

***Gold Flake Mine***  
***Site 5ST373***

The Gold Flake Mine was one of the richest hardrock operations owned by the Wapiti Mining Company. In the mine, 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 at the head of American Gulch a short distance upslope from the Wapiti Mining Company Office (5ST372) and the Victoria Mill (5ST1169). The surrounding mountainside is steep and forested with second-growth lodgepole pines. The site consists of two collapsed tunnels, their associated waste rock dumps, and little else. The lower tunnel and dump have been completely bulldozed, and the upper waste rock dump has been sorted for low-grade ore. As a result, the site possesses little integrity and was therefore not recorded in detail. The site, however, is a contributing element of a historic landscape on Farncomb Hill's northeast slope.

Gold Flake Mine Site Description

The mine featured an upper and lower tunnel. The lower tunnel, driven to undercut gold-bearing ground, manifests as a bulldozed terrace at the nadir of American Gulch's floor. The terrace is crescent-shaped in conformity with the drainage topography, and is 50 by 165 feet in area. The tunnel portal and the area where the surface plant was located have been completely bulldozed, leaving no historic attributes. The bulldozing was in preparation for recent mining activities, and the mining outfit left debris probably unrelated to the tunnel's operation. The debris includes structural steel, timbers, sheet iron, and welded steel parts.

The upper tunnel retains little integrity due to both bulldozing and natural decay. No surface plant features are readily apparent, and only a handful of historic artifacts remain. The tunnel portal collapsed, was reopened with an excavator, then collapsed again, and now manifests as two trenches forming a Y. The waste rock dump consists of loose slate material and features several lobes totaling 110 by 170 feet in area. The top-surface is hummocky due to bulldozing, recent sampling, and deposition of additional material. Expected artifacts and surface plant features such as a shop platform have been destroyed.

Gold Flake Mine Site Significance and Management Recommendations

The Gold Flake Mine lost its historic integrity to bulldozing, natural decay, and sorting for low-grade ore. No identifiable features remain except for a collapsed tunnel and waste rock dump, and the site possesses a poor artifact assemblage. 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.