

For More Information:

Payette National Forest

Supervisor's Office

500 N Mission Street

McCall, ID 83638

208.634.0700

Fax: 634.0744

McCall Ranger District

102 West Lake Street

McCall, ID 83638

208.634.0400

Fax: 634.0433

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Intermountain
Region



Payette National Forest

Warren Auto Tour and

Warren Historic

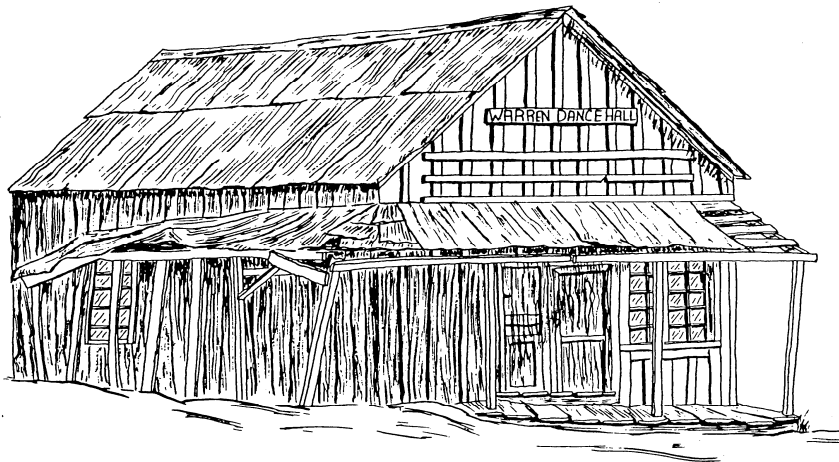
Walking Tour



Cover photos: (top) Warren, ID, 1890 (bottom) Warren, ID, 1900

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WARREN DANCE HALL

Site 10 - Warren Dance Hall

This hall was owned by local merchant Otis Morris. From 1905 to the start of World War II, Saturday night dances lasted until 2:00 a.m. Local musicians played violin, trumpet and a bellows-powered organ that was transported to Warren by pack mules. Dances included fox trots and waltzes, as the jitterbug had not yet become a craze in Warren.

Site 11 - Chinese Miners

A display of local Chinese artifacts may be viewed at the Baum Shelter and the Warren Guard Station. Many of the Chinese came to America to build the transcontinental railroad. In 1869, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads were united with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah. Upon completion of the railroad, many Chinese laborers came to mining camps in the Northwest.

Site 12 - Unity Waste Rock Dump

The Unity Mine waste rock dump can be seen at the end of the landing field nearest the town. Waste material from the mine was dumped outside the entrance of the mine. As excavation extended further into the granite mountain, discarded rock was loaded into track-mounted ore carts. The carts were then pushed out of the mine and dumped, forming the mound. The top of the mound was kept level so the tracks could be extended as the tailings accumulated.

This publication is a guide to the Warren Auto Tour and the Warren Walking Tour. Mileage and historic site numbers identify points of interest that help provide you with a sense of history for the area and an appreciation for the surrounding environment.

Warren Auto Tour

The Warren Auto Tour takes you to the town of Warren through the Payette National Forest and some of Idaho's most scenic and historically significant mountain country. This tour points out the highlights of this area's history, geology, and scenery, including the influences of Native Americans, miners, settlers, Chinese immigrants, wildlife, and gold. The audio version of the tour is available from the McCall Ranger District office in McCall.

Warren Walking Tour

Upon your arrival in Warren, the auto portion of the tour will end. The walking tour starts at the Warren Guard Station and then leads back up the main street on which you arrived. The tour provides the history and background to 13 locations along the main street. Many of the buildings are over 100 years old.

The Story of Warren

In 1862, prospector James Warren discovered gold on what became known as Warren Creek. News of the discovery spread quickly after Warren returned to Lewiston and reported his findings. People from all over the world, but particularly from the former boomtown of Florence, Idaho, flocked to the Warren country to stake mining claims. By the following summer, Warren's Camp had become northern Idaho's leading camp with a population of 660 by the end of the season. Many of the buildings that were built over 100 years ago are still around today.

