

# THE WATER FLUME

This eight-foot wide ditch is part of a nearly 1/4-mile channel that was cut through bedrock to house a wooden water flume used to deliver water to a nearby power plant.

In 1916, workers with the Western Smelting and Power Company blasted through solid rock to build this channel. In addition they built a low-head dam and installed a headgate on the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River, about one mile upstream. The impounded water was then diverted into the wooden flume through the headgate.

Behind you, the diverted water plunged 50 feet through a 24-inch metal pipe into the powerhouse turbine. The water then rotated the turbine shaft which generated electricity.



*View of the wooden water flume looking south towards the community of houses built at this site, circa 1920s.*



*The wooden flume just upstream from here.*



*A view to the north of a section of the 1/4-mile wooden flume built to transport water to the Western Smelting and Power Company's Power Plant in 1933.*



*Today, all that remains of the wooden water flume are concrete piers, rusty nails, and a few treated posts.*

*Continue along this trail to see the remains of the historic power plant.*