



**SPONSORED BY:**

The South Custer County  
Historical Society &  
White Knob Historical  
Preservation Committee

**Representing:**

The City of Mackay  
Custer County  
The U.S. Forest Service  
The Bureau of Land Management



**MACKAY'S MINE HILL TOUR**

MACKAY'S MINE HILL is the most significant part of the Alder Creek Mining District. Ore was first discovered in 1879, meaningful production began in 1884, and ore was mined into the 1980s. Almost a million tons of ore have been removed over the years, yielding about 42,000 oz. of gold, 2,000,000 oz. of silver, 62,000,000 lbs. of copper, 15,000,000 lbs. of lead, and 5,000,000 lbs. of zinc. Geological sampling still occurs, and mining could be renewed at any time to withdraw the millions of dollars of ore remaining in the ground.

The **MACKAY MINE HILL TOUR** is a self-guided tour of mining locations on Mackay's Mine Hill. Three routes are color-marked for three different modes of touring. Various parts of the tour are accessible to all vehicles, and some only to high-clearance vehicles, all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs), motorcycles, bicycles, horses, or hikers. The tour is not passable for motor homes or trailers.

The **GREEN ROUTE** is accessible to all transportation modes. It follows about 15 miles (round trip from the Lost Rivers Museum or City Hall) on rough but graded dirt roads. Twelve points of interest are described for this route that include the more significant features on the Mine Hill. This route returns to town by backtracking on the same road.

The **BLUE ROUTE** is accessible to all transportation modes except low-clearance automobiles. This route follows the GREEN and BLUE roads and adds another 5 1/2 miles for a round trip of about 20 miles. This route reaches 17 points of interest. About 5 miles of this route are extremely rough, steep, and narrow. The map shows the return path for this route.

The **RED ROUTE** is open only to all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs), bicycles, motorcycles, horses, or hikers. This route uses the GREEN and BLUE routes, and another 4 miles for a total of 24 miles. The RED ROUTE roads are physically restricted to vehicles less than 50 inches wide. This route's return to town is shown on the map.

The **TRESTLE Tour** is a separate segment of the GREEN and RED ROUTES that goes from the main Mine Hill road to the Shay Trestle and back. This 8-mile round trip from the main road is primarily for visiting the renovated Shay Trestle. The RED ROUTE road to the Shay Trestle is narrow and single lane without turnouts.

All of the routes entail a change of elevation from about 6000 feet at Mackay to about 8500 feet at the highest point, and take 2 to 8 hours depending on the route selected and mode of transportation.

The mountains determine mountain weather throughout the year. Knowledge of your planned travel with someone not touring is advised. No food, water, or toilets are available. You travel at your own risk!

The land you are touring is owned by private individuals, the US Bureau of Land Management, and the US Forest Service. Please treat it gently and courteously. The mining artifacts, no matter how deteriorated, are the treasures of the Mine Hill. Please leave them in place for everyone to see.

**MINE HILL TOUR POINTS of INTEREST and INTERPRETIVE SITES**

- |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 0. Lost Rivers Museum           | 10. Open Pit Mine and       |
| 1. Smelter Site and Buildings   | Darlington Shaft            |
| 2. Aerial Tramway Tension Tower | 11. Ausch Cabin             |
| 3. Cossack Tunnel and &         | 12. White Knob Peak         |
| Compressor Building             | 13. Cliff City Town Site    |
| 4. Anderson Family Cabin        | 14. Cliff City Cabin        |
| 5. Horseshoe Mine               | 15. Cliff City Smelter      |
| & Taylor Sawmill                | 16. Cliff City Kilns        |
| 6. White Knob Town Site         | 17. Shay Railroad Bed       |
| 7. North Bullion Tunnel         | 18. Shay Railroad Trestle   |
| 8. Aerial Tramway Headhouse     | 19. Empire Mine Ore Bins    |
| 9. Alberta Level & Tunnel Site  | 20. Lower Shay Railroad Bed |

