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Jackpot? Historic gold mine – including mineral rights – in Maricopa County hits market

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Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty

Located on a sheer cliff of Continental Mountain, a 40-acre patented historic mining parcel is listed for \$1.75 million

At a time when the price of gold has risen to near record levels to nearly \$2,000 an ounce, a 40-acre property that includes a historic

gold mine has been listed for sale.

Dubbed The Last Outpost, the parcel is the only piece of patented land for sale on the entire Continental Mountain, said Preston Westmoreland, agent for Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty who listed it for \$1.75 million.

Patented land means that all mineral rights to the land are included. It is the highest form of land ownership in America since Congress enacted a moratorium in 1994 on patented mineral parcels, which prohibits the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to accept any new patent applications, Westmoreland said.

Sitting at nearly a 4,000-foot elevation, the parcel at 8545 E. Sierra Vista Drive is in unincorporated Maricopa County. is surrounded by BLM land overlooking the entire Valley.

Click through the gallery below for a look at the private property on Continental Mountain:

Land featured in Hollywood movie

Westmoreland said the parcel is ideal for a family compound, a survivalist or someone who wants an off-the-grid bug out spot as a safe retreat in times of trouble, he said.

The historic gold mine has been providing the Cave Creek Museum bits of gold ore to demonstrate its stamp mill.

"What's better than buying land with dirt?" he asked. "Buying land with gold."

The mine tunnels were used in a Hollywood filming location for a sci fi pilot by producer Adrian Carr, who is known for producing "Crocodile Dundee."

Called "Solus," the film is set 1,000 years in the future, and Carr needed land where there were no signs of civilization, Westmoreland said.

The 40 acres is part of a larger 80-acre parcel originally claimed by the Steeles, a Mormon pioneer family who arrived in a covered wagon. Their son, Horace, established a foundation to benefit Arizona causes, including Steele Indian School Park in Phoenix.

"The Steeles haven't owned it for years," Westmoreland said. "It was split in half. We found out about this years ago. I was showing the bottom half. It was a secret ranch in a hidden canyon where 12,000 gallons of water a day was flowing out of mountain."

He sold those 40 acres to an undisclosed buyer.

Then another potential buyer wanted to buy the other 40 acres on top, where the mine was situated.

That was the first Westmoreland had heard about that parcel.

He dug into tax records and found the owner located in Tucson and asked if he could put that parcel on the market.

"We couldn't believe how gorgeous it was," Westmoreland said.

In 2021, Westmoreland negotiated the \$950,000 sale to a real estate agent from Idaho who had planned to build an off-grid house.

But he has too many projects keeping him busy and has not had time to do anything, Westmoreland said.

While the parcel is less than two miles from Cave Creek, Carefree and Scottsdale — it takes about 30 minutes on the dirt roads from Cave Creek — it feels worlds apart, Westmoreland said.

"There's all these different tunnels," he said. "It's more like your own personal playground. Even if you didn't mine the gold, there are 20 uses of old mines other than mining gold. You can grow mushrooms, store documents, archive data storage, do underground research, make a wine cellar. It has double gates at the bottom with the most guarded gate codes in Arizona."



Angela Gonzales

Senior Reporter - *Phoenix Business Journal*

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