

Steele Creek Community, Structure C Rehabilitation, July 2011



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August 2011

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Cover: Steele Creek Community, Structure C, July 2011, after rehabilitation efforts.

Location: Steele Creek Community (49-EAG-00144), Fortymile river mile 22.8R

Participants: Robin Mills (BLM-FDO Archaeologist), Kevan Cooper (BLM-FDO Realty), Nick Moser (BLM-FDO Realty Technician), Jevan Hoepfer (SCA volunteer), Gerad Smith (BLM-FDO Archaeologist Technician)

Date(s): July 19 – July 22, 2011

The Undertaking:

This project involved rehabilitating Structure C at the Steele Creek Community townsite (49-EAG-00144), located on the Fortymile River at river mile 22.8R, inside the Fortymile National Wild & Scenic River corridor, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (Figure 1). Structure C is a single-room, single-floor domestic log cabin which measures 22' in length and 16' wide. The building is oriented roughly northeast-southwest. See Figure 2 for a plan view of the site. The specific goal of the project this summer was to replace previously-cut and notched logs (from 2010) under the building in their correct placement, and lower the building down onto a stone foundation. We achieved this goal.

July 2010:

In July 2010, 11 employees associated with the BLM and the USDA Forest Service, along with much equipment, supplies, and provisions, travelled from Fairbanks into the Fortymile area to perform rehabilitation work associated with the Steele Creek Roadhouse, another building at the Steele Creek Community townsite (Mills 2010). While there, during down time associated with a flood event that flooded the roadhouse, we dug out the rotten sill and lower courses of logs of Structure C. We also tore out and burned a rotten 1970s-1980s era dimensional lumber and plywood floor in the building, and filled in most of a large, subterranean pit in the center of the foundation that used to contain a 1970s-1980s era drip oil stove (Figures 3-8). We also cut and notched 16 partial or complete logs that would replace those rotten ones that were removed (Figures 9-13). These were each labeled appropriately to be inserted under the building (set up on wooden blocks) at a future date (Figure 14).

July 2011:

In July 2011, five employees associated with the BLM (see list, above) returned to the townsite in order to insert the 16 partial and complete logs, that had been cut and notched the previous year, under Structure C, and lower in onto a stone foundation. Using equipment brought for this purpose (hydraulic and screw jacks and plates; power drills; log tongs; etc.), we were successful in this endeavor. See Figures 15-22.

