

**Gold Dust** is located 4 miles NE of Hillsboro on NM 152.

Placer gold was discovered in April 1877 in Rattlesnake and Wicks Gulches, part of Copper Flat and by 1880 a gold-mining boom brought miners to this area. The following year, the little tent camp of Gold Dust had developed. Founded in the early 1920's by John Hanson, who operated place mining and gold washing facilities in the area, the town site remained in operation until the late 1940 's. Only the original house belonging to Hanson remains today. In 1996, Alta Gold Mining Company held public environmental impact study meetings (EIS) to hear concerns from the public on reopening of the mine.



**Lake Valley** is located on NM 27, 18 miles W of Caballo in the Black Range foothills. At one time 3,500 people were here. As mining faded, so did Cutter.

The cemetery contains many of the settlers to whom Sierra County owes its heritage. Silver was discovered there in 1878 by cowboy prospector, George W Lufkin, and two years later two miners struck an ore vein that eventually led to other mines; the largest of

which was smelting. The World Exposition held in Denver in 1882 displayed a single piece of silver from the mine valued at \$7,000 at a time when silver was selling for about a dollar an ounce. Mine related businesses as well as ranches grew from 1886 to present day Lake Valley, Hillsboro and Kingston were linked by the daily stage owned by Sadie Orchard, who also owned the Kingston brothel. The fate of Lake Valley took a turn down in 1893 when silver was devalued, and in 1895 most of Main Street burned to the ground. Many of the descendents of the early families continue to live in New Mexico.



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## *Cemeteries of Sierra County*

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