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INITIAL INVESTIGATIONS OF POSSIBLE HISTORIC CHINESE HABITATION
OF SITE 24SA0122 (POACHER GULCH)

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Professional Paper

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Abstract of Initial Investigations of Possible Historic Chinese Habitation of Site 24SA2122 (Poacher Gulch)

Chair: Dr. Kelly Dixon

Site 24SA0122 is composed of a historic cabin footprint, road, trail, and masonry terraces. It is located in Poacher Gulch, a narrow North East trending drainage in Western Montana. The focus of this work has been on researching the masonry locus, and attempting to sift facts from scant documentary evidence about the area in order to create a National Register of Historic Places nomination for this site. The site is very similar to known Overseas Chinese gardening and mining loci in Idaho (Fee 1991).

Archeological explorations undertaken by a joint team of Passport in Time volunteers from the Lolo National Forest and students from the University of Montana in the fall of 2006 were inconclusive. Future study of the area is planned for 2007, again as a joint venture between the University of Montana and the Lolo National Forest. Research goals included determining who inhabited the site, what it was used for, and creating a chronology of use for the Poacher Gulch Area. Investigations are still ongoing, but currently a rich folklore of Chinese in the area, combined with the strong visual similarity of the masonry locus to Idaho's Chinese Gardens, makes it possible to infer that the site's builders may have been Chinese. This work summarizes archeological and historical investigations undertaken at this site in 2005 and 2006.

National Register of Historic Places
Poacher Gulch Site (24SA0122)
Narrative Description

Introduction

Poacher Creek has cut a narrow, damp, secluded gulch through the flanks of Eddy Mountain in Western Montana. It provides a constant flow of water to nourish healthy stands of western red cedar, spruce, and scrub maple, which line the steep walls of the drainage. During the historic period, skilled masons, whose identities are buried in local legend, prospected for gold, built masonry terraces of local granite and perhaps cultivated gardens in what is now an inhospitable location for cultivated plants.

Site 24SA0122 is located in T20N, R28W, NW NE S 2 (Insert Quad map name and date). The site is located nearly a mile up Poacher Gulch from its junction with the Eddy Creek Road. The most immediately eye catching portion of the site consists of a cabin footprint, two possible shed footprints and drylaid stone terraces (the masonry locus), historic road bed, and placer and hard rock mining activities. Preliminary surveys by the Forest Service and the University of Montana found artifacts that indicate a late 1800 to early 1900's occupation. These, however, were in the top 0-5 cm of fill in the terraces, and test excavations yielded no information. (McLeod 1979; Chris Merritt Pers. Comm. 2006). A field school and Passport in Time (PIT) project are planned for the summer of 2007, through the Lolo National Forest and the University of Montana, and at that time further explorations will take place, with the goal of establishing, among other things, an exact historical chronology for the site.

When visited by C. Milo McLeod, Forest Archeologist of the Lolo National Forest, in 1979, the cabin was in much better repair than when it was observed prior to the 2006 Pit Project. According to the description in the site form (McLeod 1979), the cabin was larger than a “typical” placer mining cabin, at 24 feet x 15 feet (7.3 x 4.6 meters), with an excavated foundation and axe and saw cut logs, round nails, and a galvanized stove pipe. At the time of the original investigation there was a historic dump as well as a 10” section of water pipe present. In the fall of 2005, field observations indicate that the cabin remains had deteriorated, yet the foundation excavation and a few logs with axe cut ends remain nearly buried under a thick layer of brush.

The historic road bed is also still visible and useable. In the early 1970’s, the lower portion of the historic road was closed by the Forest Service when they closed the two track which extended up the hill from the Eddy Creek Road gate which still connects to the historic Poacher Gulch road approximately ¼ mile southwest from the cabin locus. Less than ¼ mile southwest from the site locus, the original bed of the road is undisturbed, and portions of an older road or the Forest Service trail mentioned by McLeod in the site report (McLeod 1979) are also visible. The historic road bed appears to terminate at the upper terrace of the Poacher Gulch Site, and a well maintained trail continues upslope from the site, offset about 5 meters (17.4 feet) north from the terminus of the roadbed at the South East corner of Feature 1 (Figure. 2).