Warren Auto Tour

MILE
0.0

McCall Ranger District Office

The building housing the McCall Ranger District office was built in 1936 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps, Company 1997, camp S-223. The CCC camp was situated across the road on the lake shore. This group also built seven of the other buildings located on this compound, as well as eight of the buildings located on the west end of the block at the Central Idaho Historical Museum. Twelve of these structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places - the largest concentration of listed CCC buildings in the state of Idaho.

MILE
0.7

Warren Wagon Road

This road was originally one of several pack trails upon which goods sent to and from Warren were transported on the backs of horses, mules, and men. As the demand for heavier mining equipment grew, so did the need for a road. The "State Wagon Road" which connected Mount Idaho (near Grangeville) and McCall via Burgdorf, was built in sections from both the north and south in the 1890s. The section from Burgdorf to Warren was a spur off of the State Wagon Road.

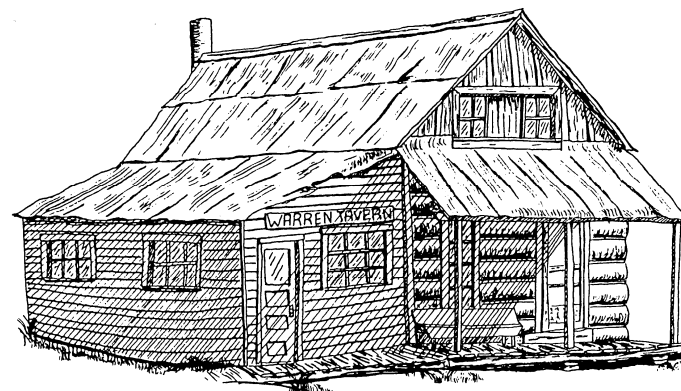
The Story of McCall

McCall was named for one of its early settlers, Thomas McCall, who arrived at the lake in 1891. At that time he traded a wagon and a team of horses to Sam Devers for "squatters rights" to the 160 acres of what is now downtown McCall. McCall, with the help of his wife and sons operated one of the first sawmills in the area, became the postmaster, and built the area's first flourmill.

Site 9 - Warren Tavern

This tavern and the Last Chance Saloon, now a private residence, represent Warren's historical watering holes. Less than a year after the 1862 gold discovery, several saloons were operating. In 1890, Charles Bemis was the proprietor of the Warren Saloon (no longer standing) which offered "Pure Whiskeys, Wines, Liquors and Cigars." Bemis occasionally held dances, closing the bar so ladies could enter. Between 75 to 100 people danced to a flute, banjo, accordion and two violins. Dances included schottisches, quadrilles, polkas, mazurkas, minuets and waltzes. Including a midnight buffet, the festivities often lasted until dawn.

The Last Chance Saloon was primarily a card room/gambling parlor. The building originally straddled Warren Creek and when mining activity

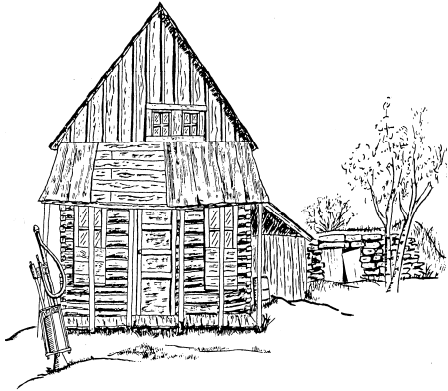


WARREN TAVERN

threatened the site, the whole building was picked up and relocated.

In the early 1900s, the bars were temporarily closed because no liquor was allowed on public land. Idaho County voted to "go wet" in 1911. Bars reopened with hours from 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., closed on Sundays and election days. "Prohibition" briefly closed the bars during the 1920s though Warren's strict compliance with that law is arguable.

