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A Columbium-Bearing Regolith on **Upper Idaho Gulch, Near Tofty, AK**

By J. Dean Warner, C. L. Mardock, and D. C. Dahlin

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Donald Paul Hodel, Secretary

BUREAU OF MINES Robert C. Horton, Director

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PREFACE

This is one of a series of Bureau of Mines reports that present the findings of reconnaissance-type mineral assessments of certain lands in Alaska. These reports include data developed by both industry and government studies.

Assessing an area for its potential for buried mineral deposits is a difficult task because no two deposits are identical. Moreover, judgments prior to drilling, the ultimate test, frequently vary among evaluators and continue to change as a result of more detailed studies.
Included in these reports are estimates of the relative favorability for discovering

mineral deposits similar to those mined elsewhere. Favorability is estimated by evaluation of outcrops, and analyses of data, including mineralogy, geochemistry, and evaluation of rock-forming processes that have taken place. Related prospects and the environment in which they occur are subjectively compared to mineral deposits and environments in well-known mining districts. Recognition of a characteristic environment allows not only the delineation of a trend but also a rough estimate of the favorability of conditions in the trend for the formation of minable concentrations of mineral materials.

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UNIT OF MEASURE ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

 $\Delta \phi$

A COLUMBIUM-BEARING REGOLITH ON UPPER IDAHO GULCH, NEAR TOFTY, AK

By J. Dean Warner,' C. L. Mardock,2 and D. C. Dahlin3

ABSTRACT

In 1984, as part of a project to evaluate Alaskan occurrences of certain critical and strategic minerals, the Bureau of Mines investigated a columbium-bearing regolith on upper Idaho Gulch, near Tofty, AK. The regolith is derived from weathering of a dolomitic marble and consists mostly of iron oxide minerals with accessory apatite, zircon, xenotime, rutile, monazite, and the columbium minerals aeschynite, columbite, and ilmenorutile. Two regolith lenses contain 340,000 lb of columbium resources at an average grade of 0.07 pct. Calculated composite concentrates from two regolith samples (approximately 200 lb each) contained 53 and 57 pct of the columbium at grades of 0.97 and 0.86 pct, respectively. In each case the grade could be improved to 1.1 pct Cb with a sacrifice of 9-pct recovery.

The regolith's mineralogy, trace-element geochemistry, and similarity to descriptions of other columbium-enriched regoliths suggest that the underlying marble may be a carbonatite. The lack of associated alkalic igneous rocks and the stratiform nature of the regolith, however, may be interpreted as evidence for sedimentary origin of the marble. The marble and regolith are a lode source for some of the minerals in the Idaho Gulch placer deposit.

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² Geologist, Albany Research Center, Bureau of Mines, Albany, OR. "Metallurgist, Albany Research Center.

INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the Bureau of Mines investigated a co-
lumbium-bearing regolith on upper Idaho Gulch, near of columbium but no tantalum are present in the regolith. Tofty, Hot Springs mining district, Alaska. The regolith is The regolith may represent residue overlying a carbon-
a residual weathering product of marble. It was originally atite and is a likely lode source for some of th a residual weathering product of marble. It was originally atite and is a likely lode source for some of the heaver
identified in 1956 by the Bureau as a result of minerals occurring in the placer deposition Idaho Gulch. identified in 1956 by the Bureau as a result of mineralsoccurring in the placer deposition Idaho Gulch.

investigations to locate lode sources of tin, columbium, This investigation was conducted as part of a Bureau investigations to locate lode sources of tin, columbium, This investigation was conducted as part of a Bureau
tantalum, chromium, and radioactive minerals found in project to assess Alaskan reserves or resources of certain tantalum, chromium, and radioactive minerals found in placer gold deposits of the Tofty area. Approximately 12,000 ft of trenching, comprising 40 trenches, and 1,400 columbium *(7).4* The United States relies entirely on ft of diamond drilling were completed in the headwaters of Idaho Gulch at that time. The results of this early study, which were not published, indicated trace amounts of columbium and tantalum were present, but concluded this report represent approximately 6 pct of the United that the regolith was not a lode source for heavy minerals States annual demand for primary columbium (2). that the regolith was not a lode source for heavy minerals found in placer deposits of the area.

Conversely, the 1984 investigation indicates that preceding the appendixes at the end of this report.

of columbium but no tantalum are present in the regolith.
The regolith may represent residue overlying a carbon-

critical and strategic minerals, including those containing columbium (1) .⁴ The United States relies entirely on heat- and corrosion-resistant alloys by the metallurgical
and aerospace industries (2). The resources identified in

⁴Italic numbers in parentheses refer to items in the list of references

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

recent investigations, it also incorporates and relies heavily on unpublished data generated by the 1956 clarify ideas about carbonatites. Field work was assisted Bureau investigation in the Idaho Gulch area conducted by D. D. Southworth, graduate student, University of by R. P. Maloney (deceased) and B. I. Thomas (retired), Alaska, Fairbanks, and by J. Y. Foley, physical scientist, mining engineers with the Bureau of Mines. The report Bureau of Mines, Fairbanks, AK. The logistical assist mining engineers with the Bureau of Mines. The report also benefited from discussions with D. M. Hopkins and R. of Robert Burgess, a placer miner at Tofty, is gratefully M. Chapman, geologists with the U.S. Geological Survey, acknowledged. M. Chapman, geologists with the U.S. Geological Survey, concerning the regional geology of the Tofty area.

Although this report primarily presents results of Discussion with D. T. Smith, geologist with the Alaska
nt investigations, it also incorporates and relies Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys, helped by D. D. Southworth, graduate student, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and by J. Y. Foley, physical scientist,

LOCATION AND ACCESSBILITY

AK, about 15 miles northwest of the village of Manley Hot Nenana. The area investigated is located about 1.5 miles
Springs, from which it is easily reached by gravel road west of Tofty at the 800-ft elevation in Idaho Gulc Springs, from which it is easily reached by gravel road west of Tofty at the 800-ft elevation in Idaho Gulch. This (fig. 1). Manley Hot Springs is accessible by road or air area lies on the U.S. Geological Survey Tanana Athroughout the year from Fairbanks and by river barge

Tofty is located 95 miles west-northwest of Fairbanks. during the summer months from the railroad center at AK, about 15 miles northwest of the village of Manley Hot Nenana. The area investigated is located about 1.5 miles area lies on the U.S. Geological Survey Tanana A-2 quadrangle (1:63.360 scale).

Figure 1.-Location of study area.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

terrain around Tofty is extremely subdued, characterized by gently sloping, northeast-trending hills, occasional

Tofty is located in the southwestern portion of the subcircular rounded mountain tops, and broad asymmet-
Yukon-Tanana upland physiographic division (3), near in ric valleys (fig. 2). This area is entirely blanketed by Yukon-Tanana upland physiographic division (3), near ric valleys (fig. 2). This area is entirely blanketed by
the confluence of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. The vegetation and a thick mantle of perennially frozen loess vegetation and a thick mantle of perennially frozen loess covers all the valleys and lower portions of the hills.

Figure 2.-Aerial view of Idaho Gulch showing trenches.

LAND STATUS

The Tofty area lies on Federal lands administered by claims cover most of the lower portions of the creeks near the Bureau of Land Manaagement and is open to mineral Tofty. The area investigated, however, was not claimed at entry. Ninety-five unpatented Federal placer mining the time of the investigation (August 1984).

PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

Herdlick,^{5} and Thomas (9). No lode source of cassiterite has ever been reported.

Columbium and rare-earth-element minerals have also been identified in placer concentrates from the Tofty

Shortly after the discovery of gold in 1907, cassiterite well as zircon, pyrite, magnetite, ilmenite, monazite. (SnO₂) was identified in placer concentrates from the xenotime, apatite, anatase, tourmaline, and barite in $(SnO₂)$ was identified in placer concentrates from the xenotime, apatite, anatase, tourmaline, and barite in Tofty area $(4-6)$. Placer deposits containing cassiterite concentrate samples from placer mines on Deep Cr were found to lie within a northeast-trending belt. Sullivan Creek, and Cache Creek. The identification of extending between Woodchopper Creek, to the southwest. these minerals was confirmed by Moxham, in 1954, who extending between Woodchopper Creek, to the southwest, these minerals was confirmed by Moxham, in 1954, who and Cooney Creek, to the northeast, that informally also identified two previously unreported minerals, and Cooney Creek, to the northeast, that informally also identified two previously unreported minerals, became known as the Tofty tin belt (fig. 3). Subsequent ellsworthite (uranpyrochlore (U.Ca.Ce), (Cb.Ta), O₆ ellsworthite (uranpyrochlore $(U, Ca, Ce)_2$ (Cb,Ta)₂ O₆ (OH,F) and columbite ((Fe,Mn)(Cb,Ta)₂O₆ (11). Moxham studies of the tin-bearing placer deposits, spurred on by (OH,F) and columbite $[(Fe, Mn)(Cb,Ta)_2O_6]/(11)$. Moxham World War II and postwar tensions, were performed by found the greatest concentrations of the three columbium World War II and postwar tensions, were performed by found the greatest concentrations of the three columbium
Thorne and Wright (7), Wayland (8), Thomas and minerals and zircon and monazite in concentrates from Thorne and Wright (7), Wayland (8), Thomas and minerals and zircon and monazite in concentrates from
Herdlick,⁵ and Thomas (9). No lode source of cassiterite placers on Idaho, Miller, and Harter Gulches. In 1955, The Bureau" confirmed Moxham's and reconfirmed Water's mineral identifications. The 1955 investigation also found also been identified in placer concentrates from the Tofty from 0.2 to 7.0 pct Cb_2O_5 in concentrates from test pits in tin belt. In 1934, Waters (10) identified the columbium tailings and from 0.15 to 1.8 pct Cb_2O_5 , tin belt. In 1934, Waters *(10)* identified the columbium tailings and from 0.15 to 1.8 pct Cb₂O₅, as well as 0.6 to mineral aeschynite $|(Ce, Ca, Fe, Th)$ *(Ti,Cb)₂ (O,OH)₆)*, as 0.25 pct CeO₂, anomalous concentratio 0.25 pct $CeO₂$, anomalous concentrations of lanthanum, $\frac{5}{2}$ Preliminary investigations of tin and radioactive minerals in gold and trace concentrations of yttrium in concentrates from