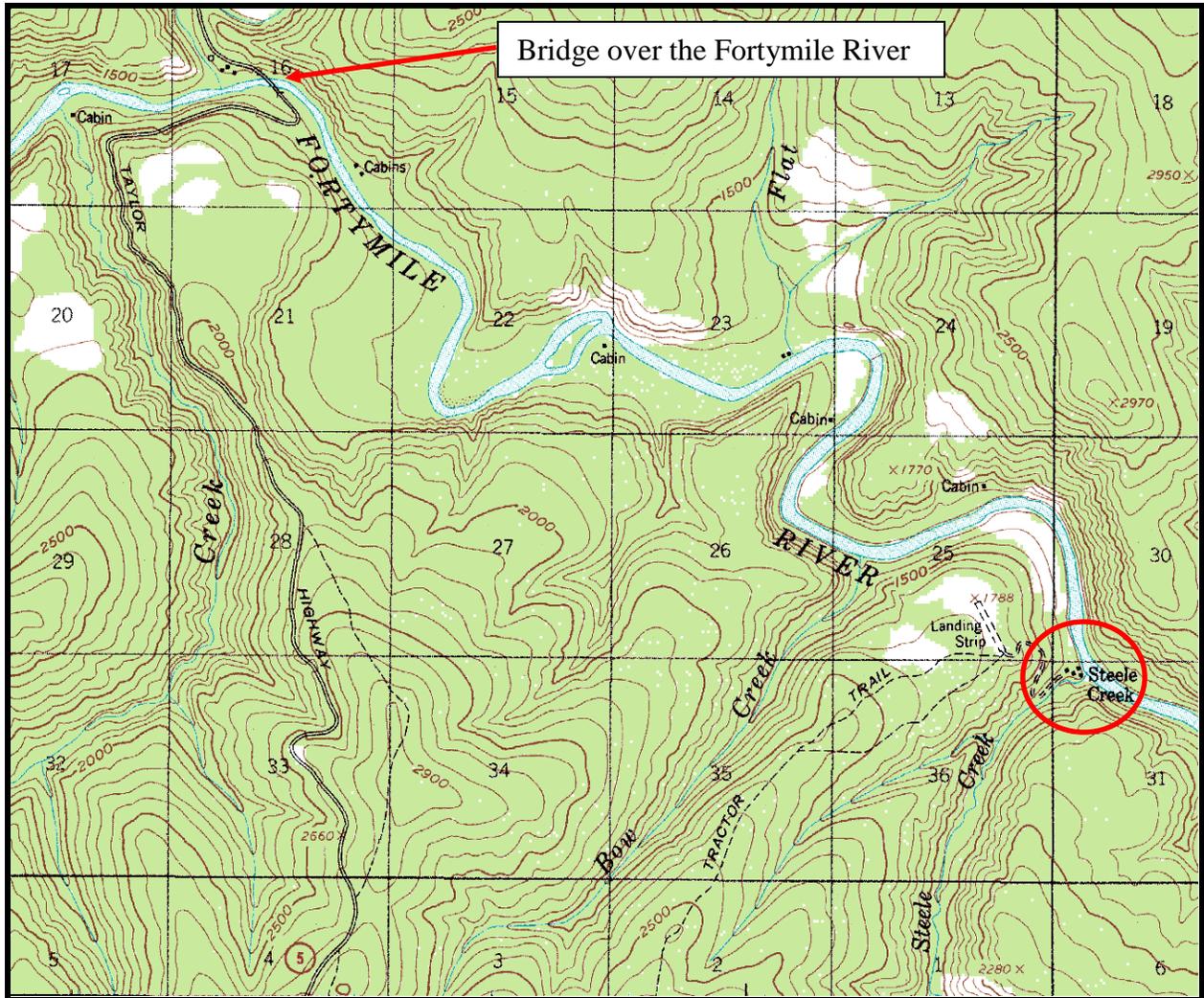


Figure 1. Portion of Eagle B-1 USGS quad map, 1:63,360 scale. Each section is 1 mile squared. Map shows the Taylor Highway crossing the Fortymile River at highway MP 112.4 and river mile 16.2. The Steele Creek site is found at river mile 22.8 on the south bank (circled).

