

San Miguel County

Iron Springs District (aka Ophir District)

The Iron Springs District was located at Sections 25-36, T. 42 N., R. 9 W; Sections 1-4 and 9-12, T. 41 N., R. 9 W. of the New Mexico principal meridian (Henderson 1926). It is located about 10 miles south of Telluride. It was also referred to as the Ophir District, which was the preferred name by Vanderwilt (1947). Dunn (2003) indicates that the district may include or overlap with the **Trout Lake District** to the southwest. The Iron Springs District was one of the original six main districts of San Miguel County, but by 1898 it was one of four districts (Dunn, 2003). It is a former gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc mining area and the Alta Mine was one of the biggest producers (Dunn, 2003).

Claims were being made by the mid 1870's. Mines were operating in the valley and shipping silver ore by 1878. Several mines, including the Alta Mine, were being developed by 1881. An unsuccessful smelter was built in Ames in 1883. The district was driven by silver prices and most mines only operated intermittently. The district was mostly inactive from 1930-1936, but was very active from 1937-1948, and inactive since then (Dunn, 2003).

The mining camp of Ophir, a short lived mining camp, was located on Ophir Creek in Ophir Valley (Eberhart, 1969) at approximately the center of the District. The small town of Iron Springs was east of Howard's Fork (later Ophir, New Ophir) (Dunn, 2003). Eberhart (1969) indicates that the small village of Iron Springs was a short distance from Old Ophir, towards Ophir Pass, and that besides mining it was also a resort community.

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

- [Alta Mine \(Alta group; Alta - St. Louis\)¹](#)
- [American Frenchman Mine](#)
- [Atlas Mine \(Atlas & Clara Mine\)](#)
- [Attica occurrence](#)
- [Badger Mine \(Badger tunnel; Getrude\)](#)
- [Black Hawk tunnel \(Alta group\)](#)
- [Black Warrior](#)
- [Bog Iron pit \(Chapman Gulch Spring Type\)](#)
- [Boston and Navite Mine](#)
- [Butterfly Mine¹](#)
- [Calamine Mine](#)
- [Calumet](#)
- [Carbonero Mine](#)
- [Carribeau Mine](#)
- [Colorado Mine](#)
- [Commercial Mine](#)
- [Contention Mine](#)
- [Court House - Dynamo Mine \(Court House Mine\)](#)
- [Creve Coeur](#)
- [Crown Jewell Mine](#)
- [Crown Point Mine](#)
- [Deadwood Mine](#)
- [Double Eagle Mine](#)
- [Electric Mine](#)
- [Fairview Mine](#)
- [Favorite tunnel \(Exploration at Favorite\)](#)
- [Ferric Oxide Mine](#)
- [Garibaldi Mine \(Garibaldi - San Bernardo Mine\)](#)
- [Getrude](#)
- [Glasier Placer Nos. 1; 2](#)
- [Gold King](#)
- [Gold King group](#)
- [Gold Medal](#)

- Gold Run placer & mill
- Golden Rose
- Grace Mine
- Hamilton Mine
- Happy Home (Roanoak placer)
- Hattie Mine (Hattie group)
- Highline
- Honduras occurrence (South Fork; Tombo)
- Ida shaft
- Illinois
- Iron Springs Group¹
- Lake View Group
- Lewis Mine
- Little Boy Mine
- Little Dorrit
- Little Eva Mine
- Little Joe crosscut
- Lucky Strike placer
- Maryland
- Matterhorn Mine
- Mohawk
- Montana vein (Revenue tunnel)
- Mountain Flower
- Mountain Quail
- Moyer & Tuscon
- Nellie & Laura Mine (Nellie Mine)
- Nevada Mine
- New Dominion Mine
- North Slope Mine
- O'Reilly Mine (Oreilly)
- Old Butterfly Mine
- Ophir Iron Springs Mine
- Ophir Mine
- Ophir tunnel
- Ophir Valley occurrence (New Dominion; Nevada Gulch; Silver Tip Lower Yellow Jacket; Chapman Gulch)
- Osceola Mine
- Palmyra Mine
- Paragon Mine
- Pike County Mine
- Pioneer Mine
- Porcupine Mine
- Purdy lease
- Redcloud Mine
- Roy Johnson Mine
- Royal group - Nelson tunnel
- San Bernardo Mine¹
- San Bernardo Valley View Mine
- Santa Cruz (Santa Cruse)
- Sarah Mine
- Shamus O'Brien Mine
- Shoemaker Mine
- Silver Bar
- Silver Bell Mine
 - Ida vein
- Silver Chief Mine
- Silver King Mine
- Silver Pick¹
- Silver Tip Mine
- Single Standard Mine
- Spar group No. 1; 2; 3; 4; 5
- St. James
- Telluride Mine
- Terrible Mine¹
- Texaco Mine
- Townsend Mine
- Trout Lake
 - Canton
- Turkey Creek Mine
- Turkey King occurrence
- U. S. Mines
- Vagabond
- Van occurrence (Kentucky; Dakota; Union)
- Vera Mine
- W. G. Claggett Mine
- Warren placer
- Wasatch Mine
- Woodie Mine (Woody Mine)
- Zambodga Mine

Note: ¹Listed in Dunn (2003).

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

Anhydrite	Galena	Pavonite
'Apatite'	var: Argentiferous Galena	Pyrargyrite
Barite	Goethite	Pyrite
'Biotite'	Gold	Quartz
Bismuth	'Gold Amalgam'	Rhodochrosite
Calcite	Hematite	'Schirmerite'
Cerussite	Hübnerite	Siderite
Chalcopyrite	Jarosite	Sphalerite
'Chlorite Group'	'Limonite'	Stibnite
Dolomite	Magnetite	Tetrahedrite
Ferrimolybdite	Molybdenite	'Wolframite'
Fluorite	Molybdite	Wollastonite
Freibergite	Muscovite var: Sericite	Zoisite
	Natrojarosite	

References:

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Eberhart, Perry. 1969. *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*. Fourth, revised edition. Swallow Press, Athens, Ohio.

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