

Kokoweef Caves, Clark Mountains

15N 14E Sec. 04 SBM 35.41195000010 -115.48556000000 (Koroweef South)
15N 14E Sec. 04 SBM 35.42030999990 -115.49304000000 (Koroweef North)

History (From Larry Vredenburgh, 1996;
http://vredenburgh.org/mining_history/pages/clark_mescal_mtns_mining_later.html)

Paul Patchick in 1961 summed up the history of the Kokoweef Caves. His description is reproduced here in full:

In the 1920s a miner named E. P. Dorr explored a cave high-up the side of Kokoweef Peak. Later, in a sworn affidavit, Dorr reported an amazing discovery - and a lost mine legend was born. Deep under Kokoweef Peak, he said he found a swiftly flowing subterranean river; lining its banks were sands rich in gold.

The legend grew. "Facts" became scarce. The cave entrance was dynamited shut...there were stories of Dorr going insane, of murdered men, of men buried alive, of rich assay sheets.

Some sources say the main cave chamber has several entrances on the flanks of the peak. In his book, *Adventure is Underground* William R. Halliday reports that the Crystal Cave Mining Corporation now owns the property. Would-be lost mine hunters are not welcome. Besides, the danger to all but the best trained and equipped cave-explorer is extreme. Two persons lost their lives here in 1959.

In 1988 Bob Ausmus wrote a less cynical, updated history which appeared in *The Friends of the Mojave Road, Guide to the East Mojave Heritage Trail, Ivanpah to Rocky Ridge*. Although the Kokoweef Caves have not yielded the much advertized river of gold, a paleontological treasure has been uncovered. Bob Reynolds of the San Bernardino County Museum during the 1970s excavated remains of Pleistocene age animals including brush ox, dire wolf, large and small camels, horses, marmots, bats, shrews and birds. (From Vredenburgh, 1996c, p. 73).

Geology

The Kokoweef Caves, (or mines) are in Goodsprings Dolomite, between 500 and 1,100 feet from the Clark Mountain Fault (Hewett, 1956, Plate 1).

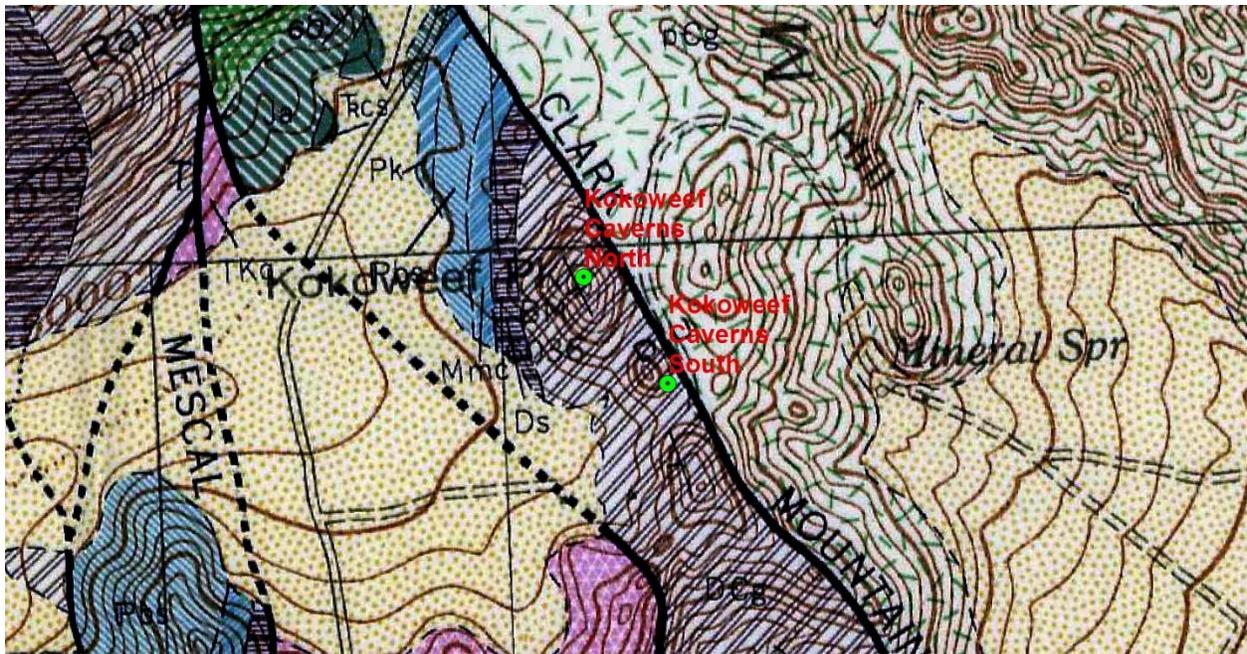


Figure 1. Geology of the Kokoweef Caverns and surrounding area. From Hewett, 1956, Plate 1.