The modern landscape of Poacher Gulch appears to have had extensive resource related modification. The lower third of the gulch displays stumps with the typical characteristics of crosscut saw usage, (i.e., they are cut off at waist height), as well as significant chainsaw logging. Modern woodcutting rather than commercial logging influenced the Forest Service decision to close the two track. (Marc Childress Pers. Comm.. 2006). The middle and lower upper thirds of the gulch display evidence of placer mining in the creek, as well as prospect holes on the hill directly above the terraces alongside the trail. There is also an irregular adit located near the waterfall in the creek approximately one fourth mile East North East from the stone structures. Artifacts found in this area appear typical of pre-1900 mining (McLeod 1979), and include lead soldered cans, bottles, wood cook stove parts, and ceramic fragments, as well as smooth wire strung between several trees. The latter suggests possible use as a corral or temporary livestock enclosure.

The terrace features of the masonry locus represent the portion of the site with the most research potential. They are also the most endangered portion of the site, due to modern pot hunting and structural instability due to natural forces. These structures or terraces are built of drylaid local stone, carefully fitted together displaying squared corners and straight lines. Large, well established cedar and spruce trees, with an understory of thick brush and moss obscure surface features of the site. If not removed, this vegetation will endanger the integrity of terrace walls within 10 to 15 years as trees begin to die and fall. Additionally, despite the formal road closure, the canyon is used by hunters throughout much of the year as evidenced by recent trash scattered around the terrace area and

throughout the canyon along the closed historic road and jeep trail, which remains the only practical travel route. The cabin feature is in ruins, but the foundation and remnant axe cut logs are still visible. Given this, preservation measures for this part of the site may not be a practical option. However, the terrace portion of the site will have its potential for conservation explored in 2007.

As per the requirements of the cooperative agreement between the Lolo National Forest and the University of Montana, much of the hazard vegetation was removed in the spring of 2006 by a crew of University of Montana archeologists, Forest Service experts, and experienced volunteers. Underbrush down to forest duff level was cleared off of the masonry locus to facilitate mapping. Larger diameter trees were felled if it was determined that their continued growth and future death would pose a threat to wall integrity, either from root growth and movement, or in the event that they should come down and tear out portions of wall construction.

In September of 2006, an advanced PIT project led by Assistant Professor Kelly Dixon and PH.D student Christopher Merritt of the University of Montana and C. Milo McLeod, forest archeologist of the Lolo National Forest, in conjunction with the Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger District, spent the week of September 10 through 15 at Poacher Gulch. They performed survey and excavation of the masonry locus and surrounding areas. Their goals were to find definitive evidence of who built and occupied the site and why it was located in such an isolated local. An additional goal was to prepare the way for a full scale investigation in 2007. Small scale test excavation was undertaken, and soil samples

were collected from the terraces for pollen analysis. The results of the pollen sample analyses were not available at the time this document was prepared. The site is potentially eligible for the NRHP under criterion “D” pending further pollen analysis and archeological work. In addition, the site remains potentially eligible for the NRHP under criterion “C”. To be eligible under criterion “C”, a site must embody distinctive characteristics of type, period, or method of construction. The terraced masonry construction is unique in western Montana, and is the only currently known site in the region. It is comparable to sites in the Warren mining district of Idaho with known Chinese occupation and construction (Fee 1991).

Setting

The Poacher Gulch site is located in a northeast/ southwest trending drainage which has a perennial stream running through it. It is an extremely remote location by current standards, as the Eddy Creek Road is located 45 minutes to an hour from the town of Plains by modern transportation methods. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the site’s period of significance, it would have been even more remote. At the time, The nearest town was Weeksville, a historic railroad camp which thrived during the site’s period of significance. It was located at the mouth of Weeksville Creek, and across the Clark Fork River from Eddy Creek and Poacher Gulch.

The vegetation consists of Western Red Cedar and Douglas Fir, with an understory of maple, alder, and snowberry. Currently, the gulch gets very little sun along the length of it due to its extreme narrowness, as well as the thick overstory. For this reason, it is

cooler and damper than the surrounding area. Most of the masonry construction takes place on a topographic bench which rises about three meters above the creek bed, providing a flatter though down creek sloping surface than the rest of the canyon walls. The walls of the canyon are composed of loose pieces of granite with quartz inclusions. There are also some larger outcroppings of solid stone spaced irregularly along the hillsides, which provide growing space for aspen and maple trees.

