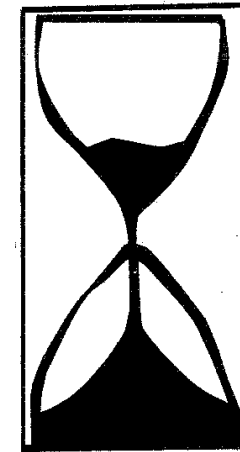
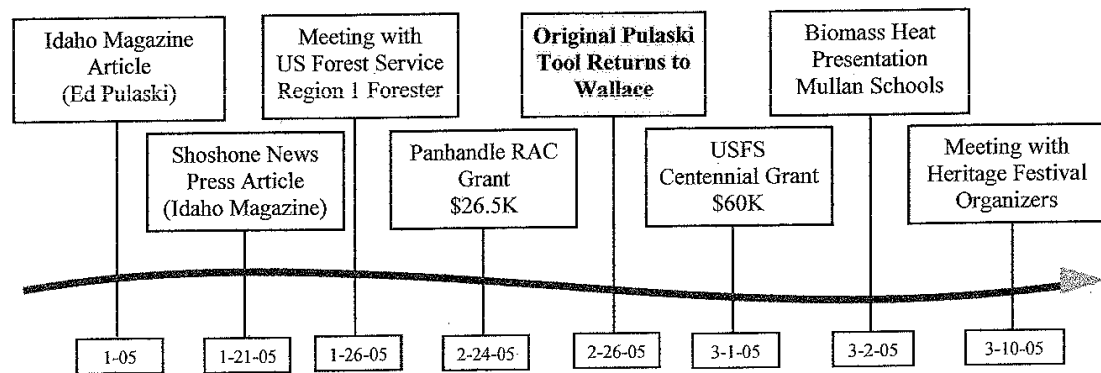
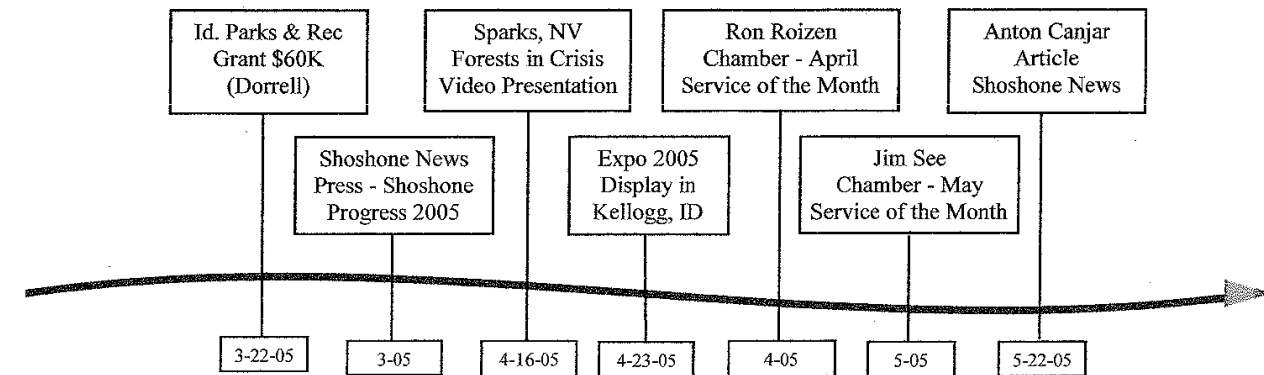


Pulaski Project Accomplishments & Activities Timeline

January - May 2005



and News & Media Coverage of the Great Fire of 1910



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A Rich Mining History

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who we are

Ed Pulaski:

Inventor, North Idaho Firefighting Hero

By Dave Goins

"Towering flames burned conifer stands like prairie grass and came over the ridges, as one survivor recalled, with the sound of a thousand trains rushing over a thousand steel trestles. One ranger said simply, the mountains roared."

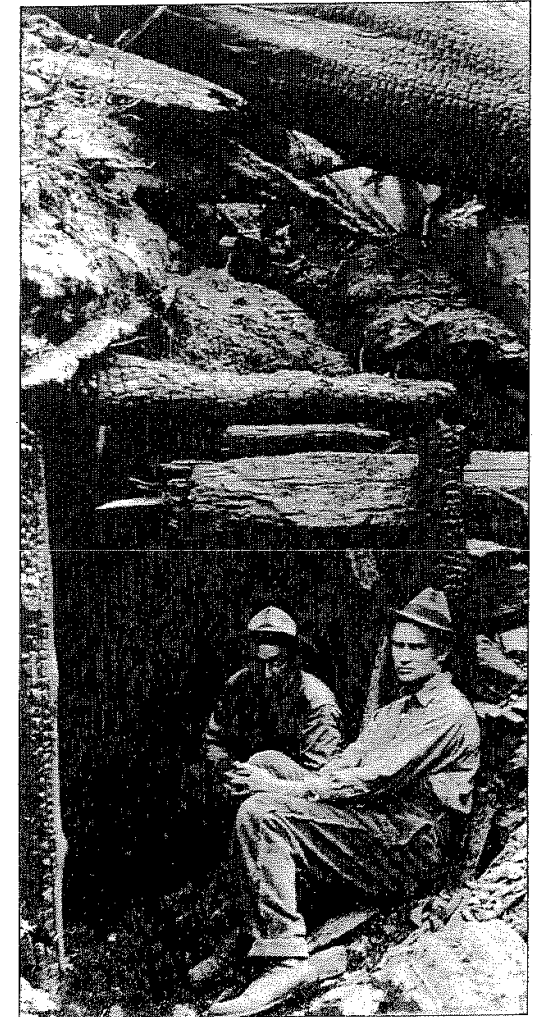
—From *Year of the Fires: The Story of the Great Fires of 1910*,
by Stephen J. Pyne
Published by Viking Penguin, 2001

During a mammoth fire more than ninety-four years ago, forest ranger Edward Pulaski combined the guts to lead a retreat at the right time with a working knowledge of the wilderness in North Idaho's Silver Valley. It was in the midst of the largest forest fire in United States history. It was no time for slipshod judgment and machismo actions. In guiding a crew of firefighters into an abandoned mining tunnel about three miles southwest of Wallace, Pulaski saved his own life, and an estimated thirty-nine others. Ringing true: the age-worn maxim that discretion really is the better part of valor.

