

TERRITORY OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF MINES

NOTES ON A REPORTED OCCURRENCE OF ASBESTOS ON

48
SALT CREEK, TANANA QUADRANGLE

48-31

by

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The story of an occurrence of asbestos on Salt Creek in the Rampart District has been circulated in interior Alaska for many years, but it has never been substantiated by any written reports. During a visit to the Rampart District in 1957, I gathered some information about the occurrence from Ira Weisner and Harry Havrilack, both long-time residents of Rampart.

The asbestos is reported to have been found at the head of Little Salt Creek on the ridge that separates the drainage of Little Salt Creek from the drainage of Dreamland Creek, tributary to Salt Creek. This ridge is at $65^{\circ} 47'$ N latitude and $150^{\circ} 28'$ W longitude in the northeast corner of the Tanana Quadrangle. On the U. S. Geological Survey maps of the Tanana and Livengood Quadrangles, the stream shown as "Ray River" is actually Salt Creek, and the next tributary to the Yukon upstream from there is the Ray River. Officials of the Geological Survey are aware of this error. The accompanying map shows the streams with their correct names.

It was reported at Rampart that several years ago, two prospectors came up the Yukon River and stopped at Rampart to inquire about the asbestos. The Indians gave them directions on how to reach the area by going up the Yukon River and up Salt Creek. After the prospectors left, two Indians (one named Ed Mayo) crossed the Yukon River at Rampart, went into the area by a shorter route, and staked the ground. When the prospectors arrived and saw the new stakes, they returned to the Yukon and went on upriver without returning to Rampart. Apparently the claims have been allowed to

revert to the public domain through failure of the owners to perform assessment work.

A general description of the geology of this region is given in U. S. Geological Survey Bulletin 631, THE YUKON-KOYUKUK REGION, ALASKA, by Henry M. Eakin. The ridge on which the asbestos is reported is composed of greenstones of Devonian and Carboniferous age interbedded with thin beds of slate, chert, and limestone. To the south this formation contacts the quaternary terrace gravel along the valley of the Yukon River. To the north, the next formation mapped is composed of metamorphic rocks of pre-Devonian age, probably equivalent to the Birch Creek Schist. The mapping is of reconnaissance nature, and the location of the contact to the north is not shown.

Harry Havrilack reported that he saw specimens of the asbestos that were brought back to Rampart by the Indians. He said that only a few pieces of float were found, and that the float was serpentine containing small stringers of asbestos. From meager information obtained thus far, it appears that this asbestos occurrence is of no commercial importance.

