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JUNEAU, ALASKA

TERRITORY OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF MINES
COLLEGE, ALASKA
30 November 1950

MEMORANDUM REPORT

TO: Leo H. Saarela, Commissioner of Mines, Juneau, Alaska

FROM: James A. Williams, Associate Mining Engineer, College, Alaska

SUBJECT: Mining Operations in the Fortymile District, Fairbanks Recording Precinct.

The writer made a trip to the Fortymile mining district August 28 to September 2, 1950. The trip was made by personal vehicle. The purpose was to gather data and information on the mining industry in the Fortymile.

A total of thirteen operations were found to be active, seven of which were visited. The number of men actually engaged in mining in the Fortymile was twenty-eight. A detailed list of the Fortymile operations is on a separate sheet included with this report. A tabulation of the operations by type follows:

<u>Operations</u>	<u>No. of Oons.</u>	<u>No. of Men</u>
Dragline-Bulldozer-Hydraulic	1	5
Bulldozer-Hydraulic	5	11
Bulldozer	3	8
Hydraulic	2	2
Sniping	1	1
Gold Lode Prospect	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTALS	13	28

Mining is definitely on the decrease in the Fortymile district. The operations become fewer each year. In only one of the operations visited was the operator sufficiently encouraged by the size of the cleanups to state that things were going well. Only one other operator, besides the one mentioned above, stated that he was definitely certain that he would still be mining there again next year. The rest of the miners that were visited were uncertain of their future activities except for one operator who stated he was moving into Canada with his outfit next year.

The road into Chicken from Tok has reduced the cost of freighting supplies into the Fortymile somewhat, but other rising expenses have overshadowed this saving.

Some of the Fortymile miners are going into Canada to take advantage of the Canadian gold bonus (up to \$15 per ounce) and the Canadian allowance of a tax-free operation for the first three years of any new mine. Leonard Stampe of Wade Creek Dredging Company and also of the Yukon Placer Mining Company stated that he was moving the Wade Creek operation over the line next season, and that the other operations in which he had interest are all over there now or will be shortly. Elmo Stout, a former Fortymile miner, has moved into Canada. Others have already made the switch, the writer is told, and still more are seriously considering it at present. According to a recent news release, Canada intends to reduce the gold bonus somewhat.

KX 60-51

The Fortymile is another district that was extremely short of water this past season. With the exception of the operation on Wade Creek, miners without pumps were severely hampered by the dry season.

The Lost Chicken Mining Company was never able to make a cleanup. The partners, Hulbert and Pierce, spent the summer on the property, but they might almost as well have been in town. They are trying to mine an apparent channel that runs across Lost Chicken Hill. They had a cut nearly complete on the southeast side of the hill last year. This year they started to strip for a cut on the northwest side, but ran out of water after a few days, and never managed to finish the stripping. Their ditch is entirely dependent on hillside drainage, and when there is no rain, there is no water. The partners are hoping to be able to either finance a pumping plant to lift water from the river (about a 400-foot lift) or to sell the operation. It appears that a good paystreak is definitely present, but the water problem is too great for anyone without capital. I. H. VanHook owns the ground.

KX 60-34



Fred and Art Purdy were found mining and prospecting on a bench of Myers Fork. Their creek claims there have been mined out and they have moved up on a bench. They were prospecting with a nozzle and a small sluicebox, moving it quite often to different places. Where it looked favorable, they would set up a larger box and push in with the bulldozer. They were not finding much pay and were quite discouraged. The bedrock here is of a very complex nature. It contains coal, limestone, hard clay, schist and granite. Ice lenses run throughout the deposit.

~~The Franklin Mining Company~~ was mining in a business-like manner on Fred Whitehead's ground on Chicken Creek two miles above the Chicken roadhouse. They had the only dragline in the Fortymile this year and two bulldozers. The dragline was equipped with a special Omaha light-weight bucket made of lighter steel than usual and perforated with many holes. It works very efficiently. The bedrock there is a very soft, sticky, muddy material that causes much difficulty, but the pay is good. The partners were quite satisfied with their cleanups. Frozen gravel is a problem and held up their progress often. The gravel there is rather angular and not well sorted, indicating a rather short distance from the source. A pump was used for returning water from downstream, and a nozzle for breaking up the sticky material at the head of the boxes. The partners are Howard Bayless and the Roberts brothers. KX 60-25

Billy Meldrum, who owns ground a mile above the Franklin Mining Company on Chicken Creek, was only stripping this year. He had a new bulldozer and was using it, and what water he could obtain, to strip a large area of ground for next year. He has frozen muck there up to fifty feet deep. KX 60-23