placer deposits near Tofty, Yukon River Region, Alaska (BM-4606-1. 19551, performed by the Bureau of Mines for the U.S. Atomic Energy

 6 Work cited in footnote 5.

Figure 3.-Tofty tin belt, Alaska.

In 1956, the Bureau, in an attempt to locate lode sources of the placer minerals, trenched on upper Idaho Gulch and identified two bodies of radioactive ferruginous regolith (figs. 2-3). Subsequent detailed sampling and diamond drilling defined two northwest-dipping, northeast-striking lenses of material containing trace amounts of columbium, phosphorus, and zirconium, among other metals, but no uranium, which was the principal interest of its study. The results of the lode investigations on Idaho Gulch were never published, but are partially incorporated in this report.

In 1984, as part of a current Bureau project to investigate critical and strategic minerals in Alaska, Southworth (12) reanalyzed concentrates from channel samples of tailings collected in 1956 by Thomas, for columbium. Southworth found that most samples contained between 0.2 pct and 4.5 pct Cb with higher values generally in gravels from the vicinity of Deep Creek, Miller Gulch, and Idaho Gulch. Using placer reserve figures from Thomas (9) and Wayland (8), Southworth calculated an inferred reserve of 100,000 lb Cb_2O_5 within the Tofty placer deposits.

BEDROCK GEOLOGY OF THE TOFTY AREA

Bedrock outcrops in the Tofty area are rare; most geologic observations have been limited to nowinaccessible drift-mine exposures and sparse road cuts or inferred from placer cobble lithologies. In general, however, much of the area is underlain by a succession of graywacke, quartzite, siltstone, shale, slate, slaty argillite, and polymictic comglomerate that has been interpreted as being a portion of a Mesozoic-age flysch basin that extends approximately 150 miles northeastward from the Tanana River to north of Livengood *(13-16).* These rocks exhibit local low grade (zeolite facies) metamorphism and severe deformation (17). Roadcut and trench exposures near Tofty and on Idaho Gulch show that bedding strikes east-northeast and dips moderately to steeply northwest; however, small hand-specimen to outcrop scale isoclinal folds are locally common.

Minor amounts of serpentinized and chloritized ultramafic and mafic rock with locally associated graphitic slaty to schistose rock are exposed along the northwest margin of the flysch basin *(13).* These rocks may have either been tectonically emplaced or partially intruded Tofty area. A biotite granite pluton with local felsic
within the basal flysch unit. Alternatively, some of the segregations and associated tourmaline crops out on Ho within the basal flysch unit. Alternatively, some of the ultramafic, mafic, and metasedimentary rocks may underultramafic, mafic, and metasedimentary rocks may under-
lie the flysch and be exposed in erosional windows.
quartz-monozonite composite pluton crops out on Roughhe flysch and be exposed in erosional windows.
Magnetite-apatite bearing limestone, similar to that top Mountain, northeast of Tofty (fig. 3). The intrusion on

Magnetite-apatite bearing limestone, similar to that top Mountain, northeast of Tofty (fig. 3). The intrusion on identified on upper Idaho Gulch in this report, is described Roughtop Mountain shows a Late Cretaceous radio by Wayland on Harter Gulch (8) . The relationship of this rock to other units is unknown; carbonate rocks are not reported elsewhere within the flysch belt.

The Mesozoic flysch is cut by two intrusions in the

NATURE AND EXTENT OF PRESENT INVESTIGATIONS

and nine diamond drill holes compiled by the Bureau in appendix A. 1956 were reevaluated. The reevaluation comprised additional methods used during this study include reanalyses of available samples, selective reexcavation of selective sampling of the 1956 trenches; optical, radiomettions of trenches and drill holes and mapped extent of the a 500- by 1,900-ft grid area (outlined on figure 4). regolith. Modified 1956 drill logs and geologic cross

During this investigation, data from nine trenches sections constructed from drill data are presented in

Dome has an early Tertiary radiometric are of $62±3$ million yr (13).

reanalyses of available samples, selective reexcavation of selective sampling of the 1956 trenches; optical, radiomet-
the trenches, and relogging of available core. Information ric, scanning electron microscope (SEM), mic ric, scanning electron microscope (SEM), microprobe, and X-ray diffraction (XRD) studies of mineral compositions; resulting from the 1956 investigation is presented and X-ray diffraction (XRD) studies of mineral compositions;
acknowledged where appropriate. Figure 4 shows loca- and magnetic, radiometric, and soil sampling surveys over

Figure 4.-Locations of trenches and drill holes and mapped extent of the regolith.

GEOLOGY OF THE REGOLITH

Two bodies of iron-rich regolith were identified on northwestern lens is partially exposed by trenching over a upper Idaho Gulch by Bureau trenching in 1956. strike length of 620 ft and dips approximately 50° to the Subse Subsequent drilling indicated the regolith forms conform-
able lenses within the N 60° E trending wallrock units. exposed over about 350 ft of strike length and dips The lenses grade downward into, and apparently have between 40° and 50° northwest (figs. A-1-A-4). In 1956, The lenses grade downward into, and apparently have been derived by chemical weathering of dolomitic marble (figs. A-1--A-6). In plan view, both lenses are irregular in but open ended to the northeast (fig. 4). shape, varying in thickness from 3 to 80 ft. The \overline{C} Cross sections in figures A-1 through A-5 show that

both lenses were mapped as pinching out to the southwest,

the southeastern regolith lens ranges in thickness from 17 to 28 ft, averaging 23 ft at trench T-8, and persists downdip for between 100 and 250 ft. The regolith, where intersected approximately 100 ft downdip in drill holes D-9, D-1, and D-6, has true thicknesses of 12, 16, and 23 ft, respectively. The increase in drill-intersected thicknesses suggests that the southeastern regolith lens may be thicker and extend deeper northeast of the trenches and diamond drill holes.

The northwestern regolith lens is approximately 31 ft thick at trench T-6 but is of unknown thickness at distances less than 200 ft downdip (fig. A-6). Where intersected at 200 ft downdip in drill hole D-3, the northwestern regolith lens consists of thin, discontinuous zones in dolomitic marble.

The footwall of the regolith grades into marble at distances of as little as 50 ft downdip in some drill holes; the regolith is generally absent at distances greater than 200 ft downdip (figs. A-3 and A-6). Because both the hanging wall and footwall were only observed in drill hole D-3, the attitude and shape of the marble body is unknown.

The marble consists of coarse, granular ankeritic (composition determined by XRD analysis) dolomite and calcite with up to 10 pct disseminated and banded rounded magnetite and euhdral to rounded pyrite grains and up to 5 pct disseminated rounded apatite crystals. In this rock, pyrite commonly replaces magnetite. Minor amounts of biotite, some of which is partially replaced by chlorite, are also present and a trace amount of zircon occurs.

Drilling and trenching indicate the regolith and marble occur within a succession of probable intermediate grade (greenschist facies) metasedimentary and metaigneous(?) rocks consisting of variable amounts of quartz. muscovite, sericite, chlorite, and graphite and locally minor amounts of talc, serpentine, dolomite, calcite, magnetite, or pyrite. Lack of outcrop and poor core recovery from drilling preclude detailed correlations between the various rock types. In general, however, the footwalls and lower few feet of the hanging walls of both regolith lenses consist of calcareous chlorite-sericite \pm talc \pm quartz phyllite and schist and the section of hanging wall beginning a few feet above each lens consists of siliceous muscovite-graphite schist (cross sections A-2, A-3, and A-5 through A-7, appendix A). The footwall of the regolith lens in drill hole D-7 consists of a nonfoliated chlorite-sericite-quartz rock that may represent a metamorphosed mafic igneous rock.