Site 7 - Amalgamation/Assay Office



AMALGAMATION/ASSAY OFFICE

The front portion of this building was built in the 1890s. The back portion, with the unusual chimney, was added to the structure in 1931 by the Baumhoff and Fisher Dredge Company, the largest producer in the district.

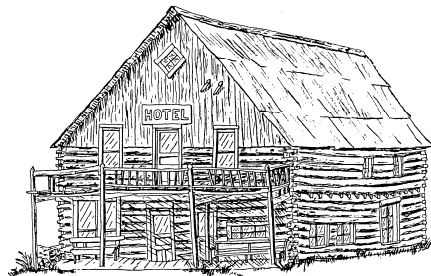
The Baumhoff and Fisher Dredge Company mined thousands of ounces of gold. Mercury, used to capture the gold in the dredge's sluice boxes, was removed before the gold was sent to an assay office.

This gold/mercury mixture, also known as amalgam, was taken to this office and retorted. "Retorting" is a process which uses heat to turn mercury to a gas, leaving the gold as the final product. The poisonous gas was vented out a small chimney on the back of the building.

The gold was cast into bricks, each eight inches long, four inches wide and one and one-half inches thick. The bricks were wrapped in brown paper and shipped to the Boise assay office by parcel post. Each brick was worth \$10,000 when gold sold for \$35 per ounce. At this rate, the Warren dredges recovered about \$4 million worth of gold. The office sold gold scales and weights and evaluated ore samples for local miners. Dredge company trucks were serviced by the gas pump in front of the building.

Site 8 - Warren Hotel

Previous hotels and boarding houses have been destroyed by time and the 1904 fire. This structure, known as the "new Warren Hotel," was built about 1912. Proprietors Ed and Ethel Roden offered rooms and food. During the 1930s, the hotel was home for many dredge workers.



WARREN HOTEL

***Payette** is more than a name! A forest. A river. A lake. What do they have in common? They were all named after Francois Payette, a trapper and fur trader who entered this region in the early 1800s while working for John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company.*

MILE
4.8

Payette Lake

Payette Lake was carved by an alpine glacier about 20,000 years ago. Glaciers from this same ice age also created many of the mountain lakes and meadows in the area. Careful observation of some of the larger rocks along the road will reveal striations, or scratches, left by the glacier as it scraped along the sides of the mountains. The glacier extended as much as 500 feet above the current surface of the lake. The lake has been measured to be over 300 feet deep at its deepest point, although some people claim it is 600 feet deep and provides a home for a mythical Loch Ness-type monster named Sharlie.

MILE
9.3

Payette River

Payette River is the link between Upper Payette Lake and Payette Lake. In the fall, you may see landlocked salmon (Kokanee) in the river. However, don't be tempted to snag one since angling is restricted to protect the fishery. Please check Idaho Department of Fish and Game's regulations to determine legal fishing dates. Also, if you see salmon in this river, they are most likely here to spawn and should not be disturbed. Spawning fish have a noticeable red color along their sides and are quite vulnerable.

Upper Payette Lake

Upper Payette Lake provides you with several campsites along the lake with wonderful views. This lake was also created by a glacier. A dam at the outlet of the lake was constructed by the Lake Reservoir Company and provides irrigation water for the Payette Valley below Black Canyon Dam.

MILE
16.1

Fires of 1994 and 2000

Undoubtedly, you have noticed the large burned-over areas along both sides of the road. The wildfires that created these burns were started by lightning in August 1994, and were fueled by hot, dry weather, spruce beetle epidemics, and a prolonged drought. When the fire started, it moved through the dry lower branches to the crowns of the dead spruce trees and then to the adjacent live trees. Over 300,000 acres were burned that year. Six years later, the Burgdorf Junction Fire picked up where the 1994 fires stopped. This fire burned over 60,000 acres northwest of Burgdorf. More information about these fires can be found on interpretive signs located at mile 19.9 and 22.9. These signs are *New Wildlife Habitat* and *Nature's Unseen Story*.