The wrong attitude then would have been human arrogance in the face of nature, such as what was made evident by the tragic decision of the fishing boat's captain in the 2000 movie entitled *The Perfect Storm*.

Facing the brunt of the "Great Fires of 1910", which charred more than three million acres in the western United States, Pulaski the firefighting supervisor understood what constitutes

In the aftermath: At the primitive Nicholson Mine entrance, where Ed Pulaski and an estimated thirty-nine other firefighters survived the "Big Blowup" fire of 1910.



who we are

foolish behavior for humans caught in the jaws of some natural conditions. Pulaski and his firefighting crew, in the early years of the U.S. Forest Service, were confronted with an outdoor inferno, commonly dubbed, the "Big Blowup" of August 20-21, 1910, that would claim the lives of more than six-dozen firefighters in the forests of North Idaho. The frenzied blaze had gained momentum from hurricane-force winds of up to eighty miles per hour, by some estimates. Many firefighters were trapped between Wallace and Avery. The ferocious, wind-fueled fire, that also torched large portions of western Montana, scoured vast acreages in the Coeur d'Alene and St. Joe national forests.

Ron Roizen, director of the Silver Valley-based Pulaski Trail Project—which aims to restore the escape area site, and eventually create an interpretive center—put that dire situation into perspective.

"The one thing that strikes me about that is the immense size of nature, compared to man," Roizen said. "It shows us truly how small we are in the face of a truly implacable natural foe—the fire."

Pulaski and his firefighting crew, in the early years of the U.S. Forest Service, were confronted with an outdoor inferno . . .

Roizen, who said that at least one million acres of North Idaho forestland were burned by the fire, noted that the gargantuan wind-driven blaze sent a large firebrand sailing over the town of Wallace. That firebrand landed in Wallace, and subsequently led to the destruction of a large portion of the town, a Silver Valley mining camp founded twenty-six years earlier. Wallace was saved from burning entirely when the wind shifted to the east, Roizen said.

Pulaski's move on August 20, 1910, allowed most of one crew (estimated by Roizen at forty-six men) to escape with their lives amid the firestorm. Exact counts are difficult to ascertain, because the public records were sketchy in those days.

One thing, at least, is certain: the raging fire had trapped Pulaski's firefighting crew on the West Fork of Placer

who we are

Creek—now on the National Register of Historic Places.

So Pulaski directed the crew through the mountains, across a primitive, thicketed trail, and into the entrance at the Nicholson Mine, also next to Placer Creek. Pulaski's decision method wasn't a focus group. It wasn't a decision by committee. It wasn't an election. It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside Nicholson Mine at gunpoint to keep them from running out, into the fire. Ostensibly, that saved most of their lives. The crew was further endangered by the wildfire when timbers at the mine entrance caught fire. What was Pulaski's response? According to the language of House Concurrent

It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside Nicholson Mine at gunpoint to keep them from running out, into the fire.

Resolution 39, (a tribute to the Pulaski's heroism, and promotion of the Pulaski Trail Project restoration effort) passed by the 2004 Idaho Legislature: "Pulaski beat out the flames with horse blankets and water from the mine floor that he gathered with his hat." Spent, both from battling the fire of now-mythic proportions, and the cumulative effects of the heat, smoke, and gas, members of the crew (including Pulaski himself) passed out—unconscious, in the tunnel. After having been mistaken for dead by a messenger who left the old mining tunnel in the middle of the night, according to Pyne's account, most woke up, early the next morning, August 21. They managed to stagger back to

Wallace, by Pulaski's own account, most with shoes burned off their feet; their clothes turned to scorched rags. "All of us were hurt or burned," wrote Pulaski, who later spent nearly two months in the hospital, suffering from blindness and pneumonia.

Pulaski's earlier decision to act, based on sound judgment and knowledge, was the pure act to survive. But even with Pulaski's quick thinking, not everyone lived to tell the tale.

Five men died in the mining tunnel. One man died in the woods, on the way to the tunnel. An educated estimate of forty, a number including Pulaski himself, survived.

Roizen reckons that the five men who died in the mining tunnel may

have actually drowned, after passing out. Their deaths may have occurred during attempts to cool themselves down with pools of water inside the mining tunnel.

"Interestingly, it appears that the ones in the tunnel who died, actually died from drowning," Roizen said. "And I think that's a pretty good speculation."

Would they all have perished, if not for Pulaski's decisiveness?

"I think that's pretty certain," said Roizen, who has studied the infamous fire.

Even though Pulaski saved the day, as mentioned earlier, he definitely didn't escape the experience physically unscathed. Said Mullan School

District counselor Jim See, president of the Pulaski Trail Project: "He did suffer some permanent damage to his eyes, and his breathing, and was never the same, which he never did get compensated for by the government, or the Forest Service."

In retrospect, See added about the Pulaski Trail Project: "And part of it, working with the Forest Service, is maybe to pay back a little bit of a debt they owe Pulaski. We've discussed that."

By most accounts, however, Pulaski was a reluctant hero, given little to talk about himself, let alone the issue of additional compensation for his heroic deed. It was the consensus among sources drawn on for this article

that Pulaski, estimated to be in his early 40s at the time of the fire, only endured praise for his actions during the firestorm.

"He never made much of a deal out of his heroic rescue of his crew," Roizen said. "He wrote about it only once, in 1923, when [*American Forests and Forest Life* magazine] actually held a contest, for forest rangers to tell about their most exciting experiences as forest rangers. At that point, from the sources that we have, Pulaski was still suffering infirmities from the 1910 fire, and owed medical bills."