MINERALOGY AND PETROGRAPHY OF THE REGOLITH

Most of the regolith consists of a moderate amount of pebble- to cobble-size rock fragments in a dark chocolate brown to brownish orange earthy matrix composed largely of sooty and specular hematite, exotic limonite, small fragments of limonitic boxworks after pyrite, goethite, and hematitic magnetite.

The most common rock type consists of a dark red spongelike matrix of siliceous hematite with up to 40 pct rounded to angular 0.5- to 2-mm apatite grains and trace amounts of euhedral zircon crystals. Cross-cutting veinlets of goethite and chalcedony and patches of limonitic boxworks after pyrite are also common. This hematiterich rock grades into a less common, more siliceous rock consisting of up to 40 pct euhedral to broken subhedral and finer rounded apatite and irregularly shaped hematitic magnetite grains with minor euhedral to angular zircon crystals or fragments in a matrix of iron-stained finely crystalline quartz. Rounded grains of carbonate, chert, and chlorite schist (?) also occur as inclusions in this rock.

Other rocks found in the regolith include massive vuggy goethite and yellowish-orange porous limonite within which are rounded fragments of kaolinitized phyllite(?) and veinlets of goethite, hematite, quartz, chalcedony, carbonate, and apatite.

Near its wallrock contacts, the regolith is more yellow-orange in color and is composed mostly of limonitic clay. Secondary(?) apatite occurs as bluish gray to white botryoidal masses along fractures in fragments of earthy, porous limonite in these areas. An apple-green clay containing a chromiferous member of the montmorillinite-beidellite series and possible traces of anatase⁷ is associated with limonitic kaolinite in the footwall of the southeastern regolith lens in trench T-8.

Geochemical, radiometric, optical microscope, microprobe, and SEM examination of the minus 20-mesh fraction of concentrates panned from regolith samples' indicate the regolith also contains trace to minor amounts of apatite, zircon, monazite, xenotime, brewsterite(?), columbium-bearing rutile, which may locally alter to ilmenorutile, and the columbium minerals aeschynite and columbite. Results of analyses of concentrate samples are presented in table 1, and ranges of mineral content in samples are listed in table 2. Apatite occurs as fine bluish-white grains with a composition (determined by XRD analysis) intermediate between the hydroxyl

Table 1.-Results of analyses' of samples of pan-concentrated regolith, parts per million

Sample ²	Cb	Sn				Nd		Description
5. 9. 15 30	5.700 9.000 100 300	<50 50 50 50	$<$ 100 100 ⊂100 $<$ 100	.000 .000 ND ND	400 400 ND 200	$<$ 500 $<$ 500 ND ND	-20 ND.	\leq 10 Heaping pan reduced to 10.6 g. Heaping pan reduced to 29.4 g. \leq 10 Heaping pan reduced to 20.4 g. 2 heaping pans reduced to 34.7 g.

ND Not detected.

¹Cb, Sn, and Ta analyses by X-ray fluorescence; Ce, La, Nd, and Y analyses by emission spectrography (other rare-earth
elements not detected). Analyses by the Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.
²Samples are numbe

listed in tables 3 and 4.

⁷Identification of anatase and clay minerals in 1956 by H. D. Hess, formerly of the Bureau of Mines, Albany, OR.

⁸A test procedure for characterization of the Tofty regolith concentrates is described in appendix B.

Figure 5.-Scanning electron microscope photomicrograph (A)and columbium X-ray scan (B) of columbium-rich portion of regolith concentrate.

Table 2.--Estimated ranges for mineral content in minus **20-mesh fraction of sampies of pan-concentrated regolith,1 weight percent**

'Samples 5, 9, 15, and 30.

 $(Ca_5 (PO_4)_3 OH)$ and fluor $(Ca_5 (PO_4)_3 F)$ endmembers of the apatite solid solution series. Although apatite is locally abundant in the regolith, its relatively low specific gravity makes it a rare constituent of the concentrates. Zircon occurs as 0.1- to 0.5-mm, clear euhedral and yellowish
 Figure 6.—Scanning electron microscope photomicrograph subhedral bipyramidal crystals or crystal fragments with **of broken aeschynite grain from regolith concentrate.** poorly developed prism faces. Microanalysis indicates monazite to be of the high-cerium and high-lanthanum and low-yttrium and low-thorium variety and locally intergrown with columbite.

flattened prismatic orthorhombic crystals with a general composition, based on four analyses, of $(Ca_{0.25-0.53} Fe_{0.08}$.

 $_{0.14}$) (Cb_{0.53}.0.90) rgrown with columbite. $\frac{\text{Ti}_{0.10\cdot0.47}{}_{2}\text{O}_{6}}{\text{A}}$. Aeschynite is the bright phase in figure 5A
An SEM photomicrograph and columbium X-ray scan with the less intense columbium signals in figure 5B; a with the less intense columbium signals in figure 5B; a of the columbium-bearing portion of a regolith concen-
trate is shown in figure 5. Aeschynite occurs as dark is also a bright phase in figure 5A, but has the more trate is shown in figure 5. Aeschynite occurs as dark is also a bright phase in figure 5A, but has the more reddish brown to black, approximately 0.1-mm angular, intense columbite signals in figure 5B. The columbite is reddish brown to black, approximately 0.1-mm angular, intense columbite signals in figure 5B. The columbite is flattened prismatic orthorhombic crystals with a general the high-iron, low-manganese variety and has a composi tion of $(Fe_{0.9}$ Mn_{0.09} Ca_{0.01}) $(Cb_{0.95}$ Ti_{0.05})₂O₆.

were collected from trenches on upper Idaho Gulch for bottom sample were collected from each pit.
geochemical analyses. The wider trenches, T-5 and T-8, Regolith samples and rock specimens were crushed, geochemical analyses. The wider trenches, T-5 and T-8, were mapped and sampled in detail (figs. 7-8). Vegetation cover and sloughing of trench walls prevented detailed Research Center. Regolith samples were analyzed for mapping and sampling of other trenches; only a few columbium, phosphate (P_2O_5) , zirconium, and zinc by samples were collected from trenches T-2, T-3, and T-4 $(fig, 9)$,

METHODS AND RESULTS Regolith samples were collected from 3- to 4-ft-deep pits (figs. 7-9). One pit was excavated in each of trenches T-2, T-3, and T-4 and a series of pits were dug in each of In 1984, samples of regolith and specimens of rocks trenches T-5 and T-8. A vertical channel sample and a collected from trenches on upper Idaho Gulch for bottom sample were collected from each pit.

split, pulverized, and analyzed by the Bureau's Reno (NV) columbium, phosphate (P_2O_5) , zirconium, and zinc by X-ray fluorescence (XRF), tin by atomic absorption (AA), and 42 elements plus rare-earth elements by emission spectrography. Results and methods of analyses are presented in tables 3 and 4 and appendix C. Owing to the LEGEND **Sensitivity** of the analytical techniques used, some
variations exist among the results presented for some Hematitic regolith variations exist among the results presented for some individual samples.
Limonitic regolith **Samples of regolith collected from pits in trenches**

/4 x ~ **3 Undifferenntiaedmetosedimentery**T-2, T-3, T-4, T-5, and T-8 contain <50 to 1,200 **ppm** Cb, ^{rocks} 0.14 to 21.4 pct P_2O_5 , $\lt 100$ to 900 ppm Zr, 200 to $1,200$
Geologic contact; hachured where ppm Zn, and not detected to 900 ppm La (table 3). Low ologic contact; hachured where ppm Zn, and not detected to 900 ppm La (table 3). Low columbium values in samples from the pit in trench T-3 **EX, AND RESERVED THEORY CITY THEORY CITY THEORY** are likely not representative of regolith as their yellow-**O₁₆ Regolith somple pit and included in the samples.**
● ¹⁴ Rock specimen **a** included in the samples also contain 0.07 to >6 pct Ba, 7 to

0 **15 Concentrote sonple** >10 pct Fe, 0.3 to >10 pct Mn, 3 to 4,000 ppm Sr, 2,000 to 20,000 ppm Ti, 50 to 6,000 ppm Cr, and 100 to 3,000 ppm 0, **125** 50 Ni (appendix C). Relatively higher values of columbium, phosphate, zirconium, lanthanum, and strontium are **Figure 7.-Locations of samples collected in trench T-5.** restricted to samples from pits excavated in the red-brown

Figure 8.-Locations of samples collected in trench T-8.

LEGEND

Figure 9.-Locations of samples collected in trenches T-2, T-3, and T-4.