MILE
17.9

MILE **22.9** Secesh Summit

Your ears may be popping now that you have reached the summit, at an elevation of 6,434 feet above sea level. The town of McCall is at 5,038 feet in elevation, so we are ascending Idaho's mountains at a rate of about 63 feet per mile. During the winter, snow depths here regularly reach more than 14 feet.

MILE **28.9** Lake Creek

This creek is part of the headwaters of the Secesh River and is a spawning ground for Idaho's migratory salmon population. Over 30 percent of the Chinook Salmon population in the Secesh drainage return to this area to spawn every year. Fishing on Lake Creek and the Secesh River is restricted at certain times of the year in order to protect spawning salmon.

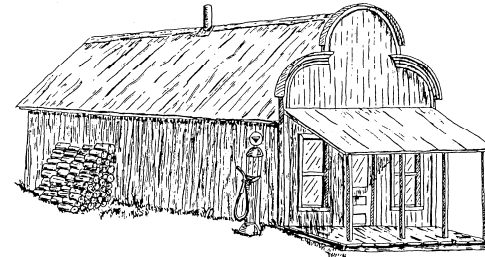
Moose **Crossing**



You might want to keep your eyes peeled for the second largest animal on the American continent — the moose. Moose prefer the cooler temperatures that the terrain at this elevation offers. You may or may not see a moose during your tour because they are remarkably adept at staying out of sight. If you do see a moose, observe it from a distance. Their behavior is unpredictable.

Site 5 - Business District

Businesses have come and gone during Warren's long history. In the early days, the town boasted a boarding house, butcher shop, blacksmith shop, hotel, general store, and several bars. The 1904 fire destroyed many commercial establishments. It was never established whether the fire was accidental or arson-caused. The 1904 fire also destroyed the Kelly and Patterson Store whose inventory, everything from personal items to mining equipment, came to Warren on pack trains. The illustrated store belonged to Otis Morris who purchased it from Jess Root in 1926. It later collapsed under the weight of the

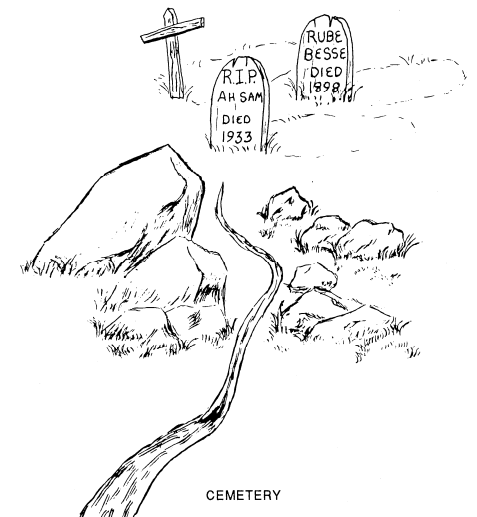


JESS ROOT/OTIS MORRIS STORE (not standing)

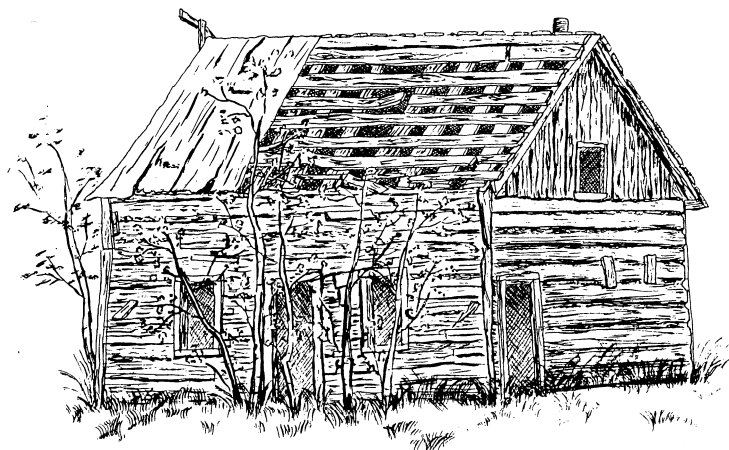
snow and was removed.

