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Pre-1900s Chinese placer mining in northeastern Washington State: an archaeological investigation

Lindsey M. Evenson

Eastern Washington University

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PRE-1900S CHINESE PLACER MINING IN NORTHEASTERN
WASHINGTON STATE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

A Thesis

Presented to

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

By

Lindsey M. Evenson

Winter 2016

THESIS OF LINDSEY M. EVENSON APPROVED BY

_____ DATE _____
DR. JOHN DORWIN, GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

_____ DATE _____
DR. LAURA HODGMAN, GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

_____ DATE _____
DR. JULIA SMITH, GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

MASTER'S THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The lack of organized historical and archival documentation regarding the pre-1900s Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington has left the historical and archaeological records fragmented. Documentation of the Chinese placer mining activities in the region is poor, at best, and the scars left on the landscape by these miners are often inundated by the damming of the Columbia River (and other major waterways), or the sites are heavily eroded and damaged. The available historic and archival data has been organized and synthesized to create an historical context regarding the pre-1900s Chinese placer miners in the region. Furthermore, archaeological sites previously determined to be affiliated with Chinese placer miners have been evaluated and analyzed to create an archaeological context defining significant Chinese cultural features and/or artifacts of the Chinese placer mining operations. These identified features and artifacts are recommended for the pursuit of future archaeological site evaluations and field work for promising Chinese placer mining sites.

The historical and archaeological contexts have been combined to create four cultural components of Chinese placer mining sites that should be evaluated during future archaeological investigations of potential Chinese sites: artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placer mining features. The combination of two or more of the abovementioned components located within the northeastern Washington State historic Chinese placer mining context is indicative of a Chinese placer mining site, camp, or other operational feature. It is recommended that future archaeological investigation be

conducted for the sites identified within this project, with special attention given to the assessment of the four Chinese placer mining cultural components described, in order to determine their potential Chinese affiliations.

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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

Chinese placer miners were an important part of the early mining history in the northeastern region of Washington State. However, the discrimination against Chinese during the mid-nineteenth century encouraged little interaction between Americans and Chinese immigrants. Unfortunately the lack of historical and archaeological documentation regarding these Chinese miners, has left a void in the regional historic mining record.

The intent of this research is to review the limited historical and archaeological data that have been clearly associated with pre-1900s Chinese placer mining in northeastern Washington in order to identify other possible sites for future study, and in order to further expand our knowledge. The limited historical, archival, and archaeological records will be analyzed, synthesized, and interpreted throughout this project.

Also, the archaeological record will be analyzed for consistent, culturally associated Chinese artifacts and placer mining features, definitive of Chinese occupation in the region, and will attempt to create criteria for establishing Chinese sites in northeastern Washington. It is the hope of this writer that this project will aid in the completion of the fragmented regional mining history, while also providing justification of future archaeological investigation and field work at recommended sites to determine potential Chinese cultural affiliations.

Project Area

The project area for this research is northeastern Washington State, chosen due to this writer's association with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) office in Spokane, Washington. As an archaeological technician, aiding with the BLM's Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) project in northeastern Washington, I observed the absence of concrete historical literature regarding the Chinese placer miners of northeastern Washington's major river systems. Through initial historical investigations, numerous camp locations were identified and large immigrant populations were discussed in the region. However, the lack of archaeological data and investigation of this known mining population, was startling.

The project area is northeastern Washington State, which includes the land within the present Washington State borders, primarily east of the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers and north of Interstate-90 (**Figure 1.1**). This project area includes the present counties of Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Okanogan, Pend Oreille and Stevens, and was chosen due to the vast majority of BLM controlled public lands occurring in this region. The only exception to this defined project area occurs with archaeological site 45KT01020 in Kittitas County, which will be used as a Chinese labor camp habitation site reference for the other sites identified within the project area.



Figure 1.1: Map indicating Washington State counties within the project area (displayed in white) (United n.d.).

Though placer gold was eventually reported throughout northeastern Washington, the major river systems with Chinese associated placer mining activities located within the project area include the Columbia, Pend Oreille, and Similkameen Rivers (Atherley 1991; Esvelt 1977:4; Splawn 1917:211). This should not discourage investigation of other river systems in Washington, as activities of Chinese miners were reported in other rivers as well (e.g. the Kettle River) (Atherley 1991:4). In 1864, Stevens County encompassed all the land within the project area, making it significant in archival research of the Chinese. However, as many of the original records and archives were transferred out of Stevens County when other counties were created, beginning in 1871; therefore archival materials from other counties in northeastern Washington were also investigated.

Methodology

In order to undertake the topic of pre-1900s Chinese placer mining in northeastern Washington State, it is necessary to review the scarce existing literature on the subject. The first known placer gold strike in the state occurred in 1855, prior to settlement of the region (Huntting 1955:28). Euro-American miners saw the Chinese as “undesirables” and unequal to themselves; therefore Chinese miners were heavily discriminated against (“ridiculed, robbed, beaten, or driven out of town”) (Chung 2011:173). Primary early histories in the region belong to the Euro-American populations, and rarely included their “Oriental” neighbors, who were among Washington’s first miners (Mires et al. 1904:669). Various scholars have attempted to understand the activities of Chinese immigrants throughout the Pacific Northwest region; however, existing data and interpretations pertaining to northeastern Washington’s Chinese miners are extremely limited and vague (see **Previous Work**).

To better understand Chinese placer miners specifically of northeastern Washington prior to 1900, it becomes necessary to rely on archival documentation; there have been no known documents or histories written regarding the day-to-day operations of the Chinese placer miners within the project area. Unfortunately, as Chinese placer mining sites in northeastern Washington were ephemeral in their organization, Chinese left little indications and documentary evidence of their operations in the region. What is known about the lifestyles of the Chinese placer miners in the region is very little, taken from the available ethnographies, oral histories, unpublished personal letters and journals, merchant store transaction logs, and newspaper reports, among other similar documents.

This study also consulted governmental archival documents. Those document types include mineral claims, cadastral surveys, census records, and maps. Unfortunately, early historians did not see the Chinese as an important regional culture and the scholars conducting oral interviews did not ask about Chinese during the search for regional historic information.

An historical document investigation was conducted at the following archival repositories in the project area: Eastern Washington University Archives and Special Collections, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Okanogan County Historical Society, Stevens County Historical Society, and Washington State Archives. Additional archival documents were sought at local libraries, including Eastern Washington University's JFK Library and Spokane Public Library's Northwest Room. Digital archives collections were also investigated, online, including: Washington State Archives, Washington State University, University of Washington, Crossroads Archive (Stevens County Oral History Project), and Washington State Libraries (Stevens County Library, Washington Rural Heritage Project), among others.

Historical information obtained from the stated sources have been compiled into a synthesized historical context of the Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington State, prior to 1900 (see **Chapter 2**). These repositories are not the only organizations to hold historical and archival data within the project area. However, the above mentioned document holdings are the primary institutions locally available to this writer. This is not an exhaustive search of data and should not be considered as such; other local document holdings (libraries, archives, churches, schools, historical societies/ clubs, etc.) may have additional resources pertinent to this project. Additionally, turn-of-the-century county

histories should also be investigated for their content, as they were the source for many of the later histories written for the regions and may contain important information regarding the early settlers and ephemeral populations.

The archaeological sites identified for this project were located through the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) index: Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data, or WISAARD. Each archaeology site recorded is provided a Smithsonian number for identification (e.g. *45ST00354*), which includes three elements: state (*45ST00354*), county (*45ST00354*), and five-digit identification number (*45ST00354*). It is important to state that some sites are not represented by their county, but rather by the branch of federal office that manages the site, such as *FS* for Forest Service (*45FS01021*) or *CF* for Colville National Forest (*45CF00614*). The final feature of the Smithsonian number, the five-digit numerical value, is provided for each site upon receipt by the DAHP for identification.

The WISAARD database was searched using keywords (such as: Chinese, China, Chinaman, etc.) to determine which archaeological sites in northeastern Washington, within the project area, have been identified as culturally connected to Chinese placer mining activities. **Table 4.1** is an exhaustive list of the archaeological sites identified by the recording archaeologist as having some kind of Chinese affiliation; the list includes the Smithsonian numbers, their locations, county, dates of occupation (if available), and what features of the site are related to Chinese mining in northeastern Washington State. **Figure 4.1** shows the locations of these archaeological sites. In order to ensure the integrity and protection of the sites identified in this project, the information provided has

been restricted, as it is considered protected information. No exact locations will be provided, only the generalized information.

The archaeological sites located will be compared for similar or consistent features. These features will then be compared amongst each other in order to assess the artifacts and construction styles common to culturally affiliated Chinese placer mining camps and operations. These comparisons will hopefully create patterns which can be used to assess additional archaeological sites for future evaluation and connection to Chinese placer miners.

Previous Work

During the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese were mining throughout the Pacific Northwest using similar styles and techniques, regardless of political boundaries; therefore, current state boundaries are irrelevant when attempting to understand the overall picture of Chinese mining practices in the region. However, as areas developed into territories and eventually gained statehood, the state legislatures developed laws and regulations (specific to the individual state), restricting Chinese (and other immigrant) activities and often encouraging Chinese to mine in certain areas over others (with less competition and/or discrimination). While Washington would have had similar mining styles as Idaho or British Columbia, Chinese miners in Washington would have had a different cultural experience due to these regulatory differences. While this study focuses on the “*etic*” perspective of Chinese miners in the northeastern Washington State project area by using local historical perspectives (since there is no known Chinese documentary evidence for this region), scholarly works focusing on Chinese mines in regions outside

this project area provide valuable insight into Chinese miners throughout the entire region and should not be ignored.

In order to better understand the scope of this research, it is necessary to investigate and compare this research to the works of other scholars. Unfortunately, as many of the project areas for other scholars' works lie outside and do not often discuss this project area (northeastern Washington), the works of others do not always provide the necessary insight. However, these scholarly works are useful in comparison with Chinese placer mining operations and day-to-day livelihoods of Chinese miners elsewhere.

Many scholars often focus on Chinatowns (such as Portland or Seattle), which often had some written histories in addition to the various architectural and archaeological remnants, still visible through time, or Chinese who were hired to construct railroads (Allen et al. 1999). For those scholars who discuss Chinese placer mining activities, they often focus on the Pacific Northwest (or Western mining frontier) as a whole, discussing the more popular mining boom-towns, such as: Rossland, British Columbia; Boise Basin and Idaho City, Idaho; American Canyon, Gold Creek, and Island Mountain, Nevada; John Day, Oregon (Chung 2011; Ripmeester 1997; Rohe 2002; Valentine 2002; Zhu 1997). Other more generalized locations discussed include: Arizona, British Columbia, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

Art Chin's (1977) *Golden Tassels: A History of the Chinese in Washington, 1857-1977* is one of the few works to describe Chinese in Washington State. However, this report was designed for primary-school educational purposes and only describes a

simplified history of Chinese residences and occupations in Washington's frontier history. While Chin's report is useful as a starting-point for historic investigation of Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington, it fails to provide in-depth historic documentation and interpretation of Chinese. Chin states his work is long overdue in regards to a study on Chinese in Washington and hopes his work will encourage further studies of Asian-Americans in the state (Chin 1977).

The importance of continued historical pursuit of Chinese experience in the United States is encouraged by other scholars, as well, especially regarding the occupations of Chinese immigrant populations. Liping Zhu (1999:43) notes the Chinese "historical significance in placer mining ... is still not wholly recognized," discussing the California gold rush and Chinese populations in Boise Basin, Idaho, to elaborate on Chinese activities of the western mining frontier. Another writer reports the Chinese "role in mining, except in California, is sparsely and inadequately understood" and may have been overlooked by the unprecedented focus on prejudice faced by Chinese in the country (Rohe 1983:3). Rohe continues to state "because we do not know enough about the Chinese mining communities, generalizations are hazardous, but there is no question that much remains to be discovered about Chinese in the mining West" (1982:19).

Liping Zhu's (1997) *A Chinaman's Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (and other works by Zhu) discusses the "rags to riches" tales of Chinese living in the Rocky Mountains, particularly Boise Basin, Idaho, who did not suffer the same harsh resentment and victimization from Euro-Americans as elsewhere, like neighboring Montana, who reportedly had a strong sense of nationalism and encouraged citizens to discriminate against Chinese residents (Quinn 1967; Zhu 1995, 1997). For

Zhu, it is important to note the two types of Chinese immigrants to America: bound laborers and free men (Zhu 1997:21). Rossland, British Columbia, also suffered a strong Chinese racial undertone from white (Euro-Canadian) miners and settlers (Ripmeester 1997:31). Ripmeester points out “it is difficult to interpret the Chinese experience in Rossland because the Chinese community’s past is knowable only as filtered through the representations of an antagonistic host community” (1997:36). Centering on Chinese experiences in Boise Basin, Idaho, and parts of California, Zhu contends the misleading negative history commonly written of Chinese laborers is a victimized stereotype, not providing due celebration for Chinese achievements on the western mining frontier (which occurred more often than Chinese were disgraced) (Rohe 1982:3; Zhu 1995, 1997).

Contrary to popular discussion, Zhu claims the majority of Chinese miners in the Pacific Northwest were free men, never-having-been or no-longer contracted with the Six Chinese Companies; of those who were contracted with the Six Chinese Companies, the bound laborers, including “the indentured, the contract workers, and the coolies” (Zhu 1997:21). For the credit system, laborers were required to repay the cost of their transportation to the United States, from their earnings; Coolies, representing the extreme, would sign a contract for an all-expenses paid transport to the U.S., being required to work for the company, with which they were contracted, for a period of two to ten years (Zhu 1997:21).

Zhu (1997:21) also proposes the Chinese “coolies” (minority populations) represented a small percentage of Chinese laborers in the country. “No matter how they chose to get there, most Chinese emigrants came to the United States voluntarily,”

chasing opportunity (Zhu 1997:21). Free men were Chinese who came to the U.S. by their own expenses, typically merchants and regular Chinese citizens with familial support (Zhu 1997:22). It was also indicated that many of these free men in the United States were previously bound laborers who either ran away or had paid off their debt (Zhu 1997:22).

