

BELMONT MILL, LOWER CHARCOAL AND LUMBER PILE  
(Nevada Belmont Mill)  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest  
Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest  
Service Road No. 623  
Ely vicinity  
White Pine County  
Nevada

HAER NV-46-M  
*HAER NV-46-M*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### BELMONT MILL, LOWER CHARCOAL AND LUMBER PILE

HAER No. NV-46-M

Location: Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest Service Road No. 623, Ely vicinity, White Pine County, Nevada.  
U.S. Geological Survey, Seligman Canyon, Nevada, 7.5 Quadrangle (1992), Township 16 North, Range 57 East, Section 1.  
UTM Zone 11, Easting 2060666.87, Northing 14266546.55 (southeast corner of structure) (NAD 83).  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Feature No. F8.

Significance: The Tonopah Belmont Development Company (TBDC) was one of the most important companies created during Nevada's early twentieth-century mining boom. As ore deposits in its central Nevada mines were depleted, the company sought new claims to resurrect its fortunes. In 1926 TBDC built the Belmont Mill near Hamilton to process lead and silver ore from its recently acquired claims in the White Pine mining district of eastern Nevada. The small pilot mill employed the most recent advances in table concentration and flotation mineral processing techniques, and the company erected numerous other buildings and structures to support the mining and milling work. The site was largely abandoned by TBDC after a few years, but later owners used the mill and associated structures for smaller operations. Today, although most of the equipment has been removed, the Belmont Mill site is one of the only intact early twentieth-century mill complexes in eastern Nevada. Importantly, much domestic architecture remain to provide a glimpse of daily life there, including relatively ephemeral structures like the lower charcoal and lumber pile, which may originally have been a storage shed. The mill complex is a tangible reminder of the decline and failure of a once-powerful company and, thereby, of the boom and bust cycle so common in the mining industry. The subsequent modification and reuse of the site for small-scale operations typifies the ceaseless hum of optimism that sustains the mining industry.

Description: The lower charcoal and lumber pile is located in the canyon bottom about 60' south of the workshop (NV-46-K) and 95' southwest of the boardinghouse (NV-46-I), at the base of the steep hill that rises immediately to the west. The feature measures about 17' east to west by 9' north to south, and appears to be the remains of a small building or an open, crib-type structure that was built partially into the hillside. There are no visible remains of a foundation or roof. Lumber is piled on the ground and is of a wide variety of dimensions, including 2" x 4", 4" x 4", 2" x 12", and 6" x 6". Several fence posts with slots cut for rails are also present, as is a large, trapezoidal piece of steel with holes along the edges (probably the remains of an old piece of equipment). These remains sit on ground liberally covered in coal or charcoal.

History: See the Narrative Overview in HAER No. NV-46 for a broad contextual history.

It is not clear if the structure dated to 1926, the original period of construction for the site, or to the boardinghouse period in mid-century. Historic photographs of the mill site do not include the buildings and structures at the south end of the complex, although they do reveal the presence of other small, shed-roofed structures that may have been similar in appearance east of the boardinghouse (NV-46-I) and on the hillside west of the supervisor's office (NV-46-H) (see Figures 3 and 4 in HAER No. NV-46). Today the structure is in very poor condition, the remains so altered that its original appearance and purpose are uncertain.

Sources: See HAER No. NV-46.

Historian: Anne Oliver, Principal, Oliver Conservation Group. Fieldwork for the project was conducted in the fall of 2010. Project documentation was accepted by HABS/HAER in 2011.

Project Information: See HAER No. NV-46 for complete details. In summary, this project was completed under a contract between the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and a consulting team under the direction of ajc architects (Salt Lake City, Utah), in consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office. The project historian was Anne Oliver, historic preservation consultant with Oliver Conservation Group. Matt Wallace, intern architect with ajc architects, was responsible for the architectural measured drawings and completed all fieldwork and final drawings with the assistance of Oliver Smith Callis, draftsman. The photography was produced by Steve Tregeagle Photography under the direction of Steve Tregeagle and with the assistance of Heath Brown.