

## Trail Characteristics, Safety Concerns, & Educational Activities

(Make a copy for each chaperone.)

### Trail Characteristics

Two miles: trailhead to tunnel site (four miles round trip) through a North Idaho forest.

Time required: two to four hours (three hours average) – depending on time for reading signs and lunch.

**The trail is moderately challenging with uphill sections totaling a 1000 feet elevation increase.**

The trail follows the West Fork of Placer Creek that is located in a narrow wooded canyon.

Cool and shadowy, the trail passes cascades, waterfalls, 1910 fire cedar snags & stumps along the way.

Five bridges, three short boardwalks, twelve interpretive signs compliment the trail.

War Eagle Mine Dump has a **steep ledge down to creek**, when crossing a gravel slide of mine tailings.

Last half mile (bridge five to tunnel overlook) is a **lengthy uphill grind**.

This section also has with **several short sections of steep hillsides**.

At the destination, a natural twenty-foot high earth bench overlooks the Pulaski Tunnel site.

Pulaski Tunnel is not accessible. – The tunnel can only be viewed from overlook.

### Safety Concerns

Consider adult-to-child ratio (one-to-six minimum is recommended).

Smaller sub-groups are recommended to leave at intervals.

Consider weather and choose clothing and shoes accordingly.

Pack food and drinks in backpacks.

The trailhead has a single modern pit-type toilet (restrooms at Wallace Visitor's Center, exit 61).

Pack first aid kit, hand sanitizer, extra water, extra granola bars and paper towels/toilet paper for emergencies.

Parents should inspect their children for ticks and/or insect bites upon arrival home.

### Pulaski Tunnel Trail Educational Activities

#### Trailhead

A. Review goals and objectives of the hike: refer to the interpretative signs.

1. The Great Fire of 1910
2. Pulaski Rescue in the Nicholson Mine (Pulaski Tunnel)
3. Historic Escape Way

B. Review trail characteristics.

1. Two miles, twelve signs, five bridges, no bathrooms
2. Uphill segments will take effort, so plan to work a little when climbing grades.
3. Safety precautions
  - a. Be aware of traffic when crossing the road
  - b. Stay on trail. No running.
  - c. Watch your step. You can trip on rocks and sticks.
  - d. Listen to your teacher or chaperones.
  - e. Have fun, but no horseplay.

C. Observe Mother Nature

1. Study the creek, cascades & waterfalls.
2. Survey wildflowers, shrubs and trees.
3. Examine rocks, outcroppings and evidence of mining.
4. Watch for wildlife and signs of wildlife.
  - a. Insects
  - b. Birds
  - c. Mammals: squirrels, deer, elk, cougar, and bear
5. Discover signs of the Great Fire of 1910.  
Burnt cedar stumps, logs, snags (standing dead trees)

## Pulaski Tunnel Trail Educational Activities

### Along the Trail

- A. Discuss the water tank. (City of Wallace water source)
- B. Stop on the bridge and estimate the number of bolts & length. (556 bolts -70 ft long)
- C. Stop at the first sign.
- D. Observe the gabion dams (wire and rock structures) and discuss possible purpose and observe waterfalls.
- E. Stop at second sign.
- F. Stop **especially** at the third sign (devoted to “Big Ed” Pulaski) and the end of pavement.
- G. Hike one-fourth mile through two young cedar groves and up a short switchback to the third bridge.
- H. Stop at fourth sign.
- I. Continue another  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (watch for waterfall) and then cross the War Eagle Mine dump (steep drop-off).
- J. Watch for Buffalo Vent on the right (just after dump crossing).
- K. Continue on one-fourth mile past cedar remnants from the Great Fire of 1910 to fourth bridge.
- L. Stop at fifth sign. Continue on through a flat wide area.
- M. Then on to the fifth bridge. (Dawdlers wait here. Possible lunch spot.)
- N. Stop at sixth sign.
- O. Hike the long uphill grind of the last one-half mile (some additional steep drop-offs).
- P. Begin loop trail to the left onto the Pulaski Tunnel Overlook.

### Pulaski Tunnel Site

- A. Stop at seventh & eighth sign.
- B. Observe tunnel site over the edge between the signs #7 and #8. (No access is permitted to portal opening.)
- C. Reflect on the events that took place here – read signs on wall.
- D. Take a well-deserved rest stop in this area (a great place for lunch or snack break).
- E. Stop at the ninth and tenth signs.
- G. Stop at the eleventh and twelfth signs (the last of the signs).
- H. Retrace the trail back two miles on the historic escape way to the trailhead.

### Abbreviated Trail Distances and Characteristics Chart

Distance in feet	Characteristic
0	Start of trail at parking lot edge
303	Bridge #1: Moosman Bridge
565	Sign #1: The Great Fires of 1910
600	Sign #2: Pulaski’s Trail
725	Sign #3: “Big Ed” Pulaski
800	Boardwalk #1
915	Bridge #2: with railings
1295	Beginning of New Trail – end of road
1505	Boardwalk #2, then #3, then #4
1875	Switchback
2575	Bridge #3
2715	Sign Site #4: The Big Blowup
4435	Waterfall
5200	Mine dump, steep edge, half way
5345	Buffalo Vent (water driven ventilation device for the War Eagle)
6700	Bridge # 4
6950	Sign Site #5: In the Eye of the Storm
7650	Bridge #5
8110	Sign Site #6: Surrounded by Fire
9870	Beginning of Trail Loop
10000	Sign Site #7: We reached the mine
10005	Rock wall with signs and plaque
10020	Sign Site #8: The men were in a panic
10130	Double Sign Site: #9 How we got down and #10 The Death Toll
10200	Double Sign Site: #11 Out of the Fire and #12: Pulaski’s pulaski
10350	End of Trail – End of Loop