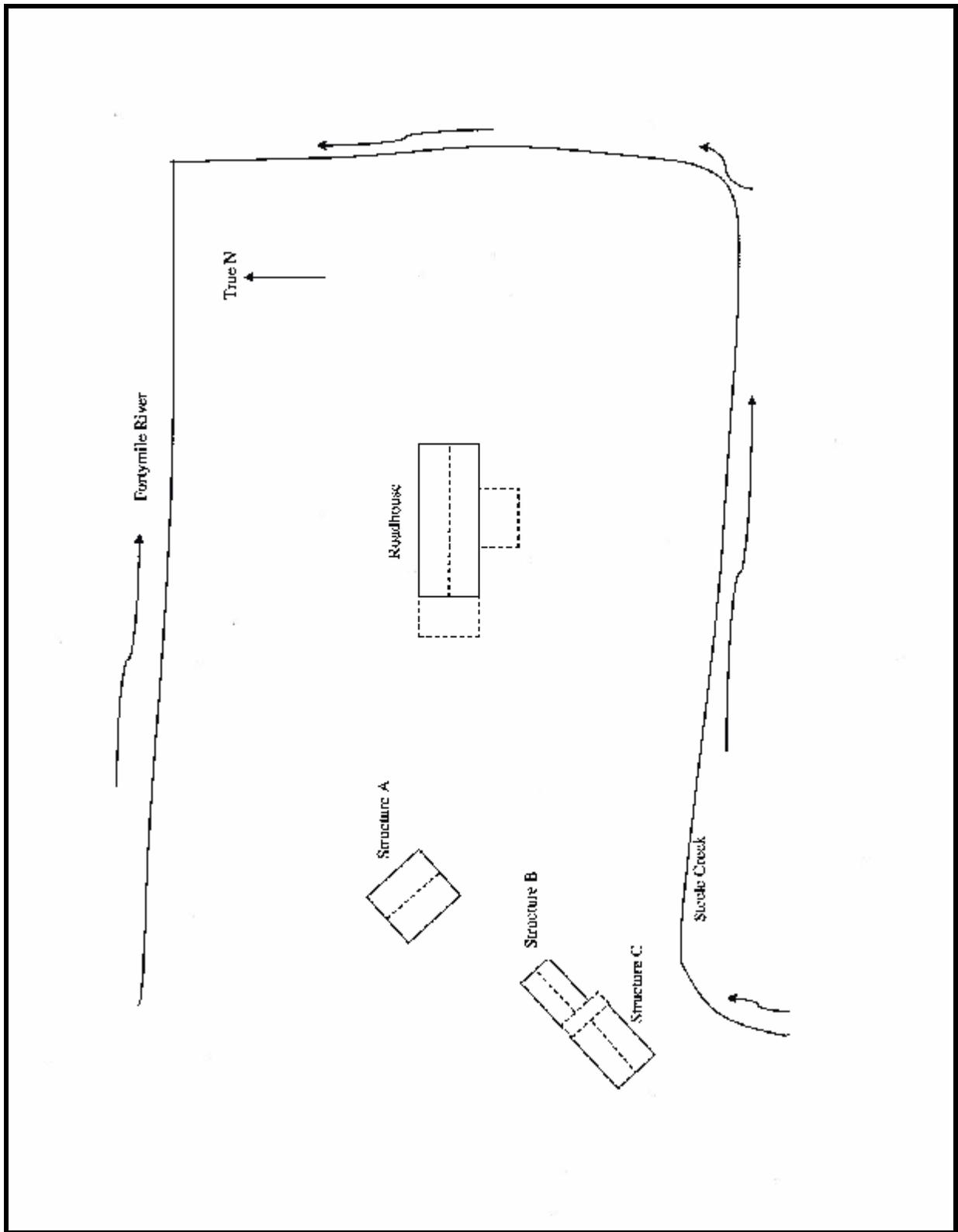


Figure 2. Steele Creek Community (49-EAG-144). Scale: Structure A measures 20'x24'; Structure C measures 16'x22'; main body of the Roadhouse (solid outline) measures 20'x52'.



Figures 3 and 4. Ripping out (3) and burning (4) the 1970s-1980s era rotten dimensional lumber joist and plywood floor inside Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2010.



Figure 5. Removing the rotten sill and lower courses of wall logs of Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2010.



Figure 6. Rotten floor, sill logs, and lower courses of wall logs of Structure C have been removed, and the building is set upon a series of wooden pier blocks for the winter. July 2010.



Figure 7. Rotten floor, sill logs, and lower courses of wall logs of Structure C have been removed, and the building is set upon a series of wooden pier blocks for the winter. July 2010.



Figure 8. Rotten floor, sill logs, and lower courses of wall logs of Structure C have been removed, and the building is set upon a series of wooden pier blocks for the winter. July 2010.



Figure 9. Cutting and notching replacement logs. July 2010.



Figure 10. Cutting and notching replacement logs. July 2010.



Figure 11. Cutting, notching and beginning to assemble the replacement logs. July 2010.



Figure 12. Cutting, notching, and assembling the replacement logs. July 2010.



Figure 13. Sixteen partial and complete replacement logs for Structure C are all assembled and ready for insertion under the building. July 2010.



Figure 14. The replacement logs were all clearly identified, and then dismantled and laid to one side of the site, set off of the ground on other log sections, for future placement under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2011.



Figure 15. Replacement logs being inserted, in order from the top to the bottom sill logs, under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2011.



Figure 16. Replacement logs being inserted, in order from the top to the bottom sill logs, under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2011.



Figure 17. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. Corners and middle of long axes placed upon large, flat boulders. July 2011.



Figure 18. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. Corners and middle of long axes placed upon large, flat boulders. July 2011.



Figure 19. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. Corners and middle of long axes placed upon large, flat boulders. July 2011.



Figure 20. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. Corners and middle of long axes placed upon large, flat boulders. July 2011.



Figure 21. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. Corners and middle of long axes placed upon large, flat boulders. Close up of "splicing in" partial log sections. July 2011.



Figure 22. All replacement logs placed under Structure C, Steele Creek townsite. July 2011.