

A Trip to the Germania

By Joseph Barreca

On July 10th a group of hard-core rock hounds gathered near the Fruitland Store at 10 AM. Gray skies poured down a steady rain as we headed back into the hills following Rex Barrans to the fabled Germania Mine. Through deep puddles, past the abandoned Deer Trail mine and up through muddy new logging roads we wound for an hour. At last we came out on the desolate ruins of the Germania. The buildings were fallen down and overgrown with trees. We parked around a lone elk hunter who had camped there to prospect for this Fall's hunt.



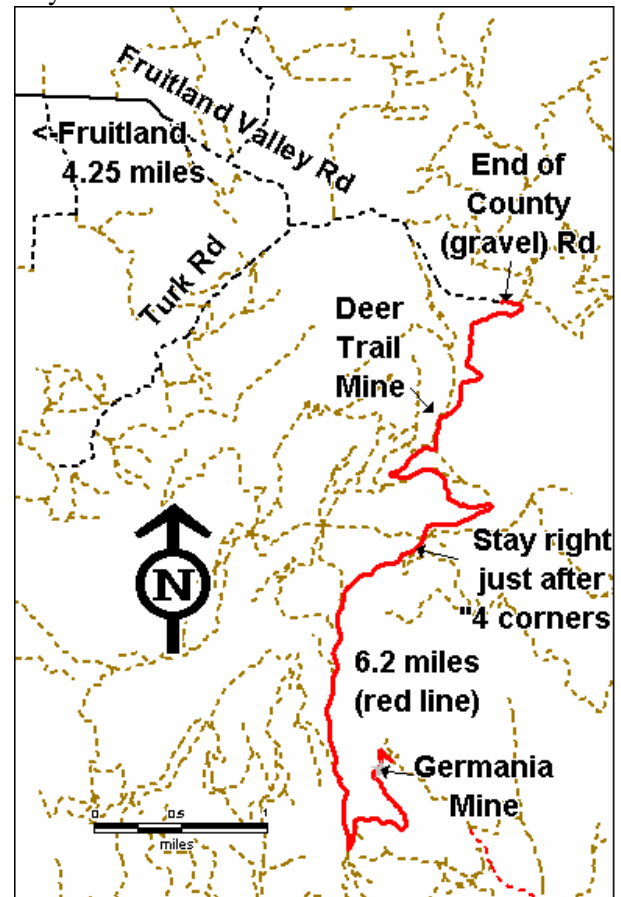
Looking for Tungsten at the Germania

The history of the Germania is compelling. It was discovered between 1894 and 1897 and was worked sporadically for the next 20 years. But it caught the eye of Alfred Krupp when it's wolframite ore was displayed at the St Louis World Fair. Krupp, who later gained fame manufacturing guns for Hitler's Germany, leased 1,000 acres of ore bearing ground around the Germania in 1906. During the outbreak of World War 1, they were said to have shipped this ore by submarine to Germany where it was used to harden steel in the making of cannons. Shipments were cut off after the US entered the war.

It later re-opened and was purchased by General Electric in 1936 and produced 8,500 tons a month in the 1940's with the labor of 100 miners.

The list of mineral found in the Germania is tantalizing. They include Flourite, Hüberrite, Jarosite, Smoky Quartz, and the Tourmaline Group along with the shiny black Wolframite – the main ore of tungsten – molybdenum, galenobismutite and arsenopyrite. Having seen the ore, there is a lot of the crumbly pyrite that could be galenopyrite. Hüberrite is a manganese tungsten oxide. Jarosite contains potassium, sulphur and iron and is a rust colored crystal. I was particularly interested in finding fluorite so we could look at it with a black light, but I have not been able to test any yet. Some pieces of rock seemed to have square chunks of feldspar in them.

Overall, this was a tough trip. The tailings pile was steep and loose. Several people lost their footing and their buckets. The minerals were not spectacular to the naked eye. It did stop raining and on the way out, we saw a moose! Here is a map of the way in for the adventurous.





**Mineral Identification
Mineral/Mine Locations**

Bristow Enterprises
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www.minrls.com