Type, Style, Method of Construction

The masonry locus of the Poacher Gulch site is constructed of the native granite, which occurs on the slopes above and across from the locus. Each stone appears to have been carefully selected to fit the purpose of the builders. The general impression, upon viewing the site, is that someone maintained attention to detail and who had the skills of a mason, constructed a sturdy and aesthetically pleasing structure in this isolated gulch. Some of the stones used in construction, particularly those used in construction of Feature 1, are nearly a meter in length by .3 meters (3.48 feet x 1.2 feet) in width. It is possible that they could have been positioned by one person, but unlikely. Further, there are at least two, possibly three pit structures which are typically associated with habitation styles of the Chinese (Features 3, 5, and 10) (Fee 1991). In addition to the terrace structures, the trail, road, and wooden structures, which collectively indicate the presence of a historic environment as opposed to a single site. The wooden structures display milled lumber and wire nails, and are fallen to grade. Construction components and architectural remains are detailed in the following section.

Size and Significant Features

The site's dimensions, according to the site form (McLeod 1979) are 200 x 200 meters (640 x 640 feet). Further exploration and detailed survey of the surrounding drainage may considerably enlarge this estimate. The most notable study units are described below, and keyed with the points noted in the recent site map (Figure 2).

The open areas (noted on the map as OA) are distinctively square areas created by single coursed walls of masonry, often with a lower wall forming another terrace surrounding it. They are described separately from the terraces, as the terraces tend to be rectangular and comparatively narrow. The open areas appear to be directly associated with pit features, whereas the terraces are not directly adjacent to pit features (Figure 2). This creates a somewhat "stepped" effect on one to two sides. They are smooth and flat on top, with generally less sapling growth than on other areas of the site such as the terrace features.

Feature 1 is located at the uppermost portion of the site. It is the final masonry structure one finds when hiking into the site, and also is located at the end of the wagon road, which pinches off directly below it. It is a square with a lower terrace surrounding it on two sides. It is not associated with a pit structure like the other two similar features (Feature 4, Feature 2). It is the only structure with extant wooden architecture, in the form of a roughly jointed peeled log or rail structure which is nailed to a tree located just off the north east corner of Feature 1. Feature 16, the trail, takes off from the South East corner of the upper open area created by this feature, ascending steeply up the hill. It

appears that this structure was created by building the lower retaining wall, then filling it to create a flat surface, upon which the upper retaining wall was built and filled with soil from the hillside directly adjacent to it.

Feature 2 is located directly adjacent to pit Feature 3. It is a square, level area approximately 3 x 3 meters (9.6 x 9.6 feet), composed of an upper retaining wall forming the surface, and a lower wall forming a terrace. Both walls appear to be of single stone construction, with fill taken from the adjacent hillside, and possibly the adjacent pit feature (Feature 3).

Feature 4 is located adjacent to Feature 5 and pit Feature 3. Like Features 1 and 2, it is a square, level feature with a lower terrace on its (streamside) and an upper terrace forming a flat space between pit features. It is square in plan view and backs up into the hill. On its north side, it appears to provide a space for a sunken entryway into Feature 3.

Feature 3 is a sunken, roughly square pit that appears to have been excavated in to the hillside and the ground surface, with masonry walls built up around it. Currently, it is approximately two meters deep. It, like the open areas, is surrounded on two sides by a lower retaining wall which forms a terrace. It has an opening on the west side with remnants of milled lumber associated with it, which may represent a door frame. This lumber contains wire nails, indicating that its construction dates from as early as the 1890's (Priess 1973). Further study may show that this structure is both superficially and deeply similar to the Chinese dwellings described by Fee in his 1991 work on

Idaho's Chinese gardens. Visually, the masonry terraces appear to perform the same function (i.e. to provide a flat space in a narrow, secluded canyon for gardening). The lack of artifacts found during testing in the fall of 2006, as well as the lack of specific historical references to Poacher Gulch, make it difficult to determine the function of this feature at this time.

Feature 5 is very similar to Feature 3 in construction. It also consists of two built up terraces forming a square, with a sunken area entered from what appears to be an entry way framed by collapsed milled lumber on the north side. It is currently filled with wall fall and down trees, as well as brush and moss. Its condition appears stable.

Feature 6 includes a course of four stairs leading from the bottom of Feature 8 (terraces) to the upper terrace. They are constructed of fitted slabs of shale, most likely from the talus slope above the site. They are covered by moss, but the risers appear in good and stable condition, as do the sidewalls.

In the fall of 2006, Feature 8, the tentatively named "garden terraces," appears to be in stable condition. Now that the bulk of the hazard trees have been removed, current monitoring intervals should be sufficient to make sure that the walls do not fall victim to vandalism.