Other scholars, including Zhu, call for further studies of Chinese to better understand their culture and the impact they had on the development of the Pacific Northwest; Zhu (1997:4) in particular states “in the Boise Basin at least, victimization, unhappiness, and oppression were not predominant themes. On the contrary, the brighter aspects of free soil, free labor, and free gold overshadowed the dark side of exploitation, injustice, and discrimination.” Other scholars also request further investigation of Chinese mining and labor in the western United States.

Another concept which opposed the popular view of Chinese miners of the Western mining frontier was the lack of knowledge of mining techniques and skills by Chinese immigrants to the United States. Valentine (2002:37) indicates Chinese adapted their knowledge and use of skills in agricultural and water management technologies (previously used in China) to build ditch, dam, and pump systems for mining in the United States. Chinese miners entered the U.S. with previous knowledge of “mining techniques, irrigation systems, cultural values, and organizational structures from China” adapting their knowledge to the American landscape (Chung 2011:180). It is also indicated that Chinese were using techniques to placer mine iron sand, tin, and other materials prior to their arrival in the U.S. and continued using the same methods while in the country (Valentine 2002:43-44).

Chinese mining camps often differed from Euro-American camps. Chinese settlements were almost 100 percent male populations (due to restrictions placed on Chinese women, see **Chinese Suppression Laws**) and included few centrally-located merchant buildings, supporting Chinese miners in various surrounding camps (Chung 2011:180; Rohe 2002:33-34, 50). This may be the theme of the Chelan Falls Chinese mining settlement discussed later (see **Chelan Falls Village**). As Chinese were known to often move around from place to place when violence escalated or placer deposits ran thin, Chinese placer mining camps were often ephemeral in design and constructed to last only a few years (Rohe 2002:34).

However, this ephemeral design was not always the case. Boise Basin, Idaho, is just one example of Chinese residing in more permanent structures and in Chinatowns (Rohe 2002:40; Zhu 1997:66). Chinese were observed residing in log cabins throughout “California, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, British Columbia, and elsewhere ... Undoubtedly, the Chinese occupied some of these log cabins after their original Euro-American occupants abandoned them... But the Chinese also built their own cabins, using Euro-American techniques (Rohe 2002:36).

Chinese habitation structures were known to vary greatly in style; Chinese resided in anything from semi-subterranean and underground dugouts, adobe or clay huts, or tents to saltbox and log cabin structures (Rohe 2002:36, 43; Zhu 1997:66). Due to discrimination, Chinese in Chinatowns would often construct “bomb-proof” or fireproof residences, made of bricks, cans, tin, clay, adobe, etc. (Rohe 2002:43).

“The sources for writing Western mining history are as widely scattered and often as elusive as the gold for which the miners searched. This is especially true of material on

Chinese” (Rohe 2002:33). The scholarly works of others provide insight into activities and occupations of Chinese laborers throughout the Pacific Northwest, often discussing housing, clothing, diet, and placer mining details, and the differences between Chinese and Euro-Americans at the same settlements. For example, placer mining features of Euro-Americans included disorganized and scattered tailings, while Chinese often had neatly stacked and organized parallel cobble alignments of sorted tailings, often multi-functioning for water diversion or sluice box support; this was a common difference observed throughout the Pacific Northwest (Chung 2011:8-9; Rohe 1996:17; Valentine 2002:46; Zhu 1997:106). Due to the limited historic materials on Chinese, “archaeological and visual records are used to supplement and corroborate the documentary record” and conclude the specific Chinese occupational details and differences from Euro-Americans (Rohe 2002:33). These archaeological comparisons will be further discussed at the end of this report (see **Chapter 4: Results**).

Archaeological investigations of these Chinese settlements reportedly began during the 1970s by cultural resource management (CRM) work, which produced little information regarding the ethnic populations who occupied the sites (Patel 2014b). Unfortunately, much of the CRM work originally done on Chinese mining archaeology sites were evaluated (often not being excavated) “out of law-induced necessity and allotted a short time frame ... [involving] less specialized archaeologists trained to interpret a variety of sites” and did not always identify Chinese cultural sites (Fong 2007:3). Historic archaeology is being used to “supplement and corroborate” the historic and documentary records with material evidence, attempting to rewrite the current perceptions of Chinese miners (Fong 2007:2). As Sue Fawn Chung (2011:xxv) reports:

The archaeological finds enhanced the few written records available and provided much insight into the Chinese miners and merchants in the mining towns. Historic ethnographers, archaeologists, and historians use much of the same written literature ... However, archaeologists focus upon the location, types, and quantities of artifacts found at a specific site, and then use documents to give a context to the site... For a group like the Chinese who left few written records, the work of archaeologist laid the foundation for studies about the people, their lifestyle, and the community.

As archaeology tends to focus on the daily lives of people, based on the materials they leave behind (garbage, structures, tools, things, etc.), it is understood that archaeology will hopefully fill the information void created by this lack of historical data. One way archaeology can do so is through the practice of historical archaeology, combining historical documentation and material artifacts to create an archaeological narrative of the study area (Swords et al. 2014:4-5). The archaeology will attempt to tell the untold or under-told stories of ethnic populations throughout the regions.

According to Louanne Atherley (1991), “in order to conduct an effective [archaeological] ground survey of the areas to be managed, a thorough search must be done of the available literature appropriate to that area.” Swords et al. (2014:4-5) describes the importance of historical archaeology, the combined influence of archaeology and history working together, by quoting the work of Jim Deetz:

While the historian creates contexts of the past based on probate data, court records, censuses, diaries, and related written materials, the archaeologist’s contexts are created from the study of excavated foundations, pottery fragments, faunal remains, smoking-pipe stems, and other such material regalia. Since people in the past produced both documents and material objects, it is obvious that archaeology and history must be complementary ... Archaeology’s value to history stems from an ability to address aspects of people’s lives that often never show up in written records. Topics range from the simple, daily aspects of life ... to essentially ignored people within a written community... the only avenue to learn about their lives and roles ... comes through the archaeological record and the meshing of historical records with archaeology through an archaeologist’s perspective ... The historical archaeological approach takes more from history and tries to “tell stories” about the subject matter rather than relying on statistical correlations.

The report continues to suggest historical archaeology must find the balance between archival (documentary) and material evidence, resulting in "... a more satisfactory explanation than would be forthcoming from either set of data along" (Swords et al. 2014:4-5).

It is the attempt of this report to further this historical archaeological approach by adequately locating and interpreting historical documentation of Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington State, while using the archaeological data to support and describe the cultural significance of Chinese mining operational features in the project area. Through this historical archaeology approach, this project will aid in the current scholarly debate of Chinese immigrants to the United States prior to 1900, by providing the context for which Chinese operated in northeastern Washington State. As other scholars stress, much more scholarly debate is needed regarding Chinese occupation in the Pacific Northwest, especially Washington State. Placer mining by Chinese immigrants should also be further historically and archaeologically evaluated in the future.

BACKGROUND AND EARLY EXPERIENCES

The first recognizable event bringing a frenzy of settlers into the American West was the famous California Gold Rush of 1848. The *New York Herald* reported news of the California gold discoveries to the east coast on August 19, 1848. Shortly after, this information reached foreign shores, beginning what has been hailed as the first world-class gold rush (Hill 1999:1).

The California Gold Rush created opportunity in the west. Large numbers of foreign laborers from around the world immigrated to the west coast during the early 1850s, some of whom were the Chinese. It was estimated that 300,000 “forty-niners” of all ethnicities ventured to the goldfields of California during its reign, from 1848-1858 (Harvard n.d.).

In China it was a law that if one emigrated from their motherland, legal punishment was death by decapitation (Zhu 1997:21). This was a major deterrent early in the gold rush era with the law finally being repealed in 1894 (Chen 1908:7). Regardless of this corporal punishment, many chose to leave: “...over 99 percent of the Chinese in America came from just a few districts around Canton (Guangzhou) in South China” in the Guangdong Province (Chen 1908:6; Zhu 1997:10). Many defied their country for the American gold fields during this time, due to the ongoing Taiping Rebellion, making conditions unbearable for many of the country’s residents (Chen 1908:6). In addition, “the pursuit of happiness is natural to the human condition. This pursuit, mainly in terms of material wealth, led the Chinese in the coastal regions to compromise their loyalty to their homeland” (Zhu 1997:10).

By 1850, there were an estimated 500 Chinese among the 57,787 miners in California working alongside both the whites and other foreigners (Marie 1976: 6). Many Chinese also became laborers in other industries, running successful laundries, restaurants, and opium dens in the larger settled areas. By 1852, their number had grown to nearly 12,000, only 7 of whom were women (*Daily Alta California* 1853). Unfortunately, for fear of unregulated prostitution among the labor camps, Chinese women faced early discrimination and exclusion from the United States (Compean n.d.;

Patel 2014b). Laws were quickly enacted to prevent intermarriage between Chinese men and white women, thus creating “bachelor” communities (Compean n.d.).

American laborers in the gold fields accepted the other foreign laborers, however, they despised the Chinese; as their numbers grew, so did white animosity (Griffith 2004:476; Hill 1999:73). Most of the Chinese entering the country maintained their traditional appearance, wearing long robe-like garments and queues, or long braided hairstyles with a shaved forehead; the Chinese were seen as quiet, different, and poor speakers of English (Griffith 2004:476). This, combined with their willingness to work for a fraction of the Euro-American cost created a growing bitterness among the Americans (Griffith 2004:476). The Chinese accepted lower wages and “dirty” work because the little earnings they made in America were worth fortunes for their families back home in China, where they would send most of their money (Compean n.d.; Griffith 2004:473-475).

Although over two-thirds of the Californian Chinese miners reworked the old, worked-out claims no longer desired by the whites (an attempt to avoid conflict and competition), Americans still felt threatened by the Chinese (Chen 1980:48). Even with French and Spanish-American populations exceeded that of the Chinese populations, American miners of the California gold fields began calling for laws restricting labor and immigration of Chinese only (see **Chinese Suppression Laws**) (*Daily Alta California* 1853).

Some of these laws required the Chinese to pay high taxes, specifically targeting and encouraging their return to China. This did not entirely stop their enterprise, however, as many Chinese stayed, employed as miners and laborers in other trades; some

even became “house boys,” who did all the labors of the home, including cooking, cleaning, and tending to the children (McNamee 1937:2).

Shortly after its start, the California Gold Rush slowly dissipated. By the mid-1850s region-wide prospecting began in the Pacific Northwest, encouraging miners to go every direction; “both Chinese and Euro-American [miners] moved to Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, Washington, British Columbia, Montana, and elsewhere in search of new sites (Chung 2011:xvi). It was during this expansion that gold was first discovered in northeastern Washington Territory, in the Yakima River valley. An expedition party under Captain McClellan, exploring a railroad route through the Cascade Mountains in 1853 for the transcontinental railroad, ordered by Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis (Hunting 1955:28; Koschmann and Bergendahl 1968:254). The following year, gold was discovered at the mouth of the Pend Oreille River, just north of the Canadian border (Hunting 1955:28; Scott 1917:151).

By late September of 1855, the *Olympia Pioneer* reported that gold had been discovered continuously along the Columbia River from the Spokane River to the Pend Oreille River, continuing up that river for nearly 40 miles, initiating a small gold rush (Hunting 1955:28; Scott 1917:151). Chinese were observed alongside other miners in the Colville Valley during this rush. U.S. military Fort Colville, built in 1859 (not to be confused with the Hudson’s Bay Company [HBC] Fort Colville at Kettle Falls), became “the first important center for mining development in the Inland Empire” (Trimble 1914:15). Attempting to capitalize on the discovery of gold at the mouth of the Pend Oreille River, the HBC constructed Fort Sheppard in 1859. This was also the location of

a known Chinese placer mining camp known as Fort Sheppard Bar (Goodwin 1998; Slater 1920).

A few short years later, the first Similkameen River gold rush occurred intermittently from 1858 to 1859, being interrupted by gold discoveries on the Fraser and Cariboo Rivers to the north (Atherley 1991; Scott 1917:151). Also “... in 1859, a gold rush also occurred in the Metalline [*sic*] district on the Pend’Oreille [*sic*] River” (Goodwin 1998:3-4). The Metaline strikes brought additional forty-niners north into the territory; of these, Chinese miners were said to have been present (Atherley 1991:6). A small placer gold prospecting occurred throughout the upper Pend Oreille River, however, the Metaline District became prominent for hard-rock mining industries during the later lead and zinc strikes.

The Similkameen River strike was the first large gold rush of the north, bringing many of the early miners into the northeastern Washington region, and it seems to be a bit of a controversy, as other claims suggest British Columbia strikes along the Cariboo and Fraser Rivers came first (Bethune 1891:5; Litzkow 2015:8; Scott 1917:151). However, there are many indications suggesting the first major gold strike discovered north of California was in the Fraser and Cariboo River valleys. To clear up confusion about the original northern strike, first state geologist George Bethune states otherwise: “It is a popular fallacy tha [*sic*] the ‘Frazier river excitement’ ... preceded ... the discovery of gold in Washington. To this state is due the distinction of being the first division of the Union in which gold was discovered north of California on the Pacific Coast” (Bethune 1891: 5). Lasting only a few short months, a frenzy of miners flooded

the lower Similkameen River, creating the lost tent settlement of “Okanogan City” (Litzkow 2015:8).

The “Old Okanogan City” greeted the placer miners as they arrived on the river, welcoming nearly 3,000 men within its first month of existence, including some Chinese immigrants (Bethune 1891:6). The 1859 Okanogan City along the Similkameen River was regarded as the “... largest placer gold mining camp in the history of early Washington State,” however, its exact location remains unknown (Barlee 1999:34; Litzkow 2015:8; Woodhouse, Jacobson, and Pisoni 2011:18). This Okanogan City was supposedly located along the north shore of the lower Similkameen, between Shanker’s Bend and Nighthawk. Compton Bar, named after Sergeant Compton of the Northwest Boundary Survey team, was the destination for these men; however, it was soon renamed Rich Bar (not to be confused with the Rich Bar of the Columbia River) (Litzkow 2015:7-8).