NA Not analyzed - ND Not detected.
'Performed by the Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno. NV; Sn analyzed by AA, but not detected.
?No other rare-earth elements detected in samples, except sample 36 contains 40 ppm Y. Anal

²No other rare-earth elements detected in samples, except sample 36 contains 40 ppm Y. Analyses by emission spectrography, Reno Research Center.
³Percent.
4Samples 2, 3, 6, 7, and 12 also contain 2.083, 2.445, 0.05, 0

Sample	Сb	S٣	Ta	Αu	Ag	Ce	La	۷	Description
4.1.1.1.1.1.1	$<$ 100	50	$<$ 100	< 0.007	< 0.3	ND.	ND	ND.	10 pct rounded to angular apatite grains within matrix of siliceous iron oxides. Cut by chalcedony veinlets.
	200	50	< 100	.016	.370	ND.	ND	<10	Grab from dump. Mostly red-brown earthy hematite.
	$<$ 100	50	< 100	< 0.007	≤ 3	ND	ND	$<$ 10	Orange, limonite-rich clay. Grab sample.
21.	1,200	50	$<$ 100	< 0.007	< .3	ND	400	20	Earthy, hematitic matrix cut by chalcedony veinlets. Representative of rocks in trench T-5.
31	200	50	< 100	< 0.007	≤ 3	ND	200	$<$ 10 $-$	4 pct rounded weathered apatite in a dark red earthy hematitic matrix cut by veinlets of goethite.
	$<$ 100	50	< 100	< 0.007	< .3	ND	90	20	Dark, angular maroon-colored patches in a punky limonitic matrix. Disseminated magnetite blebs also present.
43 .	300	50	< 100	< 0.007	≤ 3	2,000	900	20	Rounded quartz grains in a weathered limonitic matrix. Cut by veinlets of quartz, carbonate, and secondary apatite.
44.	200	50	$<$ 100	< 0.007	≤ 3	ND	40	40	Dark-red to orange siliceous iron oxide matrix cut by some veinlets of drusy quartz.
45.	700	50	< 100	NA	NA	ND.	200	20	Blebs of limonite and magnetite in an iron-stained siliceous matrix.
46.	400	$<$ 5	NA	0.007	0.3	$<$ 500	90	40	40 pct euhedral to angular subhedral and finer rounded apatite, irregular to rounded magnetite, and minor euhedral zircon in an iron-stained siliceous matrix.
47.	200	$<$ 5	NA	< 0.007	≤ 3	$<$ 500	90	40	Rounded apatite and hematite-magnetite grains, minor angular zircon crystals, and rare fragments of chert or schist (?) in a matrix of coarse recrystallized quartz and iron oxides.
48.	200	$<$ 5	NA	.020	.894	$<$ 500	200	40	Massive fine exotic limonite with rounded 3- to 7-mm fragments of clay after phyllite (?), cut by veinlets of goethite.
49	87	$<$ 5	NA	< 0.007	≤ 3	500	ND	40	5 pct rounded apatite grains in a punky siliceous hematite matrix cut by veinlets of goethite.
50	$<$ 50	9.1	NA	< 0.007	< 3	$<$ 500	ND	40	Massive vuggy goethite.

Table 4.-Results of analyses,' in parts per million, and descriptions of rock specimens

NA Not analyzed, ND Not detected.
'Cb and Ta analyses by XRF: Sn by AA (5-ppm detection limit) or XRF (50-ppm detection limit); Au and Ag analyses by inductively coupled plasma analyses. Rare-earth analyses by emission spectrography-only Ce, La, and Y detected except sample 42 also contained 1,000 ppm Nd. Analyses by the Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.

hematitic regolith whereas a small number of high values **Table 5.—Results of XRF analyses' for columbium in channel**
 Samples collected from trench T-8 in 1956
 Samples collected from trench T-8 in 1956 of zinc, titanium, barium, chromium, and nickel are **samples collected trom trench T-8 in 1956** present in samples collected from both the hematitic regolith and yellow-orange limonitic regolith.

Rock specimen sample locations are also shown in figures 7, 8, and 9. Because specimens were generally collected from float, analyses are interpreted to be representative only of the specimen and not the deposit grade. Ten of fourteen specimens contained between 200 **56 .** ⁴⁰⁰**7.4** ⁶⁶**.** 400 9.80 and 1,200 ppm Cb with traces of cerium, lanthanum, yttrium, or silver; three samples contained traces of gold and one sample contained detectable concentrations of tin; no tantalum was detected (table 4). The highest co- 'Performed by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV, in 1984. lumbium concentration $(1,200 \text{ ppm})$ was found in a specimen of earthy hematite cut by chalcedony veinlets. **Table 6.-Results of 1956 emission spectrographic (S) and**

collected in 1956 from trench T-8 are presented in table 5 **regolith** and sample locations are shown in figure 10. The analyses are in good agreement with those from samples collected from pits in 1984 and generally range between 300 and 700 ppm Cb with one value of 200 ppm and one of 1,000

Results of columbium analyses in 1956 of sludge samples of regolith from drill holes are presented in table N_A Not analyzed. 6. Similar to results of analyses of samples from trenches, 'Analyses performed by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, **NV.** between 0.01 and 0.10 pct Cb was detected in all samples.

marble from drill hole D-4 are presented in table 7. Between 257 and 731 ppm Cb as well as elevated concentrations of phosphate, lanthanum, zirconium, and cerium are present in the samples. These columbium concentrations are very similar to those found in samples 72 **225-245** 2.74 **416** 927 277 **26 1472** of regolith. Unfortunately, no other drill core containing $\frac{P_2O_5}{P_2O_5}$ analyzed by emission spectrography, other elements by XRF;
performed by Bondar-Clegg, Lakewood, CO. marble is available for analyses. performed by Bondard-Clean analyses.

² Analysis by unspecified chemical techniques in 1956

Results of analyses for columbium in channel samples **chemical (C) analyses' for columblum in sludge samples of**

$\frac{1}{2}$				
are in good agreement with those from samples collected	Drill hole	Interval, ft	Cb. pct	
from pits in 1984 and generally range between 300 and				
700 ppm Cb with one value of 200 ppm and one of 1,000	$D-1$	133.2-138.1	$0.01 - 0.10$	< 0.1
ppm.		138.1-143.3	$.01 - .10$	\leq 1
Results of columbium analyses in 1956 of sludge	D-7 D-9	$6.8 - 19.3$ 70.0-89.4	$.01 - .10$ $.01 - .10$	≤ 1 NA
samples of regolith from drill holes are presented in table				

Results of analyses of three composite samples of **Table 7.—Results of analyses' of composite samples of Table 7.—Results of analyses' of composite samples of Table 7.—Results of analyses' of composite samples of mar**

Sample	Interval, ft	$P_2O_6^2$	Сb	La			Cе
70.	174-196	1.32	257	327	653	21	529
71.	196-225	1.86	731	219	190	21	373
72.	225-245	2.74	416	927	277	26	1472

Figure 10.-Locations of 1956 channel samples intrench T-8.

Idaho Gulch is probably between 0.04 and 0.07 pct Cb. ppm Cb. Channel samples from trench T-8 contain from 200 to The presence of columbium and the mineralogic 1,000 ppm Cb. The weighted average of those values is similarities between rock specimens and regolith suggest 0.04 pct Cb over 160 ft comprising six channel samples that the specimens are essentially undecomposed or 0.04 pct Cb over 160 ft comprising six channel samples that the specimens are essentially undecomposed or with lengths varying from 19.9 to 39.2 ft. Sixteen of silicified equivalents of the regolith. Many of these rocks with lengths varying from 19.9 to 39.2 ft. Sixteen of eighteen samples collected from pits in the hematite-rich fit the description of "boulders of cellular iron-stained portions of the regolith contain between 300 and 1.200 apatite-rich material" at Magnet Cove, AR, which is a ppm Cb and average approximately 725 ppm Cb; 12 of well-studied, columbium-bearing carbonatite deposit (18, ppm Cb and average approximately 725 ppm Cb; 12 of well-studied, columbium-bearing carbonatite deposit (18, these samples contain columbium in excess of or equal to p. 43). At Magnet Cove, rocks with mineralogy and fabric 500 ppm. Spectrographic and chemical analyses performed in 1956 also show between 0.01 and 0.10 pct Cb in downward into a magnetite-apatite-perovskite-bearing drill hole sludge samples of regolith. Columbium values marble that contains approximately 300 to 400 ppm Cb. drill hole sludge samples of regolith. Columbium values marble that contains approximately 300 to 400 ppm Cb.
similar to those in the hematitic regolith samples are also These values are very similar to those found in the similar to those in the hematitic regolith samples are also These values are very simpresent in samples of marble.

on Idaho Gulch (table 7). present in samples of marble.

INTERPRETATION In contrast, five of nine samples collected from pits in clay-rich limonitic regolith contain less than 50 ppm Cb The average grade of the hematitic regolith on upper and the remaining four samples contain from 50 to 100

p. 43). At Magnet Cove, rocks with mineralogy and fabric similar to those in the regolith on Idaho Gulch grade

12

MAGNETIC, RADIOMETRIC, AND SOIL SAMPLE SURVEYS ON UPPER IDAHO GULCH

METHODS AND RESULTS

Magnetic, radiometric, and soil sample surveys were conducted over the area known, or projected, to overlie ferruginous regolith on upper Idaho Gulch (fig. 4). Magnetic and radiometric measurements were taken at 25-ft intervals on 17 northwest-trending 500- to 900-ftlong lines spaced 100 to 200 ft apart. Soil samples were collected at 25-ft intervals on seven 500-ft-long lines spaced 200 ft apart. Survey lines are oriented \overline{N} 30 W, perpendicular to the trend of the regolith lenses. Figures 11, 12, and 13 are contour maps showing the results of the three surveys. Results are also tabulated in appendix D.