The cabin footprint (no feature number assigned) is in a much depleted condition of collapse. Most of the lumber will soon deteriorate entirely due to natural processes of

decay. The road and trail are in varying condition due to forest management needs. In some places they are entirely obscured by dozer work, and in others the trail and historic road are obscured by tree growth and erosion. The general course of the road is still visible, and much of it is still useable. The exploratory mine pits, and placer activity in the gulch are slowly being erased by time and erosion, but are still visible.

Site Narrative/History

The portion of the Lower Clark Fork River valley where Poacher Gulch and its associated sites are located has a rich history. The Clark Fork River has served as a trade and travel route between the Great Plains on the east and the Columbia River Plateau to the west. Native Americans used the corridor long before David Thompson, of the Hudson Bay Trading Company, explored the region in 1809, and built a trading post known as Saleesh House three miles up river from Thompson Falls. In 1823 Finan McDonald and John Work established another trading post named Flathead Post whose exact location has since been lost (Moore and Gray 1993). Accounts state that it may have been located across the river from Swamp Creek, a tributary of the Clark Fork River about 5 miles upstream of the mouth of Eddy Creek, and its tributary, Poacher Creek. See GCM's 1993 work, "*Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation of Weeksville West Federal Aid Project F6-1 (NP)*" for a complete prehistoric and historic chronology of this area. The remaining portion of this NRHP nomination will specifically focus on Poacher Gulch. The paucity of historical records specifically related to this site requires a context

constructed of a combination of archeological remains and general historical records for the region.

The site form for the Poacher Gulch Site (McLeod 1979) states that this site is an example of Anglo/Chinese placer and hard rock mining in the American West from the 1880s through the early 1900s. It may show two distinct periods of occupation. One and probably the first was a substantial placer mining operation from 1880-1900.

According to information from Fred Cavill, Plains Ranger District, Lolo National Forest (McLeod 1979), the stone structures were possibly built by Chinese railroad workers who quit the railroad and worked the abandoned claim at a slightly later date. Other than local folklore and visual appearance of the site, there is little archeological evidence for this interpretation.

Further exploration of the site and the canyon must establish a chronology of use for the area. Surface survey shows that there were certainly several periods of use; although it is not possible to tell precisely when on the timeline of use they occurred, other than the fact that they generally date from the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries.

These activities include both historic and modern small scale firewood cutting and logging. Additionally, the gulch experienced placer mining and prospecting, as evidenced by the prospect holes scattered across the upper gulch and the single adit constructed approximately a quarter mile upstream from the masonry locus. There was also the period which saw the building of the stone terrace structures, which appear to have had at least a primary building and use phase, and a secondary use phase

characterized by crimped cans, and mason jars deposited in the 0-5 cm level of the terrace fill. These artifacts are typical of a mid to early 20th century hunting or trapping camp (Fike 2002). Historic and modern use of the canyon for hunting lends credence to this secondary use profile.

Despite the archeological evidence of mining in the area, there are no detailed patented mining claim records of this section of Poacher Gulch. There is a single existing map, entitled “Parts of the Kaniksu, Kootenai, and Lolo National Forests (former Cabinet National Forest)” from 1956 that suggests that that area was indeed part of a claim. Unfortunately, that map is the only evidence for this area being patented, and no accompanying records have been found.

The Chinese have a significant history in Montana and the American West. They came primarily as miners or railroad workers, and were often subject to harsh treatment by the local Anglo-American community. A classic example of discrimination was conducted against the Chinese by those who feared the Chinese would take jobs from Europeans in California. California was where much legislation, as well as popular feeling against the Chinese began (Lee 1960) (Tung 1974) (McLeod 1948). Labor unions often led the anti- Chinese feeling (Kung 1962).

Conversly, there are records of Chinese immigrants becoming tolerated and valued members of the community (Fee 1991) (Zhu 1997). In Montana, the greatest bulk of the Chinese population was located in Butte, where the Chinese worked as resterauteurs, ran

laundry businesses, worked as doctors, and performed many other valuable services to the community. There are numerous examples of Chinese gardens of the type described by Fee (1991) throughout Montana, and many of these sites will be surveyed and compared to Poacher Gulch in the future. A significant population of Chinese lived near Butte in German Gulch, where they mined and produced terraced and masonry structures similar to those found in Poacher Gulch and in the Warren Mining District in Idaho (Meyer 1992).

Outside of Butte, there is significant folklore relating many sites in western Montana and North Idaho to Chinese occupation. These range from “Chinese” stills on Rock Island near present day Thompson Falls (Christopher Merritt pers. comm., 2006), to suspected graves (Karen Pickering pers. Comm., 2006).