As news broke of gold being discovered just north of the Canadian border, almost every white miner who had taken up camp along the Similkameen River left in search of greater profits at the “New El Dorado,” along the Fraser and Cariboo Rivers (Robertson 1909:15). The combined gold rushes of the Similkameen River and the Fraser and Cariboo Rivers were said to yield very high volumes of gold, sending a frenzy of forty-niners to the north. This initial Fraser/Cariboo rush was also brief, as larger gold strikes were reported south of the border at Rock Creek and near Bridgeport (Goodwin 1998: 3-4). This encouraged the white miners to quickly spread out from the Similkameen River area, some returning to British Columbia, others moving throughout the northeastern Washington Region (Litzkow 2015:8).

Large numbers of Chinese followed the northbound miners: “Some 2,000 [Chinese] left California for newly discovered gold mines in British Columbia” (Chen 1980:48). “[John P.] Esvelt reports that the Chinese came into this area sometime after 1858” (Hodgen n.d.). However, by August of 1860, only 150 miners were visible on the Similkameen River, with an ethnic division again being evident, as white men would work one side of the river and the Chinese the other (Gjerde 1965; Litzkow 2015:10; Woodhouse, Jacobson, and Pisoni 2011:33). By 1861, 150 Chinese miners were visible working the Similkameen River gravel bars (Litzkow 2015:10; Salo 1987:26).

Chinese in the northeastern Washington region typically resided along major river systems, such as the Columbia River. Due to the limited supply of materials to construct shelters, Chinese were often observed residing in “dugouts.” These dugouts were often semi-subterranean earthen depressions with timber and sod roofs. They occasionally were dug into the hillside or river bank, creating a cave or fort-like structure with logs used as support beams in front (Chin 1977:20-21; Hodgen n.d.; Mires et al. 1904:670; Powell 1994; Schmidt 1993:2; Zhu 1999:55). These dugout habitations will be discussed throughout the text, as they occur in the historical and archaeological records.

By 1862, placer gold was actively being discovered throughout the upper Columbia River and “... a considerable number of Chinese from Canada came into the mines in the Upper Columbia and Pend Oreille Rivers” (Atherley 1991:6). Chinese miners were noted in strong numbers during this time, all along the Columbia River, from Rock Island north, to the Canadian border (Splawn 1917:211). Some early records suggest the Chinese preceded white miners in some regions along the Columbia River, such as near Chelan Falls; Wilma (2006) reports that “... the first non-Indians” living in

the Chelan and Wenatchee Valleys were Chinese placer miners, beginning around 1863. In April of 1865, the *Walla Walla Statesman* "... reported there were none but Chinese miners at work on the Columbia and Pend Oreille Rivers, some 300 or 400 in all" (Esvelt 1977:4).

The Stevens County borders were expanded in 1864 to include the western bank of the Columbia River, in part so the government could more efficiently tax the Chinese miners from the Canadian border all the way south to the Wenatchee River. Bruce Wilson states, "Nearly everywhere, Chinese were greeted by hostility. Newspapers railed that Chinese were products of 'a pagan climate and a despotic soil' whose acceptance of low wages threatened the subsistence of the American workingman" (Wilson 1990).

It was reported by early settlers that the Chinese did not have any original workings, rather they re-worked the diggings that had been abandoned by Euro-Americans, because they were not permitted to own their own land in the United States (Hodgen n.d.). As with California, "the richer mines – all claimed or owned by whites – [had] been poorly supplied with water; little work [had] been done, and little gold [had] therefore been [removed] ... But all the time the patient plodding [Chinese] Johns [had] been delving among the rocks and ravines of the foothills – in places where a white man would starve, rather than work at all" (Gibson 1877:238). The Chinese were so efficient in their methods, they managed profits from these old, worked-out bars, sustaining their enterprises in the region. It was said that everywhere white men mined, the Chinese followed, cleaning up their "leftovers" (Schmidt 1973b:1)

By the early 1870s, the Chinese population in the region was at an all-time high, with an estimated 1,500 Chinese mining the upper Columbia River; low numbers were

also seen along the Similkameen River (Borg 1986:18; Esvelt 1977:3-4; Wilson 1990). In the upper Columbia River near Colville, the Chinese outnumbered Euro-American placer miners two to one (Jones 2010:9). The high populations of Chinese may have encouraged conflicts to arise between the Native Americans and Chinese immigrants in the Big Bend Country, with “Indian Wars” occurring from 1875-1877 (Mires et al. 1904:530). Due to this conflict, many Chinese left the Big Bend region. However, by 1881, Chinese miners were once again seen in large numbers at the Chelan Falls Chinese village (Hodgen n.d.).

Northern Columbia River Chinese populations had a positive interaction with the Colville Native Americans; when the sheriff would come to collect the quarterly taxes, the Chinese would hide out on the opposite side of the river the Natives. This hiding practice most likely accounts for the discrepancies seen in the census records. According to John P. Esvelt, “... an old Indian acquaintance” of Emery Bayley was told that the first two Chinese visible along the Columbia River near the San Poil River were captured by the Native Americans, having their fate decided at a tribal council meeting: “Since they weren’t white men, and weren’t Indians, they therefore must be devils” (Esvelt 1977:9). The source continues to say that these Chinese men were executed, presumably by the San Poil Natives, around 1863.

The United States census of 1860 reportedly listed 420 Chinese in eastern Washington (Chung 2011:xx). However, the 1870 census was drastically lower for Chinese populations, listing the following populations of Chinese in the Pacific Northwest: 49, 310 in California, 3,330 in Oregon, 4,274 in Idaho Territory, 1,949 in Montana Territory, and 84 in eastern Washington Territory (Esvelt 1977:6). **Figure 1.2** is an example of Chinese recorded on the 1878 Stevens County census. By 1880 the

Stevens County census recorded a total of 1,203 people; of those, 227 were Chinese, all of whom were males (equaling 18% of the county's total population), with just 32 Chinese being reported near Okanogan, all between the ages of 20-60 (Gaylord 1993:12; Litzkow 2015:10).

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CENSUS of the Inhabitants in Columbia River, in the County of Stevens, Territory of Washington, enumerated by me on the 2 day of May, 1876.

H. W. Angus Deputy County Assessor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Serial	Name of every person whose place of abode on the first day of March, 1876, was in this family.	Age at last birthday, or under 1 year, after census.	Sex	Color	Profession, Occupation or Trade of each person, male or female.	Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S., or the country, if of foreign birth.	Married	Immigrant	Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S., or the country, if of foreign birth.	Parent's Age	It born within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.	It married within this year, was married within this year, or was married within this year.
1	Ah Yati	42	M	C	Miner	China												
2	Rim Yak	37	M	C	"	"												
3	Pauy	32	M	C	"	"												
4	Pien	20	M	C	"	"												
5	Ah Chong	24	M	C	"	"												
6	Ah Lo	27	M	C	"	"												
7	Ah Kee	24	M	C	"	"												
8	Ah Chow	31	M	C	"	"												
9	Ah Lee	42	M	C	"	"												
10	Ah Mui	28	M	C	"	"												
11	Ah Yee	35	M	C	"	"												
12	Ah Chow	30	M	C	"	"												
13	Ah Bang	40	M	C	"	"												
14	Ah Lee	48	M	C	"	"												
15	Ah Chow	27	M	C	"	"												
16	W. E. Hughes	27	M	W	Farmer	Ill												
17	Frank	12	M	W	"	"												
18	W. E. Hughes	27	M	W	Farmer	Ill												

Figure 1.2: 1878 Stevens County census record, revealing Chinese immigrants (all males from China, employed in mining, ages 20-48) (Wilson 1878).

The census records were inaccurate: other sources report twice as many Chinese as whites mining the Columbia River during this time, and three years prior, Ah Tai had said there were 1,500 Chinese along the Columbia and Kettle Rivers (Esvelt 1977:3-4; Graham 1937:1; McNamee 1937:1). The discrepancies in the total number of Chinese immigrants in northeastern Washington were often caused by Chinese crossing to the eastern side of the Columbia River, hiding out with Native Americans, avoiding being counted in the census and escaping the high quarterly tax they owed (Esvelt 1977:3-4;

Gaylord 1993:12; Goodwin 1998:9). “Because the Chinese sometimes avoided both the tax collectors and the census takers, tracing individual male Chinese has been difficult. Once the poll and other taxes were ruled illegal, many of the records of earlier tax collections were not preserved (Chung 2011:xxi).

In addition to the Chinese hiding from the tax collectors and census counters, reducing their recorded numbers, the Stevens County census only counted residents of major settlement areas. These areas included Fort Colville, Spokane Plains, and Union Flats (Esvelt 1977:3-4). The source continues to indicate there were probably no more than 800 Euro-Americans and greater than 1,500 Chinese.

Confirming this, an oral interview with George Quintasket, who had half Chinese/half Native American cousins, the interviewer Arlene Pinette asks if Quintasket remembers “... the Indians [who] used to hide the Chinese when the Americans ... were taking the head count.” Pinette had heard the Chinese “... would hide out in Quillascut and the Indians would come over from this side and take them over;” Unfortunately, Quintasket could not attest to this (Crossroads 1980a).

As the hostility toward the Chinese was continuing to develop, the United States government passed the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882*, denying further immigration of Chinese, and the *Geary Act of 1892*, requiring the U.S. Chinese residents to apply for a permit to stay. Failure to obtain and hold this document meant deportation for those who were caught (see **Chinese Suppression Laws**) (Soennichsen 2011). After these suppression laws had halted their legal immigration, Chinese immigrants found other methods to enter the country. Often the Six Chinese Companies and the Chinese Tongs assisted in the illegal smuggling of the Chinese and opium into the country (see

The Six Chinese Companies) (Griffith 2014:477). *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported that in 1886 Chinese were being smuggled across the northern Okanogan border from British Columbia, working their way from Osooyos Lake, down the Okanogan River, and into the Columbia River placer mining operations (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1888).

After being closed for some time, the area surrounding the Similkameen River was once again opened to mineral entry in 1886. This encouraged a second gold rush to begin, during which it was declared the “Comstock of Washington” (McKowen and McKowen 2009:494). During this strike, a second Okanogan City tent settlement was developed, which has also disappeared from the landscape and historical records. This later gold rush to the north is probably what encouraged many of the Chinese from the Chelan Falls Chinese camp to move north, up the Okanogan River (Mires et al. 1904:670).

During this time, climate fluctuations encouraged stronger-than-normal water level fluctuations occurred in the region’s major waterways, limiting the available placer bars for the Chinese to work. The lack of available work and demand for their labor encouraged many of the Chinese to return to China; very few stayed in the region, hoping for the river to reveal its placer bars again. After this, the mining industry took a turn underground, and the concentration changed to hard rock (lode) mining. The complexities and high costs of hard-rock (lode) mining encouraged many Chinese to abandon their mining enterprises and return to China (Rohe 1996:17).

After the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882* tensions between the Chinese and Americans began to fade, as the Chinese threat toward “free white labor” diminished

(Anonymous 1864:56; Kanazawa 2005; Soennichsen 2011). Many Americans began to befriend the Chinese, creating amiable relations (Hodgen n.d.). Evidence of their camaraderie can be seen in later accounts of Chinese being employed by Americans in agriculture, or in the accounts of old Wong Fook Tai of Daisy. By 1900, virtually all placer mining done by the Chinese had ceased; the once flourishing Chinese populace that had taken the region by storm, was now gone.

This decline in Chinese population in the United States may have been caused by the aging population in the country and the few young Chinese miners able to enter the country (illegally) after the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882*; in addition, the decline in Chinese populations around 1900 may have also been partially caused by the depletion of gold placer bars and the increase of Euro-American hard-rock mines emerging throughout the region (Valentine 2002:45).

It was reported in numerous instances that the Chinese intermarried and interbred with the Native Americans in the region; however, specific examples of this are poorly documents. As an example, the descendants of Chee Saw and Julia Lum are reportedly still living among the Colville today (Hodgen n.d.). John Freedman, part of the Timentwa family, was supposedly part Chinese. “Old Sitkum Bill” (Sitkum meaning half in Chinook Jargon) was also half Chinese (Davis 1976:28).

Frank Matsura’s famous frontier photographs include a possible mixed-race child of both Chinese and Native American blood. The photograph (held by the Okanogan County Historical Society) caption reads “An Indian boy who may have been part Chinese. There was considerable intermarriage between Chinese miners along the international border and Indians” (**Figure 1.3**) (Roe and Morgan 1981:123).



Figure 1.3: Frank Matura image of “Skukum,” a Native American child who was also part Chinese (Matura n.d.).

Chinese Burial Beliefs

Despite the thousands of Chinese who were in Washington Territory during the second half of the nineteenth century, there are few burials on United States soil. Yet the hard manual labor they endured in the harsh terrain and climate of the region surely meant death for some of the immigrants. There was “an ancient Chinese superstition, one that our miners clung to, [that] their bones had to find a resting place in the homeland if the Chinaman was to find celestial bliss” (Hodgen n.d.).

Nelson (1993) points out the Chinese were raised to believe in filial piety (respect for elders and ancestors) and the existence of spirits; upon coming to America, it was the

intent of the immigrants to return home to China (in life or in death) in order to fulfill their filial duties and not upset the spirits. It was believed the bones of the deceased must return and be buried in China in order to fulfil their filial duties, otherwise the spirits would wreak ill fortune on the family of the deceased.

If a Chinese immigrant died while in the U.S., his countrymen would perform a ceremonial burial, later recovering his bones and sending them back home to China with the assistance of the Six Chinese Companies (Nelson 1993). “Those who left alive took their dead country men back home with them to rest where the Chinese could find celestial bliss” (Schmidt 1973b: 3-4). The larger, non-mining Chinatowns, like those observed in Spokane, Seattle, or Portland, among others, often contained a “Chinese dead house (for storage of bones awaiting shipment to China)” (Rohe 2002:50).

The Six Chinese Companies

Stepping back to view the Chinese as a whole in the Pacific Northwest, the Six Chinese Companies were a common organizational practice amongst Chinese mining camps and Chinatowns throughout the United States, beginning with the California Gold Fields. Due to the harsh discrimination and sentiment by the whites, protective associations were voluntarily formed among the Chinese communities. These groups often became a substitute for family life since there were few Chinese women or children in the United States. These protective organizations were based on family clan associations of the districts in China, however, in the U. S. they did not restrict membership based on family name. These groups supported the social welfare of the communities and mediated disputes between their members (Compean n.d.).

