

***Key West Mine
Site 5ST1164***

The Key West Mine was one of the richest hardrock operations owned by the Wapiti Mining Company. Between 1880 and 1911, lessees produced wire, crystallized, and free gold so rare that samples were sent to the Colorado Museum of Natural History, the Colorado School of Mines, and the Smithsonian Institute for display. Today, the site lies on the south side Georgia Gulch's head at 10,900 feet elevation. The surrounding mountainside is steep and forested with second-growth subalpine firs. The site consists of several collapsed tunnels, their associated waste rock dumps and little else. The entire site lost its integrity to bulldozing, low-grade sorting efforts, mineral sampling, and was therefore not recorded in detail. The site, however, is a contributing element of a historic landscape on Farncomb Hill's northeast slope.

Key West Mine Site Description

The mine features numerous, small piles of waste rock that coalesced into a hummocky veneer 354 by 363 feet in area. Someone bulldozed several switchback roads through the dump from bottom to top and bulldozed individual mounds of material into terraces. While the mine originally featured at least several adits, none could be confirmed due to the extensive bulldozing. A recreational road crosses the site's bottom, and the main road from Parkville to the top of Farncomb Hill crosses the site's head. At the bottom, the last mining operation, which was recent, erected a loading dock with log cribbing and waste rock fill, and built an ore chute. Both structures, as well as most of the refuse on site, are recent.

Key West Mine Site Significance and Management Recommendations

The Key West Mine lost its historic integrity to bulldozing, and no identifiable features remain except for the waste rock dump. As a result, the site is not a sound example of a hardrock mine, is no longer significant as a historic resource, and is recommended ineligible for the NRHP and the SRHP. Management recommendations suggest no further considerations as a historic resource.