Pulaski's wife, Emma Pulaski, had suggested that her husband enter an essay contest to recoup some of his medical expenses. He did. And won

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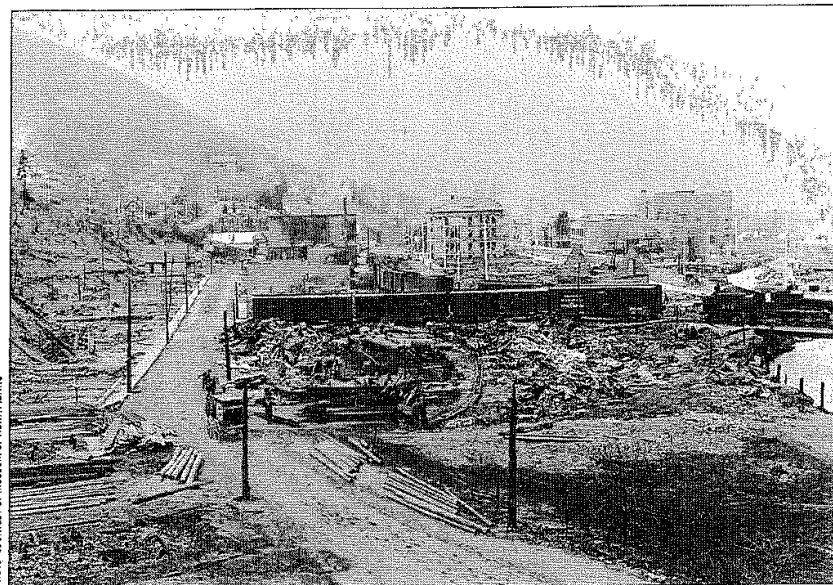


PHOTO COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF NORTH IDAHO

An estimated two hundred houses were burned in eastern Wallace during the "Big Blowup" fire of August 1910. In this photo, soon after the historic blaze, the men near a wagon on the road work to clean up debris.

\$500 for the essay entitled "Surrounded by Forest Fires," that was published in the August 1923 edition of American Forests and Forest Life magazine. "I would guess that he actually penned it [the essay] himself," Roizen said.

Despite his ongoing health problems, Pulaski invented a pick-ax device that firefighters have now used for decades. The dual-use invention came to be known as the "Pulaski Tool."

And the legend grew.

Destiny, in the form of fame, seemed to descend on Pulaski, despite an austere personality that seemed to endorse obscurity. Somewhere along the way, he was lauded for his shirttail ancestry relationship to American Revolutionary War hero Casimir

Pulaski. The latter, a Polish emigrant, died in 1779 at the battle of Savannah, fighting against the British. After Edward Pulaski's death on February 2, 1931, his widow, Emma Pulaski, acted to have the name: "Count Edward Pulaski"—chiseled on his gravestone at Coeur d'Alene's Forest Cemetery.

And the legend grew some more.

The personality of Emma Pulaski was far different than her husband's. "Apparently," Roizen said, in an amused tone, "Emma . . . felt quite strongly that [Ed Pulaski] was from a noble Polish line, and [Emma] liked being called countess." Roizen also talked about Emma Pulaski posing for a photograph, in formal attire, at the Nicholson Tunnel site. "She's dressed almost like for an Easter Sunday,"

Roizen said. "It's damn hard to get up there. How did that woman ever go a total of three miles, from Wallace to the mine, dressed like that?" Roizen's conjecture was that Mrs. Pulaski likely had to have packed the formal clothing separately for the trek.

And Edward Pulaski, a low-key actor on the stage of life, content with simply doing his job, might well have been embarrassed by the clamor of the 2004 Idaho Legislature—the group that passed HCR39. The state legislative act followed the successful drive by U.S. Sen. Larry

Craig, R-Idaho, to bring home a \$297,000 federal appropriation for the Pulaski Trail Project. The state legislature's legally non-binding resolution was twofold in purpose. One, it was a political tribute to Pulaski. HCR39 also expressed support for the government-financed Pulaski Project—an effort that supporters hope not only brings attention to the site of Pulaski's heroics, but how modern firefighting practices have evolved. The heroic act itself, through the persona of Ed Pulaski, and the common culture, long ago took on a life of its own.

"It's a little bit ironic that we want to highlight [Pulaski], given that he was pretty self-effacing," Roizen said. "But you know, we like our heroes that way. We don't like the ones that are bragging, and puffing their chests up. So, I think it's quite fitting."

Jim See corroborated Roizen's view of the likely discomfort Pulaski's

who we are

heroism brought him. Pulaski, a jack-of-all-trades in both Idaho and Montana, prior to becoming a forest ranger for the nascent U.S. Forest Service, was an unassuming but intelligent man assigned the role of hero.

"He was kind of a quiet man who would not like this whole idea of him as hero in this situation," See said. "He continued to work in Wallace and the forest . . . He did work to get a memorial for the fallen firefighters." Pulaski worked successfully, Roizen said, to help obtain a \$500 federal appropriation to purchase gravestones for the firefighting casualties buried at two mass sites at the Nine Mile Cemetery near Wallace. "Pulaski made a case that the men who had died in

the U.S. Roizen noted that the 1910 North Idaho portion of the Big Blowup brought national attention to firefighting practices, and how the modern firefighters should proceed. The 1910 disaster led to the now-outdated one hundred percent fire suppression paradigm, that eventually caused what has been deemed forest overgrowth—a prime breeding ground for tree diseases.

"If that's so," said Roizen, "then perhaps relearning the historic story . . . will help us as a society, emancipate ourselves from that [one-hundred percent suppression] paradigm. Aside from the memorial purpose, that's the kind of social purpose we've seen for our project." Now days, prescribed

the trail and the trailhead done by next summer [2005], which happens to be the 100th anniversary of the Forest Service."

Despite the federal appropriation, the project remains \$125,000 short, Roizen said. Politicians and project leaders have stated that the project, when and if it's completed, could give the economically beleaguered Silver Valley some financial therapy.

"We just decided we ought to save the trail, and at the same time look at ways that the Silver Valley, and all of Idaho, could benefit from this place," See said.

Dave Goins is managing editor of IDAHO magazine.

The North Idaho-based Pulaski Trail Project is working to bring the events of August 20, 1910 to life.

the 1910 fire . . . had died as heroically as the men who had gone over to fight [World War I]," Roizen said.