Geographical divisions became evident within these organizations in the United States, being based on the Chinese home districts from China (Compean n.d.).

In the early days of the California gold strike, these organizations created six different district divisions, later being recorded as the “Six Chinese Companies.” The Six Chinese Companies, or huiguans, were: the Sam Yup Company, See Yup Company, Ning Yugen Company, Yeung Wo Company, Hop Wo Company, and Hip Kat Company (Weirde n.d.). Though these original Six Chinese Companies began in San Francisco, the same district associations followed the Chinese into the mining labor camps of northeastern Washington (Compean n.d.).

These companies provided a broad range of assistance for their members, including “temporary housing, loans, labor placement, and protection to new arrivals, and served as intermediaries with government authorities” (Compean n.d.). The Six Chinese Companies also offered to pay the transportation costs of any Chinese who wished to travel to the United States, if the individuals signed contracts with the companies prior to departing China; these contracts obligated the individuals to repay the company from their earnings in the U.S., for a specified term (Compean n.d.).

Since the contracts were required and bound, the Six Chinese Companies virtually restricted the freedom of their members, who remained loyal to their company due to their familial ties. The contracts made it so the individuals “could not seek work independently and were required to abide by their company’s policies, especially in disputes with other Chinese companies,” regardless of how much money they owed the company (Compean n.d.). Research has found there were but a few independent and free

Chinese laborers working the placer mines of Washington, such as Ah Tai, Chee Saw, and Ah Yen, who will be discussed later.

As the living conditions in China were less than ideal, individuals willingly accepted the terms of these companies, escaping to the United States. Some accounts suggest the Six Chinese Companies' contracts had even worse terms than simply restricted freedoms and required payments: "The men sometimes were contracted, sometimes bought, and sometimes kidnapped. The masters provided the outfit and required both repayment of expenses and profits for themselves" (Trimble 1914:144).

The Chinese were also often contracted out in large groups as labor forces. Some of the work they were contracted to do included building ditches or railroads. Examples of this can be seen at Eureka Ditch (archaeology site *45CL00215*), near Vancouver, Washington and at an 1880s Sino-American (Chinese) railroad camp near Cle Elum (archaeology site *45KT01020*) (WISAARD 2016). These are not the only examples of their alternative labor industries, as the Chinese were also known to have worked in the salmon canneries on the lower Columbia River and on Vancouver Island (Chin 1977:15).

Due to the heavy discrimination faced by Chinese laborers, the Six Chinese Companies quickly monopolized in the United States, contracting a large majority of the Chinese immigrants. Internal conflict arose, fostering resistance organizations which challenged the Six Chinese Companies. These resistance groups, based on the secret societies in China, became known as Tongs (Compean n.d.; Zelenko n.d.). Tongs were based on fraternal principles, like brotherhoods, and aimed to provide fair and equal treatment to its members, not discriminating based on clan or social background. The largest Tong was the San Ho Hui, or Triad Society (Zelenko n.d.). Conflicts often arose

between Tong associations as well (Compean n.d.). Tongs were known to have existed among all the Chinese mining camps in northeastern Washington; local pioneer Emery Bayley stated that three Tongs existed at the Hawk Creek camp (Esvelt 1977:12).

After anti-immigration laws took effect in the United States, the Six Chinese Companies played a huge role in the illegal immigration of Chinese laborers. Newspapers like *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* stated that Chinese were smuggled illegally into the United States from British Columbia (Territorial 1897). The Six Chinese Companies often fronted money for legal fees to Chinese immigrants who were caught being illegally smuggled into the country (Griffith 2014:477).

Though Zhu (1997:183) indicates, “there were no coolies toiling in the mining fields [of Boise Basin]; almost every man was either a free laborer or an independent miner,” there are no indications to support this conclusion in northeastern Washington State. However, minor evidence to the contrary does exist in the concept that Chinese worked for Boss Chinaman Ah Tai or Ah Yen, Chinese miners were paid very little (much lower than wages elsewhere), and the Chinese camps reportedly contained Tongs.

Chinese Suppression Laws

At the beginning of the United States as a country, the *Naturalization Act of 1790* only granted national citizenship to “free white persons” of good character, excluding indentured servants, slaves, free blacks, Native Americans, most women, and immigrants from the Pacific, including those of Asian descent (Franklin 1906:35, 174). The *Naturalization Act* was modified a number of times, always excluding naturalization and

citizenship to those immigrants from the Pacific (Franklin 1906; Library of Congress, n.d.).

The *Foreign Miners Tax Law of 1850* was possibly the first law aimed primarily at the foreigners who were mining in the California gold fields, requiring twenty dollars per month tax on each foreign miner. That law was repealed in 1851, only to be reestablished in 1852 with more reasonable terms. By 1853, the tax was four dollars per month. This law was primarily aimed at restricting the Chinese laborers, being less enforced on other foreigners. The following year, this tax increased to six dollars. Similar taxes were later placed specifically on the Chinese mining in Washington Territory. Also during 1853, as a preemptive strategy in anticipation of Chinese immigrants traveling north, Washington adopted a territorial law banning anyone of Chinese descent from voting (Litzkow 2015:10).

By 1864, as the Chinese moved north to Washington a territorial law had been passed, placing a six dollar quarterly tax on any Chinese earning a living in the region. This law, titled *An Act to Protect Free White Labor against Competition with Chinese Coulie Labor, and to discourage the Immigration of the Chinese into this Territory*, it contained 12 sections, effective March 1, 1864 (“Statutes of the Territory” 1864:56). This law became “informally known as the Chinese Police Tax” because the money was to be collected by the local sheriff (Wierzbicki 1997:18). Of the taxes collected, “25 per cent of the amount [went] to the sheriff who collected it, and the rest [was] divided between the county and the territory. In 1864, Stevens County’s share of the tax was \$1,542. In 1866 it was \$3,076” (Hodgen n.d.). After several amendments, the “Chinese Police Tax” law was finally repealed in 1869 (Esvelt 1977:8).

The *Page Act of 1875* was the first federal immigration law prohibiting “undesirable” immigrants from entering the United States. The undesirables were said to be people of Asian descent who were coming into the U.S. as laborers and prostitutes, or who were criminals back in their own country (Patel 2014b; Zhu 2010).

Shortly after, Congress passed the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882*, stopping all legal immigration of Chinese into the country for a period of 10 years. The *Act* also required the Chinese residing in the country to carry a document labelling their status as a laborer, scholar, diplomat, or merchant (Kanazawa 2005; Soennichsen 2011). In addition, Chinese men were unable to sponsor “the immigration of their wives and families” (Patel 2014b). This Act encouraged the illegal smuggling of Chinese laborers into the United States from British Columbia ports, often made possible by the Sic Chinese Companies (Griffith 2004: 477).

Taking it a step further, the *Scott Act of 1888* denied reentry to the United States after a visit to China, or after having left the country at all, even for long-term legal residents. This act applied to all Chinese, including those who held “return certificates,” which had previously allowed reentry to the country after the *Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chen 1980:155, 160).

When the 10 year anti-immigration block expired in 1892, the *Geary Act* was passed, extending the *Chinese Exclusion Act*, and adding onerous new requirements. This new law mandated all Chinese in the United States to carry a passport-like identification document, which they had to apply for; failure to provide this document at any time would result in deportation or a year of involuntary labor. If a Chinese immigrant did not have this document on his person, he was required to have two Euro-American witnesses

testify to his immigration status. Chinese were also not allowed to bear witness in a court and could not receive bail upon being arrested for a crime (National Archives n.d.). The *Geary Act* was seen in effect along the Columbia River near Pateros and Chelan Falls: “The Chinamen stayed in the country ... until about ’91 when the government deported all who failed to pay their ten dollars and take out some kind of citizenship papers” (Clifford 1926).

In 1902, this prohibition was expanded to halt the immigration of persons from Hawaii and the Philippines. This anti-immigration, or exclusion, measure was later expanded indefinitely. This hostility against the Chinese, and anyone of Asian descent, continued well into first half of the twentieth century. In 1921, a *State Anti-Alien Law* was passed, denying any Asian immigrants the right to lease or own land; additionally they still could not naturalize or become citizens of the United States (Wierzbicki 1997:22).

It was not until the *Magnuson Act* that these exclusion laws were finally repealed; also known as the *Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943*, this abolishment was necessary for the morale of our Chinese allies during World War II. It was the first time since 1882 that Chinese were legally allowed to immigrate into the United States. The *Magnuson Act* permitted those Chinese already living in the U.S. to become naturalized citizens, marking the first time since 1790 that any persons of Asian origins were allowed to be naturalized in the United States of America.

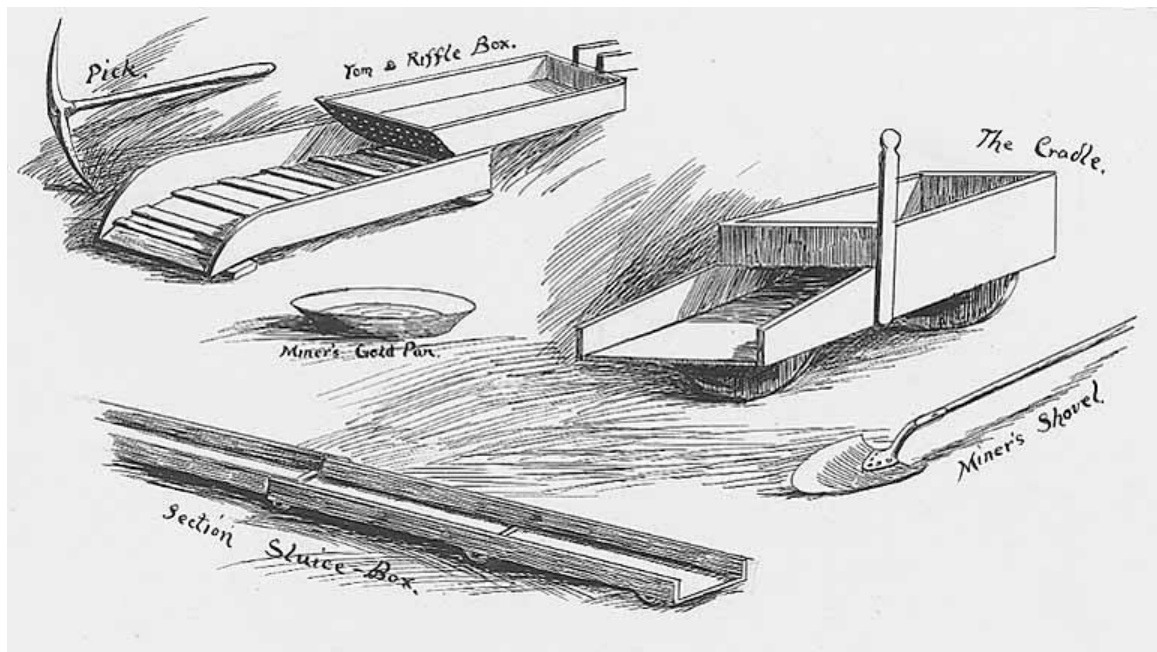
PLACER MINING METHODS

Gold mineral deposits primarily occur in three forms: “Veins or other lode ore bodies of hydrothermal origin, ordinary placer deposits, and consolidated placer deposits (gold-bearing conglomerates and sandstones)” (Hunting 1955:11; Moen 1979:6). A placer deposit is the result of solid rock (which contains gold ore) disintegrating or eroding, creating sand and gravel particulates, or similar substance. The easiest of these gold forms to obtain, prior to technological advances, were the ordinary placer deposits (Moen 1979:9).

Placer gold was first located in Washington in 1853, leading to placer gold being recovered in the territory beginning in 1855. There are many kinds of placer deposits; along the Columbia River region, placers commonly occur in the river sands and gravels of alluvial and glacial deposits. The earliest efforts to recover these placer deposits were through gold panning methods, which were commonly used by the Chinese as well as Euro-American miners northeastern Washington (Gjerde 1965; Moen 1979:9).

Gold pans were generally designed to be 12 inches in diameter, though frying pans or similar flat pans were also used, as supplies were often limited. The sands or gravels were placed in the pan, of larger stones removed, and water was added, either through filling the pan or running water over the pan. While the materials are sloshed around within the pan gold particulates will settle to the bottom due to its density; the lighter materials on the surface are allowed to be washed over the brim of the pan. This sloshing process is done over and over again until only the gold particulates and/or nuggets can be separated (Moen 1979:10).

Gold can then be collected from the pans in a number of ways, ranging from a bare fingertip to tweezers or paint brushes, or through the binding of gold particulates with mercury or quicksilver; however, it is unknown if the Chinese in northeastern Washington used any chemical compounds to extract the gold. This was a slow process and would yield relative low profits, encouraging many miners to quickly move to other areas after scraping the cream off the top.



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Figure 1.4: A miner's working outfit, 1987 (Knight 1897).

Through technological advances, other forms of recovering placer gold became popular during the early mining days (**Figure 1.4**), such as rockers, long toms, and sluice boxes, all of which were used along the Columbia River. Rockers, sluice boxes, and long toms are the most prominent among the Chinese miners. These advanced methods of placering require a substantial supply of water, allowing a miner to handle twice the amount of material as a gold pan (Moen 1979:13). Through research, it was observed that

Chinese miners often constructed long, elaborate, clay-lined ditches and flumes as a means to provide water to these devices.

“Rockers” (or “cradles”) were commonly constructed and operated by hand along the river banks. Gravels are dumped into a hopper, then washed over with water. The sediments are washed through holes in the hopper, falling upon an apron which catches much of the finer gold particulates. The materials are then washed over riffles which catch the remaining gold and allow the lighter sediments to pass through. This process was often done in pairs, with one person feeding the hopper, and the other person watering and rocking the hopper, feeding the materials through the device. The gold particulates are then collected from the apron and riffles to be later panned recovering the concentrated gold flakes and nuggets (Moen 1979:11-12).

