

NORTH IDAHO 1910 FIRE SITES THEMATIC GROUP

Name: Edward Pulaski's Tunnel and Placer Creek escape Route, ~~site number 1~~

Location: SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 4 (tunnel)

West fork Placer Creek, Sections 4, 5, and 8, T47N, R4E (trail)

Shoshone County, vicinity of Wallace, Idaho

S w of Wallace

Ownership: BLM (tunnel); BLM, USFS, and Hecla Mining Company (trail)

Map: USGS Wallace 62,500

Acreage: 12 acres

Boundary: SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 4 (tunnel)

A strip 1 drain wide, west side of West fork in sections, 4, 5, and 8 (trail),
T47N, R4E

Coordinates: 11/578 600/5255 150 (tunnel); A: 11/580 300/5256 550; B: 11/580 220/5256 5

C: 11/577 400/5254 550; D: 11/577 400/5254 750 (trail)

Date: 1910

Significance: conservation.
National

Condition: Tunnel good, except for some caving near portal.
Trail, good

Description: West Fork (Placer Creek) trail and tunnel. Edward Pulaski and his crew crossed a high ridge and descended a Forest Service trail that ran across from a prospect tunnel long enough to provide shelter when a backfire from Wallace blocked their escape route. With a portal only ten feet above West Fork water level and a dump extending downstream, this tunnel was six to six and one-half feet high and five feet wide. A partly-caved-in entrance (and additional caving fifteen feet farther in) somewhat restricts access. Split cedar floor planks extend thirty feet farther. Three charred squeeze caps (logs nine inches to a foot in diameter wedged to prevent spalling) are spaced over a distance of twenty-five feet of that portion. After 120 feet, a ten-foot offset occurs. One hundred and ten feet beyond, a widened area (six by twelve feet) was used to store tools and equipment. This tunnel followed a vein that did not yield ore, so it was abandoned. Miners using hand steel for drilling and a wheelbarrow for hauling rock to their dump went about as far as was practical with that kind of equipment. Their tunnel was deep enough to protect Pulaski's crew, but it never developed into a mine. It now is caved in at a depth of 250 feet, but it did not extend a great deal farther.

This tunnel also is significant as an example of an early hand-drilled prospect, providing important information as to how such work was done.