

Porcupine district on register

Russell W. Cahill, Director of the Alaska Division of Parks, announced today the placement of Porcupine Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Porcupine, an 1898 mining district, became the 64th entry for Alaska on the National Register.

Disgruntled Klondikers, S. W. Mix, Ed Fenley, and Perry Wiley began prospecting Boulder a tributary of the Chilkat River northwest of Haines in May, 1898. Throughout the summer they found the terrain difficult and had only modest recovery of fine gold. By October they had reached the Porcupine, where they uncovered larger nuggets and richer gravels. In ten days they took almost \$1200 from the streambed. They staked out claims and on October 22 called a meeting of the 13 claim holders in the area; established the Porcupine Mining District and a Mining Code to govern the area.

By the following year the United States Geological Survey recorded 1,000 prospectors and miners in the area. The camp grew slowly. By 1903 it consisted of a hotel, Dalton's Store, and 12 cabins, and was an important stop on the Jack Dalton tollroad to the Klondike. When larger-scale mining developed, largely the Sunshine Mining Co., from 1927 to 1936, a saloon, mess hall, another store, a sawmill, doctor's office, and a score of residences replaced buildings wiped out in the fire of 1915. About 11 of the 25 remaining structures are intact, although the area has seen little mining since World War II. The historic 40-acre district is on State-owned lands.