The magnetic survey was performed using a Geometrics UniMag 11, model G-846 portable proton magnetometer.' Measurements were corrected for diurnal variations with time-variation graphs constructed from repeated measurements at a single station. All measurements were taken facing N 30 W, perpendicular to the strike of the regolith lenses.

High concentrations of magnetite in the regolith produce strong positive magnetic responses. At intensities above 56,600 gammas, two 1,200-ft-long, N 60 E-trending areas, which merge to the southwest, are defined (fig. *11*). Magnetic profiles are generally asymmetric, with steep positive slopes to the southeast and gentle negative slopes to the northwest. Peak magnetic intensities are offset to the northwest of the regolith, correlating with the northerly dip of the lenses.

Total-count gamma-ray radiation was measured using a Scintrex model G15-5 gamma-ray spectrometer. Measurements were taken at hip level over 10-s intervals. Trace amounts of radioactive minerals, including zircon, monazite, apatite, and aeschynite, in the regolith produce radiation measurements between 100 and 250 cps in trenched areas (fig. 12). Two larger irregularly shaped northeast-trending and six other smaller areas with higher radiation values were delineated.

Soil samples were collected at depths of 2.5 to 3.0 ft with a hand auger. Approximately 0.5 lb of sample material was placed in a paper envelope, dried, and screened to minus 80 mesh. Samples were analyzed by the Bureau's Reno (NV) Research Center for columbium, P_2O_5 , and zinc by X-ray fluorescence.

Most soil samples consisted of gray-brown, clay-rich silt, but some also contained limonite and rock fragments and were yellow-orange to red. Organic contents of samples ranged widely, but generally were low. Much of the soil in the surveyed area is windblown silt without a developed profile, however some of the samples containing rock chips or hematite staining may contain residual material derived from bedrock.

Drilling and a test pit at the midpoint of soil sample line 10,000 NE show that the silt ranges from 3 to 9 ft and averages approximately 5 ft in thickness. The presence of rare bedrock outcrops near Idaho Gulch suggests that the silt cover thickens away from the gulch.

The large concentrations of apatite in the regolith are reflected by soil samples with anomalously high P_2O_5 concentrations. P_2O_5 soil values above a threshold of 0.3 pct define two 25- to 125-ft-wide anomalous areas that are coincident with and extend beyond the known extent of the regolith (fig. 13).

In contrast to P_2O_5 concentrations, anomalously large columbium or zinc concentrations were limited to samples that were collected either from trenched areas or that contained iron-stained material derived from buried regolith. Five of seven detected columbium values occur within samples collected from regolith exposed in trenches; the other two samples were noteworthy for their orange-red color. Zinc values above 240 ppm also are limited to samples collected from trenched areas or that contain iron-staining derived from regolith.

INTERPRETATION

The magnetic, radiometric, and soil sample surveys produced complementary results indicating that the two regolith lenses extend along strike for approximately 1,200 ft. The two lenses may join to the southwest. Asymmetric magnetic responses offset from the surface expression of the regolith suggest a moderate to steep northwest dip of the two lenses.

Comparison of the data indicates that soil P_2O_5 concentrations define the area underlain by regolith better than does radiation, but neither defines the extent of the regolith as well as its magnetic signature. Higher radioactivity is generally restricted to exposed portions of the regolith.

It is likely that away from the trenched areas and Idaho Gulch, all three surveys were seriously hindered in detecting the regolith by the greater thicknesses of silt cover. There is good probability that the lenses may continue undetected along strike, especially to the northeast.

^{&#}x27;Reference to specific products does not imply endorsement by the Bureau of Mines.

Figure 11.-Residual magnetic intensities within surveyed area on upper Idaho Gulch.

Figure 12.-Total-count gamma-ray radioactivity within surveyed area on upper Idaho Gulch.

Figure 13.-Columbium, zinc, and P_2O_5 concentrations in soils within surveyed area on upper Idaho Gulch.

According to standard guidelines, set by Bureau of Mines
and U.S. Geological Survey (19), this columbium comprises approximately 30,000 lb of indicated and approximate-
ly 310,000 lb of inferred resources.

southeastern regolith lens exposed in trench T-8 and downdip, then the volume of inferred hematitic regolith is
intersected in drill holes D-1, D-2, D-3, D-6, D-7, and D-8. approximately 5.25 million ft³. At a tonnage fa intersected in drill holes D-1, D-2, D-3, D-6, D-7, and D-8. approximately 5.25 million ft³. At a tonnage factor of 23.5
Drill hole intersections show that this lens decreases from and a grade of 0.07 pct Cb, a minimum Drill hole intersections show that this lens decreases from and a grade of 0.07 pct Cb, a minimum of approximately has a present and a grade of 0.07 pct Cb, a minimum of approximation as a present. an average thickness of 23 ft at the surface to an 310,000 lb of inferred columbium resource is present.
approximate average of 17 ft at 100 ft downdip. Given The regolith also contains zirconium and P_2O_5 approximate average of 17 ft at 100 ft downdip. Given The regolith also contains zirconium and P_2O_5
the 6.900 ft surface area and 40° porth dip of the resources. Seven of eight 1984 channel samples collected the 6,900 ft⁻ surface area and 40° north dip of the resources. Seven of eight 1984 channel samples collected hematitic regolith in trench T-8, and assuming that the in pits contain 700 to 900 ppm Zr (table 3). At an ave hematitic regolith in trench T-8, and assuming that the in pits contain 700 to 900 ppm Zr (table 3). At an average
average thickness decreases by 50 pct at 150 ft downdip, concentration of approximately 0.07 pct Zr and a t average thickness decreases by 50 pct at 150 ft downdip, concentration of approximately 0.07 pct Zr and a total
the volume of hematitic regolith represented by that regolith tonnage of approximately 245,000 st, an inferred the volume of hematitic regolith represented by that regolith tonnage of approximately 245,000 st, an inferred
exposed in trench T-8 is approximately 500,000 ft³. At a zirconium resource is approximately 340,000 lb. $P_$ exposed in trench T-8 is approximately 500,000 ft³. At a zirconium resource is approximately 340,000 lb. P₂O₅ measured¹⁰ tonnage factor of 23.5 ft³/st and a minimum values in the same eight samples range from 0. measuredth tonnage factor of 23.5 ft^o/st and a minimum values in the same eight samples range from 0.5 to 20.4
grade of 0.07 pct Cb⁻¹¹ a minimum of approximately 30.000 pct. The average of these values is 6.5 pct P grade of 0.07 pct $\overline{\text{Cb}}$," a minimum of approximately 30,000 lb of indicated resource is present.

remaining known or projected regolith. The average

Approximately 340,000 lb of indicated and inferred apparent thickness, as measured in trenches, over the columbium resources are present within the known and remaining 2,200 ft of strike length is approximately 50 ft. remaining 2,200 ft of strike length is approximately 50 ft.
inferred extent of the regolith lenses on uper Idaho Gulch. Subtracting 40 pct of this to account for an approximate Subtracting 40 pct of this to account for an approximate average amount of unmineralized limonitic regolith, and given an approximately 45[°] northerly dip of the regolith lenses, the average true thickness is 22 ft. Assuming a 10,000 lb of inferred resources.
The indicated resource comprises that portion of the the regolith decreases in thickness by 50 pct at 150 ft the regolith decreases in thickness by 50 pct at 150 ft downdip, then the volume of inferred hematitic regolith is

Indicated resource is present.
The inferred columbium resource comprises the P_2O_5 . At a concentration of 5 pct P_2O_5 and a total regolith P_2O_5 . At a concentration of 5 pct P_2O_5 and a total regolith tonnage of 245,000 st, an inferred P_2O_5 resource is approximately 12,250 st.

Good potential also exists for large additional Tomage factor determined on dried, compacted material; all analyses
are also on a dry basis.
The average grade was determined previously in the text to be between lying the regolith. At an average grade similar to that of are also on a dry basis.

¹¹The average grade was determined previously in the text to be between lying the regolith. At an average grade similar to that of the next to be between and 0.07 pct Cb. Head analyses of 0.12 a the regolith, the marble may contain several times the identified resource.