The northern cavern is 250 feet southeast of the Carbonate King Mine.

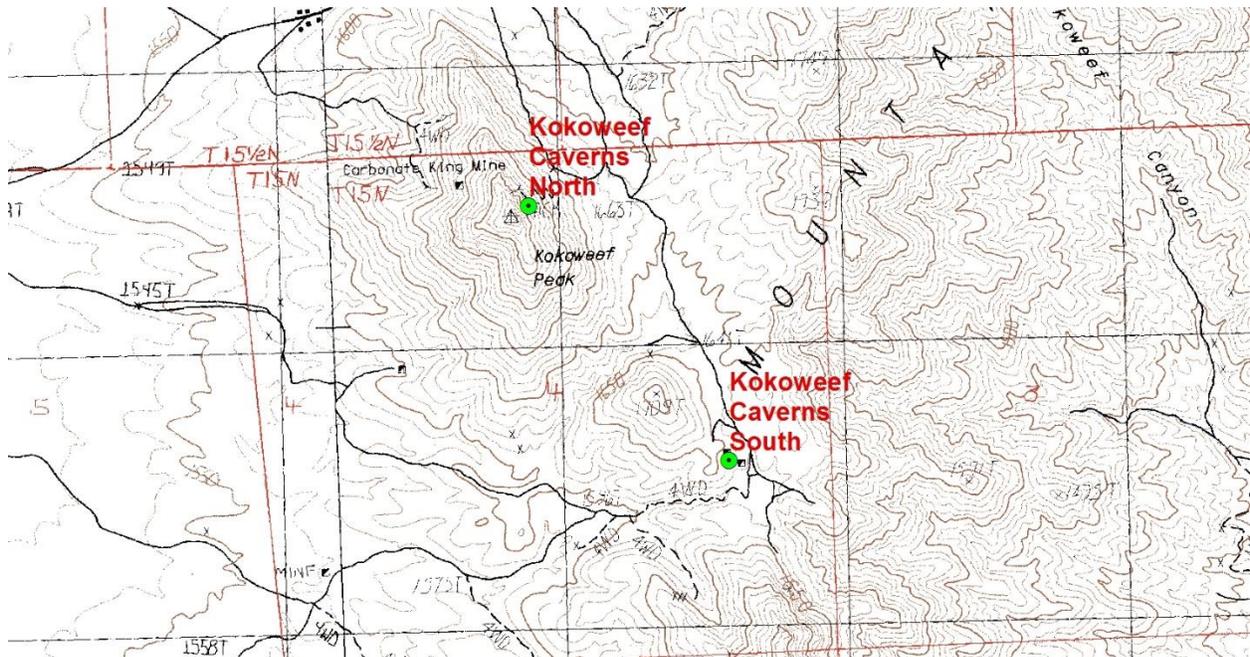


Figure 2. Topographic map of the Kokoweef Caverns. USGS Ivanpah quadrangle, 1:24K.

An anonymous on-line article about the Kokoweef Mine is at <http://www.in-the-desert.com/kokoweef.html> (accessed March 12, 2016). It is reproduced, in part, below:

Kokoweef Mine and the tale of Earl Dorr

As far as treasure tales goes this one is something to consider and look into in the desert. However like all treasure tales -- it's been mis-understood, exaggerated, and quite frankly very few people (with some exceptions) have spent the time to research this tale and see if it holds water. Does it? It's still open to discussion! We've talked to several of the main characters involved with the search and none of them has seen the River of Gold. So lets see why this is so interesting to so many. Also note: currently there are legal proceedings going on between the different parties involved. This account of the validity of the River of Gold is only part of my research and should not be construed as the gospel truth; only my interpretation and opinion. Well as treasure tales go this one is probably one of the most interesting. I say this because we've been to the Kokoweef Mine and talked to the people there. Also a great deal of research in the desert has gone into the following tale. So let's start at the beginning. My ramblings begin! The first time we went looking for the Kokoweef Mine we went with Jack Ross our fellow treasure hunter. Jack was great at research and had traveled the world looking thru archives and treasures documents. We got along great because Jack had a terrible sense of direction and he soon realized that I, on the other hand an infallible sense of direction. So we worked good together, both of us liked to camp out in the desert, we liked to explore; and the Kokoweef was just the tip of the iceberg for us. We were also looking for some old Spanish markings in caves near the Kokoweef. We never did find them.

