

***Prospect Adit  
Site 5ST1160***

Site 5ST1160 encompasses the archaeological remnants of a failed prospect adit. The site consists of the adit, its waste rock dump, a tunnel house platform, a privy pit, and a residence platform. The site, at around 9,900 feet elevation, lies on the west side of Brown Gulch a short distance north of the Cashier Mine and Mill. The adit and residence platform lie on the steep wall of Brown Gulch, and a road passes by on the gulch floor below. The site retains poor archaeological integrity due to natural decay.

Prospect Adit History

No archival information regarding the adit could be found. It seems likely that prospectors drove the adit during the mid-1880s, when the discovery of the Cashier ore body stimulated a small rush to Brown Gulch.

Prospect Adit Site Description

Prospectors drove the adit northwest, and the portal (F1) collapsed, creating a linear area of subsidence. Prospectors dumped waste rock at the mouth of the adit, forming a bench (F2) around 15 by 63 feet in area. They graded the top-surface flat and extended the eastern edge in the form of a lobe. The dump attained the size of 63 by 90 feet in area and 6 feet thick.

The adit featured a simple surface plant that consisted of little more than a frame tunnel house. The building, 15 by 20 feet in area, enclosed the tunnel portal and a basic blacksmith shop. Currently, the platform (F3) remains, and it features several large rocks along the southeast edge that supported the building's wall footers. The remnants of a stump used as an anvil block stand on the platform's south edge and mark the location of the shop. The platform's surface is overgrown, and the ground cover and duff conceal artifacts.

A privy stood isolated to the north of the adit. The privy building collapsed, leaving a pile of lumber and a pit (F4) around 3 feet in diameter and 6 inches deep. The absence of backdirt indicates that the pit is shallow and that buried deposits are unlikely.

The prospectors lived in a frame residence, now gone, northeast of the adit. The building stood on a cut-and-fill platform (F5) 15 by 27 feet in area, and the prospectors extended the north end 15 feet for outdoor activities. The platform is heavily overgrown, which conceals most artifacts. Regardless, some items extend downslope, and buried deposits are unlikely because of the steep mountainside.

The site possesses a relatively light artifact assemblage. Structural debris is associated with the tunnel house platform, privy pit, and residence platform. A small volume of domestic refuse also lies around the residence platform. According to cut nails and hole-in-cap cans assembled with lapped side seams, prospectors drove the adit during the 1880s. During the 1890s or 1900s, another party occupied the site and used wire nails to repair the structures. The members left hole-in-cap cans assembled with inner-rolled and soldered side seams around the residence platform.

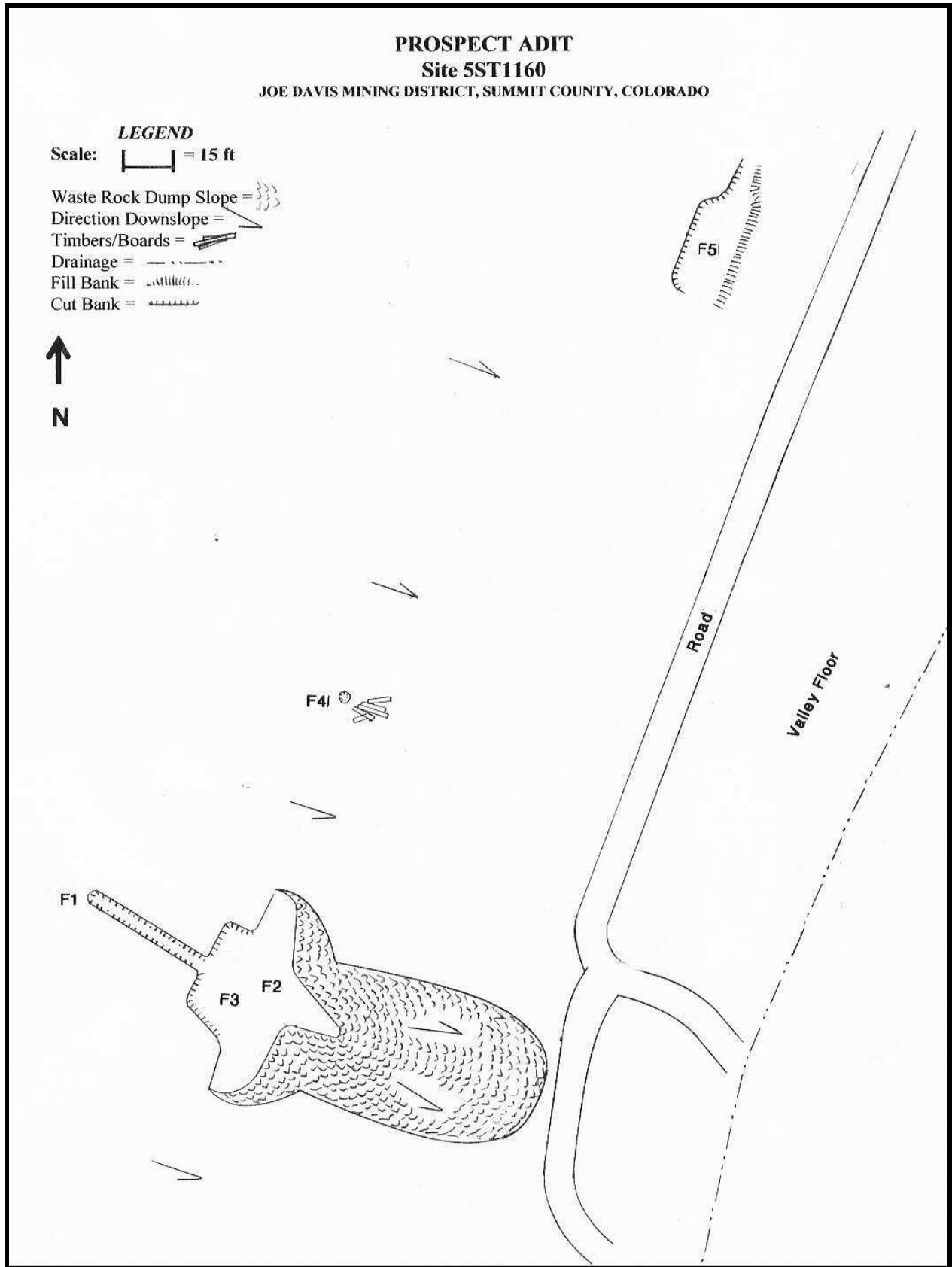


Figure 2.53: Plan view of a prospect adit site in Brown Gulch.

### Prospect Adit Site Interpretation

The adit was a failed attempt to find a mineralized vein and sample its content at depth. Prospectors drove the adit northwest to cross-cut the local geology, which trended northeast. The purpose of a cross-cut was to penetrate a maximum sampling of veins, faults, and rock formations. The waste rock dump contains a moderate amount of material, indicating that the adit was fairly lengthy relative to prospects. The prospectors installed a simple surface plant that was typical of minor exploratory operations. The surface plant represents a minimal capital investment, and the lack of an ore storage structure indicates that the adit was unproductive.

### Prospect Adit Site Significance and Management Recommendations

The prospect adit is not a significant historic resource for several reasons. First, it is a common site type in Summit County and elsewhere in Colorado. Second, due to natural decay, the site is not a sound example of a prospect adit. Third, the site is unlikely to offer meaningful information upon further study. For these reasons, the site is recommended ineligible. Management recommendations suggest no further cultural resource work.