Author Pyne wrote: "Ed Pulaski never claimed—in fact, ignored and dismissed—any thought that he was a hero. Others made that assertion, and there is little evidence that Pulaski sought to boost that label or to play on it. He declined to become a celebrity. He shunned publicity and only once, thirteen years later, wrote down his own account."

The North Idaho-based Pulaski Trail Project is working to bring the events of August 20, 1910 to life.

The Pulaski Trail Project, supporters hope, will be a fitting effort to highlight the history of forest policy in

burns in some forests are considered to be more responsible forest management practices by many people. The Pulaski Trail Project seeks to restore the overgrown trail, the Nicholson Mine entrance, and create the National Wildfire Education Center and Museum in Wallace or Silverton. Said Roizen: "We hope to have

A suited Ed Pulaski near the Nicholson Mine entrance in September 1910, after saving forty lives, including his own, during the "Big Blowup" fire the month before.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF NORTH IDAHO

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2005

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Pulaski Trail Project moves forward

By PAUL BORING
Staff writer

SILVER VALLEY — With legislative support, the Pulaski Trail Project is gaining steam, honoring the project's namesake and hoping to educate the public on a man who has become a hero.

A recent article in Idaho Magazine describes a self-effacing forest ranger in Edward Pulaski, who saved his own life

and an estimated 39 others during the Herculean fire that ripped through the forests of northern Idaho in 1910, in the process claiming the lives of more than 60 firefighters.

"Facing the brunt of the 'Great Fires of 1910', which charred more than three million acres in the western United States, Pulaski the firefighting supervisor understood what constitutes foolish behavior for humans caught in the jaws

of some natural conditions," wrote Dave Goins, managing editor for Idaho Magazine and author of the article "Ed Pulaski: Inventor, North Idaho Firefighting Hero."

Quick and rational thinking by Pulaski, coupled with his extensive knowledge of the Silver Valley wilderness, allowed the firefighters to escape with their lives after the crew became pinned down by the raging fire on the

West Fork of Placer Creek. Pulaski led the firefighters through the mountains across an overgrown trail, finally arriving at the Nicholson Mine.

"Pulaski's decision method wasn't a focus group," Goins wrote. "It wasn't a decision by committee. It wasn't an election. It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside

See PULASKI, Page 3

PULASKI

Continued from Page 1

Nicholson Mine at gunpoint to keep them from running out, into the fire. Ostensibly, that saved most of their lives."

According to Pulaski's account of the events, he and the surviving members of the crew managed to stagger back

to Wallace with severe burns and injuries. The hero spent nearly two months in the hospital following the escape.

Pulaski, who contended with health problems after the fire for the remainder of his life, later invented a pick-ax device that firefighters continue to use that has come to be known as "The Pulaski Tool."

A resolution was passed by the 2004 Idaho Legislature to honor Pulaski's heroism and

promote the Pulaski Trail Project restoration project.

"The state legislative act followed the successful drive by U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, to bring home a \$297,000 federal appropriation for the Pulaski Trail Project," Goins wrote. "The state legislature's legally non-binding resolution was twofold in purpose. One, it was a political tribute to Pulaski. HCR39 also expressed support for the government-financ

ed Pulaski Project, an effort that supporters hope not only brings attention to the site of Pulaski's heroics, but how modern firefighting practices have evolved. The heroic act itself, through the persona of Ed Pulaski, and the common culture, long ago took on a life of its own."

The Pulaski Trail Project seeks to restore the overgrown trail that Pulaski used, the Nicholson Mine entrance, and

created the National Wildfire Education Center and Museum in Wallace or Silverton. Ron Roizen, director of the Pulaski Trail Project, told Goins that the project remains \$125,000 short.

"We hope to have the trail and the trailhead done by next summer [2005], which happens to be the 100th anniversary of the Forest Service," Roizen said.

The project could be a boon

to the local economy, as well as serve as a valuable information resource to give people a better understanding of firefighting practices and the quiet hero, Ed Pulaski.

"We just decided we ought to save the trail, and at the same time look at ways that the Silver Valley, and all of Idaho, could benefit from this place," said Mullan School District counselor Jim See, president of the Pulaski Trail Project.

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Pulaski Project experiences financial boost

Pulaski Project experiences financial boost

The Pulaski Tunnel Trail undertaking was recently awarded a \$60,000 grant from the United States Forest Service Region I to do historical signage on the trail.

The new funding, which was announced by Jack Dorrell of the Forest Service, will allow the creation of trailside signs of a quality on par with the signs along the Hiawatha bike trail. Members of the Pulaski Project are jockeying to hire Grady Meyers, creator of the extremely eye-pleasing and weather resistant Hiawatha signs.

"They're really a top-of-the-line sign," said Jim See, president of the Pulaski Project.

The grant money came from a special \$1 million

fund that each region of the Forest Service was allocated to spend on projects associated with the agency's centennial observance this year. The grant was submitted by the Coeur d'Alene Forest Service office in partnership with the Pulaski Project to the Region I office in Missoula, Mont. Linda McFadden of the USFS played an important role in supporting the submission from the CDA Forest Service office.

The Pulaski Project also recently received a \$26,000 grant from the Panhandle Resource Advisory Commission to go towards a bridge. In turn, the funds are the chief part of the required match for a \$60,000 proposal that the Forest Service has submitted to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's "Recreational Trails Program." Pulaski Project members are waiting to hear if the latter funding will be

awarded.

Senator Larry Craig brought home a \$300,000 grant for the trail in 2003-2004. The funding initially appeared to be sufficient to complete the project. In due course, however, inadequate budgeting for a parking area, where the two signs are now located across from the trailhead, and the discovery that a considerable stretch of the trail near the trailhead was on ground too marshy to support conventional trail surfacing, led to a shortfall in excess of \$100,000.

"We fell a little short because of unforeseen things," See said.

Due to the marshy area, a new bridge and elevated walkway will be included in the project.

"The trail is only one part of the project," See said.

3/15/05

Woman airlifted from Pulaski Trail

By GREG SKINNER
Staff writer

WALLACE — Two miles up the Pulaski Tunnel Train, a woman fell, injuring her hip Sunday afternoon while geocaching with her husband. Geocaching is a new world-wide adventure game involving hand-held GPS units.