~~The Atwood Mining Company~~, consisting of one man, had been actively mining a bench on Stonehouse Creek, tributary to Chicken Creek. At the time of the visit, however, he had gone to town, so the writer did not go on the property. Frank Barrett owns the ground. KX 60-6

Frank Barrett was doing some work on the old Cameron Prospect, a gold lode proposition on the face of a bluff overlooking the Mosquito Fork. There have been a number of holes dug in the face of the bluff, roughly outlining a supposed vein. In most of them, a little high-grade has been found, but it apparently never goes in farther than about six to ten feet. Time was not taken to make any attempt at an examination, but a good specimen of the high-grade was picked up and later assayed at \$1035.21 per ton. If there were any milling equipment in the Fortymile country that could be used, some exploration here would probably be justified. KX 60-7

~~Ed Johansson~~ was mining on Ingle Creek this year as usual. Dan Manske, who also has ground on Ingle Creek, was not active this year, but plans to return to the creek next year.

~~Buck Rosenbush~~ was reported sniping along the Fortymile River with a Rex pump and a small sluicebox.

The road from Chicken to Boundary was complete except between the South Fork and Walkers Fork where it goes over a hill. The writer's car was left at the Alaska Road Commission's South Fork Camp and a ride was caught with a freight tractor going over to the other camp on Walkers Fork at Lassen Field. From there a truck ride was obtained to Jack Wade where the Wade Creek Dredging Company was in operation.

The Wade Creek Dredge has long been inactive and is now partially buried by a road construction fill. It will probably never be used again. The company is mining with three D-8 bulldozers and a sluice-plate. Two men were required as sluicebox tenders because of large boulders. They were moving a big yardage (approximately 110 yards per hour) but the manager, Leonard Stampe, said that the pay was too low and that he was going to move the outfit into Canada next year. He has interests in other mining operations which have already moved across the border. His Canyon Creek operation was finished and moved early in the season.

The trip from Wade Creek over the ridge to Napoleon Creek was made on foot. Vern Weaver was mining there with a small pump and sluicebox. He was new in the business and did not have his boxes properly prepared, so the writer spent a half-day there with him, helping him fix up his boxes and make more riffles. He had found a small spot at the mouth of No. 2 Pup where there were some large nuggets, but at the time of the visit, he had only about fifteen ounces of them for the summer's work. It is reported that he intends to sink some holes there this winter.

2-x 60-45

The hike was made from there back to the Alaska Road Commission South Fork Camp the following day.

The United States Smelting, Refining and Mining Company has a dredge on the South Fork, and from year to year they hope to start operating it. It has been idle for several years, and from the appearance of present conditions, it can be seen that it will not be in operation next year, either.

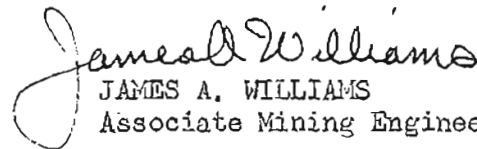
On the way to the Fortymile District, a stop was made at G. B. Martin's operation near Richardson, in the Tenderfoot area. This is the property that received wide publicity last August when Mr. Martin came to Fairbanks with a reported 2000-ounce cleanup. The ground is owned by oldtimer Fred Campbell who has been sniping at it for years without success because of lack of water at the elevation of the deposit. It is located on the ridge between the head of Bush Creek, tributary of Tenderfoot Creek and the head of Hinkley Gulch, tributary to Buckeye Creek which is tributary to Banner Creek. At the time of the visit, they were working on their second cut, moving uphill on the Hinkley Gulch side. They had a reservoir catching water from both Buckeye and Banner Creeks, and were pumping it from there to the giant at the boxes with three Diesel-powered pumps in series, a lift of 275 feet. They were pushing in with two of the large Allis-Chalmers HD-19 bulldozers. Tailings were no problem since the hillside was so steep that the tailings went down the drain with no trouble. Most of the equipment was purchased new for this project, including 2500 feet of 14" to 16" hydraulic pipe. They were running two shifts with a crew of eight,

1-x 59-22

and burning about \$130 worth of fuel oil per day in the pumps and bulldozers, so the expenses were quite high. Only two cleanups were made this year, as far as is known.

The deposit is a residual one, the gold being sharp, brittle, and coarse. The gravel is angular and is composed of quartz and granite. The quartz might contain gold in itself. Very little gold was found in bedrock. The deposit is irregularly shaped and the limits have not been determined.

G. B. Martin formerly mined on Pedro Creek.


JAMES A. WILLIAMS
Associate Mining Engineer