Site 6 - Cemetery

Like many gold rush cemeteries, this one holds the locally famous and the unknown. Thirty-four of the graves are named. Most of the infants died of childhood diseases. Causes of adult deaths include illness, old age, and violence. Just a few stories of the people buried here include: James Rains, 1879, Warren pioneer killed by the Sheepeater Indians; John "Tow Head John" Babion got his name while mining the "Tow Head" claim; Dick Hambly was shot by Steve Winchester with an Iver-Johnson .38 caliber pistol; Ah Sam, 1933, was the "honorary mayor" of Warren, he was well-liked and respected by his fellow residents.



CEMETERY



"GREEN HOUSE"

Site 3 - "Green House"

The office and residence for the Justice of the Peace was the "Green House." Andy Kavanaugh assumed the office in 1895 and was distinguished by never rendering a verdict. Kavanaugh threw all his cases out of court on the basis of hearsay evidence because "it made a lot smoother living in the community." After selling his two-thirds of the Warren Meadows to a dredge company, Kavanaugh left town and was never heard from again.

Site 4 - Kelly Home

The Kelly/Patterson family owned a mercantile store in Warren. This photograph, taken around 1895, shows the family in front of the Kelly/Patterson home. Family members also mined at the Iola and Mayflower lode mines located east of Warren. The women and children spent the winters in Kansas.



Burgdorf

The old town site of Burgdorf is about two miles off Warren Wagon Road and is well worth seeing. The town is historically interesting and still offers its original attraction — natural hot water springs. Burgdorf was originally known as "Warm Springs" and was located on one of the trails leading to Warren. The two-story log hotel was one of the first sites in Idaho to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



MILE 32.8 Secesh Cemetery

The cemetery was established in 1904 when two murder victims were buried on the hill. To get to the cemetery you can walk 1/10 of a mile up the road located just past the Fire District building or drive up the road located behind the building.

Secesh Meadows — Fernan Ranch

These log structures, the Fernan Ranch, were constructed around 1925 by Jack and Ethyl Fernan. The building on the left was a log barn and the building on the right was their residence. Jack harvested wild hay from the meadows. He was not able to patent a homestead here because the land was classified as mineral land.

Secesh Meadows is an excellent spot to see wildlife, especially during early morning and late evening. Keep an eye out and your camera ready for deer and elk that come to the meadows to feed. You can also see remnants of the 1989, 1994, 2000, and 2007 fires in the mountains around the meadows.

MILE 34.3

MILE 39.2 Steamboat Summit

Elevation - 6,996 feet above sea level.

A description of Warren's history would not be complete without mention of the Chinese and Native American influences in the area.

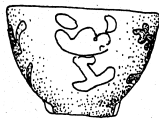
MILE Chinese Miners

43.6

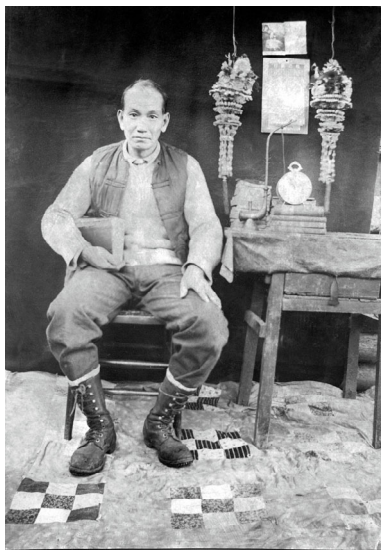
During the last half of the 19th century, the people of China were undergoing a series of struggles which included warfare, slavery, famine, floods, earthquakes, over-population, and environmental degradation. In order to improve their standard of living, thousands of Chinese immigrants came to the western United States in search of economic opportunities.

