HISTORY

STATION 1

Mile High Gold Rush

Central 70

MORE THAN AN INTERSTATE

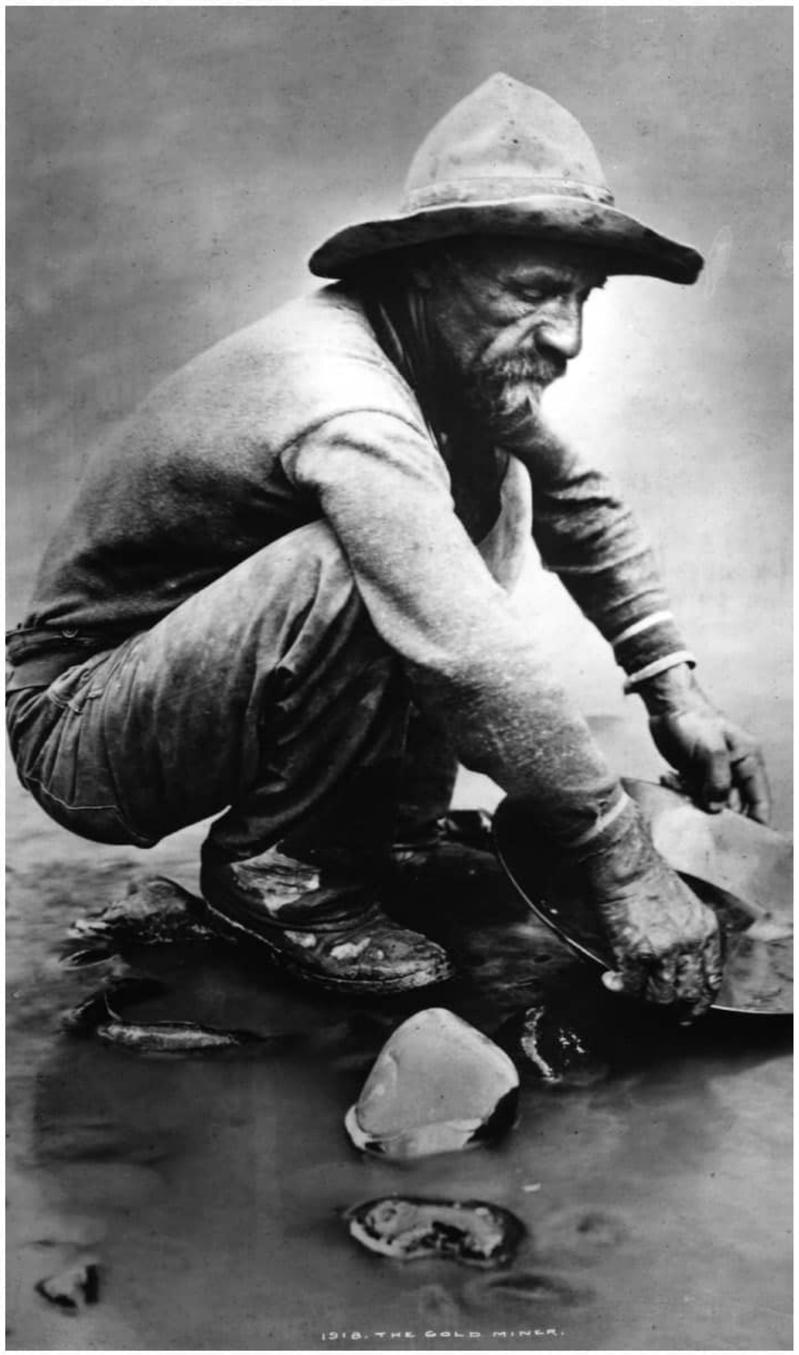
Inside Colorado's Largest Transportation Project