Around 3:30 Shoshone County got a call that Susan Fuller, 52, had injured her hip while crossing the creek near the Pulaski Trail. She was unable to walk out on her own, said John Koziuk, operations officer with Shoshone County Sheriff's Office.

The rescue involved 16 people from five agencies including Shoshone County Search and Rescue, U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement, Shoshone County Fire Department District 1 Quick Response Team, and the Air Force.

Koziuk said rescuers on the scene realized a ground rescue was off and called Fairchild Air Force Base.

"It would have taken until morning to hike her out," said Koziuk.

Fairchild responded with a helicopter and paramedic. Fuller was stabilized at the scene and prepared for transport, said Koziuk.

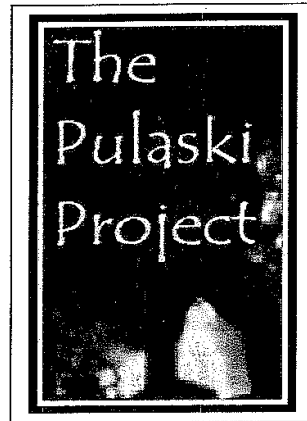
A zone had to be cleared for the UH-1 (Huey) to hover during the rescue operation. Koziuk said that the Forest Service gave authorization to cut the trees, and taking only a few select trees a deputy went to work with a chainsaw.

A paramedic was lowered and Fuller was placed in a rescue basket, loaded into the hovering aircraft and transported to Kootenai Medical Center in Couer d' Alene. Fuller's condition was unknown as of press time, but Koziuk said, "She was conscious and in good spirits."

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Project Status Report

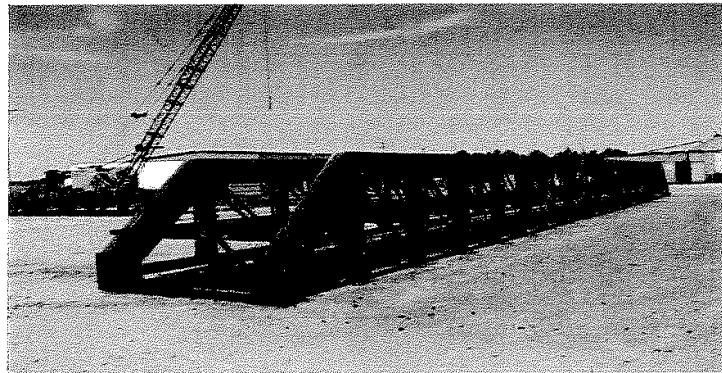
Pulaski Tunnel Trail
Idaho Panhandle National Forests
(March 1, 2005)



Trailhead Area:

Progress continues on the final design phase of the trailhead area. A field review of the final plan set is tentatively scheduled for the week of March 7th. Bids will be solicited from selected contractors following final approval of the plans.

After soliciting bids from two bridge fabricators, an award was made to the Moosman Bridge Company to supply the 70' bridge over Placer Creek at the trailhead area. Shop drawings for the structure were reviewed and approved on 2/9/2005, allowing the manufacturer to begin fabrication.



Moosman Bridge

Trail Reconstruction:

Plans for the four timber bridges and three puncheon bridges have been completed, and prices are being solicited to furnish, fabricate, and treat the timber materials for these trail structures. Purchase of this material should be completed by the 2nd week of March.

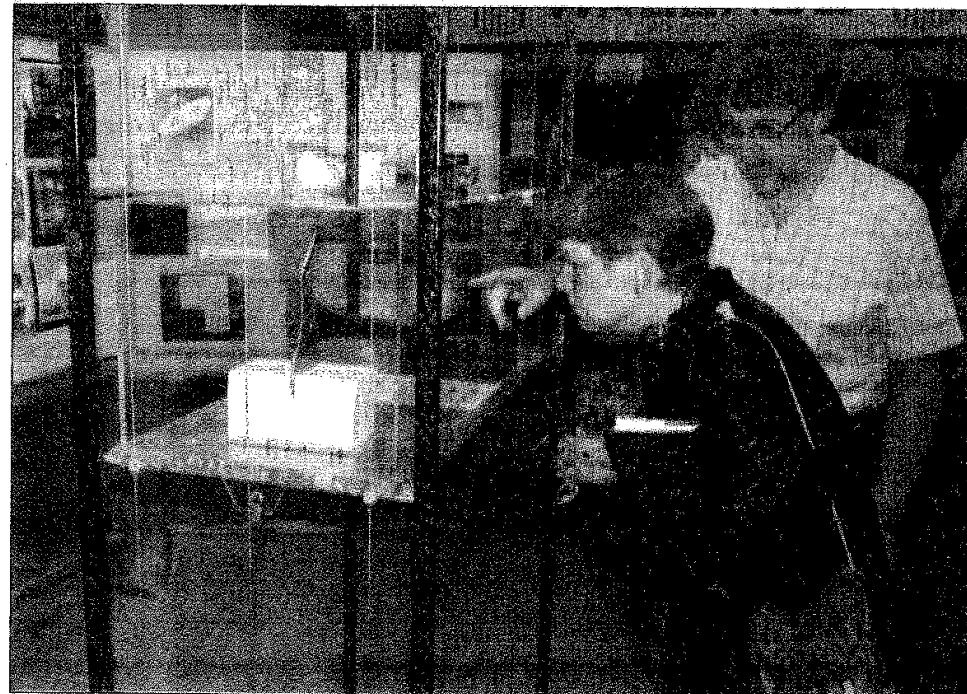
Project Funding Strategy:

The Idaho Panhandle Resource Advisory Committee (IPRAC) approve \$26,500 for the Pulaski project at the February 18th meeting by funding the four treated timber trail bridges along the trail system beyond the Pulaski trailhead area.

The Forest Service has submitted a \$60,000 Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) Grant Application to complete construction of the 1.8 miles of trail to the historic Pulaski Tunnel. In conjunction with the RAC funding this should be adequate funding to complete trail construction estimated between \$85-90,000. With approval, this funding should be available in June of 2005. Contingency plans are being developed for completion of the trail should the Pulaski project not be approved under the IDPR grant request.