When the Warren Mining District was organized in 1862, there was an exclusionary policy among the Euro American miners that prevented Chinese immigrants from working mining claims.

In 1869, after the Euro American miners had taken most of the easily recovered gold out of the placer claims, they began selling and leasing their claims to the Chinese. Between 1870 and 1900, Chinese miners reworked existing claims and placer mined new mineral-rich ground in the Warren area. Chinese placer miners used labor intensive methods to extract gold nuggets and flour gold. It is estimated that from 1862 to 1935, the Warren Mining District produced approximately \$15,000,000 in placer gold.



Chinese Liquor Cup



Lee Dick, 1914

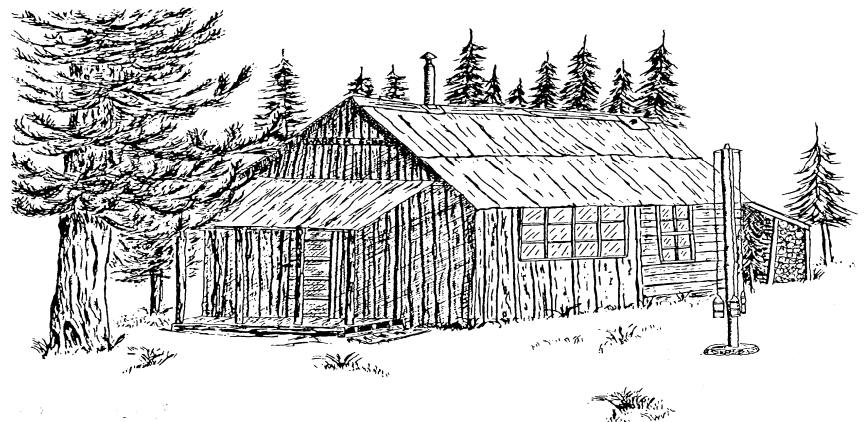
Site 1 - Warren Guard Station

In 1918, the Forest Service moved its guard station from Hays Station, near the South Fork of the Salmon River, to Warren. Construction dates at the station site range from the barn built in 1932, to the 1959 ranch-style, one-level frame house, to the modern bunkhouse built in 1995. Other facilities were built by Franklin D. Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps. The water cannon, or "hydraulic giant," in front of the station, washed the hillsides through sluice boxes as part of the placer mining process. The Guard Station offers information and exhibits on the history of the area.

Site 2 - Warren School

In 1868, Warren had the first public school in Idaho County and boasted four students. In 1887, the community collected \$180 to build a new school house, signaling a banner year in 19th century education. Subjects included spelling, penmanship, reading, and singing. Books for the entire school cost about \$27 per year and the institution was sustained on between \$100 and \$150 each year.

The front, one-room portion of the building is over 100 years old. The back half was added to accommodate increased attendance during the 1930s dredging era. During this same time, there was a debate in town about correction of the backwards "N" on the sign over the school's entrance. Correction was defeated because "that was the way it had always been and there was no reason to change it now."



WARREN SCHOOL

Warren Historic Walking Tour

MILE
44.5

Now that you have arrived at the Warren Guard Station, it is time to begin the walking tour. With the exception of the cemetery, which sits atop a small hill, the tour stays on the main street of Warren, so it is accessible to foot traffic, wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.

The walking tour starts at the Guard Station and then leads back up the main street on which you arrived. With the Guard Station at your back turn left on the main street and as you walk, match the historic site numbered on the map to its corresponding interpretive text contained in this booklet. Please remember, many of these buildings are privately owned and respecting the rights of the owners is appreciated.

Introduction

As you look down Warren's main street, imagine the history that occurred here. After the discovery of gold in 1862, the town held over 600 people. During lulls in mining activity the population plummeted but soared again as dredging started in the 1930s.

