

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF MINES

**Mineral investigation of the Rattlesnake Roadless Area,
Coconino and Yavapai Counties, Arizona**

U.S. Bureau of Mines Mineral Land Assessment
MLA 133-82
1982

By
McColly, R.A.

This open file report summarizes the results of a Bureau of Mines wilderness study and will be incorporated in a joint report with the U.S. Geological Survey. The report is preliminary and has not been edited or reviewed for conformity with the U.S. Bureau of Mines editorial standards. Work on this study was conducted by personnel from Intermountain Field Operations Center, Building 20, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225.

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FOREWORD

The U.S. Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey jointly conduct mineral surveys of land which in the U.S. Forest Service Second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) program have been designated for further planning. These evaluations are used in the RARE II program which conforms with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (74 Stat. 215; 16 U.S.C. 528-531), the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (88 Stat. 476, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1601 note), and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (90 Stat. 2949; 16 U.S.C. 1600 note). Reports on these surveys provide the President, Congress, the U.S. Forest Service, and the general public with information essential for determining the suitability of land for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

This report is on the Rattlesnake Roadless Area (3-054), Coconino and Yavapai Counties, Arizona.

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MINERAL INVESTIGATION OF THE RATTLESNAKE ROADLESS AREA,
COCONINO AND YAVAPAI COUNTIES, ARIZONA

By Robert A. McColly, U.S. Bureau of Mines

INTRODUCTION

During the winter of 1981, a mineral investigation of the Rattlesnake Roadless Area, Coconino and Yavapai Counties, Arizona, was made by R. A. McColly and T. J. Kreidler of the U.S. Bureau of Mines in conjunction with a study by the U.S. Geological Survey. The investigation included a review of the geologic and mining literature, a search for recorded claims in the County and Bureau of Land Management records, and field work in the roadless area and vicinity to determine if any mines, prospects or mineralized zones were present. No mine workings or mineralized zones were found, and consequently no samples requiring analysis were taken during the study.

Location, size, and geographic setting

The roadless area, all within the Coconino National Forest, lies on the Coconino-Yavapai County line in central Arizona, about 30 mi south of Flagstaff (fig. 1). A somewhat larger portion of the 32,870 acre area lies in Yavapai County. Included are most of the National Forest lands within a roughly triangular area bounded by U.S. Interstate Highway I-17 to the south and east, Arizona State Highway 179 on the west, and Schnebly Hill road to the north. In a north-south direction, the area has a maximum length of about 12 mi, east-west about 8 mi.

Topography in the northern portion of the area is dominated by north-south-trending Munds Mountain and its southern extension, Lee Mountain. Munds Mountain, at 6,834 ft, is the highest point in the area; the lowest point is on Bias Canyon at the south end of the area, and is just under 3,800 ft. A plateau, with elevations ranging from 5,000 to 5,400 ft, extends south and east of Munds Mountain, and includes most of the remaining area.