In 1870, work began on the Northern Pacific Railroad. In 1873, due to a failure of fundraising, work halted. In 1878, investors, including Fredrick Billings, raised 40 million dollars in bond sales to continue construction. Soon European investor Henry Villard bought a majority of the shares in the Northern Pacific Railroad. By Aug. 22, 1882, the railroad was completed, although the official opening was not slated to take place until September. 8, 1883 (Czajka 2006). The Chinese contribution to this part of Western expansion was never officially memorialized by the Northern Pacific Railroad at the time.

According to Moore and Grey (1993), labor shortages influenced the Northern Pacific Railroad to import workers. Of the twenty-five thousand guest workers recorded, over half were of Chinese ethnicity. These men were primarily employed in grading and clearing the railroad bed. Between Missoula and Thompson Falls, Eddy, Hammond, and Co. of Missoula had the contract for clearing grade and providing lumber. Eddy, Hammond, and Co. also operated a sawmill was erected at Eddy, near Weeksville, in the vicinity of but across the river from, the mouth of Poacher Gulch.

The portion of the Northern Pacific Railroad that was constructed up the Clark Fork River between Thompson Falls and Plains was purported to have the most difficult and dangerous terrain in Montana (Moore and Gray 1993). This was primarily due to a rock formation on the North side of the river directly across from the Eddy Creek and Poacher Gulch drainage. It was known as “Bad Rock,” because of the difficulty that early travelers had getting around it on their way along the Kootenai Trail, which runs over the rock formation.

Before the Northern Pacific Railroad came through, there was a wagon road running below Bad Rock which was funded by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and Portland Merchants as a major travel and trade route through this portion of the west. (David Roshelo, Sanders County Historical Society pers. comm., 2006).

A school newspaper article from the Thompson Falls “*Cliffdweller*,” quoted in the Sanders County *Ledger* of Thursday 2 February 2006 discusses the railroad’s impacts on

Thompson Falls and surrounding communities. It states that Chinese railroad workers never worked on the actual railroad building, but were only employed to cut wood to power the locomotives. It further states that large piles of wood were left every three miles along the tracks for the engines to refuel. Other sources, speaking of the Central Pacific Railway's construction, state that the Chinese were given the most difficult and dangerous jobs of any of the railroad workers, but does not elaborate upon what those might be (e.g.,Czjaka 2006).

As late as the early 1900's, there are mentions of Chinese railroad workers in the area. The *Plainsman* newspaper of Saturday 18 January 1896 says "The Chinese work crew from Jocko, or thereabouts, has been hauled off the job and sidetracked here for the present". An earlier article talks about the celebration of the Chinese New Year in Plains by railroad workers. "*The Chinese New Year opened up at 12:05 midnight Wednesday and so did a horrible din of firecrackers and bombs from the cars of the Chinese laborers at present sidetracked here. The cars are decorated at night with the peculiar lanterns of the race, and for a while John will have his holiday fun, "allee samee Mellican mans"*". (*The Plainsman* Saturday 15 February 1896).

The Chinese were subject in Montana to the Exclusion Act of 1882, making it very difficult for them after that time to become citizens. This legislation was fueled by claims from organized labor that the Chinese were taking jobs from European workers because of their willingness to work for lower wages. Additionally, the Chinese refusal early on to assimilate into American culture lead influenced discomfort between European and Asian

populations which occasionally flared in to violence. Butte, Montana, with the states largest Chinese population, was the epicenter for anti-Chinese feeling. In 1882, William Owsley was elected Butte's fourth mayor, on the slogan "Down with cheap Chinese Labor" (Flaherty 1987).

Chinese people were not allowed to patent new claims in Montana between 1872 and 1874 due to the Exclusion Act of 1872, which was struck down in 1874. However, in Butte, where there was a much higher Chinese population, ways were found by both Anglo miners and Chinese miners for the Chinese to continue working claims (Meyer 1992). Generally, the Chinese would mortgage a claim which would then be nominally owned by Anglos, but in reality worked by Chinese. However, there were several instances of outright sale of claims from an Anglo to a Chinese during the 1872-1874 period (Meyer 1992). As in other parts of the country, particularly California, they often worked "used up" claims as well after the European owners had given up and moved on.