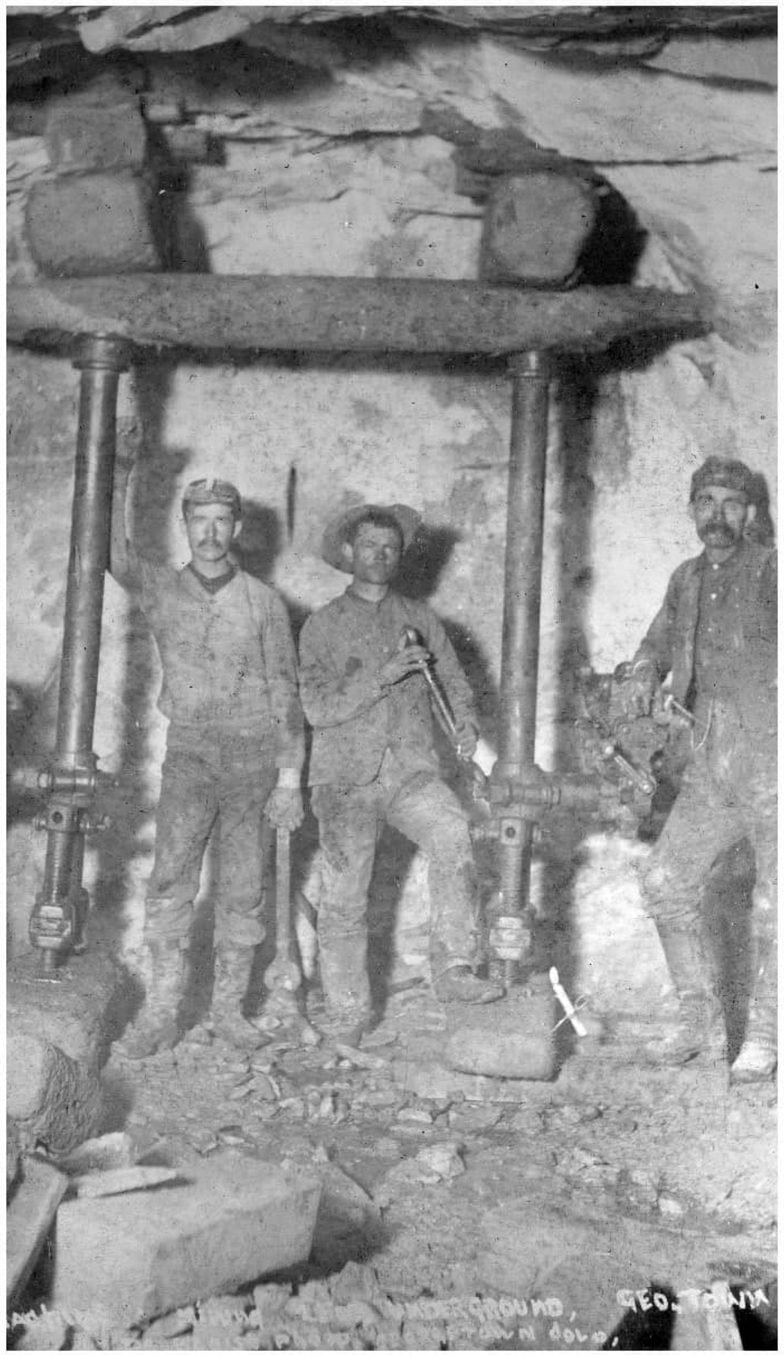
NESTLED ON THE BANKS of the South Platte River, Denver was founded in November 1858 as a gold mining town. Gold within the city quickly dried up, but the need for a supply hub to the nearby Rocky Mountain mines brought a host of opportunities to Denver. With the discovery of silver near Montezuma, Georgetown, Central City and Idaho Springs in the 1860s, Denver thrived, quickly growing to become the county seat and eventually the state capital.