The “sluice box” is an inclined trough containing riffles in the bottom that provide a lodging place for gold and other heavy minerals” (Moen 1979: 13). They vary in size, dependent upon what local materials are available for construction and the size of the operations. Sluice boxes required a constant flow of water and were typically built on a grade, allowing gravity to work with the process. “Water for sluicing operations [was] usually directed to the head sluice box by means of a ditch” (Moen 1979:13). Material is placed in a “head box” (hopper) and washed; “grizzly” bars were sometimes placed across the head box, allowing larger rocks to fall off to the side of the sluice and not obstruct the process (Moen 1973: 13). Like the rockers, as sediments are washed through the sluice, gold particulates remain in the riffles, later being collected and panned to further concentrate and recover the gold.

A “long tom” (“Tom” or “riffle box”) is also a trough-like device and consists of three parts: the hopper, washing box with some kind of a screen, and a small sluice device at the end (Moen 1979: 12). The parts are set together along a slight slope, like the sluice box, allowing gravity to aid with the process. As larger gravels are removed by the screen, the smaller particles are sorted out in the sluice box. A long tom, being much larger than a sluice or rocker, could have been operated by four men: two adding gravels to the hopper, one removing the gravels from the screen, and one removing the “tailings,” or remaining washed out gravels at the end of the process. The gold particulates that gather in the riffles are then collected and panned for further concentration.

The term “hydraulic mining” is sometimes used in association with early placer mining, as an abundant water supply was required for use of sluice boxes, rockers, and long toms. The Chinese mining operations almost always included of some sort of water ditch or flume system; these ditches would often run for miles, using gravity to provide water from a nearby stream or creek to their placers along the river’s edge. The later hydraulic mining operations used canvas hoses or iron pipes and generators, and were common in the larger placers and lode mining operations (Moen 1979:15).

During the mid-1870s to 1880s, as the placer deposits were narrowing and becoming less profitable, mining took a turn underground, in hard-rock (lode) mining which followed the gold ore veins by tunneling underground. In general, Chinese did not partake in the underground workings; hard-rock mining required a more difficult skillset, heavy machinery, and larger costs than was compatible with the Chinese aquatic expertise used in placer mining (Zhu 1999:54).

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

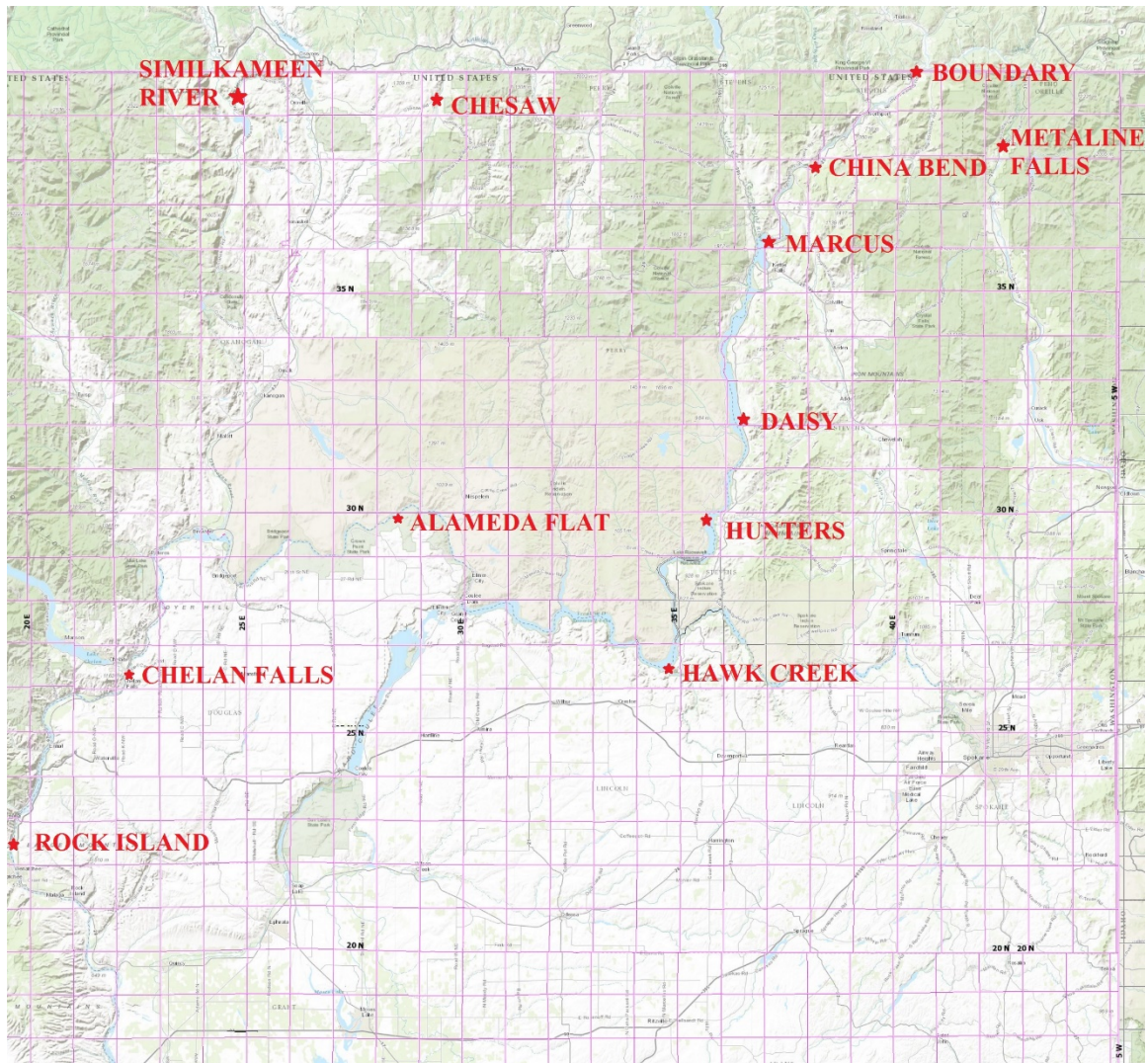


Figure 2.1: Historic Chinese placer mining winter camps in northeastern Washington.

Chinese miners “... found enough gold remaining to support themselves and sent to their families’ back home earnings which in the Cantonese countryside amounted to riches” (Wilson 1990). They did so by working hard, in well-organized teams. They built sound ditch and flume systems to provide a constant supply of water to their operations,

some of which are still visible today. They dug all summer long, in teams – one team fed their sluices while the other team would work them – often saving the gold concentrating work for during the winter months when the river flooded the placer bars.

Due to the harsh winter climate of northeastern Washington, and the heavy flow of spring run-off water, mining was only possible during the summer and fall, with many small summer camps developed all along the Columbia River at the Chinese placer operations. When winter would approach, the men would gather at larger winter camps, where they would often discuss their mining operations and plan out their next year's work (Goodwin 1998:5).

The Chinese laborers were often managed by a supervisor, or a “Boss Chinaman,” who organized the work teams and divided the labor. The Six Chinese Companies were the original organizations behind this style of large workforce, organized labor, providing protection and employment to any Chinese member who signed a contract with one of the companies back in China. Unfortunately, the contract meant the individual Chinese laborers had to share their profits with the company who managed them (see **The Six Chinese Companies**) (Compean n.d.).

Very few Chinese were not contracted with the Six Chinese Companies, and those who were free from the constraints of the companies often managed their own work forces. Ah Tai was the “Boss Chinaman” at multiple operations along the Columbia River, from Daisy to China Bend, employing and paying the workers. Ah Yen was seen along the Pend Oreille River at Chinaman's Bar near Metaline Falls, employing a group of Chinese miners from Canada (Gaylord 1993:20; Giniger et al. 1976:77). Chee Saw operated the Chinese stores on the eastern bank of the Columbia River at Chelan Falls

and Pateros, in the Big Bend Country; he later took his store and the regional Chinese miners north up the Okanogan River near the present town of Chesaw.

An accumulation of historical documentation has revealed the following large Chinese placer mining camps, located along the Columbia River (organized from south to north, going upstream): Rock Island (Ringlow Bar), Chelan Falls (China Gold Bar and Rich Bar), Alameda Flat (China Placer Bar), Hawk Creek, Hunters (Rogers Bar), Daisy (Charley Francois Bar), Marcus (Six Mile, Nine Mile, and Twelve Mile Bars), China Bend (China Bar), and Boundary (Fort Sheppard Bar). These large camps were the locations that the Chinese miners would congregate during the region's harsh winter months. Additional large Chinese operations were along the Pend Oreille River near Metaline Falls (Chinaman's Bar), on the Similkameen River (between Shanker's Bend and Nighthawk), and at Chesaw (**Figure 2.1**) (Atherley 1977; Litzkow 2010:8).

There were also a handful Chinese owned and operated merchant stores along the Columbia River and its tributaries. These stores were some of the very first merchant trading posts in the region; they were located at Rock Island, Chelan Falls, Pateros, and Alameda Flat, all four occurring along the eastern bank of the Columbia River. There were later stores near Daisy and in Chesaw. These stores provided the miners (both Euro-American and Chinese) with all necessary equipment and food supplies (Esvelt 1977:12; Hodgen n.d.; Schmidt 1973b:2). The Chinese reportedly survived on a diet of staple foods, including rice (imported), beef (purchased from local ranchers), and home-grown vegetables, in addition to whatever was scavenged locally; Daisy pioneer Frank Miles claimed to have sold the Chinese skunks and other rodents as meat (Esvelt 1977:12).

ROCK ISLAND

Upstream from the point of Rock Island on the Columbia River, Chinese miners could be seen panning for placer gold beginning in the early 1860s. There was reportedly a large mining camp near Rock Island called “Ringlow Bar,” according to *The Colville Examiner* (Slater 1920). This large camp was located where the Great Northern railroad bridge crossed the Columbia River, and was observed in use in 1868 (Hodgen n.d.). The Chinese had apparently used the waters from Stemilt Creek to work their sluice boxes at Ringlow Bar, about two miles north of Rock Island (Hodgen n.d.). The “first irrigation ditch” in the vicinity of Rock Island, which was used for agricultural purposes once the area was settled, had been built by Chinese placer miners at the Rock Island camp.

A.J. Splawn (1917:212) reported that about 100 Chinese had bought a large bar near Rock Island in 1864 that had previously been worked by Euro-Americans in 1863. In 1864-1865, Splawn recorded packing a freight train to a trading store at a large Chinese mining camp between Wenatchee and Rock Island. This camp was located on the eastern banks of the Columbia River, and was operated by Mr. Wing. It was reported that “... about 100 Chinese miners had purchased the large gravel bar from white miners” and were constructing a large ditch to feed their workings (Gaylord 1993:29; Splawn 1917:212). After a brief altercation with the local Natives, Splawn was rewarded for the safe transport and return of the two Chinese traveling with him, earning the trust of his Chinese companions (Splawn 1917:212-213). Splawn often carried their gold dust to Portland to be deposited into the Chinamen’s account (Gaylord 1993: 29).

The Chinese filed (date unknown) a “Location Notice” in Ellensburg for the “Colockin placer” near the confluence of Colockin (Colockum) Creek and the Columbia

River, about four miles south of Rock Island (Gaylord 1993:29). This is presumably the same location as archaeology site *45CH00004*. There are two other Chinese-claimed placer bars supposedly recorded in the Kittitas County records books (the specific books referenced are unknown) in the Rock Island area (Gaylord 1993:29). The sub-leased claims of a Chinese man by the name of Chin Lee include the “Four Thousand Five Hundred” claim, sub-leased from V. H. Thomas in 1886, and the “Rock Island” claim, sub-leased from J. I. Brown. These claims indicate that Chinese were still placer mining during the late 1880s along the Columbia River near Rock Island (Gaylord 1993:29).

This information suggests the Chinese store and camp above Rock Island, which used water from Stemilt Creek to feed its placers, was called Ringlow Bar. However, another Chinese placer mining operation claim, located about two miles south of Rock Island, was officially filed with the county (in Ellensburg) as “Colockin Placer,” on the land of precontact archaeology site *45CH00004* (Chambers 2005; Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd 1961b; Freiberg et al. 2001a). There is the potential for two other Chinese operations somewhere in the vicinity of Rock Island, claimed “Four Thousand Five Hundred” and “Rock Island” (Gaylord 1993:29). These claims should be further evaluated in future analysis.

THE BIG BEND

Chelan Falls Village

The Chelan Falls settlement was located along the eastern shore of the Columbia River across from the mouth of the Chelan River, it was the center for Chinese mining activities in the Big Bend Country (so termed for the large bend in the river between

products, serving miners and early settlers (Chin 1977:21; Mires et al. 1904:670). In addition to the supplies provided in their store, the Chinese in this area would sometimes purchase supplies from the Euro-American settlers, such as eggs, chicken, fruit, and vegetables, and would often pay in gold or silver dust (Schmidt 1973b: 2).

According to Ken Mather, a Chinese merchant named Chee Saw owned a store on the Columbia River in 1862, near its confluence with the Okanogan River; Chee Saw helped the men of Mather's party safely transport their cattle across the Columbia River, receiving a steer as payment (Mather 1947:34). Seeing as the Pateros and Chelan Falls Chinese stores were reportedly run by the same operator, with a pack train and row boat supplying both stores, it is presumed Chee Saw was the owner of both stores. Mather also indicates the town of Chesaw in northern Okanogan County was named for the early Chinese store owner along the Columbia River, named Chee Saw (Mather 1947:34).

At their Chelan Falls settlement, the Chinese resided in dugout structures, like the one described here: "It was built mainly of cedar boards split from the log, like shakes, pegged against upright posts, and roofed with logs and brush. At present [1904] nothing but the shells of these huts remain" (Chin 1977:20-21; Mires et al. 1904:670). In addition to the dugout shelters used for habitation by the Chinese, the Chelan Falls settlement had a large garden and a gambling or "gaming house" (Mires et al. 1904:670).

The Chelan Falls settlement hit its height in 1875, shortly before being attacked at numerous locations by the local Native Americans, supposedly by the Okanogan, Methow, Chelan, and Entiat Natives; Ah Tai of Daisy believed members of the Yakima tribe were responsible ("The Chelan Massacre Reconstructed" 2015b; McNamee 1937:1). These conflicts were suggested to have been part of a regional Native American

resistance movement led by Chief Moses; several Chinese were initially killed along the Methow River in 1875 (“The Chelan Massacre Reconstructed” 2015b; Hodgen n.d.).