BENEFICIATION OF COLUMBIUM FROM THE REGOLITH

Two large bulk samples of regolith, each weighing Sample approximately 200 lb, were collected from trenches on
upper Idaho Gulch for columbium beneficiation studies. Screening and grinding (minus 65 mesh) upper Idaho Gulch for columbium beneficiation studies. Sample A was collected from trench T-4 from the same pit \overline{a} as samples 12 and 13 and had a head analysis of 0.09 pct Rougher tabling as samples 12 and 13 and had a head analysis of 0.09 pct Cb. Sample B was collected from trench T-5 from the same pit as samples 18 and 19 and had a head analysis of 0.12 \sim Concentrate Coarse tailings Fine tailings

the two samples. The samples were screened and ground in stages to pass 65 mesh and then tabled on a slime deck Scavenger tabling to produce a rougher concentrate, coarse tailings (those \downarrow intervalse \downarrow intervalse \downarrow intervalse that settled and banded on the deck), and fine tailings concentrate coarse tailings Fine tailings that settled and banded on the deck), and fine tailings (those that washed off the deck without settling). The rougher coarse tailings were screened and reground in Acid scrubbing stages to pass 150 mesh and then retabled in a scavenger step. A scavenger concentrate, coarse tailings, and fine Concentrate Concentrate Decant tailings tailings were produced. The rougher and scavenger \overline{V} \overline{V} concentrates were combined and scrubbed at 50 pct solids Magnetic separation concentrates were combined and scrubbed at 50 pct solids for 10 min in a 1:2 volume HCl-H₂O solution (13 pct HCl $\overline{}$ $\overline{}$ $\overline{}$ $\overline{}$ is the weight) to remove iron oxide staining from the mineral Magnetic fractions by weight) to remove iron oxide staining from the mineral Magnetic fractions Nonmagnetics surfaces. The scrubbed concentrate was washed and **Figure 14.-Flow diagram of columbium beneficiation proce** decanted four times and then treated by magnetic separation. A hand magnet was used to remove magnetite and other highly magnetic material. The remainder was slurred and pumped through a high-intensity wet magne-
tic separator with a grooved-plate configuration at eight samples A and B. A calculated composite concentrate from power settings. The magnetic field strength varied from sample A contained 57 pct of the columbium at a grade of approximately 500 G with the hand magnet to about 9,500 0.86 pct Cb. A calculated composite concentrate from approximately 500 G with the hand magnet to about 9,500 G at the maximum power setting.

samples A and B. A calculated composite concentrate from
sample A contained 57 pct of the columbium at a grade of sample B contained 53 pct of the columbium at a grade of

samples of the regolith suggest the higher value may be more accurate.

Figure 13.-Columbium, zinc, and P_2O_5 concentrations in soils within surveyed area on upper Idaho Gulch.

Product	wt pct		Analysis, pct		Distribution, pct			
		Сb	Zr	Sr	Cb	Zr	Sr	
Rougher and scavenger concentrates: Magnetics:								
	0.4	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.3	0.2	<0.1	
At 700 G.	\cdot 1	.09	.04	.09	- 1	\cdot . 1.	- 1	
	.3	.42	.09	.15	1.2	.6	. 1	
	.3	1.06	.13	.25	3.3		.1	
	1.6	1.06	.17	.47	17.3	5.2	1.3	
	1.0	1.01	.33	.73	10.4	6.3	1.2	
	.4	1.10	.27	.64	4.3	2.0	\cdot 4	
	.8	1.12	.67	.98	8.7	9.8	1.3	
At 9.500 G.	\mathcal{A}	1.15	.26	.70	4.2	1.8	\mathcal{A}	
Nonmagnetics at 9,500 G.	1.9	.42	1.39	1.99	7.8	48.1	6.1	
Weight loss from acid scrubbing	2.9	NA.	NA	NA.	NAp	NAp	NAp	
Subtotal	10.1	NA	NA	NA	57.6	74.7	10.9	
Rougher table fine tailings	47.5	.04	.02	.39	18.7	17.5	30.2	
Scavenger table coarse tailings	27.3	.06	.01	.97	16.2	5.0	43.3	
Scavenger table fine tailings	15.1	.05	.01	.63	7.5	2.8	15.6	
	100.0	.10	.05	.61	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Calculated composite concentrate ²	6.7	.86	.60	1.00	57.2	74.5	10.9	

Table 8.-Gravity and magnetic concentration of sample A

NA Not analyzed. NAp Not applicable.
1Additional analysis: 63.6 pct Fe.
?Mathematical combination of magnetics at 1,500, 2,200, 4,000, 6,200, 7,600, 8,700, and 9,500 G, and nonmagnetics at 9,500 G.

Table 9.-Gravity and magnetic concentration of sample B

NA Not analyzed. NAp Not applicable.
'Additional analysis: 62.0 pct Fe.
²Mathematical combination of magnetics at 1,500, 2,200, 4,000, 6,200, 7,600, 8,700, and 9,500 G, and nonmagnetics at 9,500 G.

sample A contained 74.5 pct of the zirconium and nearly ly. strontium. The calculated composite concentrate from

0.97 pct Cb. In each case the grade could be improved to 11 pct of the strontium with grades of 0.60 pct and 1.00 pct. 11 pct Cb with a sacrifice of 9 pct in recovery. oct Cb with a sacrifice of 9 pct in recovery. pct, respectively. The concentrate from sample B con-
The concentrates also contained zirconium and tained nearly 33 pct of the zirconium and 9 pct of the
ntium. The calculated

derived from chemical weathering of the underlying rocks or alteration halo either remain hidden beneath the
dolomitic marble Most of the constituents of the regolith extensive silt cover or have not yet been exposed by dolomitic marble. Most of the constituents of the regolith, extensive silt cover or have not yet been exposed by
including anatite zircon, and a mixed assemblage of iron erosion. Alternatively, poorly exposed and preserved including apatite, zircon, and a mixed assemblage of iron erosion. Alternatively, poorly exposed and preserved
oxide minerals, are also found downdin in the less occurrences of serpentinized rock in the vicinity of upper oxide minerals, are also found downdip in the less occurrences of serpentinized rock in the vicinity of upper
weathered marble. Columbium minerals and monazite. Idaho Gulch may represent metamorphosed mafic alkalic weathered marble. Columbium minerals and monazite Idaho $\frac{1}{2}$ have not been found in the marble; however, analyses rocks.
show the marble contains trace amounts of columbium. The grade and tonnage of the identified columbium show the marble contains trace amounts of columbium, cerium, and P_2O_5 .

limestone, dolomite, or marble are unknown elsewhere worldwide. However, uneconomic columbium grades
within the extensive Mesozoic flysch belt (17). The marble similar to or lower than those on upper Idaho Gulch have within the extensive Mesozoic flysch belt (17). The marble similar to or lower than those on upper Idaho Gulch have
and possibly associated metasedimentary wall rocks could been identified in carbonatites elsewhere. Specif and possibly associated metasedimentary wall rocks could been identified in carbonatites elsewhere. Specifically, at
he older than the flysch and correlative to a unit of Magnet Cove, AR, only 6 of 21 samples of the carbon be older than the flysch and correlative to a unit of Magnet Cove, AR, only 6 of 21 samples of the carbonatite
Paleozoic-age limestone, dolomite, argillite, phyllite, exposure in Kinsey Quarry contained detectable co-Paleozoic-age limestone, dolomite, argillite, phyllite, exposure in Kinsey Quarry contained detectable co-
metachert and quartz-mica and chlorite schist that is lumbium with concentration ranging between 0.01 and metachert, and quartz-mica and chlorite schist that is lumbium with concentration ranging between 0.01 and exposed west of Tofty pear the Yukon River (17) Near $(0.07 \text{ pet})(18)$. Additionally, it should be noted that the exposed west of Tofty near the Yukon River (17) . Near (0.07) pct (18) . Additionally, it should be noted that the Γ Tofty, this material could either occur as fault-bounded extent of the marble that underlies the regolith on upper
slivers intercalated within the flysch or underlie the Idaho Gulch is unknown, and that only three samples slivers intercalated within the flysch, or underlie the Idaho Gulch is unknown, and that only three samples of
flysch and he exposed in an erosional window Significant- marble have been analyzed. Therefore there is a possi flysch and be exposed in an erosional window. Significant-
ly, apatite, which is characteristic of the marble on upper Idaho Gulch, has not been identified in the Paleozoic-age. carbonate rocks west of Tofty.

Alternatively, the marble and regolith on upper Idaho **SOURCES OF PLACER MINERALS** Gulch may represent a carbonatite and its residual weathering product. Calcite, ankeritic dolomite, biotite, The bedrock source of the tin belt placer minerals is
fluorapatite, monazite, xenotime, magnetite, pyrite, ana-
inknown Wayland (8) outlines two hypotheses to expla tase, hematite, zircon, columbium-bearing rutile, ilmeno- possible origins. One suggests the northeast alignment of rutile, columbite, and aeschynite are present in the placer deposits reflects the trend of an ancient stream regolith and/or marble. This mineralogy closely resembles channel that has been reworked by younger streams. In
that of the apatite-magnetite variety of carbonatite as this hypothesis the placer minerals would have been described by Pecora (20). Similarly, the trace element derived from a source outside of the tin belt. The other composition of the marble and/or regolith closely resem-
bles that the placer constituents were
bles that of carbonatites (table 10). Particularly close derived from sources within the tin belt and that the bles that of carbonatites (table 10). Particularly close derived from sources within the tin belt and that the agreement for level of concentration of trace elements placer deposits were formed from virtual in-place weath-

lumbium and zirconium, are concentrated in the regolith monazite, aeschynite, apatite, and zircon can be accounted to levels above those in the parent marble (table 10). This for under either hypothesis" $(8, p. 403)$. upgraded material is directly comparable to upgraded This investigation shows that a source for some of the concentrations of magnetite, P_2O_5 , columbium, and placer minerals lies within the tin belt, northwest of the zirconium in residual soils overlying the Sukula carbona-
existing placer denosits. High concentrations of r zirconium in residual soils overlying the Sukula carbona-
tite complex in southeastern Uganda (21), in "apatite-
tive minerals and columbium in placer gravels on Idaho francolite regolith" overlying the Sokli carbonatite com-
plex in Finland (22), and elsewhere (23).
on upper Idaho Gulch High concentration of radioactive

the rock assemblages found on upper Idaho Gulch are not Deep Creeks and the reported presence of apatite- and
overwhelmingly similar to those of classic carbonatite magnetite-bearing dolomite on Harter Gulch (8) likewise occurrences $(20, 24)$. In particular, no alkalic igneous suggest additional lode sources in the headwaters of those rocks or alkali-rich alteration halo have been identified in creeks.