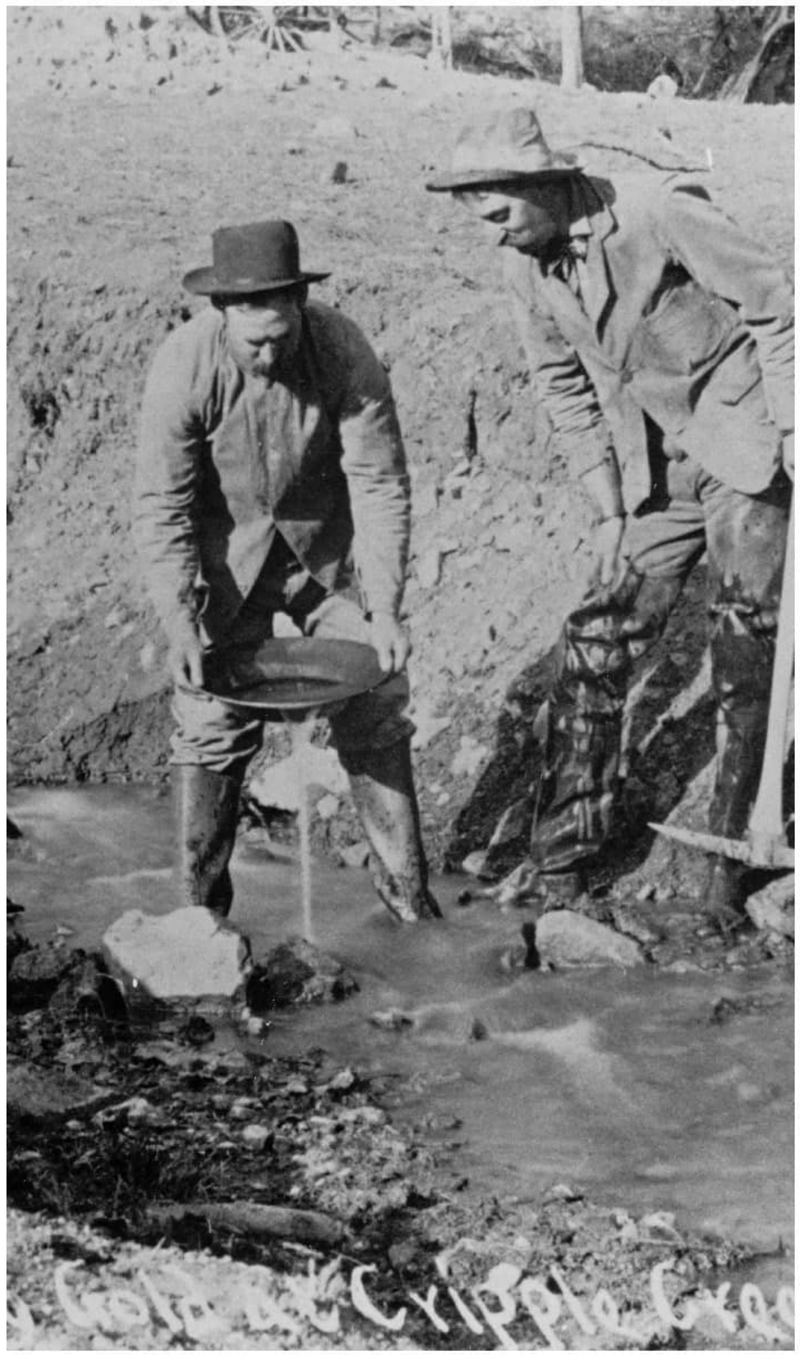
Investors saw Denver's potential and built a rail line through the city, extending from Cheyenne to western Kansas. With the addition of the railroad, new people and supplies helped the city grow a stable economy rooted in wholesale trade, manufacturing, food processing, and servicing the growing agriculture and ranching industries. Between 1870 and 1890, manufacturing output soared from $600,000 to $40 million and the Denver population boomed, surpassing 100,000 people in a matter of years. In fewer than 50 years, Denver had exploded from a small supply town to a bustling city.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Colorado Gold Rush, originally known as Pike's Peak Gold Rush, began in 1858 and ended in 1861.







Horace and Baby Doe Tabor's famous "Matchless" silver mine in Leadville, Colo.

Photograph courtesy of the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum, Leadville, Colo.

DID YOU KNOW?

Colorado's largest silver district, Leadville, was not discovered until 1874.

Railroad Memories in Colorado

Union Pacific Railroad freight cars, 1966. History Colorado. Accession ID #2000.168.13.

