

Ouray County

Red Mountain District

The Red Mountain District was recognized by Henderson (1926), who noted that the district overlapped the **Sneffels and Uncompahgre (Ouray) Districts**. Vanderwilt (1947) also recognized the district and Burbank included a description in the classic 1947 volume on Mineral Resources of Colorado. Dunn (2003) points out that the Red Mountain was one of the original six districts defined in 1882 for Ouray County, of which the Mount Sneffels (Sneffels) and Uncompahgre (Ouray) are still in Ouray County (while the other three lie in later-established counties.)

Moore (2004) defines the geography of the district. He says it extends across the county line to the headwaters of Mineral Creek in San Juan County (over Red Mountain Pass). It extends from the northern end of Ironton Park south to the three Red Mountains (#1, #2, and #3) and Mount Abram and west to the divide above Red Mountain Creek. The mineralization is the same as - and continuous with - those of the **Telluride** and Sneffels Districts.

The area lies on the northwest rim of the Silverton caldera in a marginal zone of ring faults. Some older rocks of the Ouray and Leadville limestones and the Hermosa Formation crop out in the Ironton Basin, but further south they are mainly the Silverton volcanic series with the San Juan tuff on the west side of the district. The most productive mines lie in a zone about a mile wide and four miles long.

Most of the district's production came from chimney-like ore bodies in or near breccia pipes and volcanic plugs, filling open spaces and caves or replacing altered wall rock (Burbank, 1941; 1947). Burbank describes some nearly solid copper-silver sulfide bodies. Copper is more abundant than is typical in the area (and in fact in Colorado), and many veins contained massive bodies of lead and zinc sulfides.

The district was being thoroughly explored by the 1870s. The earliest discovery in the area was in San Juan County in 1881. Production declined significantly by 1900, with later bursts of activity during the two world wars. During the district's heyday some of the large mines spawned development of vibrant (but short-lived) settlements such as Red Mountain Town, Guston, Old Congress Town and Ironton. Eberhart's classic book on Colorado Mining Camps (1969) contains some stories about those early towns.

Additional references include: Burbank and Luedke (1968), Collins (1931), Emmons (1888), Schwartz (1888) and Smith (1994).

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

- [Alexandra](#)¹
- [Bailey Shaft](#)
- [Baltic Group](#)¹
- [Barstow](#)¹
- [Brobdignag claim](#)¹
- [Carbonate King](#)¹
- [Charter Oak Mine](#)
- [Congress](#)¹
- [Copper King](#)
- [Genesee-Vanderbilt Mine \(Genesee-Vanderbilt Mine\)](#)¹
- [Gertrude mine](#)

- Grand Prize¹
- Guston Mine¹
- Guston No. 5
- Hero Mine
- Hoffs
- Idarado Mine
- Jay Eye See¹
- Knox Shaft
- Lucky Twenty Mine
- Magnet¹
- Magnolia Shaft
- Meldrum and Hammond Tunnels¹
- Midnight¹
- National Belle¹
- Old Kentucky
- Orphan Boy
- Patsie Helen and Marion Occurrence
- Paymaster¹
- Pittsburgh
- R. E. Lee Claim; Atlantic C
- Rainbow Tunnel
- Red Creek Mine
- Red Mountain
 - National Belle Mine (National Bell Mine)
- Red Mountain Deposits
- Red Mountain No. 3 Deposit
- Robinson Mine¹
- Rouville
- Saint Paul¹
- San Antonio (Kohler)
- Saratoga¹
- Silver Belle¹
- Silver Ledge¹
- St Lawerance
- Tennessee Tunnel
- Treasure Trove Occurrence
- Vanderbilt
- White Cloud¹
- Yankee Girl Shaft¹
- Zuni Mine¹

Note:¹ Details in Ransome (1901).

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

Alunite	Dolomite	Nacrite
Anglesite	var: Ferroan Dolomite	Natroalunite (TL)
Baryte	Enargite	'Pitticite'
Bornite	Epidote	Proustite
Calcite	Famatinite	Pyrrargyrite
var: Manganoan Calcite	Fluorite	Pyrite
Cerussite	Galena	Quartz var: Amethyst
Chalcocite	Gold var: Electrum	Scorodite
Chalcopyrite	Hydrozincite	Sphalerite
'Chlorite Group'	Kaolinite	Stromeyerite
Colusite	'K Feldspar var: Adularia'	Sulphur
Copper	'Limonite'	Tennantite
Covellite	Malachite	Tetrahedrite
Cristobalite	Molybdenite	Uraninite
Diaspore	Muscovite	Wurtzite
Dickite	var: Illite	Zoisite
	var: Sericite	Zunyite

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