

A Summary of the 1964 Minerals Resource Picture in Baker County, Oregon.

As during the past several years, limestone and shale rate top billing for mineral resource production in Baker County with the Chemical Lime Company at Baker and the Oregon Portland Cement Company at Line manufacturing a variety of industrially important burnt lime and cement products. The basic work-force at these two operations consists of approximately 150 employees.

Although quarried on a modest extent as compared to the limestone, rhyolite breccia from Doolley Mountain was used as a decorative facing stone on an impressive number of large commercial structures erected in Portland and various other western Oregon areas during 1964. The Royal Motor Inn on Broadway, in Baker, is a notable local example of the use and architectural potentiality of this stone. Interest generated by many of the recently completed structures indicates increased demand and a wider market area for the coming year.

Productive mining of gold and silver remained virtually negligible during 1964. However, investigative work and some development was carried out at several properties in anticipation of the probability that the increasingly critical shortage of these minerals will eventually result in price levels that will favor the resumption of mining operations. In this connection, and because of an already existent increase in the market demands for antimony, re-conditioning of the underground workings of the Gray Eagle antimony-gold mine was started during the early fall by way of setting the stage for renewed exploratory development. The Gray Eagle was last worked between 1941 and 1946 at which time the associated antimony was desperately needed to fill the abnormal demands created by the war.

Although it is of no commercial potential at the present time, the mica in the decomposed granodiorite bordering the Elkhorn range west of Haines has been found to be expansible to an extent that compares favorably with vermiculites expanded commercially from other sources. A report covering this discovery was released by the State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries in the October issue of the Ore-Bin, Volume 26, Number 10, 1964.

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