As news of these attacks spread, many Chinese fled the region; when the Natives arrived at the Chelan Falls Chinese village, they found it virtually abandoned (Mires et al. 1904: 530). The Natives continued downriver, attacking a group of Chinese miners working on the cliffs above Rock Island. Being surrounded on three sides by Natives with a 300 foot cliff at their backs, the Chinese were slaughtered. The number of Chinese killed in this massacre is unknown. However their deaths were confirmed by early pioneer A.J. Splawn who saw their bodies floating in the river at Vantage (Hodgen n.d.).

These struggles between the Native Americans and the Chinese continued from 1875 to 1877. The series of conflicts between the two groups have been referred to as the “Indian Wars,” and were reportedly instigated by Chief Moses (“The Chelan Massacre Reconstructed” 2015b; Gaylord 1993:19; Goodwin 1998:4). Due to this conflict, many of the Big Bend Country Chinese miners left the United State, returning home to China. However, by 1881, the Chinese who stayed in the U.S. were once again seen in large numbers at their Chelan Falls village (Hodgen n.d.).

The Chelan Falls mining camp faced a steady decline after the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In addition to this, the Chinese merchant who had funded the Chelan Falls mining operations, Chee Saw, found his northward departure from the Chelan Falls camp after his funds began to run low. “... The finances of the old Chinese merchant were running low, for he had ‘grubstaked’ too many of his countrymen in their search for gold. In a big mine up on the Okanogan River he had an interest, and there he moved, taking ... his store with him” (Mires et al. 1904:670). After Chee Saw’s northbound departure from

“China Ditch” (Pateros China Ditch, Starr Ditch, or Ellingsworth Ditch) is an example of the Chinese labor practices and was constructed near the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers by Chinese placer miners sometime around 1860. The exact date of its construction is unknown (**Figure 2.4**). While in use, the original China Ditch ran for about five miles, to the China Gold Bar placer operations near the old Cooper Ranch, just below the Methow Rapids (Schmidt 1973d:5). The China Ditch was included in the Rand, McNally, and Company 1892 map of Washington (**Figure 2.3**).

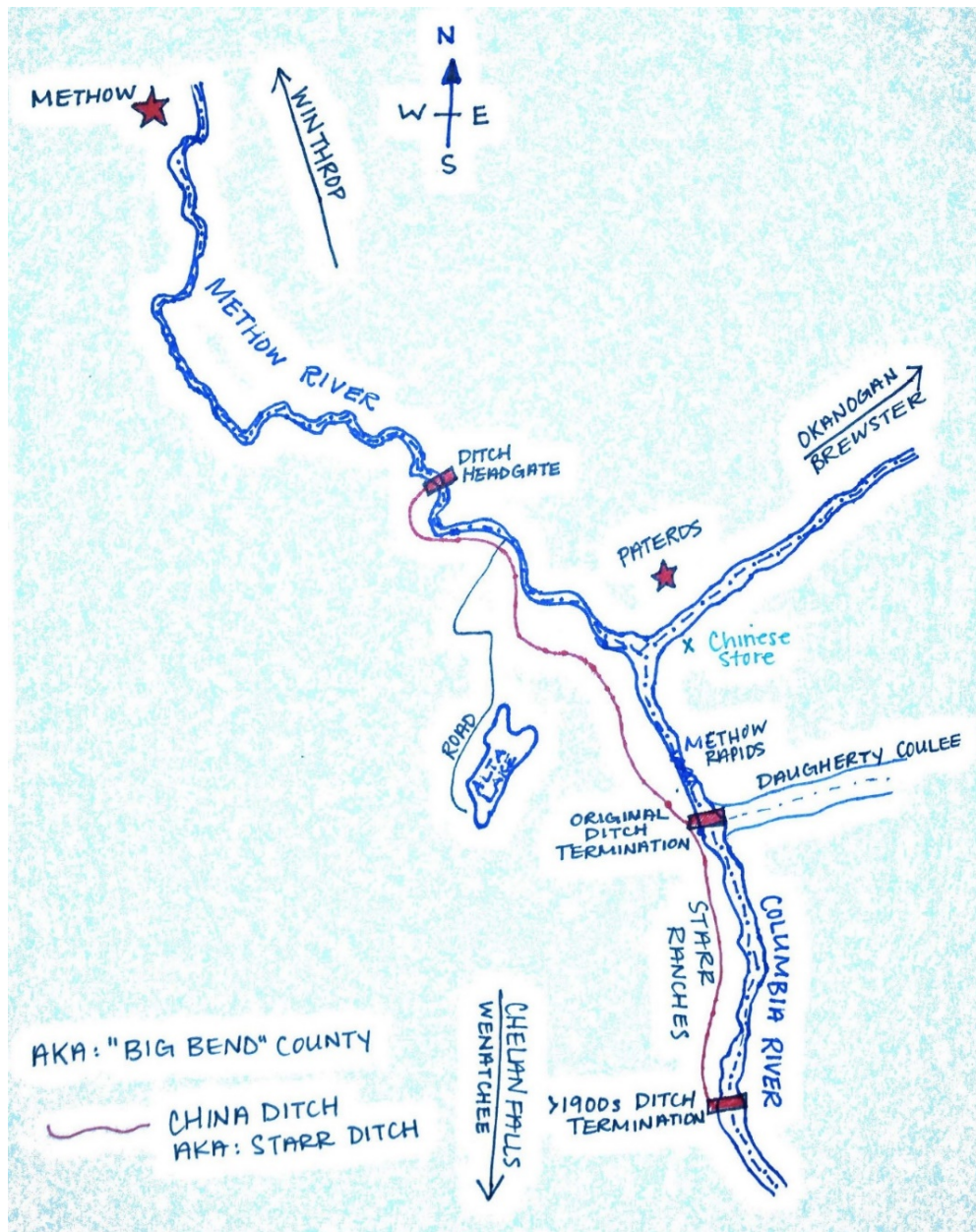


Figure 2.4: Map showing China Ditch, estimated location.

The Chinese built a small dam on the Methow River at the beginning of their ditch, which ran along the western edge of the river for about three miles, and continued down the Columbia River for about two miles to their placer operations at China Gold Bar. The head gate and flumes of the ditch were constructed of rough whipsawed lumber and lined with clay; the ditch was mostly constructed by hand, while in some cases

dynamite, or other explosive substance, was used to blast the rocks (Schmidt 1973d:5).

The head gate of their dam on the Methow River was possibly the same “Headgate” indicated on the 1887 Cadastral Survey of Township 30 North, Range 23 East of the Willamette Meridian, Section 28 (**Figure 2.5**).

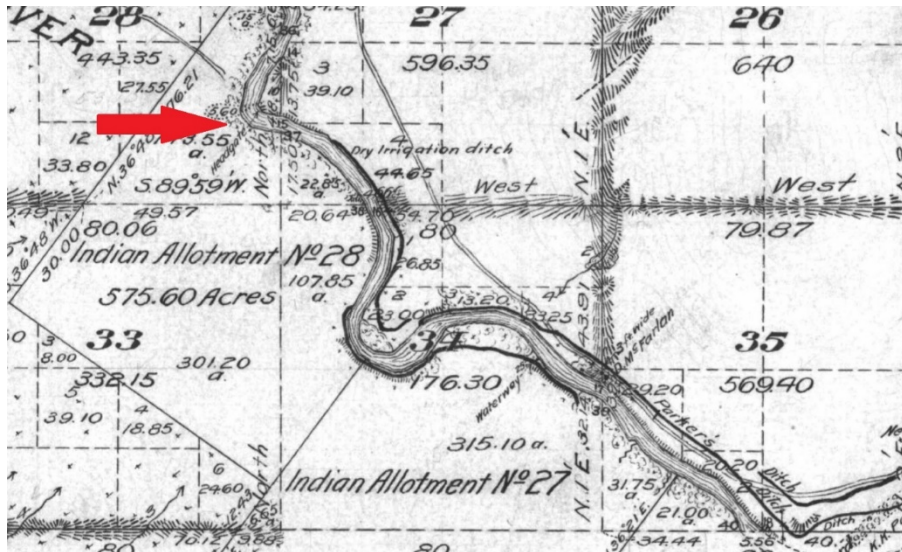


Figure 2.5: Possible China Ditch "headgate" along the Methow River in 1897 (Surveyor 1897).

Prior to its abandonment, Euro-American settlers in the area began using the China Ditch for irrigation of their orchards. Evidence of this can be seen as early as 1886, when the Ives family used the China Ditch to irrigate their garden across the river from Pateros, to which they had to use a boat to reach (Schmidt 1973d:5; Borg 1986:18).

Upon coming to Pateros in 1891, Arch Fuller reported about 20 Chinese working the bars of the Columbia River below the town, stating their “China Ditch” provided water to their China Gold Bar from the Methow River (Borg 1986:17). In 1897, when the Coopers moved to the area, they reported that “some Chinese were still working the bar just below the Cooper ranch and they bought farm produce, paying for it with gold dust” (Borg 1986:18).

In the 1937 *Pateros History, Pateros Pioneer Days*, Thomas Paslay mentioned that the Chinese purchased vegetables from his farm, paying in gold dust. Paslay would trade the gold dust to a Mr. Tony Anderson of Virginia City (now Brewster) (Hodgen n.d.). As described by U. E. Fries in *Copenhagen to Okanogan*, Anderson supposedly later took-in about "... \$12,000 worth of gold dust from the Chinese placer miners" in 1899 (Hodgen n.d.).

By 1897, after the ditch and placer workings were abandoned by the Chinese when the Columbia River was experiencing abnormally high water-level fluctuations (specific dates unknown), the Euro-American settlers began to regularly use and modify the ditch for irrigation purposes. Quee U, former Chinese placer miner, had aided in extending the ditch and was possibly one of the original constructors of the China Ditch (Clifford 1926; Schmidt 1973d:5). The original head gate and upper workings of the old China Ditch were eventually washed away in a large flood of the Methow River in May of 1948 (Borg 1986; Kerr 1957; Schmidt 1973d:7).

There are some suggestions that there was more than one water source for the placer workings at the China Gold Bar. A ditch constructed using stone masonry skills was also seen on the eastern bank of the Columbia River, near Daugherty Coulee, one mile south of Pateros (Borg 1986:20). This ditch was said to have been constructed by the Chinese, running water from a spring at the coulee to the "China Bar" (Borg 1986:20). "The construction of irrigation systems lasted long after the Chinese left;" portions of both the China Ditch and the stone masonry ditch can still be seen today (**Figure 2.6**) (Chung 2011:184).



Figure 2.6: Remnants of China Ditch after the Carlton Complex Fire, 2014 (Murray 2014).

Rich Bar (Bridgeport Bar)

Gold was formally discovered in the Big Bend Country, near present day Bridgeport, after an old man was directed to the bar here, in 1862; however, Chinese placer miners may have been near Bridgeport, Pateros, and Chelan Falls around 1858 (Borg 1986:17). Located on the Columbia River between Pateros (old Ives Landing) and Bridgeport, prior to the inundation of Wells Dam, this area was soon coined “Rich Bar” for the large wealth initially recovered in 1862 (Gaylord 1993:23).

When cattle driver A. J. Splawn passed through the area in 1863, on his travels from Yakima to the Fraser and Cariboo Rivers, he saw around 500 Chinese working the placers near Bridgeport at Rich Bar, or Bridgeport Bar, (not to be confused with the earlier “Rich Bar” of the Similkameen River); the Euro-American miners who had previously worked this bar, quickly moved on to seek richer strikes elsewhere, leaving the bar to be reworked freely by Chinese miners (Schmidt 1973b:1). Splawn also noted

that miners were scouring the area known as Rich Bar for a distance of 15 miles (Esvelt 1977:4).

The following year, when Splawn again passed through the area, he "... reported that in 1864 there were 'hundreds' of Chinese mining the river above Rock Island" (Esvelt 1977:5; Hodgen n.d.; Splawn 1917:211). According to Bruce Wilson, Splawn had seen high numbers of Chinese specifically near "... an industrious [Chinese] colony at a Rich Bar (not the Similkameen's Rich Bar) on the Douglas County side between the present sites of Pateros and Bridgeport" (1990). However, by 1868, after being rapidly mined-out, Rich Bar had been abandoned (Hodgen n.d.). The Chinese here most likely moved to other profitable bars in the area, later returning to Rich Bar, as they were still observed near China Gold Bar, which had a population of nearly one thousand in the 1870s (Wilson 1990).

The Chinese at Rich Bar were observed using two methods to placer mine the bar: sluice boxes, and rockers, both of which used ditches for water supply (Schmidt 1973b: 3). Mrs. Paslay of Bridgeport said in an early interview, that "... the Chinese worked in teams, carrying water in big pails slung from their shoulders, and the others digging and shoveling the gravel and rocking the big rockers" (Schmidt 1973b: 3).

There was another Chinese-operated store near Pateros, presumably supplying both China Gold Bar and Rich Bar. This Chinese store was supposedly quite similar to the Chelan Falls post; the Pateros and Chelan Falls stores were reportedly connected by a large six to eight man row-boat, which transported supplies between their two posts (Schmidt 1973d: 5; Borg 1986: 18). In 1891 Arch Fuller, local Pateros settler, described the Pateros Chinese store as a simple dugout store made from earth and rock, with a

couple of small windows in the front, “much like a fort;” Fuller said the Chinese traded with the Natives in addition to the local Euro-Americans and amongst themselves (Borg 1986: 17; Hodgen n.d.). Jessie Schmidt provides a similar description of the Pateros Chinese store, a “crude shelter of rocks in the side of the hill with a couple of small windows in the front (1973b: 2).

In the 1937 *Pateros History, Pateros Pioneer Days*, early Pateros settler, Thomas Paslay described the Chinese dugouts near Rich Bar: “The Chinamen made quite comfortable homes in dugouts in the hillside. They would build a fireplace at one end and a bunk along the side. There was usually plenty of cedar floating in the river and with this they would roof it over and then pile on grass and dirt” (Hodgen n.d.). After working for long periods of time, it appears the Chinese would take a day to relax and regain their strength before going back to work. Paslay describes the Chinese miners from when he was a child: “About every two weeks they would have a big opium smoke and they would all go to sleep. We children would play about while they slept. When they awoke they would go to work for another two weeks” (Hodgen n.d.).

