevadaville to avoid confusion with that other location (Eberhart, 1969). According to Eberhart (Ibid) the town flourished in the 1860s, again in the 1870s, nearly emptied during the "panic of 1883," but was rejuvenated in the 1890s, reaching a population of 1200 residents. The California Mine had the deepest shaft in the area - 2230 feet.

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

- [Barker](#)
- [Belcher](#)³
- California
- Glory Hill
- Hubert^{1,3}
- King¹

- [Nevadaville](#)
- Newfoundland^{1,2}
- Post Hole¹
- Prize^{1,2}

Notes: ¹ denotes mines described in detail in Sims et al. (1953).

² denotes mines described in detail in Bastin and Hill (1917).

³ denotes mines described in detail in Lovering and Goddard (1950).

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

Gold	Johannite	Zippeite
Gypsum	Quartz var: Amethyst	
Jarosite	Zincocopiapite	

References:

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