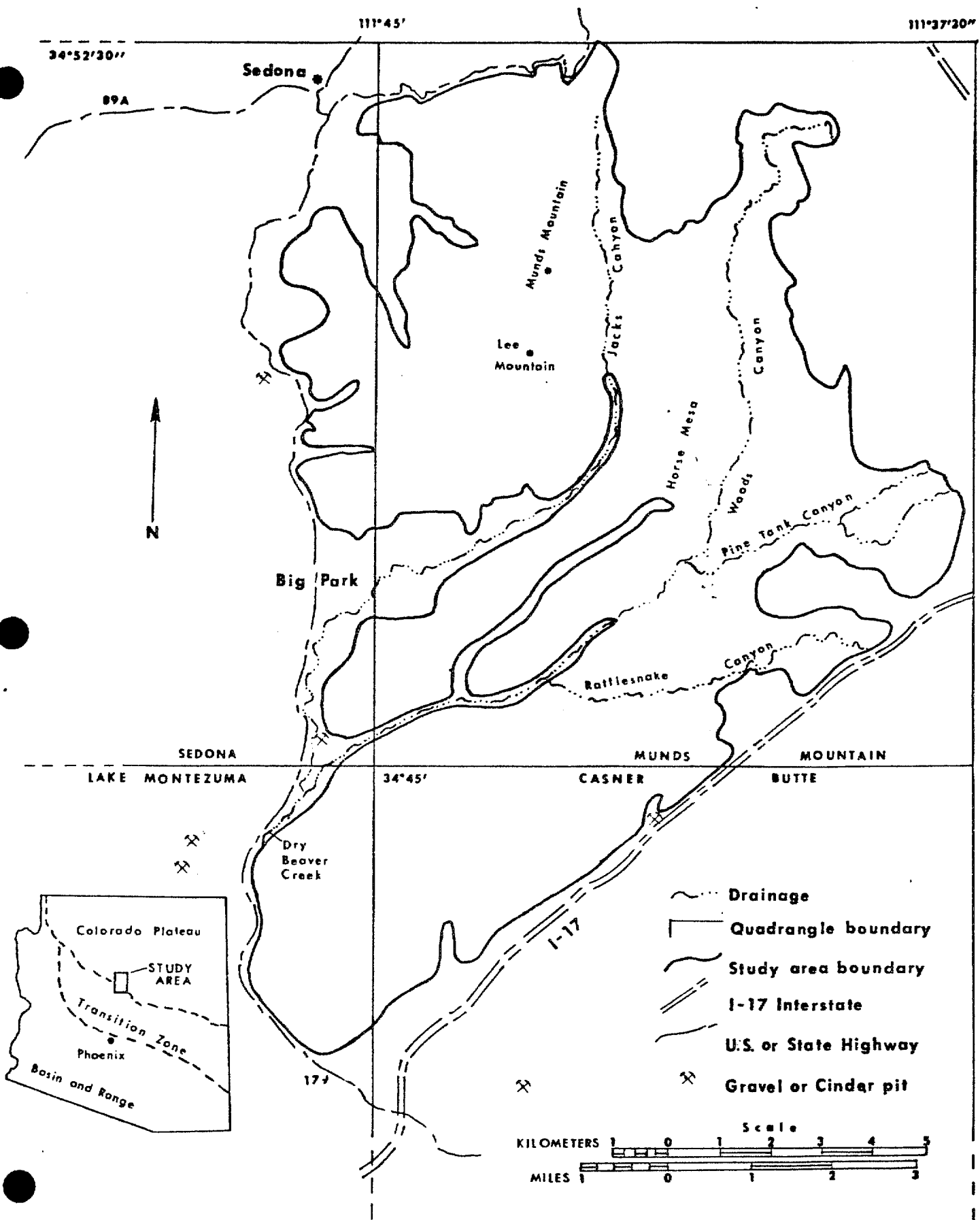


Figure 1.-Index map of Rattlesnake Roadless Area, Coconino and Yavapai Counties, Arizona.

A series of sub-parallel canyons which ultimately drain into the Verde River deeply dissects this plateau surface.

Access to the area is excellent: paved roads are adjacent to much of the perimeter, and jeep trails extend into the central portion along several of the larger canyons.

Mining activity

No mining and little if any prospecting have occurred within the roadless area. Three claims, found in a review of the Yavapai County records, have descriptions placing them along the area boundary in Jacks Canyon, 4 mi south of the town of Sedona. The most recent of the three is over 20 years old however, and field work in the vicinity produced no evidence of claims or mine workings. All other Yavapai County claims reviewed were clearly outside of the roadless area.

Twelve of more than seventy mining claims located near Sedona in Coconino County have descriptions placing them in or partially within the roadless area. Nearly all are just east of Sedona along the northwest edge of the area. No evidence of mining could be found at any of these sites, and all were filed by the mid-1950's or earlier.

MINING DISTRICTS AND MINERALIZED AREAS

The Rattlesnake Roadless Area is not included in any mining district, and no occurrences of metallic minerals are known within a 10 mi radius (Keith, 1969a, b).

Nonmetallic deposits are limited to borrow, cinders, gravel, sand, and stone used locally for building and road construction (McCrory and O'Haire, 1965). Pits from which borrow, cinders, gravel, and sand have been removed are found at several places along Interstate Highway I-17 and State Routes 89A and 179. Nearly all are inactive, most are small, and none are in the roadless area.

Near Sedona, several dozen mining claims were located during the early and mid-1950's for building stone or flagstone, though none have a production history. Similar stone occurs in the roadless area where Coconino sandstone and Supai Formation are exposed, but there is no evidence of past production.

Bureau of Land Management records showed no active mining claims and no leases or permits for oil, gas, or other leasable minerals in or near the roadless area.

CONCLUSIONS

The only mineral deposits identified in this investigation were cinders, gravel, sand, and stone, but abundant similar deposits occur nearer both current and future markets outside the area.

REFERENCES

Keith, S. B., 1969a, Map of known metallic mineral occurrences (Excluding base and precious metals) in Arizona: University of Arizona, Arizona Bureau of Mines, scale 1:1,000,000.

——— 1969b, Map of known nonferrous base and precious metal mineral occurrences in Arizona: University of Arizona, Arizona Bureau of Mines, scale 1:1,000,000.

McCrorry, F. J., and O'Haire, R. T., 1965, Map of known nonmetallic mineral occurrences of Arizona: University of Arizona, Arizona Bureau of Mines, scale 1:1,000,000.