

State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

1069 State Office Building
Portland 1, Oregon

PINE CREEK PLACERS

Cornucopia District
Baker County

Foreword:

Coarse gold has been recovered in appreciable amounts by placer mining operations in force at various locations on Pine Creek from time to time throughout the present century and probably even earlier. These operations have included some attempted hydraulicking; however, because of many factors such as the depth of the pay streak (50 to 65 feet for the most part), adverse tailings disposal problems, the amount of generally barren, bouldery overburden to be handled, diverse surface ownership, etc., past mining consisted mostly of shaft and tunnel work at a limited number of advantageously located places. Just prior to World War II the Morrison-Knudsen Company test-drilled most of the prominent claims and were reportedly considering installation of heavy equipment for a large scale earth moving type of operation throughout the entire channel; however the plan was dropped because of the pressure of war contracts. In 1952 the principal claims were optioned by another group, the Halfway Placer Company. More test drilling was done and the property readied for another similar but less extensive earth moving-type of operation but for reasons not currently ascertainable this attempted development never did get past the preliminary digging-in stages.

Names by which some of the properties and/or past operations have been described are: The Underwood Placer, the Steinmetz Placer, the Pine Creek Placers, the Boulder Creek Mining Company, the Pine Creek Mining Company and the Halfway Placer Company. This report deals with basic information pertaining to renewed activity currently being undertaken by a new group known as the Cornucopia Placer Company.

Operator-lessee:

Principal partners in the Cornucopia Placer Company are Sidney Lawrence, General Manager, home address 4348 State St., Boise, Idaho and L. W. Hawkes, Hillcrest Drive, Boise, Idaho. The Oregon address for the company is c/o Fred Smith, Foreman, P. O. Box 739, Halfway, Oregon. Phone contact with Mr. Smith can be made after 8:00 P.M. through the Jimtown store -- SH-1-2685. Five men are currently employed and covered by State Industrial Accident Insurance.

Location:

On Pine Creek about two miles below Cornucopia at an elevation of approximately 4000 feet and in sections 10 and 15, T. 7 S., R. 45 E.

Area: The holdings of the Cornucopia Placer Company include tracts of deeded land and several unpatented mining claims. These embrace most of the property previously held by the Halfway Placer Company and shown on the plat of holdings contained in a Dogami file report entitled Underwood Placers, by N.S.W., July 9, 1953. Most of this land is understood to be now controlled by, and leased from Mr. Steinmetz.

General: Activity by the company began in the fall of 1967 and was resumed in April of this year. It consists of excavating overburden from a trench designed to expose bedrock in the lowermost section of the channel in order to establish a drainable bedrock profile that can be continued on up-stream as mining progresses in the future. Most of the large quantity of overburden removed to date has been used to construct a terrace on the western margin of the canyon; however some is dumped through a grizzly and into a sluice where it is washed for the purpose of making spot determinations of overburden grade. Once bedrock is reached and firmly exposed, a portable trommel-type washing plant will be installed in the cut and the present temporary grizzly-sluice test set-up will be abandoned. The amount of overburden that can be profitably washed will then be determined by trial runs through the trommel plant as mining progresses; however the task of getting dug in will be a prime materials handling problem until such time that an initial trench is established, after which the haulage problem will be progressively lessened by the ability to dump substantial proportions of the waste from new mining on adjacent segments into the old, previously dug cuts. Even then, coping with overburden, pay gravel and tailings will constitute a problem requiring continual attention.

According to the management there are two bedrock channel levels. One, the youngest and deepest (50 to 65 feet) is the mainstream channel of the present Pine Creek. The other, at a lesser depth, represents uneroded remnants of an older phase of the channel. Present excavations have just recently made contact with portions of one of the intermediate level remnants and the magnitude of the job yet to be done is such that it will probably be Fall before the digging-in phase of the operation can be completed with both bedrock levels exposed in a firm, drainable manner suitable for mining. Excavation is being done at the present time with a rent-purchase shovel with haulage on a contract basis utilizing two leased 32-ton Euclids; otherwise, the company owns a large dozer, several general purpose vehicles, and related maintenance equipment.