Many have walked Warren's streets: Sylvester "Three-Fingered" Smith; the hunter "Cougar Dave" Lewis; governor of Idaho, Norman Willey; Polly Bemis; Ah Kan; and Ah Sam 'honorary mayor' of Warren.

Warren winters promised skiing, horse-drawn sleigh rides, Chinese New Year celebrations, and temperatures as low as minus 41 degrees. Except for occasional bar fights, highway robberies, and a huge 1904 business district fire, Warren was considered a relatively calm mining camp.

In 1989, the Whangdoodle wildfire threatened the entire town. During the fire, burning twigs and ash rained on the town. In 2000, flames from the Burgdorf Junction Fire were visible on the ridges northwest of town. In 2007, the East Zone Complex burned in Warren Meadows.

Placer mining is a process for removing valuable minerals from alluvial deposits of gravel or sand, also known as placers.

The Chinese population within the Warren mining District varied yearly and seasonally. Many of Warren's Chinese population wintered in Portland, Oregon, and other coastal and inland cities which had Chinese communities. The U.S. census records for the Washington (Warren) Precinct list 362 Chinese people living in the area in 1870, 394 in 1880, 22 in 1900, and six in 1910. The population figures are probably higher, since it was difficult to locate the widely dispersed population in the mining district.

The Chinese ran their own stores, saloons, and gambling houses. The whole town anticipated the festive celebrations of the Chinese New Year and celebrated with a parade from Warren to the Chinese cemetery.



Bronze Chinese Coin

Native American Culture

Unfortunately, the Native American culture did not fare as well as the Chinese culture in the Warren area. The campaign against the Sheepeater Indians in 1879 is a good example of the conflict between the native people and the miners/settlers. In the late 1800s settlers had become uneasy because of events such as the 1877 Nez Perce War and the 1878 Bannock War. The paranoia of the settlers grew to the point that any depredation in the county was attributed to the local tribe of Native Americans. In 1879 a campaign against these Northern Shoshone people removed 51 of them from what is now the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. The merchants of Warren supplied the army during the conflict, and several Warren residents acted as scouts for the army.



Payette National Forest

Warren Auto Tour



This map is a general guide to the attractions along the Warren Wagon Road. Contact any Forest office for more detailed information.