The Forest Service has also very successfully competed for \$60,000 under the Northern Region Centennial of Service Challenge Cost Share Program to cover major costs for interpretive signs and exhibits. Signs and exhibits will be developed to interpret the Pulaski story as well as element of the history of the Great Fire and its environmental and social effects that remain an influence on forest management.

The Pulaski returns to the Silver Valley



— Photo by LAUREN MCKEAN

Wallace District Mining Museum employee Ed Eckle (right) shows Wallace resident Mary McGlynn the original Pulaski tool, hand assembled by Ed Pulaski, which was recently relocated and placed in a case especially constructed for the piece in the museum.

Tool that made history on display in Wallace

By GREG SKINNER
Staff Writer

Wallace — After a 15-year absence the original eight-pound tool that changed wildfire fighting forever returned to Wallace on Feb. 26. Bearing the name of its credited inventor, the Pulaski is on display at the Wallace District Mining Museum.

In the wake of the great Bitterroot fire blitz of 1910,

Edward Pulaski, ranger with the U.S. Forest Service, perfected the tool that now bears his name. He presented the tool in a 1911 supervisors meeting as, "The logical tool for the work," said John Amonson, of the Wallace District Mining Museum.

Part ax and part Maddox, the key to Pulaski's new tool was in the ease of use and its balance when swung, said

Amonson. Balance to swing the fire tool over and over all day long, day after day.

In 1910 the tool would have been well used during the fires that burned for three months consuming nine-billion board feet of timber across three-million acres of land; the largest wildfire in U.S. history. News accounts of the time say the cloud of smoke spread one-third the way around the

world. The number of people killed varies greatly in accounts, from 85 to 200.

The original tool, now 95-years old, remained in Wallace until the final family members moved to western Washington. The return comes in conjunction with the 100-year anniversary of the U.S. Forest Service, this year, and the opening of the Pulaski Tunnel Trail set for Aug. 20.

The tunnel trail, just south of Wallace, was the abandoned War Eagle Mine that Pulaski led his team of 45 men into, avoiding certain death as a firestorm trapped 1,800 men between Wallace and Avery that August.

The Pulaski Project is behind the August ceremony, and their hope is to use the tool to cut a ribbon laid across an old stump recovered from the 1910 fire as a way to open the trail officially. New signs and improved access make it a proper historical site, said Amonson. The project asked the owner of the Pulaski to cut the ribbon, but he has politely declined.

The Pulaski is on display at the Wallace District Mining Museum until Aug. 20. The museum is open Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. through May 1, thereafter seven days a week, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2005

Pulaski tool still in demand

By GREG SKINNER
Staff Writer

Editor's note: This article is a continuation of the Pulaski article printed in the Tuesday, March 8 edition of the News-Press.

Seventeen years ago Ed Eckle was surveying the Pulaski trail above Placer Creek for the United States Geological Survey when he stopped to get a drink from a spring and found something.

Half-a-mile above the old War Eagle Mine were Edward Pulaski corralled his men to save them from a brutal fire storm Eckle looked about and noticed a brand new Pulaski laying near by. Eckle treasures the firefighting tool to this day for the serendipitous manner it came to him.

It is said that that the big fire season of 1910, the largest in U.S. history, pushed Pulaski into creating the firefighting tool.

"The ones they make today look just the same as the one Mr. Pulaski make in 1910," said Eckle. "No improvements have been made."

Pulaski, originally from Ohio, moved west and joined the U.S. Forest Service just a few years after Gifford Pinchot started the land management organization in 1905. The name Pulaski is known in America for another groundbreaking advancement. Casimir Pulaski is credited with introducing the battle drills that turned American Minutemen into a viable and fierce fighting force. Edward Pulaski was a descendant of the great general.

The key to Pulaski's new tool was that it combined two tools into one, an ax and a Mattox together. The new weapon against wild fire saved time and weight, allowing a fire fighter to switch from digging in the fire line to cutting down branches and other fuel with a simple flip of the wrist.

Even more important than combining the two tools into one was the balance of the tool, said John Amonson, Wallace District Mining Museum curator.

Darrell Knoll, assistant fire chief of Shoshone County Fire District 2 said that he and his men swing the eight-pound tool for hours without fatigue.

The original 1910 tool is on display in the Wallace Mining Museum. On loan from Pulaski descendents, it will remain in Wallace until Aug. 20.

See PULASKI, Page 3

PULASKI

Continued from Page 1

Regarding the tool today Knoll said, "I like it, but it's only one piece of the puzzle." He and his firefighters stock two or three Pulaski tools in each of their trucks. The Pulaski is the first tool deployed when he or his firefighters arrive at the scene of any brush or forest fire. With it they swing and scrape a fire line completely encircling a fire.

Pulaski fashioned the tool and took it to a large gathering of U.S. Forest Service supervisors presenting it as "the logical tool for the work." Pulaski looked into having his tool patented years later after it fell into regular use fighting fires but had missed a two-year window in which he could apply.

"It's used now around the world by forest service people," said Eckle.

Later after his death colleges tried again to gain royalties for Pulaski's widow; the best the federal government could do was declare that regardless of others who would claim credit, Pulaski did invent the fire tool, and applied his name to it forever.

The Pulaski remains "One of the primary tools in fire suppression today," said Bill Cowin, area supervisor for Idaho Department of Lands.

In hope of keeping the story alive, a newly improved interpretive trail leading to the site of the War Eagle Mine spurred by a local group, called the Pulaski Project, is scheduled to open on Aug. 20

Film producer Nancy Hanks is currently working on a new documentary that includes Pulaski and his contribution to firefighting and the local forests.

"He's a real folk hero, and shouldn't be lost to time," she said.

Tribute to forest fire hero in historic Wallace

3-25-05

A forest fire in 1910 burned 3 million acres of Northwest timber. In 1984, the Forest Service dedicated a monument, one mile south of Wallace, to firefighter Edward C. Pulaski. During his group's retreat from the flames, they were caught in the fire.