At the present stage of development tailings water from the washing that is being done for test purposes is diverted through a series of old ponds in which most contained solids are settled; however, by the time the development work is concluded and the property is in shape for mining, it will be possible to construct more sophisticated facilities, including a re-cycling set-up, to insure the discharge of clear overflow water. Additionally, and although no formalized plans have as yet been drawn up, the operators indicated to the writer that they plan to conduct mining and tailings disposal operations along lines that will facilitate development of the land surface for recreational use after the mining operations are concluded; to wit: landscaped into a succession of shallow pools in the canyon bottom with adjoining terraces of levelled overburden on the sides for clusters of cabin sites.

For added details concerning the geologic setting see the Underwood Placers report of July 9, 1953 referred to earlier.

Report by N.S.W.: July 19, 1968

Property Visited: July 10, 1968

Informants: Lawrence & Smith

State Department of **RECEIVED** Geology and Mineral Industries

STATE DEPT. OF GEOLOGY
& MINERAL INDS.

702 Woodlark Building
Portland 5, Oregon
Cornucopia District
Baker County

Underwood placers

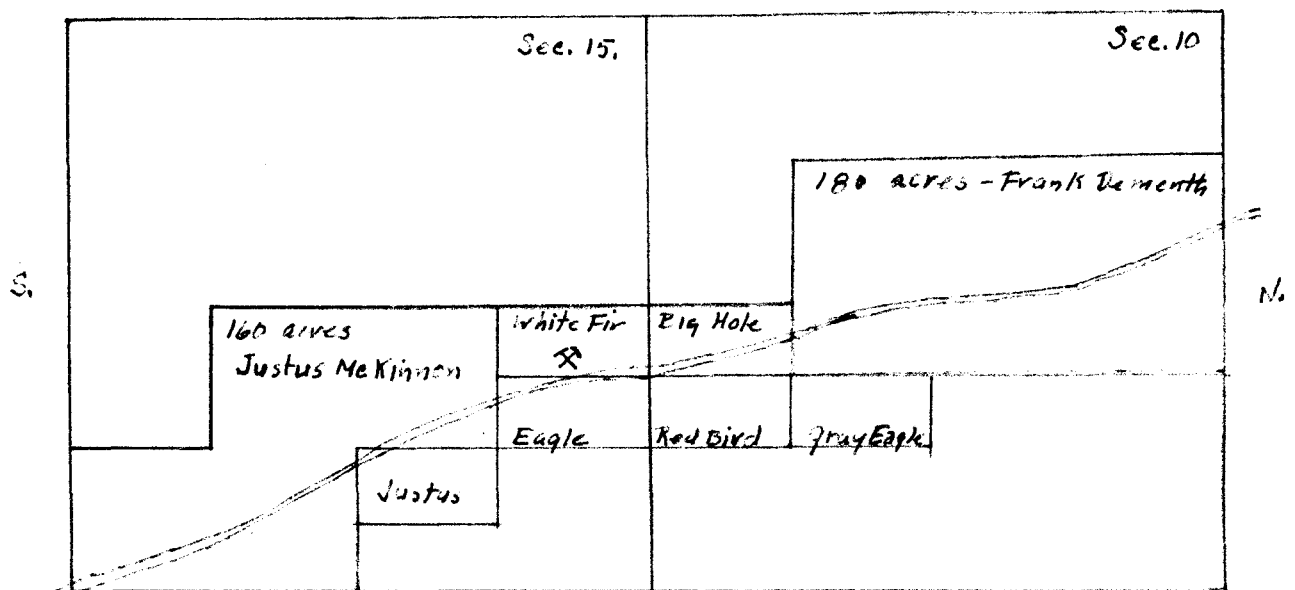
Old Names: This property has been known as the Underwood Placer, the Boulder Creek Mining Company and Pine Creek Mining Company.

Operator-lessee: Halfway Placer Company, comprised of Mr. W. H. Conley, Yreka, California, Vaughn Whitmore, Gold Hill, Oregon and E. H. Tecum, Central, ^{Portland} Oregon, working on a partnership basis. Mr. Conley is director field operations and the company's address is P. O. Box 304, Halfway, Oregon.

