

Conrad spent a fortune on his dream until 1912 when he was forced into bankruptcy. A new company, Yukon District Gold, leased the Venus claims and they ran the mill for a short time. New equipment was installed before the mill re-opened to run between 1918 and 1920. At peak production, the mill produced 10 tons of silver ore concentrate per day.

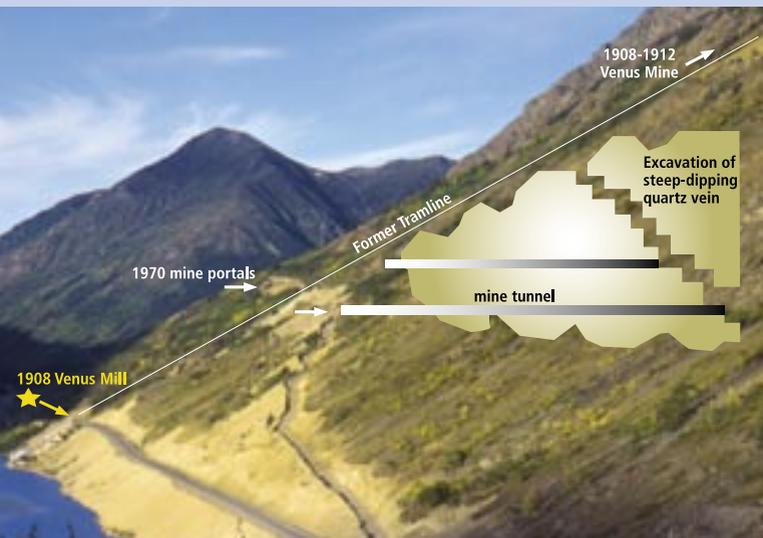


Close view of Venus Mill.

The Venus Mill did not operate after 1920. In 1970 and 1979, new mines lower on the hillside recovered half a million ounces of silver and more than 12,000 ounces of gold. Both of these later mining attempts ended when world metal prices fell.



North Side of Venus Mill



Large cast-iron machinery was hauled up to the mines using the tramline. Waste rock was used as ballast to make the tramline work in this direction.



The Venus vein is a sheet of quartz rock from 1 to 6 m thick, dipping steeply into the mountain. Old trenches expose it near the surface (visible as light brown streaks across the mountainside in the photo above), and it was mined on five levels inside the mountain.

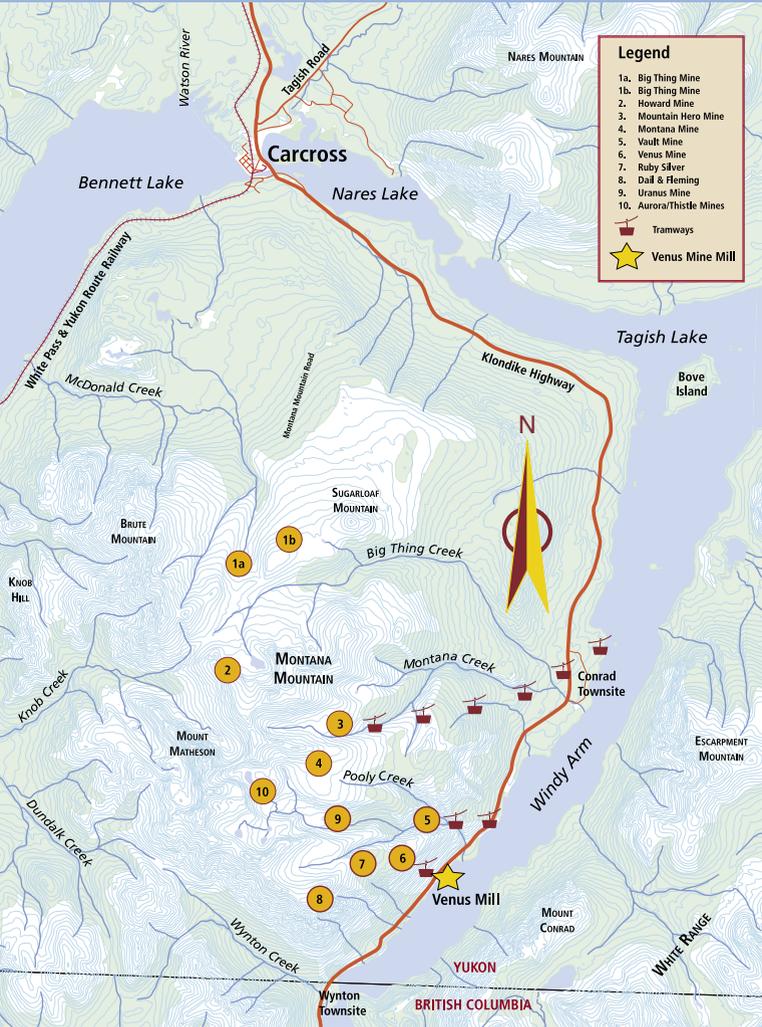


Venus Mine Ore: The quartz is white to grey-blue with bands of shiny galena (silvery - contains silver), arsenopyrite (brassy - contains gold) and sphalerite (dark brown - containing zinc).



The mill and slope are unstable and dangerous. Please do not stop at this site – it is closed to the public.

Windy Arm Mining District



VENUS MILL



John Conrad's Jewel



The Venus Mill ran with the smoothness and nicety of a new sewing machine. (Weekly Star, December 4, 1908)

John Conrad dreamed of making his Windy Arm district silver mines the best on the continent and a state-of-the-art concentrating mill was part of that dream. The Venus Mill, built in 1908, eased the high cost of shipping silver ore out of the territory. Gravity pulled a line of ore-filled tipping buckets 460m down an aerial tramway cable from Venus Mine to the mill. Belt-driven mill machinery crushed and ground the ore into a powder. Mineral concentrate, floated out of the crushed rock by chemical means, was dried, bagged and shipped by steamboat to the railway at Carcross. The South Klondike Highway, now running past Venus Mill, was built in the late 1970s.