While there are no period accounts of that happening in the Plains area of western Montana, it certainly seems plausible that practices of this nature could have occurred. Many of the residents of the Plains area engaged in small scale mining in the hills on both sides of the Clark Fork River as evidenced by the many small adits which are still visible. There were a number of early citizens of Plains engaged in low level mining in drainages similar to Poacher Gulch, such as Combest, Bemish, and Eddy creek drainages. Plains is not currently known as a mining area; however, adits and shafts, as well as small placer operations, dot the surrounding hills and creek drainages.

Additionally, the Plains Valley is located directly east as the crow flies from the mining districts around Wallace, Idaho, which did have a significant Chinese population engaged in mining (Fee 1991). It is also in close proximity to the Bitterroot and Camas Mining Sections, where miners were generally looking for gold.

Period of Significance

While there is a significant lack of documentary evidence declaring period of significance for this particular site, tree ring dates and artifact deposition indicates that the final uses of the terraces were later than expected. Of seven trees tested in September of 2006, only one was found to be greater than 100 years old. The ages of the other trees tested ranged from 50 to 81 years old. This indicates that they started putting on dateable growth rings between 1925 and 1956. Because these trees were growing within the confines of the masonry terraces, it appears that at the latest, the terraces ceased being used actively by 1925. Most likely, it was slightly earlier, as it takes a few years for trees to grow to the DBH height which is the standard location of a core sample. No doubt there was some time between habitation and the establishment of seedlings as well. See Figure 3 (Dendrochronology data).

While there are no mining claim records of Poacher Gulch, archeological evidence of mining indicates that the area was prospected and worked sometime during the later Nineteenth and Early twentieth century. How the Chinese may have come to know about the area remains unknown. It could be speculated that Chinese people may have heard of

the workings in the area while employed on the railroad or at the camp of Weeksville. When the opportunity arose, they may have moved up there to try a little prospecting of their own, after the European miners had moved on.

Zhu in his 1997 article “No Need to Rush: The Chinese, Placer Mining, and the Western Environment” states that “The first challenge to the Chinese, as to anyone living in a foreign land, was to remain healthy.” He further explains that the Chinese ate a more vegetable rich and high protein varied diet than did white miners. They maintained this healthy eating style by utilizing labor intensive, adaptive gardening techniques.

Vegetables were scarce and expensive in frontier mining camps, and the Chinese gained economic success not only through mining, but also by selling their produce to other community members. Zhu further states that the Chinese exploited other natural resources, such as timber when mining was slow, selling firewood commercially.

This appears to fit the usage profile of Poacher Gulch, as it bears evidence of placer mining, logging (both historic and modern), and gardening. While it may be impossible to establish a definitive chronology of use for the Poacher Gulch site, what is certain is that it has seen much use in its history. Most, if not all, of this use is undocumented in written records. The terraces fit the construction method discussed in depth by Fee (1991) in the Warren Mining District of Idaho. The terraces of Poacher Gulch are located in a narrow canyon, and constructed on a shale slope near a creek for water. Tree ring dates taken from trees on the masonry locus indicate that all trees growing on the terraces are less than 100 years old (Figure 1). Surrounded by placer diggings and cross cut stumps,

there are enough building footprints (Feature 3, Feature 5) and three wooden structures, around the terraces to qualify as a small community, if they are found to be dwellings.

This site may be eligible for consideration for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion “C” at this time. NRHP Criterion “C” states that the site must possess distinctive character of type, period, method of construction or represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. Future archeological study may reveal that the Poacher Gulch site may also be eligible for consideration under Criterion “D”, which states that the site has yielded or is likely to yield information important to history or pre-history (National Register Bulletin Number 15).

Such a unique site deserves archeological investigation to determine where it fits in the history of Montana, and the recognition and protection a determination of eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places would provide.

Insert Figure 1. Overview of Site 24SA0122.

Insert Figure 2. Map of Site 24SA0122.

Figure 3.

Dendrochronology For Poacher Gulch (24SA0122)
(^) is Tree symbol on map
Mark Childress, Robert Childress, Jennifer Childress
14 March 2006

^1	18.3 DBH	72 rings	Douglas Fir c.a. 1934
2	14.6 DBH	52 rings	Douglas Fir
3	60 Rings		
4	Five feet of NW 24 DBH center not reached	103 rings	Douglas Fir
5	73 feet east of center of road	12.6 DBH 73 rings	Grand Fir
6	93 Ft. East from center of Road.	16.5 DBH 81 rings	Douglas Fir
7	2.3 DBH	35 rings	Spruce

Insert additional figures (e.g., Location map on USGS topographic map; individual feature photos).

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