Burgdorf Junction
Fire 2000

Fires
of 2007



Warren

Chinese
Cemetery

War Eagle Lookout

Burgdorf
Hot Springs

Lake Creek

Steamboat Summit

Secesh Meadows

Chinook Campground

Secesh Summit

Upper
Payette Lake

Payette River

Fires
of 1994

Payette Lake

Warren Wagon Road

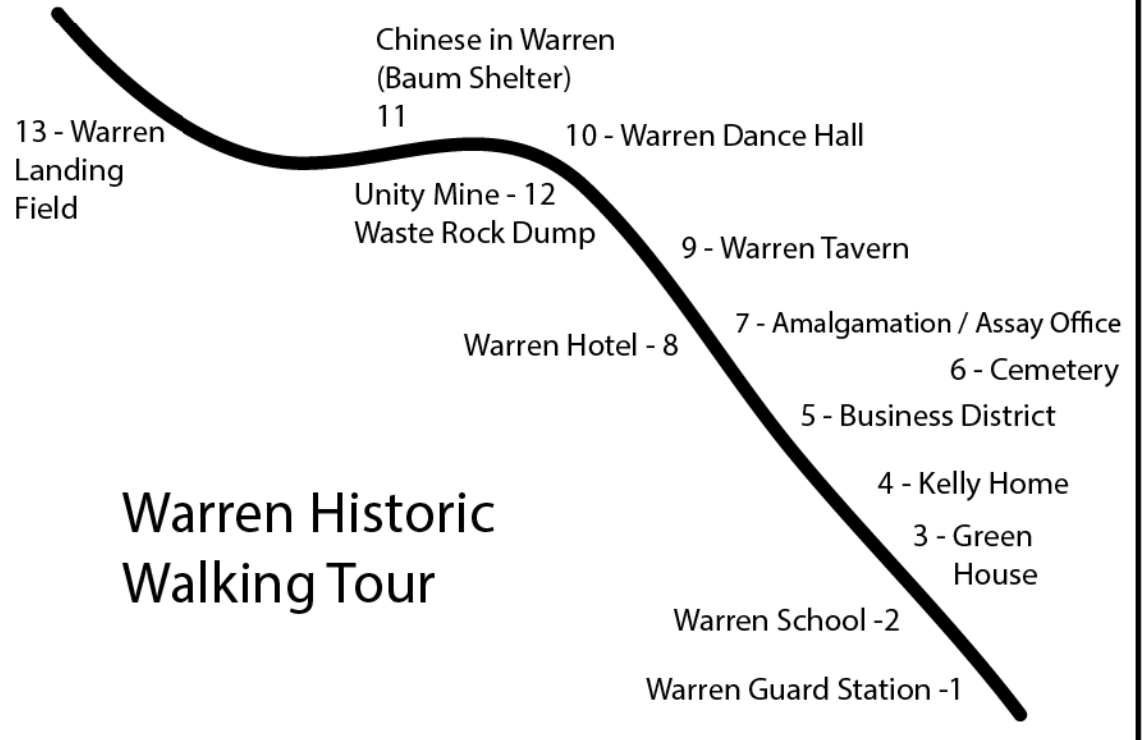
McCall
Ranger
District Office



Map Not To Scale

55

Boise



Touring Tips

Getting Started

Set your odometer to zero before leaving the McCall Ranger District office. The points of interest discussed throughout the auto portion of the tour are designated by signposts with mileage markers. You may want to take along fishing gear, swimsuits, towels, and a camera. Make sure your car has plenty of gas before heading out.

The Route

Take Highway 55 to Warren Wagon Road, also known as Forest Highway 21, located on the west side of McCall. Warren Wagon Road takes you to Warren and to many other areas of interest.

Road Conditions

The roads in the area are suitable for most highway vehicles. About half of the roads you will be traveling today are paved. If you take a side trip off Warren Wagon Road many of these roads can be rutted, narrow, and winding in some places. It is important that you fasten your seatbelts, observe the speed limits, and stay on your side of the road. Elevations range from 5,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level. The Warren Wagon Road is not plowed during the winter months but it is groomed for snowmobile use. Snow falls early and persists until early June.

Travel Time

Travel times are dependent on the traveler, vehicle speeds, and number of stops for viewing. It is 44 miles and about a one and one-half hour drive from McCall to Warren.

Be cautious of hazards around abandoned mines

There are many dangers in and around abandoned mines. Great care should be taken when exploring any of the old mining sites. Hazards could include deep mine shafts, cave-ins, bad air in tunnels and decaying timbers.

Site 13 - Warren Landing Field

The original landing field was built in 1931 by Baumhoff's Idaho Gold Dredging Company. During Idaho's severe winters, trails and roads were blocked by snow, and to this day, airplanes transport Warren's supplies and mail. Dredging destroyed the original field. In 1937, the dredge company, Forest Service, and local citizens leveled the dredge tailings and the field became usable again.

This concludes the tour.

We hope you have enjoyed it!

Historical sites hold clues to America's past. Payette National Forest archaeologists work to preserve, protect, gather and document the history of Idaho and the western United States.

You can help by leaving artifacts where you find them on the National Forest and by informing the Forest Archaeologist of your find. Remember, leave only with your experience and photographs!

The music that you listened to on the Warren Auto Tour was played in Warren in the 1870s and 80s. Peter Beemer, a Warren miner and musician, wrote down over 100 instrumental tunes for the local dance orchestra. A copy of his manuscript is held by Boise State University and the recordings were made by Voyager Records and are used with their permission.