Pulaski saved 37 of the 43 men by leading them into two old mine tunnels near where the monument now stands. Today's firefighters even use a combined pick-axe tool named after Pulaski.

In early 2005, the Wallace District Mining Museum in Wallace received "Pulaski" number one, the first production tool manufactured by Ed Pulaski.

This year, the Idaho Legislature is trying to fund other efforts to preserve information about Pulaski and the fire.

Call the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District at (208) 752-1221 for details about the monument and the fire.

Idaho Magazine stokes Pulaski Trail project fire

WALLACE — With legislative support the Pulaski Trail project is gaining steam, honoring the project's namesake and hoping to educate the public on a man who has become a hero.

A recent article in Idaho Magazine describes a self-effacing forest ranger in Edward Pulaski, who saved his own life and that of about 39 others during the great firestorm of 1910. The blaze raged unchecked across the Silver Valley, razed half of Wallace, and killed over 60 firefighters.

"Facing the brunt of 'The Great Fires of 1910' which charred more than three million acres in the western United States, Pulaski the firefighting supervisor understood what constitutes foolish behavior for humans caught in the jaws of some natural conditions," wrote Dave Goins, managing editor for Idaho Magazine and author of the article "Ed Pulaski, Inventor, North Idaho Firefighting Hero."

Quick and rational thinking by Pulaski, coupled with his extensive knowledge of the Silver valley wilderness, allowed the firefighters to escape with their own lives after the crew became pinned down by the raging fire on the west fork of Placer Creek. Pulaski led the firefighters through the mountains along an overgrown trail, finally arriving at the Nicholson Mine.

"Pulaski's decision method wasn't a focus group," Goins wrote. "It wasn't a decision

by committee. It wasn't an election. It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside the tunnel at gunpoint to keep them from running out into the fire. Ostensibly, that saved most of their lives."

According to Pulaski's account of the events he and the surviving members of the crew managed to stagger back into Wallace with severe burns and injuries. The hero spent nearly two months in the hospital following the escape.

Pulaski, who contended with fire-related health problems for the rest of his life, later invented a firefighting tool that combined a hoe and an axe and to this day is called a "Pulaski." A resolution was passed by the 2004 Idaho Legislature to honor Pulaski's heroism and promote the Pulaski Trail project.

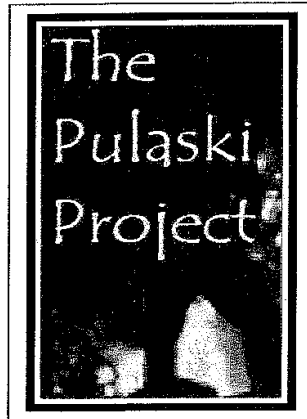
Sen. Larry Craig succeeded in obtaining a \$297,000 federal appropriation for the project, which seeks to restore the overgrown trail that Pulaski used, the Nicholson Mine portal, and the National Wildfire Education Center and Museum in Wallace or Silverton.

According to Ron Roizen, director of the project, some \$125,000 needs to be raised.

"We just decided we ought to save the trail and at the same time look at ways that the Silver Valley, and all of Idaho, could benefit from this place," said Mullan School District counselor Jim See, president of the Pulaski Trail Project.

Project Status Report

Pulaski Tunnel Trail
Idaho Panhandle National Forests
(April 1, 2005)



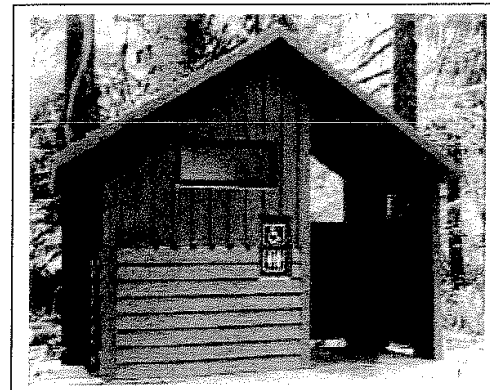
Trailhead Area:

A Consultant (DJ&A, P.C.) and Forest Service field review of the final plans was conducted on March 15th. As a result of the field review the trail alignment was shifted slightly to provide more separation between pedestrians and traffic adjacent to the Moon Pass Road, and to facilitate construction of the block wall segment of the trail along Placer Creek.

Anticipated schedule for this phase of the project is to send bid packages out to selected contractors on April 11th, and open bids by the last week of April. This should allow for construction on the Trailhead Area to begin by the first week of June.

Moosman Bridge Company has purchased all necessary materials and has started fabrication on the Placer Creek Bridge.

The two tone color Cascadian ADA accessible concrete toilet with sweet smelling technology has been selected for installation in the trailhead parking area. The unique texture and steeper roof pitch gives the Cascadian a distinctive look much like the old CCC designed buildings and fits very well with the theme of the Pulaski Tunnel Tail project.



Trail Reconstruction:

The subcontractor performing this aspect of the work has purchased timber and hardware for the four trail bridges and three puncheon bridges. Trail construction is also anticipated to be in progress by the first week in June.

Project Interpretive Signing:

The Forest Service has received approval of the \$60,000 funding request under the Northern Region Centennial of Service Challenge Cost Share Program to cover major costs for interpretive signs and exhibit. Cort Sims (IPNF Archeologist) has completed a significant amount of research to facilitate interpretation of the Pulaski story as well as the Great Fire and its impacts on environmental, social and forest management issues. The Pulaski Tunnel Trail Action Committee will play an important role in helping develop the theme for the twelve porcelain interpretive signs.

Hello Mr. Canjar!

Relative's visit reveals what happened to man in photograph

BY RON ROIZEN
and JIM SEE
Special to The Press

It's one of the best known photographs deriving from the Great 1910 Fire (right).

Here are two men with bandaged heads, and hats, standing next to each other — one with heavily bandaged hands as well.

The photo comes from the Barnard-Stockbridge collection at the University of Idaho (8-X545H).

It is almost certainly a studio portrait.

Carl Ritchie, Forest Service archeologist and Big Blowup historian, says it's the only post-Big Blowup portrait of injured firefighters known to exist.

"Their attire," says Ritchie, "is standard dress in early 1910. Pictures of other crews readying for the fire line show similar dress."

