

MINING ACTIVITIES

FIRST DIVISION - Our assay office at Ketchikan is again open for business at the same old location until further notice. Although the city-owned lot and building were to be sold as reported in the June Bulletin, no sale has yet been effected, and latest information indicates that the deal may not be closed for some time. So for an indefinite period, we are again open for assistance to the prospecting and mining public at the old stand.

An airborne magnetometer survey was made during the past month of the Admiralty-Alaska nickel-copper deposit and vicinity near Funter Bay. The company making the survey was Canadian Aero Service, Ltd. of Canada. A special permit had to be obtained from the Civil Aeronautics Board to allow them to use their Canadian two-motor Anson plane for the work. The mineralization at the Funter Bay property is highly magnetic, and the resulting aero magnetic map of the property and vicinity will do much toward the proper directing of future development of the property. The same crew also made an aerial survey of the Port Snettisham magnetite deposit, which is partly held by W. S. Pekovich, one of the Admiralty-Alaska principals.

SECOND DIVISION - Shortage of funds in the TDM's appropriation is delaying the completion of the new assay office and laboratory at Nome. It was hoped to have this office in operation by late summer, but it appears now that this will probably not be the case. The starting date when samples may be sent to this office for assay will be announced as soon as possible. In the meantime, technical help and information can be obtained there from Pete Sandvik, Engineer-Assayer.

A surprising amount of interest has been shown lately in the old Independence silver-lead mine, a one-time producer at the confluence of Independence Creek and the Kugruk River on the Seward Peninsula. The most recent indication is a formal request to the TDM for an engineer's examination of the property from Archie Ferguson of Kotzebue. Mr. Ferguson states he has plans for putting the mine back into operation.

THIRD DIVISION - W. A. Richardson, Toronto mining promoter, has had engineers examine and sample the gold lode property of Bill Lyons and C. W. Bradley on Bird Creek in the Talkeetna district. The property has long been considered by experts to be quite promising. Richardson plans large-scale exploratory work and development if the results of the preliminary work are satisfactory to his financial backers. News reports state that he has staked considerable ground adjacent to the property.

Bill Lyons, President of Seldovia Mining and Trading Company, plans to put the old Chrome Queen property at Red Mountain into production as soon as conditions permit.

Mining has commenced for the season at the Kenai Chrome Company property at Red Mountain. They hope to be shipping chromite by early August. A tram will not be built as planned earlier, but the ore will be brought down off the mountain by crawler tractor and trailer.

FOURTH DIVISION - Fred Weseman, 1546 S. Cushman Street, Fairbanks, who handles various types of radiation detecting equipment, has set up an aerial radiation testing unit on the roof of his establishment, the first of its kind in the Territory. It is for the purpose of testing and calibrating air-borne Geiger counters, scintillometers, and nucleometers. The output of the unit is such that aircraft with counters can easily detect the radiation at an altitude of 1,000 feet. The radiating unit is made by The Radium Company of America and is fully tested and approved. The building below it is protected from possible damage by a lead shield.

OIL NEWS

The Alaska Oil and Gas Development Company has struck promising gas indications at depths of 1,200 feet and lower at their drilling site near Eureka on the Glenn Highway.

Drilling in the Goose Bay area, across Knik Arm from Anchorage, is being planned by the Alaska Gulf Oil and Gas Development Corporation. They intend to bring a large rotary drill rig and experienced drillers from California for the venture.

The Havenstrite drilling operation at Chinitna Bay should get under way by late July. A road is being built to the drilling site, a camp is being erected, and over 1,000 tons of supplies have been unloaded at the beach. A dock was improvised by sinking a barge and filling it with rocks.

Homer and vicinity is the scene of extensive seismic exploration for oil indications. Standard Oil is believed to be financing this work, while Shell Oil is reported to have field parties working on the opposite side of Cook Inlet from Homer. The seismic work is being carried out at a rapid rate with truck-mounted drills drilling the shot holes, and a total crew of about 20 men.

Kerr-McGee has finished their first test well near Yakataga with negative results, and is now preparing to start on the second hole. A total of about 12 wells are to be drilled in the area, according to their contract with the people holding the leases on the ground.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Canadian Geological Survey has written and published a very practical booklet entitled Prospecting for Uranium in Canada, which will be found to be of interest and help to Alaskan miners and prospectors. Chapters in the booklet, which can be studied or used to an advantage in Alaska, are as follows: "General Information Necessary for the Prospector," "Devices and Methods for Detecting Radioactivity," "Tests for Uranium Element," "Use of Geiger Counters and Scintillation Instruments in Prospecting," and "Sampling and Evaluation of Uranium Discoveries." This booklet can be obtained from the Territorial Department of Mines offices until our small supply is gone, or from the Queen's Printer at Ottawa. The price is fifty cents.

The AEC booklet, Prospecting With a Counter, which was announced in our March Bulletin and which was out of print before Alaskans had time to purchase them, is expected to be available again in the near future.

CURRENT METAL PRICES

The following metal prices taken from the E.&M.J. Metal Markets report of July 1, 1954, should be of interest to the prospector and miner:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Copper | Domestic average - 29.7¢ refinery (per lb.) |
| Lead | 14¢ N. Y. (per lb.) |
| Zinc | 11¢ East St. Louis (per lb.) |
| Tin | 96-5/8¢ prompt, N. Y. (per lb.) |
| Quicksilver | \$280 - \$285, N. Y. (per 76-lb. flask) |
| Silver | 85-1/4¢ N. Y. (per oz.) |
| Platinum | \$84 - \$87 (per oz.) |
| Nickel | 60¢ (per lb.) |

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN MINING CONGRESS BULLETINS

TEXAS TIN SMELTER: S. Con. Res. 79, introduced by Senate Minority Leader Johnson (Dem., Tex.) (Bull. #11, p.5), has been passed by the Senate and sent to the House.

The resolution expresses the "sense of Congress" that the Government should continue to operate the Texas City tin smelter until June 30, 1955, and provides for a study group under the Senate Armed Services and Senate Banking Committees to look into the "desirability of a permanent domestic tin-smelting industry."

Passage of the resolution was prompted by the tense situation existing in southeast Asia and by strong representations by Alaskan tin producers against the Government's shutting down of the smelter. The House Armed Services Committee is expected to give prompt approval to the resolution and House approval at an early date is likely. It is believed that President Eisenhower will endorse the legislation and order the smelter's reopening.

The Administration had previously indicated that the operation of the smelter, the only major plant of its kind in the Western Hemisphere, would be terminated at the end of this month.

MINE CLAIM ASSESSMENT: Rep. Engle (Dem., Calif.) has warned mining claim owners that they must complete work on their annual assessments for this year by July 1.

Engle stated that many claimholders are under the impression that S. 2320, introduced by Senator Murray (Dem., Mont.), which passed the Senate last year and would extend the date for completing the assessment work to October 1, has become law.

The measure is still in the House Rules Committee, and Engle said that it is likely that it will not be passed by the House before the July 1 deadline, and possibly will not be acted on at this session.

NEWS FROM E&MJ METAL & MINERAL MARKETS

President Eisenhower last week directed the Secretary of the Treasury to organize the Federal Facilities Corporation to take over the responsibility of operating the Texas City tin smelter after the Reconstruction Finance Corporation goes out of business on June 30.