There were a few Chinese miners left in the Big Bend Country during 1899; at the time, “the steamboat did business with about fifty Chinese between Entiat and Bridgeport” (Hodgen n.d.). After this, only a few Chinese were known to have remained in the region. For example, Quee U, an old Chinese man, waited about 20 years, while working for the Starr Orchards and hoping the Columbia River would once again reveal the old China Gold Bar workings (Clifford 1926).

Around 1895, James Mather and his son (Ken Mather) were placer mining their Lucy Mary Bar claim, across the Columbia River from the old Rich Bar where Quee U

was seen still working (Gaylord 1993:13). When the Mathers' noticed no smoke coming from Quee U's camp, they investigated and found that the Chinese man had fallen ill; the Mathers' nursed Quee U back to health; in return for their kindness, he helped the father-son duo modify their rocker, enabling them to collect more gold quicker (Gaylord 1993:13).

The Chinese clearly made profits from their workings in this area, as Quee U was able to loan money to the Coopers (early settlers and orchard owners along the eastern shore of the Columbia River near Methow Rapids), sometimes \$100 or more (Kerr 1957). Unfortunately for Quee U, the river never lowered enough to reveal the old China Gold Bar (Clifford 1926).

Another late departure from the Columbia River was Sam Wow, who was "living in Wilbur in 1904, and claimed to have done placer mining on the Columbia River in 1864" (Gaylord 1993:30). Sam Wow (or Sam Yow) was reportedly a long-time friend of Chief Moses, indicating the unrest between the Natives and the Chinese miners eventually ended (Gaylord 1993:4).

ALAMEDA FLAT

Historical documentation reported a lack of placering activities by the Chinese along the Columbia River above Bridgeport and below Hawk Creek. The Chinese were said to have extensively placer mined the Columbia River bars above Rock Island and below the mouth of the Pend Oreille River, with the exception of the stretch from Chief Joseph Dam to Keller Ferry, where the canyon walls were too steep and "the river ran too rapidly to build up gold deposits" (Esvelt 1977: 5 and Hodgen n.d.).

However, the archaeological record suggests they did operate along this section of the Columbia River, near the Alameda Flat landform at China Placer Bar. There are numerous placer mining features and a supposed Chinese merchant store in the vicinity of Alameda Flat, estimated to have been active between 1870 and 1885 (based on archaeological data). There are five archaeology sites confirming this: *45DO00200*, *00247*, *000250*, *00259*, and *00263* (WISAARD 2016). The first four sites demonstrate various placer mining features and activities, while the fifth was a store supposedly operated by Chinese merchants and a dugout containing various artifacts (see *45DO00263*).

Art Chin (1977:22) references many Chinese placer mining "... in Lincoln County, opposite the mouth of the San Poil River ... as early as 1864." It is possible Chin was associating the San Poil River location with the Alameda Flat mining features, however, this is not for certain. No other historic documentation was found for this particular area; it is unknown if any document do exist to support the indications of culturally affiliated Chinese placer mining activities at these sites. Further historic analysis is needed to determine the historic context of the Alameda Flat Chinese cultural affiliation.

HAWK CREEK AND HUNTERS

Hawk Creek

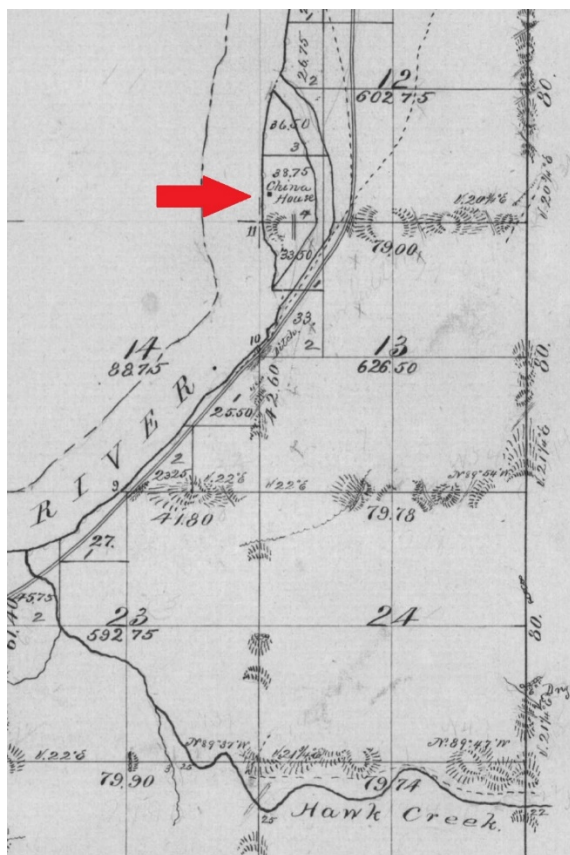


Figure 2.7: Hawk Creek, showing a "China House" on an island (near present Seven Bays recreation area) (Surveyor 1885).

The Hawk Creek Chinese placer mining winter camp was located approximately three miles south of the confluence of the Spokane and Columbia Rivers. The Chinese miners made their way into this vicinity of the river around 1864 (Gaylord 1993:29; Splawn 1917:212). Very little information was located for this site.

Around 1880, Hawk Creek reached its population peak, with around 500 Chinese (Esvelt 1977:7, 12). Lt. Symons reported seeing the Chinese still working here in 1882, indicating they had a three and one quarter mile long ditch and flume system from Hawk Creek to their placer workings on an island in the Columbia River (Gaylord 1993:17;

Goodwin 1998:5). Their flume “was built of whip-sawed lumber and they crossed the intervening channel to the island with an inverted siphon, also made of whip-sawed lumber” (Gaylord 1993:17). This ditch and flume system was supposedly an example of industrial success of the large Chinese winter camp (Goodwin 1998:5). “The ‘Old Chinese Ditch’ ... is found on a land ownership map dated 1911, paralleling the east bank of Hawk Creek” (McDaniel and Stegner 2012:109).

Esvelt also reported that three Chinese Tongs were present at Hawk Creek, however, details are not provided (Esvelt 1977:12). “A ‘China House’ ... attests to late-nineteenth century placer mining that occurred” in this region (McDaniel and Stegner 2012:105). The Hawk Creek Chinese camp had all but disappeared the year following Symons’ passing, being abandoned in 1883.

Early settlers near the town of Peach used water from the old Chinese-built canals, which had supplied their mining operations northeast of Peach during the prior decades, for agriculture. In 1885, the U.S. cadastral survey of Township 27 North, Range 35 East of the Willamette Meridian, Section 12, indicates a “China House” located on an island of the Columbia River at what is now the Seven Bays recreation area (**Figure 2.7**). This “China House” is presumably on the same island as the Chinese placer workings described above. There have been numerous archaeological investigations of the Native American components of this area, however, no Chinese affiliations or placer mines have been recorded.

Hunters



Figure 2.8: Rogers Bar, shown on the 1892 map of Washington (Rand 1897).

There was a large Chinese winter camp located on the western bank of the Columbia River at Rogers Bar (**Figure 2.8**), across the river from the town of Hunters (Slater 1920). This landform was roughly 13 miles north of Hawk Creek and can be seen on the 1892 Rand, McNally, and Company map of Washington (Rand 1897).

Figure 2.9 shows a photo identified as being of the old “Chinese gold diggings on [the] Columbia River,” directly west of Fruitland, presumably at Rogers Bar (Lantz 1938). Lantz supposedly played at these workings as a child, after the Chinese

abandoned them; his father used the Chinese-built placer ditches to irrigate their farm just south of Hunters (Jones 2010:15; Lantzy 1938).



Figure 2.9: "Chinese gold diggings on Columbia River," image taken directly west from Fruitland, showing the old Chinese placer workings (Lantzy 1938).

Remnants of placer mining operations that may have been affiliated with the Rogers Bar operations, but located on the eastern bank of the Columbia River, are evident in the 1908 Cadastral Survey, which indicates two old placer workings and an old placer ditch (**Figure 2.10**). These may be the same placer workings Lantzy's father had used for irrigation, considering they are located on the eastern bank of the Columbia River, while Rogers Bar was located on the western bank of the river. Limited historical data was located in reference to the Chinese camp and placer mining operations near Hunters. It was presumed that this region was not popularly settled by Americans, due to the

surrounding Native American lands. Additional historical data inventories should be conducted to further elaborate on the activities at Rogers Bar.

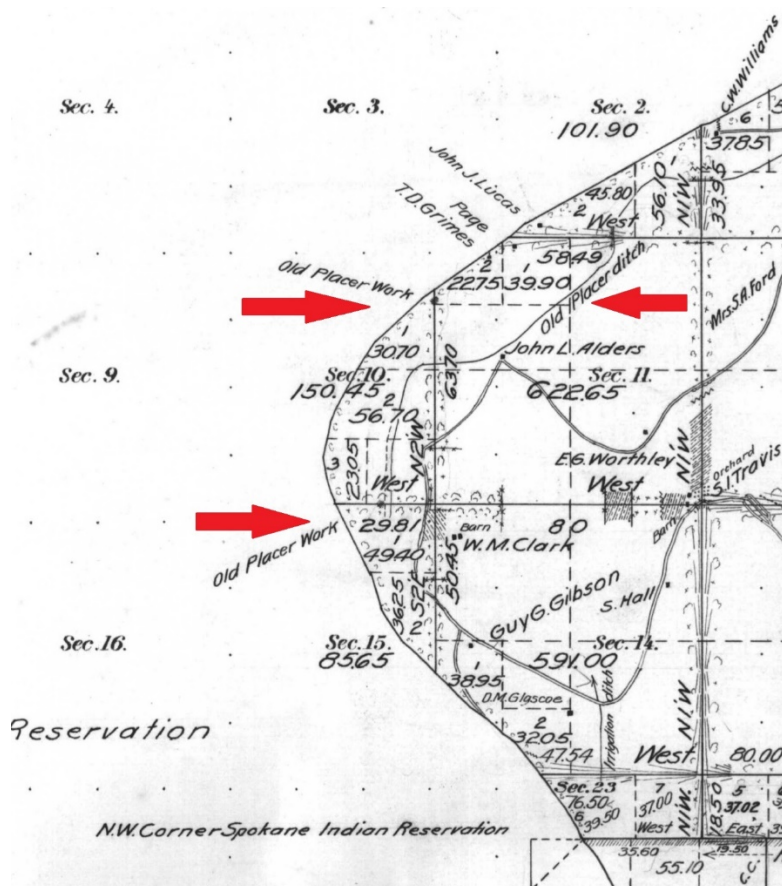


Figure 2.10: Old placer workings and ditch, near Hunters (Surveyor 1908b).

DAISY, MARCUS, AND CHINA BEND

Daisy: Ah Tai

Charley Francois Bar was located 18 miles south of Kettle Falls and two miles north of Daisy, on the eastern bank of the Columbia River; this bar was worked by Chinese placer miners during the late 1880s and may have also been called “Rickey Bar,” after famous Colville pioneer John Rickey, friend of Ah Tai (Wong Fook Tai) (Gaylord 1993:16; Graham 1937:1). At Charley Francois Bar, the Chinese built a two and a half

mile long ditch from Harvey (Cheweka) Creek, providing water to their placer mine along the Columbia River (Esvelt 1977:10; Goodwin 1998:15).

The story of Ah Tai (below) suggests his home was located along the eastern bank of the Columbia River, two miles north of Daisy, presumably at the location of Charley Francois Bar. Relations between the Native Americans and the Chinese miners were reportedly friendly in this section of the river. The Natives would help hide the Chinese from the sheriff during the head count and tax collection (Crossroads 1980a; Esvelt 1977:3-4; Gaylord 1993:12; Goodwin 1998 9).

Another claim next to Charley Francois Bar was Five Thousand Dollar Bar. According to Lawrence McNamee, five white men had a placer mining operation along the Columbia River near Daisy, having built a ditch from Harvey Creek to feed their operations (Esvelt 1977:11; McNamee 1937:2). Since these white men had come west fleeing prosecution, they hurriedly sold their property “to a group of Chinamen for \$5,000” when their ill deeds caught up with them (McNamee 1937:2). This bar is referenced as Five Thousand Dollar Bar in the Stevens County placer mining records at the Washington State Archives in Cheney, Washington; **Table 2.2** shows claims by Ah Jim, Ah Nem, and Ah Tye, numbers 2-5 reference the Charley Francois Bar in relation to Five Thousand Dollar Bar (presumably the same claim for different years).

DATE	SIZE	LOCATION	WHOM
October 2, 1886	400'	About 6.25 miles above mouth of Spokane River, east bank of Columbia River	Ah Pew, Ah Chong
May 25, 1888	600'	About 1 mile above Five Thousand Dollar Bar, east bank of Columbia River	Ah Jim, Ah Nim, Ah Tye
May 9, 1898	600'	About 1 mile above Five Thousand Dollar Bar, east bank of Columbia River	Ah Jim, Ah Nim, Ah Tye
May 23, 1891	600'	About 1 mile above Five Thousand Dollar Bar, east bank of Columbia River	Ah Jim, Ah Nim, Ah Tye
July 12, 1892	600'	About 1 mile above Five Thousand Dollar Bar, east bank of Columbia River	Ah Jim, Ah Nim, Ah Tye
March 2, 1895	1,000'	About 2.5 miles below Harvey, about 0.5 miles west of William Lawson Ranch, on east bank of Columbia River	Ah Jim, Ah Nim, Ah Tye

Table 2.2: List of placers claimed by Chinese miners in Stevens County (*Placer Mining Claims* n.d.).

The Colville Examiner reported that there were two other large placer mining camps near Rickey, at Whitestone Bar and Leo Bar; the occupation dates of these camps are unknown (Slater 1920). Unfortunately, as place names tend to disappear with time, there are no indications of a Whitestone Bar or Leo Bar existing in the historic documents reviewed or on the landscape today.

Ah Tai (Ah Tye, Wong Fook Tai, Charley Ah Tai, etc.) was born around 1860 and came to America from Southern China in 1877. After paying his \$25 passage onboard a small sailing vessel, Ah Tai arrived in Portland, just in time to celebrate the Fourth of July (McNamee 1937:1). He then took a steamboat up the Columbia River to Wallula, and a train to Walla Walla, where he met his uncle Ah Jim (Chin Jim), for the first time in his life; the two then took a wagon train to Spokane Falls, then to Marcus where they met up with Ah Tai's older brother, Ah Nem (McNamee 1937:1).