Owners: The land currently held under an operation's lease includes two tracts of patented claims, one patented once. This is largely owned by the Pine Creek Mining Company, J. H. Moore, 709 Leon Building, Portland, Oregon.

Location: T. 7 S., R. 15 E., sections 10 & 15. This is on Pine Creek about 2 miles below the Cornucopia divide at an elevation of approximately 4,000 feet.

Area: 460 acres as indicated below in accordance with sketch data furnished by Mr. Conley.



History & Geology: According to available reports (Underwood Placers, page 225, Mineral Resources of Oregon, Vol. 2, No. 4, and Pine Creek Mining Company, Department of Geology & Mineral Industries, Bulletin 14-A) this ground has been worked by both drifting and by piping.

The initial hydraulic operation was by the Boulder Creek Mining Company in 1913 and 1914. A later attempt was made by the Pine Creek Mining Company in the late '30's. Boulders and problems attendant to the stacking of tailings obviously hampered operations by hydraulic methods. It is understood, however, that very good values were recovered by the early drifting operations and later test workings. Immediately prior to the late war the Morrison-Knudsen Company considered installation of heavy equipment for a large scale earth moving type of operation, but the prospect was given up because of pressure of war contracts.

The gravel is considered as belonging primarily to the early channel system of Pine Creek. Large angular boulders have been noted however, and considered as representing material of glacial origin. Boulders of all kinds, both wash and angular include rock of granitic type, basalt, greenstone and banded hornfels, and boulders of 6 and 7 tons are reported. Very little sand was found and clay is reported as having been essentially absent to the extent that the tailing waters were quite clear a short distance below the site of operation during the various periods of early operation. Gravel depths of 50 to 65 feet are reported as having been established by the early shafts and the gold is reported as being coarse and confined to a zone relatively close to bedrock.

Equipment and
Mining Practice

The present company has cleared an initial pit site near the northern line of section 15 as shown on the claim map. A ditch and flume has been constructed along the brink of a high bench paralleling the creek. This is equipped with a grizzly at the head of the flume. Current plans are to mine with a 2 yard diesel shovel and truck the gravel to the grizzly. Mining is scheduled to be done on a contract basis with the Kieth Brothers of Medford doing the work. A fleet of 10 yard trucks is to be used. Plans call for an initial pit in the form of a trench paralleling Pine Creek. After its completion the creek will be diverted and the other segment worked. The boxes total 80 feet in length, 4 feet in width and 30 inches deep. They are made of tongue and groove 2 x 6's and are equipped with Hungarian and pole riffles. The grizzly is set on about a 3 inch clearance and the oversize discharges over the bank into the canyon. Mining water is taken from Pine Creek and returned thereto. Construction of a ditch and flume to by-pass nearby farm ditch take-offs is contemplated should muddy tailings prove to be a greater problem than is currently envisioned.

Plans are to work two 8 hour shifts. The crew will be composed of 10 to 12 men including the contractors and normal work season will extend from late April to about December.

All basic construction was completed at the time of the writer's visit and the commencement of operation awaits the arrival of the shovel and trucks. Activity by this company began June 1, 1953.

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Report by M.S. Wagner, 7-9-53

Exam date: 7-8-53

Informant: R. M. Conley

References: Underwood Placer - O.B.M. Bull. Vol. 2, No. 4

Pine creek placers, Dogami Bull. 14-A

Unpublished notes by H.K.L. and assorted correspondence relative to the Morrison-Knudsen operation.

BLANK B—ANNUAL REPORT

Cornucopia

This report must be properly executed and filed with the Corporation Commissioner on or before July 1, 1933, in order to entitle a corporation mining for any of the precious metals, coal, or prospecting or operating for oil, or operating an oil well, to pay a license fee of only \$10. If not so filed, such corporation must pay the same license fees as are required to be paid by other corporations for gain.—Section 25-244, Oregon Code 1930.