Monfort feedlot near Greeley, Colorado. 1940-1960. History Colorado. Accession ID #90.447.25.

Union Pacific Railroad crowd, 1869. History Colorado. Accession ID #PH.PROP.3274.

DID YOU KNOW?

Before becoming home to eastern European immigrants and the GES families here today, the land you're standing on originally belonged to Arapaho, Cheyenne, Núu-agha-tʉvʉ-pʉ̱ (Ute) and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Tribes.

Denver Public Library, Denver Public Library Special Collections, X-32079

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Denver Public Library, Denver Public Library Special Collections, X-30508
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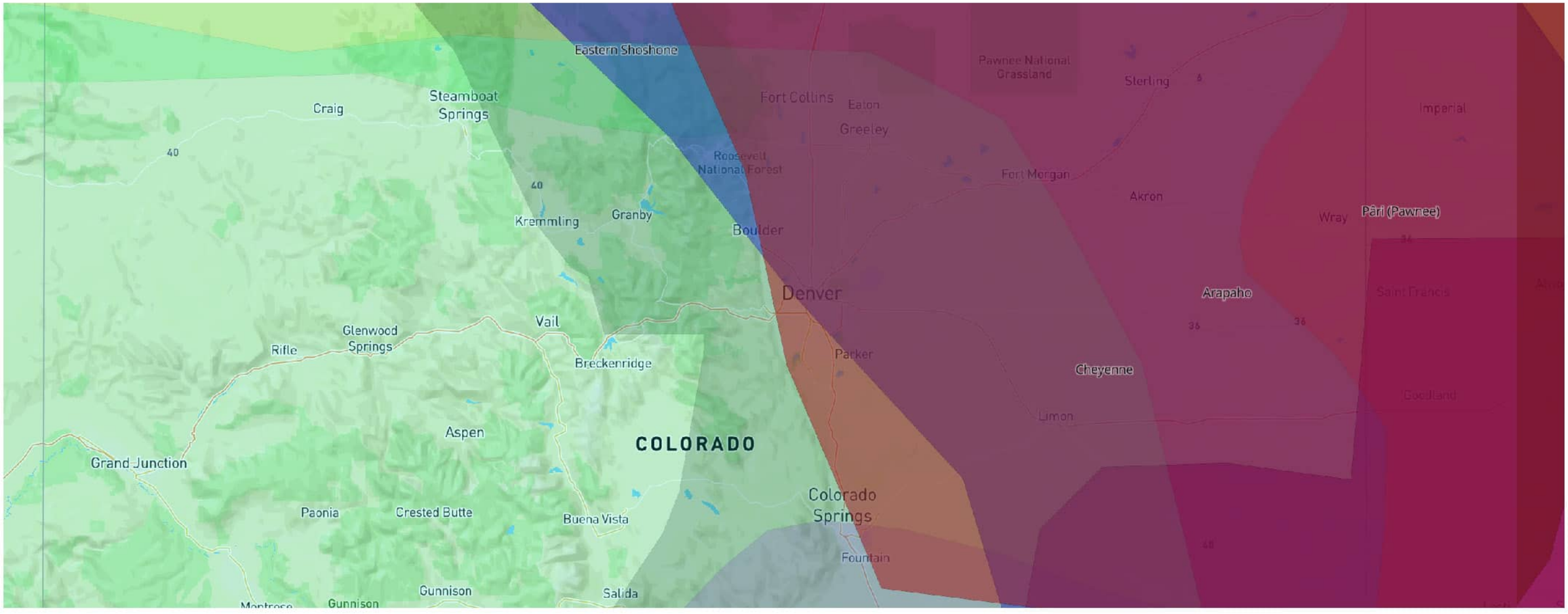
Denver Public Library, Denver Public Library Special Collections, X-31789

DID YOU KNOW?

A pan like the one shown is used for placer mining, mining for gold in rivers or streams. Every river in the world contains gold but some rivers contain so little gold that you could pan and sieve for years and not find even one small flake.

SCAN THE QR CODE to your left with your smartphone camera to view the webpage. Just type in any address, and you'll be able to see what indigenous group(s) once lived there or nearby.