

WISCONSIN MINE HISTORY

The Wisconsin Mine, as are other mines located along the route of this hike, is located in the Greaterville Mining District. Mining in the Greaterville District got its start in 1874 with the discovery of gold in placer deposits in the ravines and washes near what was to become Greaterville. The Greaterville placer deposits proved to be the greatest and richest placer deposits in southern Arizona. However, the “easy pickings” that were found in the 1870s rapidly disappeared and gold recovery became much more difficult. Since the gold found in placer deposits originally came from gold bearing veins in lode deposits as the mountains eroded, the search soon spread to the mountains.

The Wisconsin Mine, which was originally called the Buckhorn Mine, was first worked



Cabin by Wisconsin Mine

in the 1880s. It produced silver, copper, lead and gold. The mine experienced a resurgence in 1936 and 1937 during the depression and has seen periodic minor activity since then. It was reopened and worked a few years ago and renamed the Playa Cascabel Mine. There is a bronze plaque mounted on a concrete pad adjacent to the second mineshaft above the main adit. This plaque was installed in 1979 and recognizes the Playa Cascabel name. There are a number of old pieces of equipment lying around the area and also the remains of a cabin. The water tank with the water supply line leading to one of the shafts higher up on the slopes has only been there for a couple of years.

The rock structure in the area consists of partially oxidized pyrite (FeS_2), galena and chalcopyrite (CuFeS_2) with free gold in an oxidized zone in an iron stained quartz vein cutting Precambrian granodiorite.

Summary updated by T Johnson in 2008. Picture by T. Johnson

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