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CORPORATION DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, ~~1933~~ 1937

Of PINE CREEK MINING COMPANY
(Give legal name in full)

a corporation organized and existing under and pursuant to the laws of the State of Oregon.

The location of its principal office is at No. 700 Yeon Bldg. Street,
in the city of Portland, in the state of Oregon.

The names and addresses of principal officers, with the postoffice address of each are as follows:

NAMES	OFFICE	BUSINESS ADDRESS
<u>B. H. Moore</u>	President	<u>700 Yeon Bldg., Portland,</u>
<u>James G. Kidwell</u>	Secretary	<u>1397 2d St., Baker, Oregon</u>
	Treasurer	

The date of the annual election of officers is May 15th

The date of the annual election of directors is May 15th

	Common With Par Value	Common No Par Value	Preferred
Amount of authorized capital stock	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>	<u>Shares</u>	<u>\$</u>
Number of shares of authorized capital stock	<u>2,500</u>		
Par value of each share	<u>\$ 10.00</u>	<u>x x x x x x</u>	<u>\$</u>
Amount of capital stock subscribed	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>	<u>Shares</u>	<u>\$</u>
Amount of capital stock issued	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>	<u>Shares</u>	<u>\$</u>
Amount of capital stock paid up	<u>\$ 25,000.00</u>	<u>Shares</u>	<u>\$</u>
Price at which no par value stock issued	<u>x x x x x x</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>x x x x x x</u>

State amount of capital, represented by stock of no par value, with which
the corporation began business \$

Total amount of its properties in Oregon (name of claims, lodes, or placers)
Lease on 180 acres on Pine Creek, Baker County, Oregon

The location of its properties Halway, Oregon

The amount of work done thereon and improvements made thereon since the time of filing
last report none

The amount of output or products of the mines or wells of such corporation from January 1,
1932, to December 31, 1932, inclusive, none

The value of output or products of the mines or wells of such corporation from January 1,
1932, to December 31, 1932, \$ none

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, B. H. Moore

of said corporation, have signed this report, this
25th day of June, A. D. 1937.
(signed) Ben H. Moore, President

[CORPORATE SEAL]

STATE OF OREGON, }
County of _____ } ss.

Pine Creek Mining Co. (placer) see Underwood Placers

Gold

NAME	OLD NAMES	PRINCIPAL ORE	MINOR MINERALS
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Junction of Boulder and Pine Creeks

PUBLISHED REFERENCES

T	R	S
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..... Baker COUNTY

..... Cornucopia AREA

..... ELEVATION

..... ROAD OR HIGHWAY

..... DISTANCE TO SHIPPING POINT

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

PRESENT LEGAL OWNER (S) Pine Creek Mining Co. B. H. Moore, Pres.

Address .. 700. Yeon. Bldg., Portland, Ore.

OPERATOR

Name of claims	Area	Pat.	Unpat.
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Name of claims	Area	Pat.	Unpat.
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EQUIPMENT ON PROPERTY

Pine Creek Placers

Underwood Placers
Steinmetz Placers
Halfway Placer Co.

All

NAME

OLD NAMES

PRINCIPAL ORE

MINOR MINERALS

7 S

45 E

10 - 15

T

R

S

PUBLISHED REFERENCES

Baker

COUNTY

Cornucopia

AREA

4,000 - about

DESCRIPTION

MINOR MINERALS

ROAD OR HIGHWAY

**DISTANCE TO
SHIPPING POINT**

PRESENT LEGAL OWNER (S) Cornucopia Placer Co.

ADDRESS c/o Sid Lawrence, Mgr. 1310 State St.
Boise, Idaho, or Fred Smith, P. O. Box 739,
Halfway, Oregon

OPERATOR

Name of claims **Area** **Pat.** **Unpat.**

Name of claims **Area** **Pat.** **Unpat.**

EQUIPMENT ON PROPERTY

Underwood Placers
Steinmetz Placers
Halfway Placer Co.
OLD NAMES

PRINCIPAL ORE MINOR MINERALS

7 S 45 E 10 - 15
T R S

Baker COUNTY

Cornucopia AREA

4,000 about ELEVATION

ROAD OR HIGHWAY

DISTANCE TO SHIPPING POINT

PRESENT LEGAL OWNER (S) Cornucopia Placer Co.

