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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES AZMILS DATA

PRIMARY NAME: OAK CREEK PLACER

ALTERNATE NAMES:

YAVAPAI COUNTY MILS NUMBER: 847

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP 9 N RANGE 2 W SECTION 8 QUARTER N2  
LATITUDE: N 34DEG 08MIN 30SEC LONGITUDE: W 112DEG 29MIN 16SEC  
TOPO MAP NAME: MINNEHAHA - 7.5 MIN

CURRENT STATUS: PAST PRODUCER

COMMODITY:  
GOLD PLACER

BIBLIOGRAPHY:  
ADMMR OAK CREEK PLACER FILE  
ADMMR LITTLE MAY GROUP FILE SEE MAP

REFERENCES

ADMR Little May Group File (see map)

ABM Bull. 160, p. 55

MILS Sheet sequence number 004025

REPORT ON THE OAK CREEK PLACERS.

by

G.W. Steinman.

Engineer of Mines.

Mr. Victor B. Hoffman,  
Phoenix, Arizona.

Dear Sir:

At your request, I have completed an examination Of the Oak Creek placers and herewith submit my report.

The Oak Creek placers consist of three claims,- the Black Rock, Mint and Moon Flower, of approximately twenty acres each. These claims are situated twenty-five miles in an air line south of Prescott, Arizona. They have been extensively worked for the past six years by Peter Zerbey, an old time prospector and miner. These claims are located in Yavapai county, Walnut Grove mining district. The nearest post office is Waggoner, Arizona, which is a distance of seven miles from the property.

The city of Phoenix would be the indicated trading center, and the property is reached from this city by a ninety-six mile drive on a main highway, then twenty-one miles on a good county road, to Waggoner. From Waggoner a distance of six miles has to be covered on a farm road, which is being turned into a County road at the present time, and the last mile to the mine, at present a trail can be made into a good road at small expense.

Machinery and construction material could be shipped to Prescott and trucked to the mine from that point.

Wages for common labor in this district are \$3.00 a day, with many men available.

The summer climate is cool for Arizona, and the winter climate very mild, and snow only lasts from three to four days and occurs once or twice each winter. Good water for drinking purposes is available. Firewood can be cut on the claims for years to come.

The average rainfall for this district is 20" per year.

The property is situated in the United States Forest Reservation, and is unsurveyed.

I recommend the taking up of a 160 acre placer claim, throwing

this new claim on top of the existing acreage, so as to cover even the slopes and sides of the canon with all contained values. This is not of vital importance, but is advisable.

Peter Zerby, from whom you purchased the property, worked without assistance, and as a result worked only by panning and trenching, and no machinery or installation for systematic working exists, not even sluice boxes. He produced water in the dry season by digging through to bedrock. The dry season extends from the end of May to the middle of September. During the rainy season the creek carries up to 20,000 miners inches of water. The gravel banks are honeycombed with trenches and shafts, done between 1874 and 1900, which facilitated preliminary test work. Ruins of arrastres show that in Spanish times systematic work had been done.

#### Geology and Mineralogy.

The formation of the ground covered by the claims is pre-Cambrian Granodiorite, Undifferentiated Diorite and Granite, Schist and older volcanic rocks, associated with intrusive and sedimentary material. The creek proper runs east and west, and during its course is frequently crossed by veins, as shown on the accompanying sketch, which were the probable sources of placer gold. The creek gravel changes annually through heavy floods, each of them enriching the clay, covering the bedrock. The gravel banks are six feet deep to bedrock, with about two feet of barren dirt of vegetable origin covering the pay dirt. Red colored clayey material three or four inches thick mark the former surfaces, existing between the floods, each being covered by a later flow of gravel from rainfall-eroded veins farther up the canon. The majority of the gravel is loose, but very high values are found in the cemented gravel strata. These furnish most of the pay-dirt for the former owner, giving him over \$5 per yard.

The gold occurs in well rounded nuggets, ranging from 50¢ to \$5 in value. The largest nugget, found and sold, last year, amounted to 40 ounces, 40% of which undoubtedly was quartz. Zerby has never made any effort to save any fine gold, but my tests prove the fact that there is a large quantity of fine gold in the gravel, and not only well worth saving but the total value would be measurably increased. The gold is 906 fine.

Workable gravel is estimated to amount to 800,000 cubic yards,

with a value of \$2.40 per yard.

The placers are situated in a district which, in my opinion, would be a greater and second Klondyke but for the lack of water development.

The south end of the Hoffman placer claims adjoin claims owned by some French miners, whose gold sales are reputed to average \$180 per week, the values being produced by panning with two men working.