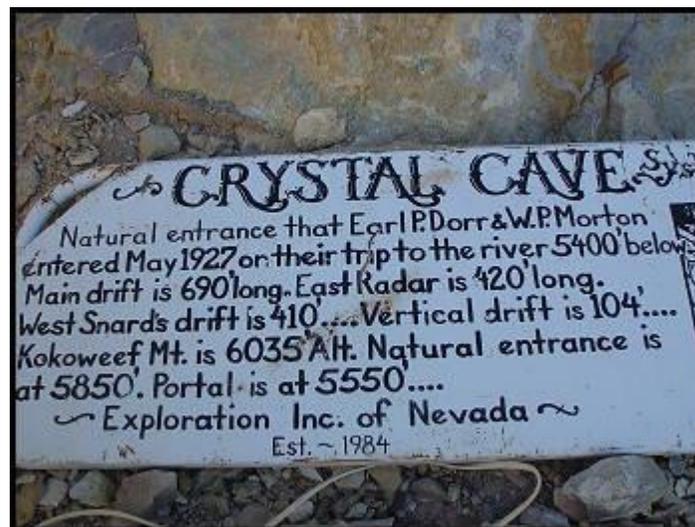
This goes back to 1994 when we came on the scene. We stopped at the Kokoweef Mine and met the head miner of the operation at the time; Joe Kelly- now deceased; he was a really nice guy with an old west attitude; very friendly. His girlfriend Katra was also very friendly and in fact she let us go exploring in the old Crystal Cave. There were a lot of different tunnels and some were blocked with gates with a sign announcing lethal gas environments. We climbed down the main shaft of the tunnel; which had old metal ladders attached to the sloping walls. It was quite an experience. Earl Dorr's name was on one of the shaft tunnels. Now a more correct name would be natural caves. As they were natural once you got into the mountain. The (alleged but disproved) OLD original access through the Crystal Cave natural entrance from near the top on the East side was replaced with a lower tunnel and a raise that had been drilled and blasted into the original natural cave system to make it easier to gain access and remove exploratory rock debris. This tunnel was supposedly the one that Earl Dorr blasted shut to stop anyone from getting his gold. We've heard that Government Engineers went into the tunnel right after this took place and could find no evidence of a blast.



This popcorn (that's what they call this) was a sample that I took off of the wall of the natural cave. This was done with Joe Kelly's permission. He said he didn't think anyone would mind, caus' they was looking

for gold. Now Joe (who was an old professional trucker who worked mines in his youth) knew mining and he was the one setting the charges in the mine on the other side of the mountain. But to his misfortune he was used to doing things the old fashioned way. He lost his life in an accident at the mine on May 18th 1996 when he was 70 years old. See the link to the MSHA's report above for details on his demise. He was working at the time for the Lessee of the property at Kokoweef Peak: Explorations Inc. Nevada.

The present owners & lessor companies are the Crystal Cave Mining & Development Co's. As the story goes, Earl Dorr had been down in the cave and had taken a considerable amount of gold from the river at the bottom of the cave system. This cave system allegedly runs for many miles and it's even believed that it may run from the middle of Nevada down to empty into the Sea of Cortez. Of course this has never been documented, but a lot of evidence says that it's very possible. Devil's Hole just West of Pahrump in Death Valley has water in it in a place where there shouldn't be any water. It also varies in depth and the hole has never been fully explored because of the death of a couple of cave explorers. It may be connected to this underground river. Our new Argosy section of the site will have an article on this river soon. Also Ivanpah dry lake bed is another strange anomaly that figures into this scenario. And we've seen this -- it can rain and cause flash floods and the dry lake bed will fill with water to a level of several feet in depth only to disappear. This loss of water could be accounted for by previous drilling sites in the Ivanpah Dry Lake Bed!. Kind of makes you wonder where all that water goes. There have even been explorers that say they have found caves near the Mexican border that have running water rivers in them. There are also tales of Indians finding natural openings that have a great wind rushing out of them in areas of the desert in Southeastern California



This is a sign that when found was on the wrong side of the mountain. Of course this sign was put up back then to inform investors. When we were there the first time we were approached to be investors. I hope they all get rich beyond their wildest dreams



5 acres of private property just below the Northwestern side of the Peak is home to many of the volunteers and investors. The camp is shown here.



The mine entrance that they put into the Peak on the Western side to hopefully connect with the alleged, but still not discovered, Dorr's Natural Cave and Caverns. So far this has been unsuccessful. These photos were taken Nov. 26th 2002 by me. A lot of money has gone into this search as well as time and effort. Maybe it's time for a new direction to be taken -- remember the deep Sulfide Gold ore body located here? Just a thought.