ORIGIN OF THE REGOLITH the Tofty area. However, it is possible that the marble intruded along the structurally complex northwestern The ferruginous regolith on upper Idaho Gulch is margin of the flysch basin and that any associated alkalic
ved from chemical weathering of the underlying rocks or alteration halo either remain hidden beneath the

resource on upper Idaho Gulch is considerably lower than
that in exploitable columbium-bearing carbonatites The origin of the marble is not as clear. Beds of that in exploitable columbium-bearing carbonatites
stone, dolomite, or marble are unknown elsewhere worldwide. However, uneconomic columbium grades ity for yet undiscovered, possibly higher grade columbium
resources in the Tofty area.

unknown. Wayland (8) outlines two hypotheses to explain this hypothesis, the placer minerals would have been agreement for level of concentration of trace elements placer deposits were formed from virtual in-place weath-
exists for barium, titanium, and P_2O_5 .
exists for barium, titanium, and P_2O_5 . ts for barium, titanium, and P_2O_5 .
Magnetite and P_2O_5 and to a lesser extent, co- best explains the origin of the cassiterite, but that "the best explains the origin of the cassiterite, but that "the

tive minerals and columbium in placer gravels on Idaho on upper Idaho Gulch. High concentration of radioactive The overall interpreted regional geologic setting and minerals and columbium in tailings piles on Miller and magnetite-bearing dolomite on Harter Gulch (8) likewise

Table 10.-Trace-element abundances and variations in reported (20) carbonatite deposits and marble and regolith on upper Idaho Gulch, percent

Trace element	Reported carbonatite	Marble ¹	Regolith ²	Trace element	Reported carbonatite	Marble ¹	Reach ²
Ce ³ Ba Sr Cb	$0.02 -$ $.05 - 10.0$.50 - 2.0 .001-	$0.06 - 0.24$ NΑ NA .073 025-	0.20 .5 > 6.0 .40	$P_{2}O_{5}$	$0.001 - 0.02$ $.10 - 3.0$ $.10 - 6.0$	$0.02 - 0.065$ NA 1.32-2.74	-0.09 .2 - 2.0 14-21.4

Not analyzed.

'Only 3 samples collected (see table 6).

 $\mathrm{^2}$ See tables 2 and 3.

³Includes all rare-earth elements.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

lenses of slightly radioactive iron-rich regolith were indicated whereas 310,000 lb is inferred. Large additional identified on upper Idaho Gulch in 1956 and investigated columbium resources are probably present in the dol identified on upper Idaho Gulch in 1956 and investigated columbium resources are probably present in the dolo-
in 1984 by the Bureau of Mines. The regolith contains mitic marble. The regolith also contains inferred remajor amounts of magnetic and nonmagnetic iron oxide sources of approximately 340,000 lb of zirconium and minerals, abundant apatite and zircon, moderate amounts 12,250 st of P_2O_5 . minerals, abundant apatite and zircon, moderate amounts $12,250$ st of P_2O_5 .
of pyrite, monazite, and columbium-bearing rutile. The Calculated composite concentrates from two large of pyrite, monazite, and columbium-bearing rutile. The regolith also contains trace amounts of xenotime and the regolith also contains trace amounts of xenotime and the samples of regolith contained 53 and 57 pct of the columbium minerals aeschynite, columbite, and ilmeno-
columbium at grades of 0.97 and 0.86 pct Cb, respectively. rutile. Trace to major concentrations of barium, strontium, In each case the grade could be improved to 1.1 pct Cb lanthanum, cerium, yttrium, silver, and titanium have with a sacrifice of 9 pct recovery. lanthanum, cerium, yttrium, silver, and titanium have with a sacrifice of 9 pct recovery.
also been identified. Each lens has a strike length of The unweathered source of the regolith, a dolomitic also been identified. Each lens has a strike length of approximately 1,200 ft and persists for 200 to 250 ft approximately 1,200 ft and persists for 200 to $\overline{250}$ ft marble, could be of either igneous or sedimentary origin.
downdip where unweathered magnetite-pyrite-apatite-
Its mineralogy and trace-element geochemistry and downdip where unweathered magnetite-pyrite-apatite-
zircon-bearing dolomitic marble has been encountered in similarity of the regolith to descriptions of other co-

rich, red-brown portion of the regolith lenses. These stratiform nature of the regolith can be interpretenting mineralized zones have an average thickness of approx-
evidence for sedimentary origin of the marble. mineralized zones have an average thickness of approx-
imately 22 ft, probably decrease in thickness by 50 pct 150 imately 22 ft, probably decrease in thickness by 50 pct 150 The marble and regolith are a lode source for some of
It downdip, and have average columbium grades between the minerals of the Tofty placer deposits. Similar bed 0.04 pct and 0.07 pct. Given these dimensions and at a geology or placer mineralogy suggests that additional lode grade of 0.07 pct Cb, the regolith lenses on upper Idaho sources may exist in the headwaters of Miller Gulch, Deep
Gulch contain approximately 340,000 lb of columbium Creek, and Harter Gulch. Gulch contain approximately 340,000 lb of columbium

Two parallel N 60 E trending, northwest-dipping resources. Approximately 30,000 lb of this resource is

columbium at grades of 0.97 and 0.86 pct Cb, respectively.

drill core.
High columbium and generally higher zirconium and carbonatite. However, the lack of associated alkalic High columbium and generally higher zirconium and carbonatite. However, the lack of associated alkalic P_2O_5 concentrations are restricted to a central, hematite-
igneous rocks or alkali-rich alteration halo and the igneous rocks or alkali-rich alteration halo and the
stratiform nature of the regolith can be interpreted as

the minerals of the Tofty placer deposits. Similar bedrock

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APPENDIX A.-MODIFIED 1956 DRILL CORE LOGS AND GEOLOGIC CROSS SECTIONS CONSTRUCTED FROM DRILL CORE DATA

Tables A-1 through A-9 are logs of diamond drill holes D-1 through D-9. Geologic cross sections through drill holes D-1 through D-9 and trench T-8 are presented in figures A-1 through A-6.

¹Rock type identified from coarse cuttings in sludge²
Included with 191.0- to 259.8-ft intervals.

 \overline{a}

Table A-5.-Log of diamond drill hole D-5, Idaho Gulch

'Rock type identified from coarse cuttings in sludge.

Table A-6.-Log of diamond drill hole D-6, Idaho Gulch

'Included with 75.0- to 95.4-ft interval.

Table A-7.-Log of diamond drill hole D-7, Idaho Gulch

'Included with 14.3- to 19.3-ft interval.

Table A-8.-Log of diamond drill hole D-8, Idaho Gulch

'Included with 5.0- to i3.8-ft interval.

Table A-9.-Log of diamond drill hole D-9, Idaho Gulch

'Rock type identified from coarse cuttings in sludge.

Figure A-i.-Geologic section through drill holes D-2 and trench T-8.

D-1 and Figure A-3.-Geologic section through drill hole D-7 and trench T-8.

Figure A-2.-Geologic section through drill holes D-3 and D-6 and trench T-8.

Figure A-4.---Geologic section through drill hole D-8 and trench T-8.

Figure A-6.-Geologic section through drill holes D-4 and D-5 and trench T-6.

LEGEND

Figure A-5.-Geologic section through drill hole D-9 and trench T-8.

APPENDIX B.—TEST PROCEDURE FOR CHARACTERIZATION OF TOFTY REGOLITH **CONCENTRATES 5, 9,15, AND 30**

Planned concentrate samples were acid leached in a 1:1 HCl solution to remove excess iron oxide. The material was then screened at 20 mesh. The plus 20-mesh fraction was optically, radiometrically, and spectroscopically examined and was found to contain no properties characteristic of the suspected columbium-bearing minerals. The remaining minus 20-mesh fraction of each sample was run through a laboratory-model isodynarnic magnetic separator at 0-, 0.1-, 0.2-, 0.3-, 0.4-, 0.5-, 0.6-, 1.0-, and 1.7-A settings to isolate minerals of similar magnetic susceptibilities. These fractions were examined optically, radiometrically, and spectroscopically to determine possible concentrations of columbium-bearing minerals. The fractions determined to contain the highest concentration of columbium were prepared in polished grain mounts for scanning electron microscope (SEM) and microprobe studies. Aeschynite was positively identified by SEM methods and found to be well concentrated in the 0.7-A magnetic fraction. Columbite was also identified and found concentrated in the 0.5-A magnetic fraction. Columbium-bearing rutile (possibly altered in part to ilmenorutile) was also concentrated in the 0.5-A fraction. Table B-1 summarizes the results of the analyses.

