Silver Creek Soda Springs

Harney County
T. 19 S., R. 25 E., SW¼ of SW¼
Sec. 25.

These springs are located on Silver Creek about 1½ miles south of the Forest Service road from Allison Ranger Station to Doe Springs. Recent issues of the Forest Service maps show the springs situated as per the description given above. Older issues indicate the location to be in the northwest quarter, a scant mile from the road.

Silver Creek flows directly across one spring. The east bank section of this spring discharges from a highly visicular Tertiary basalt over an area about 10 feet on a side and not more than foot at it highest place above the late August creek level. The west bank spring issues from the surface of an alluvial bank located in an area of about six by eight feet. There are two drainage channels which discharge the outflow to the creek by a near-vertical fall.

The left bank spring yields the most water, but this discharge originates from a great number of places and diffuses with the creek water under conditions whichmake the rate of flow difficult to judge. The combined rate of both the east and west bank sections can be described as small however, and probably less than five gallons a minute.

A second spring is located on the west bank about 100 feet downstream from the one just described and at a point in the valley side about twenty feet above the stream level. This spring is little more than a strong seepage from a soil-covered bank but the line of damp soil extends downward nearly to the creek.

The rocks and gravels over which the spring water flows are abundantly coated at all sites with an encrustation which is bright yellow, orange and brown in the sunlight. The water also supports clusters of vivid green organic matter which enhances the other colors considerably. No travertine is in evidence.

The water temperature, measured 58° F in the east bank spring. Gas bubbles are emitted more or less continuously from several different places at both sites, particularly so at the creek site, but the amount of discharge is manifestly small.

That these springs are in a dying phase is indicated by the relic remains of two or three inactive spring sites on the west side of the creek, a short distance beyond and above the western section of the presently flowing creek spring.

Report by: N. S. Wagner.

Date of Exam: Aug. 24, 1958.

Date of Report: Feb. 19, 1959.