Address c/o Sid Lawrence, Mgr. 4340 State St.

Boise, Idaho, or c/o Fred Smith, P. O. Box 739.

Halfway, Oregon

OPERATOR

Name of claims Area Pat. Unpat.

Name of claims Area Pat. Unpat.

EQUIPMENT ON PROPERTY

REPORTS

See old file reports under name Underwood Placer, NSW 7/9/53

x

X

and others

Pine Creek Placers - Cornucopia Placer Co. operation

X

X

SHIPMENT AND ASSAY RECORDS

MAPS

Underwood Placers see Pine Creek Mining Co.

Gold

NAME
On Pine Creek 2 miles south of
Cornucopia

OLD NAMES

PRINCIPAL ORE

MINOR MINERALS

PUBLISHED REFERENCES

T R S

Baker

COUNTY

Cornucopia

AREA

ELEVATION

ROAD OR HIGHWAY

DISTANCE TO
SHIPPING POINT

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

PRESENT LEGAL OWNER (S)

Address

OPERATOR

Name of claims Area Pat. Unpat.

Name of claims Area Pat. Unpat.

EQUIPMENT ON PROPERTY

WALLOWA
RANGE
CORNUCOPIA
DISTRICT

THE CORNUCOPIA PLACERS

Placer deposits in the Cornucopia region are of rather limited extent, although further investigations may reveal new workable ground. The only placers now being worked are situated about two miles below the town of Cornucopia, on Pine creek, near the mouth of Boulder creek. They are known as the "Underwood" placers, and are now operated under the name of the Boulder Creek Mining Company, Charles Campbell, superintendent. It is a bench boulder gravel deposit with the bed-rock several feet above the present stream, and the "pay" in an old channel of Pine creek. The gold, which is usually quite coarse, is nearly all found close to bed-rock, or within a few feet of it. The bed-rock is covered by a deep overburden, composed largely of heavy bowlders, some up to 6 or 7 tons. Previous to the sale to the present owners this property was worked by drifting, and the returns are said to have been about \$25 a day per man after the "pay" channel was struck.

The new owners have equipped the property with flumes, pipe, giants and derricks operated by water power, and have proceeded to hydraulic the ground. It would seem to a casual observer that the place where they began to hydraulic the ground was ill-advised.

Apparently it should have been begun farther down the stream so that bowlders and wash could have been placed on worked ground rather than to have begun apparently in the middle of the deposit. It would seem that there would be a greater profit to continue with the working of the mine by means of drifting, because of the coarse deep overburden of low value.

PLACERS

WALLOWA
RANGE
CORNUCOPIA
DISTRICT

It is not to be expected that extensive placer deposits will be found in a glaciated region above the lowest terminal moraines. Glaciers are moving streams of solid ice, which in their slow but forceful progress cut deep into the solid rock, taking both rock and ice to the valleys below. Here the warm air melts the ice as rapidly as it arrives and piles up the ever-increasing amount of bowlders stripped from the mountains above. With a change to warmer climate the ice melts faster than it advances, so its lower limit recedes up the glaciated valleys to at last disappear, as it has done in the "Eagle Creek" range. At certain points it halts, like a modern army in retreat, to build new ramparts of moraines.

Extensive placers are the result of rock decay and erosion. In nature's method of concentration in stream beds, cubic miles are often concentrated into cubic yards. No such work has been accomplished above the terminal moraines in this region. Extensive stream deposits will not then be found above the lower moraines. Above that point, if the hills had plenty of it, the moraines may contain deposits of gold, but these are apt to be only the coarser particles.

It would be then of practical use to the placer miner to know how far glaciers have gone down Pine creek. An undoubted terminal moraine is found on the East fork in the narrows, but a short distance above its junction with the West fork, a mile above town. Lindgren speaks of a terminal moraine but a short distance above Carson. Time did not permit the working out of this problem.