Yavapai county contains - Lynx Creek placers, 7 miles southeast of Prescott; Green Creek placers, 6 miles south of Prescott; Granite Creek, 4 miles southeast from Prescott, and others, all showing good values, but these claims all lack water development possibilities of Oak Creek. On the other hand, they prove the whole region to be a dominantly gold-bearing zone.

#### History of Claims.

These claims were worked in Spanish times, arrastres were installed, ruins of which are left, and the Spanish Royal Mail Highway went through Oak Creek, part of the pillars standing today where the bridge crossed the river. In 1874 these claims were rediscovered and caused such a rush that each man could take up only such ground as his blanket would cover. No account of production was kept in those times, and a guess is very hard to make due to the conflicting statements made. In 1901 a second rush was staged and about \$100,000 taken out in a few months. Shortly after this Peter Zerbey took these claims up and has been doing continuous work for the past six years. It is impossible to get exact data on values he obtained, but he has been called to Court to show cause why he should not pay an income tax on \$20,000 a year. This and his ill health are given as the reasons for his selling.

#### Sampling.

By using existing trenches, shafts, and digging pits, samples were taken at close intervals, the general average of which was \$2.40 per cubic yard. This result was very surprising to me, as never before in any experience have I had a property show these average values, and had I not taken these samples myself and had them assayed by a reputable firm, namely, A.L. Pellegrin & Son of Tucson, Arizona, I would have been skeptical of a placer property showing such average values. However, Zerbey contends that in his opinion and results as shown from his work the ground should average even higher.

### Water Development.

There are several possible and practical ways of developing wa-  
ter on this property, but primarily I recommend the building of a dam,  
approximately forty feet long, fifteen feet high, six feet thick, at a point  
designated on the sketch. This dam would seal the water at bedrock and would  
form an underground storage even though gravel and sand filled the reservoir.  
This dam should be pierced at the bottom with an 8" perforated pipe, and back-  
filled with rock, forming an infiltration gallery. This would develop suffic-  
ient water for a very sizeable operation.

Although I did not go into the matter thoroughly I know that  
there is a possibility of developing a very large supply of water at a site  
about three miles up the canon. It is my opinion that sufficient water could  
be developed at that point for even hydraulic operations. However, this would  
entail an expense of probable two or three hundred thousand dollars.

There are two lode claims crossing the middle placer claim. These  
veins not only carry good values in gold but it is my opinion that a well or  
shaft should be sunk on each of these veins, as they carry sufficient water to  
to have forced the owners of mines more than a mile away to be drowned out,  
or at least interfered with underground operations.

A third well should be sunk near the camp site for the camp  
use exclusively.

### Proposed Development.

An initial outlay of from \$15,00 to \$25,000, depending upon the  
extent of operations you wish to undertake, should develop sufficient water  
and fully equip the mine and operate three Old Toms, each set consisting of  
two Old Toms, driven by a gasoline engine, and handling a total of a hundred  
yards per day, or eight hour shift. Also three sets of rockers, each set con-  
sisting of two rockers, driven by a gasoline engine, and handling forty yards  
per day, or eight hour shift.

This operation would handle 120 yards per shift and at \$2.40 a  
yard would total \$336. Allowing a loss of 20% of values, it would show an  
earning of \$268.80 gross. The cost of operating would depend entirely upon  
the method decided upon for handling the material. In my conversation with you  
you, you mentioned a plan which you had formulated in your mind for the

handling of the material by mechanical means, but until you put this into effect I would advise the use of teams and scrapers, together with cheap Mexican labor. In a short while you would be able to decide upon the mechanical equipment necessary to handle the same amount of dirt at a saving.

I do not believe it would be possible to work efficiently and have a daily overhead and operating expense of less than \$150 per day. This would leave a net profit of \$118.80 per day, and this may be easily doubled by working two eight hour shifts, and in my opinion sufficient water will be developed to allow it.

In my opinion, it would be a good plan, while financing the property, to have a complete assay map made and a complete survey as well. The assay map would allow you to work nothing but paying gravel from the start. By "paying gravel" I mean high grade gravel or gravel running well above the average of \$2.40.

I have not included a detailed working plan, as I know from your experience in placer mining you have probably had as much or more experience in actual operation in placer mining than I, at least in Arizona.

In conclusion I wish to state that your property is one of great merit and under your personal supervision should yield large returns.

Respectfully Submitted,

(Signed) C.W. Steinman,  
Engineer of Mines, Faculties  
of Pueblo, Mexico, and  
Frieberg, Saxony.

Dated at Tucson, Arizona,  
September 30th, 1930.