ND Not detected.

'Separated on a laboratory-model isodynamic magnetic separator.

APPENDIX C.-RESULTS OF EMISSION SPECTROGRAPHIC ANALYSES' OF REGOLITH SAMPLES

'Analyses by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.

RESULTS OF EMISSION SPECTROGRAPHIC ANALYSES' OF REGOLITH SAMPLES---Continued

'Analyses by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.

 \Box

APPENDIX D.-RESULTS OF MAGNETIC,' RADIOMETRIC,2 AND SOIL SAMPLE3 SURVEYS

NS No sample, NR No reading. 'Total-tield magnetic magnetic magnetic intensity, all readings have a base of 56,000 gammas.
'Total-tield magnetic intensity, all readings have a base of 56,000 gammas.

'Soil sample analyses by XRF by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.

Station	Magnetic intensity, gammas	Radioactivity, cps	Cb, ppm	P_2O_5 pct	Zn, ppm	Station	Magnetic intensity, gammas	Radioactivity, cps	Cb, ppm	P ₂ O ₅ pct	Zn. ppm
		LINE 10,400 NE						LINE 10,700 NE			
$9,500$ SE \dots 9,525 SE \sim \sim \sim 9,550 SE 9,575 SE \ddotsc 9.600 SE \bar{a} . 9,625 SE \ddotsc $9,650$ SE \dots	580 571 581 576 645 738 1081	86 88 92 92 96 113 109	50 50 50 50 50 50 $<$ 50	0.19 .16 .13 .13 .13 .77 .32	180 190 180 190 190 210 220	$9,500$ SE \dots 9,525 SE ~ 100 9,550 SE \ldots 9,575 SE 9,600 SE \sim \sim \sim 9,625 SE ~ 100 $9,650$ SE	540 537 527 521 508 507 498	73 75 78 73 74 70 81	$_{\rm NS}^{\rm NS}$ NS $_{\rm NS}^{\rm NS}$ NS NS	NS $\overline{\text{NS}}$ NS NS NS NS NS	ΝS ÑŠ NS NS NS NS NS
9,675 SE ~ 10 9,700 SE ~ 10 9,725 SE \mathbb{Z} 9,750 SE \ldots 9,775 SE 9.800 SE \sim . 9,825 SE \ldots	887 576 545 397 504 548 560	174 149 112 105 98 98 106	NS 250 50 50 50 50 $<$ 50	ΝS 5.40 .29 .28 .17 .20 .13	NS 460 180 230 170 200 170	$9,675$ SE \dots 9,700 SE $\sim 10^{-1}$ 9,725 SE \sim \sim \sim $9,750$ SE \dots 9,775 SE ~ 10 km $^{-1}$ 9,800 SE $\bar{\omega}$. 9,825 SE	545 548 535 543 576 694 900	79 78 73 81 86 84 63	NS NS NS NS $\overline{\text{NS}}$ NS NS	NS ΝS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS ΝS NS NS NS
9,850 SE 9.875 SE \cdots 9,900 SE $\bar{1}$, $\bar{1}$ 9,925 SE \ldots 9,950 SE \bar{z} . 9,975 SE 10,000 SE	582 602 560 507 510 511 532	133 167 250 179 189 124 100	$<$ 50 50 180 50 70 50 $<$ 50	.26 .56 2.60 .52 .89 .31 .20	210 330 1160 280 320 290 200	9,850 SE 9,875 SE \sim . 9,900 SE 9,925 SE $\omega \sim \omega$ 9,950 SE \sim \sim \sim 9,975 SE 10,000 SE	951 712 548 521 519 530 507	71 62 60 63 63 63 61	NS NS NS NS NS ΝS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	ΝS NS ΝS NS NS ΝS ΝS
		LINE 10,500 NE						LINE 10,800 NE			
9,500 SE \sim . . 9,525 SE \sim \sim \sim 9,550 SE \cdots 9,575 SE \bar{z} , \bar{z} 9,600 SE \ldots 9625 SE $\bar{\nu}$, $\bar{\nu}$ $9,650$ SE $$	582 551 539 636 624 659 677	94 91 86 81 87 103 108	ΝS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	9,500 SE \sim 9,525 SE \sim \sim \sim 9,550 SE 9,575 SE \sim \sim 9,600 SE ~ 100 9,625 SE \bar{z} , \bar{z} 9,650 SE ~ 100	567 568 592 633 662 600 557	78 81 79 75 73 82 104	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS $N\bar{S}$ NS ΝS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS
9,675 SE \sim \sim \sim 9.700 SE \cdots 9,725 SE . 9,750 SE \ldots 9,775 SE \sim . 9,800 SE ~ 10 9,825 SE	608 587 586 595 594 585 593	159 112 107 90 87 90 98	ΝS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	9,675 SE 9,700 SE ~ 100 9,725 SE ~ 10 9,750 SE \ldots 9,775 SE α , α 9,800 SE \bar{z} , \bar{z} 9,825 SE \ldots	545 544 532 564 594 643 764	101 88 65 62 87 71 60	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	ΝS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS ΝS NS
9,850 SE \cdots 9,875 SE \ldots $9,900$ SE \ldots 9,925 SE $\bar{1}$, $\bar{1}$ 9,950 SE \ldots 9,975 SE ~ 10 k 10,000 SE	591 631 591 601 545 527 521	174 208 196 188 165 139 100	NS NS NS NS NS ΝS NS	NS $_{\rm NS}^{\rm NS}$ NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS $_{\rm NS}^{\rm NS}$ NS	9,850 SE 9,875 SE v. 9,900 SE $\bar{1}$. 9,925 SE ~ 100 9,950 SE $\mathcal{L}_{\mathrm{max}}$ 9,975 SE ~ 100 10,000 SE	701 655 591 594 567 568 544	57 NR 66 63 61 62 62	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	NS NS NS NS NS NS NS	ΝS NS NS NS NS NS NS
		LINE 10,600 NE						LINE 10,900 NE			
$9,500$ SE $$ 9.525 SE \sim . 9,550 SE \ldots 9,575 SE \bar{z} , \bar{z} 9,600 SE 9,625 SE \ldots 9,650 SE	541 547 553 \degree 592 715 954 1159	86 101 102 90 92 99 127	$<$ 50 $\,$ 50 50 $<$ 50 $\,$ 50 50 50	0.18 .17 .22 .21 .16 .28 5.10	200 200 200 220 190 210 480	9,500 SE 9,525 SE $\bar{\nu}$. 9,550 SE ~ 100 9,575 SE \ldots 9,600 SE \sim . 9,625 SE \sim \sim \sim $9,650$ SE	555 559 577 651 735 909 962	83 90 88 84 85 79 84	50 50 50 50 50 50 50	0.26 .13 .13 .14 .13 .25 .15	210 190 200 200 190 200 180
9,675 SE 9,700 SE 9,725 SE $9,750$ SE \dots $9,775$ SE 9,800 SE 9,825 SE	722 593 540 555 568 586 612	142 98 97 99 98 87 83	480 270 50 < 50 50 50 50	1.85 .26 . 17 .22 .20 .22 .16	290 220 200 230 170 190 160	9.675 SE 9,700 SE 9,725 SE \Box . $9,750$ SE \dots 9,775 SE 9,800 SE ~ 10 9,825 SE	589 572 581 557 574 587 608	84 89 87 114 117 90 81	$<$ 50 <50 50 50 $<$ 50 $<$ 50 $<$ 50	.17 .15 .10 .23 .39 .20 .14	180 180 180 220 390 210 160
$9,850$ SE $$ 9,875 SE 9,900 SE …. 9,925 SE 9,950 SE 9,975 SE 10,000 SE.	671 558 560 556 553 543 563	95 86 77 81 76 83 83	50 50 50 $<$ 50 50 50 50	.26 .25 .36 .21 .25 .24 .18	250 250 170 180 200 230 190	$9,850$ SE 9,875 SE $9,900$ SE $$ 9,925 SE 9,950 SE $9,975$ SE \dots 10,000 SE	607 588 736 724 566 546 549	79 72 82 86 140 91 85	50 50 <50 340 50 100 <50	.19 .13 .25 2.43 1.05 .21 .38	180 180 280 390 220 260 230

RESULTS OF MAGNETIC,' FRADIOMETRIC,2 AND SOIL SAMPLE' SURVEYS-Continued

NS No sample, NR No reading.
'Total-field magnetic intensity, all readings have a base of 56,000 gammas.
'Total-count gamma-ray radiation.
''Soil sample analyses by XRF by Bureau's Reno Research Center, Reno, NV.

RESULTS OF MAGNETIC,¹ RADIOMETRIC,² AND SOIL SAMPLE³ SURVEYS---Continued

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