"Yet, their clothes might

"I think he ended up in Tacoma, but no one in the family really knows."

— Ivan Canjar

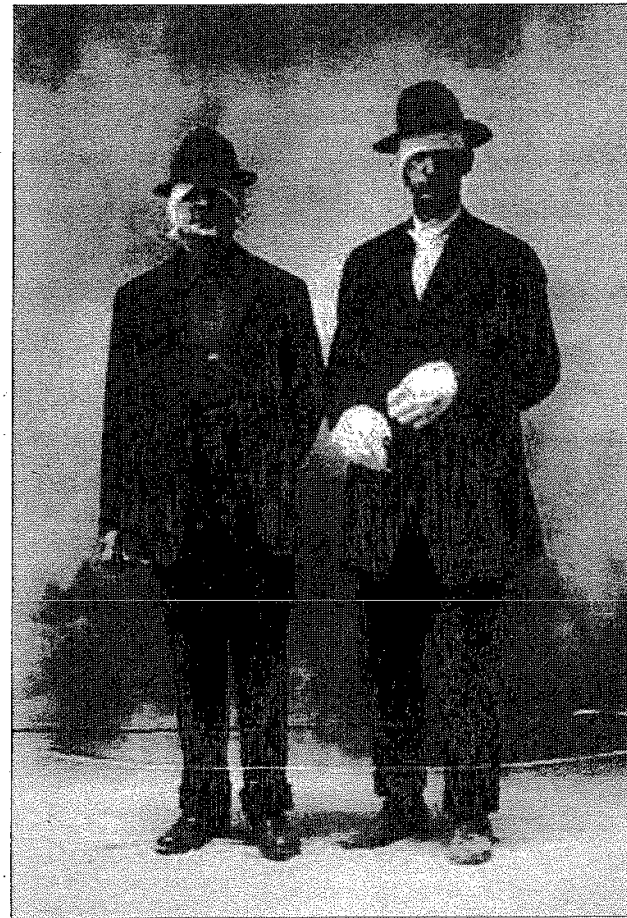
have been donated to these men once they were discharged from the hospital or they were furnished by the studio just for the photo."

Both men's names are known, says Ritchie. "Anton Canjar is on the right and a man named Zeller on the left."

Nellie Stockbridge probably took the photo — T.N. Barnard turned over most of the operation of the studio to her years earlier.

Did Stockbridge seek the men out and take this photo as part of her ongoing documentation of Wallace's turbulent history — now including the Great 1910 Fire?

Or did the men come to Stockbridge — wanting a commemorative photo, perhaps



one suitable for use as a postcard, to send to family, and marking their participation in and survival of a momentous and terrifying event?

"More likely," suggests Ritchie, "the men got their photos taken as documentation and proof that they were injured in the Big Blowup while in service to the U.S. Forest Service."

"This photo" continued Ritchie, "could be used later should evidence for compensation be required....A picture is worth a thousand words."

Who were they, these dignified men — who bore the injuries of trying to fight an overwhelming fire and who, doubtless, were lucky to escape with their lives?

Last week, Jim See, president of the Pulaski Project, was enjoying a social hour at a local watering hole when he happened to meet Ivan Canjar, a visitor in town from British Columbia.

Canjar, as it happened, had come to Wallace and the Silver Valley to check out the place where his grandfather, Anton Canjar — the man on the right of the photo — as a young man had once fought in the Great 1910 Fire.

Ivan, a fit looking and friendly man in his mid-fifties, was born in Croatia and spoke with a moderate accent. He'd lived in Canada, he said, since the 1960s.

Ivan brought with him a collection of old letters, stained

copper brown where paper clips had once held the pages together.

The letters comprised the Forest Service's side of a long exchange in which grandfather Anton had sought compensation for his badly burned hands as well as for time spent in Wallace's Providence Hospital and, thereafter, for time during which he was unable to work. The correspondence stretched into 1912, when the Forest Service was still assuring Anton that they were seeking appropriate relief for him.

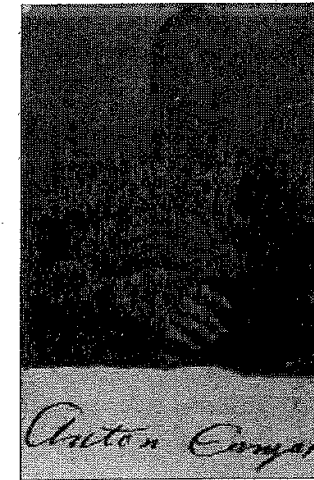
Grandson Ivan also had a post-Big Burn picture of grandfather Anton. It showed a man with badly burned hands, now unbandaged.

Who was Anton Canjar? What happened to him?

Ivan knew very little of his grandfather, though what he knew was enough to define the deep structure of a human drama.

Anton had arrived in the U.S., at Ellis Island, in 1904 at the age of 17. Somehow, he made his way to Montana and Idaho — doubtless, Ivan said, following the lead and advice of other Croatians who had also come to the Inland Northwest.

He fought in the Big Blowup. (Carl Ritchie informs that Canjar faced the fire at the head of Boulder Creek, south of Mullan, in James Danielson's crew. "Danielson and his crew took refuge on a large talus slope," Ritchie added, "but the fire intensity was so great that every man on the crew had their hands, face and head burned by the searing heat. One crew member panicked and died in an



attempt to flee.")

Anton Canjar survived but with badly burned hands.

In due course, Anton traveled back to Croatia, where he met and married Ivan's grandmother. A son, Ivan's father, issued from the union.

Then Anton headed back to America, promising to bring his wife and child over when he had settled.

Letters arrived for a time, but then they stopped coming.

Anton disappeared in a distant and vast continent.

"I think he ended up in Tacoma," says Ivan, "but no one in the family really knows."

Ivan's grandmother, Anton's wife, never remarried.

She never spoke ill of Anton, Ivan said.

"She was too dignified to do that," he added, with a smile.

Ron Roizen and Jim See are members of the Pulaski Project, which group has partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to save the mine and trail where Big Ed Pulaski's heroic rescue of his crew was carried out in August, 1910.