These men "... were independent miners, and moved from camp to camp" (Esvelt 1977:11). Colville pioneer Thomas Graham was employed by Ah Tai, the "Boss Chinaman" of Six Mile Bar (and others), to transport Chinese from Marcus and China Bend to Spokane (on their journey back to China), suggesting there was a strong

connection between the Chinese placer operations in the northern Columbia River, between Daisy and China Bend (Gaylord 1993:16; Graham 1937:1). This is also a reminder of how large and impressive these placer mining operations were.

The brothers and their uncle placer mined Rickey Bar (presumably Charley Francois Bar) for a number of years, its name coming from their good friend and early Colville settler, John Rickey. Rickey apparently took Ah Tai as his protégé when he was young, later leasing him property on a 99-year lease (McNamee 1937:1). This property is where the brothers built their home and placer mining operations along the Columbia River (McNamee 1937:1, 3).

During an oral interview, Neal Ledgerwood remembers the Chinese panning the Columbia River up until the late 1890s, when he was a child; he said that by that time there weren't too many of them left (Crossroads 1980b). In another interview Ruth Heidigger McNutt recalls that just below old Kettle Falls had been called "the Bend" down where Ah Tai and Ah Nem mined for gold along the river (Crossroads 1981).

Ah Tai was a very well-liked member of the Daisy community (**Figure 2.11**). He was friends with all of his neighbors, including the Native Americans (McNamee 1937:2). He would socialize and celebrate the Fourth of July with the locals, bringing traditional Chinese dishes; she said "we all liked him, he was such a friendly little China man" (Crossroads 1981).



Figure 2.11: Newspaper image of Ah Tai with two Daisy children (Harlick n.d.).

Ah Tai and Ah Nem operated a store out of their home, selling silk, fire crackers, fans, teapots, and other novelty items from China; Ah Tai also grew vegetables, strawberries, and Chinese lilies in their garden to sell in their store and neighboring towns (McNamee 1937:2). After his placer mining days had ended, Ah Tai was known to occasionally do chores and other work for his neighbors, “even minding the baby” (McNamee 1937:2).

Ah Tai’s uncle, Ah Jim, who was the local “doctor” prior to a Euro-American doctor settling in the area, passed away in 1900 (Esvelt 1977:13; Gaylord 1993:19; McNamee 1937:1). Years later, in 1922, his brother, Ah Nem, was murdered in his home north of Daisy. Ms. McNutt recalled that some men “knew that they had gold and they murdered the one brother ... the whole community was upset” (Crossroads 1981). Ah Tai had been traveling back home from Daisy, a distance of two miles, and was knocked

unconscious by the perpetrators. Upon regaining his consciousness and returning home, he found Ah Nem dead in the doorway, with multiple gunshot wounds in his back.

Ah Tai never admitted this, however, it was commonly believed that he knew who the murderers were; supposedly, the murder of Ah Nem and near-murder of Ah Tai was an inside job, possibly including the sheriff and judge, hoping to steal the brothers' placer gold stash (Jones 2010: 14; McNamee 1937:1-2). It was reported that some years later, during land clearing for the creation of Lake Roosevelt, "money was found around the door jamb and under some of the fruit trees on their property" (Atherley 1991:7).

Ah Tai stayed with his good friend John Rickey for some time after the death of Ah Nem, never again residing in the house his brother was killed in; Ah Tai returned to his dugout for shelter along the river (McNamee 1937:3). His dugout had a low door and no windows, with a small skylight in the roof providing a little light inside (McNamee 1937: 3).

Of all the Chinese who immigrated to the United States, almost all returned home to China where their bones could be laid to rest in "celestial bliss;" very few Chinese placer miners of northeastern Washington chose to live out the remainder of their lives in America. Of those immigrants, Ah Tai was the last known Chinese man to reside in Stevens County, passing away in June of 1937 in his earthen covered dugout structure near Rice, about two miles north of Daisy. Following a large funeral, Ah Tai was buried in the Cully Memorial Cemetery of Rice, next to his brother Ah Nem (Graham 1937:1; Jones 2010:14).

Marcus

Marcus was a very prominent historic mining town and the site of the earliest confirmed store in this region. The store, opening as early as 1860, was famously operated by pioneer Marcus Oppenheimer. The Old Marcus store ledger (1863) indicates there were a few customers with Chinese names, including ““Big Chinemen, Hun Chinemen, Ah Sun, Hong Joy, A Sing, and Doctor Chinemen”” (Lakin 1987: 17). The “Doctor Chinemen” may be Ah Tai’s uncle, Ah Jim from Daisy.

The camp locations, or bars, were named in reference to their distance from Marcus, the most important town at the time of placer mining activities, between 1860 and 1890. “The largest scene of operations in Stevens County was what was known as 6 mile bar ... under the supervision of Charley Ah Tai” (Graham 1937: 1). Half Mile Bar was at Marcus, Six Mile Bar was at Evans, Nine Mile Bar was near Bossburg, Twelve Mile Bar was near Williams Siding; and Fifteen Mile Bar was presumably at China Bend, near Marble (Graham, 1937:1; Slater 1920). China Creek was a local place-name and reflects the early Chinese presence in this area; the confluence of China Creek and the Columbia River is located at Evans, just north of Marcus (McDaniel and Stegner 2012:11).

Very few culturally Chinese connections to Marcus and China Bend were found through historic and archival data, apart from the Chinese placer mining camp names and locations. It is of high importance that further historic investigations be done to establish details regarding the Chinese operations near Marcus.

China Bend

The China Bend camp was located downstream from Northport and was named for its association with Chinese placer miners in the region, presumably at Fifteen Mile Bar, or China Bar (Jones 2010:14; Slater 1920). Nine miles south of Northport, along the Columbia River, the "... Chinamen were engaged in placer mining. This point is now known as China Bend. It is understood that considerable gold was sluiced out of the different streams in this vicinity by Chinese" (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1900).

Of the little information obtained regarding the China Bend area, it was suggested Chinese miners may have been working the China Bend placer bars as early as 1856 (Atherley 1991:4). China Bend is "... an area of considerable placer mining from the late 1860s through the 1890s, particularly by Chinese who washed gravel or operated sluice boxes" (McDaniel and Stegner 2012:28).

The Chinese miners would often work from dawn till dusk seven days per week, earning about fifteen cents per day, according to Sam Yow, a Chinese informant who worked at China Bend (Esvelt 1977:11). In 1886, Thomas Graham was employed by Ah Tai, hauling a cargo of "old Chinamen who were going back to the Homeland to spend their last days in their own country" (Graham 1937:1-2). Traveling with the old men were the bones of their fallen comrades, being transported back home where they could rest in peace and find "celestial bliss" (Graham 1937:1-2). Graham also recalled safely transporting thousands of dollars in their gold dust to Spokane, under the cover of darkness (after hostile threats from a military deserter), earning the trust and gratitude of Ah Tai and the Chinese miners (Graham 1937:2).

BOUNDARY



Figure 2.12: Hudson's Bay Company post Fort Sheppard, B.C. ("Fort Sheppard" 1858).

The large Chinese camp at Boundary was called Fort Sheppard Bar, beginning on the United States side of the border and extending into British Columbia, just south of the mouth of the Pend Oreille River (Graham 1937:1). In 1854, gold was first discovered at this location, beginning the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) attempt at securing the location with Fort Sheppard (hence the name Fort Sheppard Bar); construction of the HBC Fort Shepard was complete in 1859 (**Figure 2.12**). The confluence of Sheep Creek and the Columbia River was also an area reportedly worked by Chinese placer miners (Atherley 1991:4).

Little historic information was reported regarding the Chinese placering activities near Northport and Boundary. However, they were occasionally discussed after the

Chinese had departed the region. In 1897, *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported that the remains of old Chinese placer mines were scattered throughout the Columbia River, and some of their workings could still be seen by passengers of the Spokane Falls & Northern railroad at Boundary (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1897). By 1921, another writer noted that “the traveler through this area will note many old diggings worked over years ago by the Chinese. Particularly, are the old diggings evident in the vicinity of Northport and Boundary” (Patty 1921:42).

The Moraski Flats Placer Mine

The Moraski Flats placer mine is a suspected Chinese placer mining operation located along the west bank of the Columbia River near Boundary, about seven miles north of Northport, in Township 40 North, Range 41 East, Section 14 of the Willamette Meridian (Goodwin 1998:2, 5). It should be noted that the Township, Range, and Section lines from the western bank of the Columbia River do not line-up to those on the eastern bank; the eastern side of the river appears to be in Range 41 East, while the western bank is in Range 40 East of the Willamette Meridian. The Moraski Flats landform exists on the western shore of the Columbia River, and therefore, its location should be updated to Township 40 North, Range 40 East, Section 14 of the Willamette Meridian; this site has been recorded as 45ST01113 (River Mile 742 Placer Mine) (Orsen 2014).

Apparently the Chinese placer miners had built a three mile long canal or ditch from Goodeve (Nigger) Creek to their workings at Moraski Flats, and possibly another from Morris Creek (1998:6). This is possibly the same ditch system Mr. Fowler was referencing in archaeological site record 45ST00091 (WISAARD 2016).

The site was probably worked by the Chinese during the 1860s or 1870s, prior to the development of Northport in 1892 (Goodwin 1998:2, 9, 19). As this area was part of the reservation at that time, it could not be officially exploited until about 1900 (Goodwin 1998: 9). However, by 1885, there were lode miners along Sheep Creek, who were shipping their ores north to Nelson, B.C., keeping their operations secret, indicating mining operations were easily hidden from onlookers. After the establishment of Northport, the large scale operations at Moraski Flats would have been reported in the newspapers; since there are no observed historical documents indicating this, it is suggested the workings at Moraski Flats occurred prior to 1892 (Goodwin 1998:9).

Jim Goodwin asserts, after comparing the Moraski Flats operations to that of the lower Salmon River Chinese rock houses and placer workings (constructed by a force of 20 men or less), that these were constructed by a “well organized work force of possibly 100 men” (Goodwin 1998:18). However, the lack of everyday Chinese materials and artifacts at the Moraski Flats area suggests they camped elsewhere, most likely at Fort Sheppard Bar.

It was the hopes of Jim Goodwin (1998:19) that his report on the Moraski Flats placer operations will aid more knowledgeable persons in future analysis of the site, potentially confirming its Chinese origins. This report of Moraski Flats is not an archaeological site record and should not be treated as such. It is, however, relevant to connecting the historical context of the area to the archaeological record. The site *45ST01113* is not definitively culturally connected to Chinese placer mining, and is recommended for future evaluation; the report discussed here may greatly aide in the connection of the above mentioned archaeology site to the Chinese miners.

UPPER PEND OREILLE RIVER REGION

Chinaman's Bar and Ditch: Ah Yen

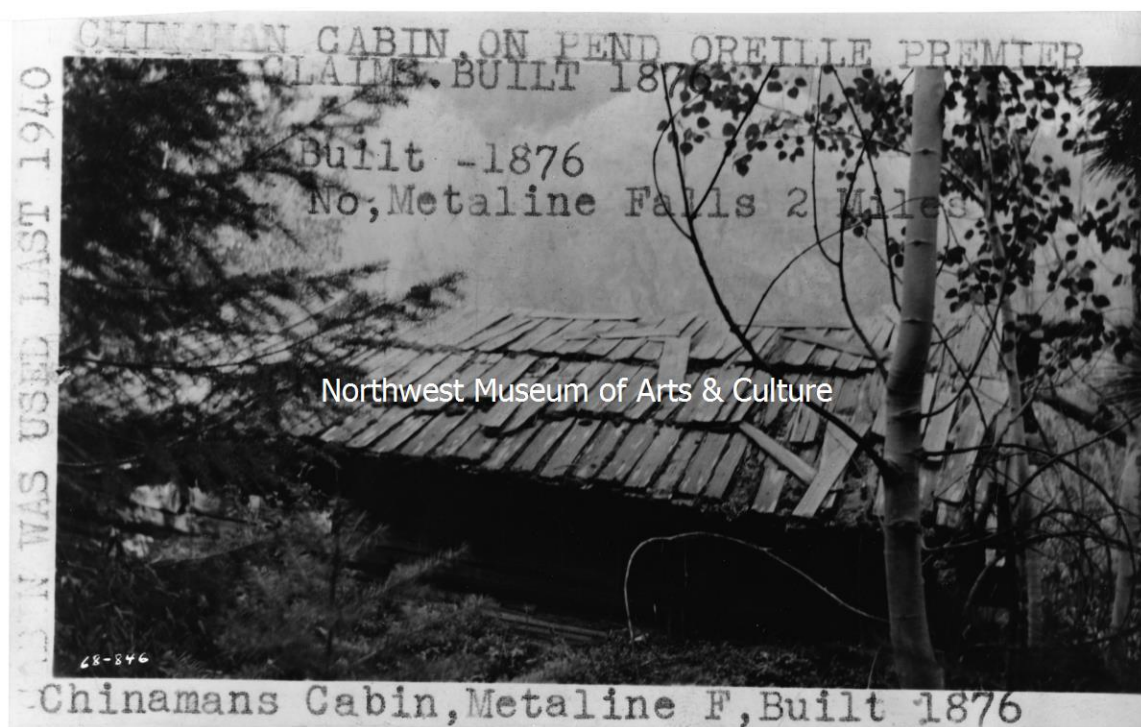


Figure 2.13: Chinaman's Cabin at Metaline Falls, 1968, built in 1876 about two miles north of Metaline Falls (Libby 1968).

In 1859, gold was discovered near the Metaline Falls on the Pend Oreille River, near the confluence with Sullivan Creek; the town of Metaline Falls was a product of this early gold strike (Atherley 1991:4; Gaylord 1993:20; Goodwin 1998:4). During the 1870s, a Chinese merchant from Spokane by the name of Ah Yen established a camp at “Chinaman’s Bar,” bringing with him numerous Chinese miners who worked for him on a 50:50 basis, owing him half of the gold recovered at this bar (Gaylord 1993:20; Giniger et al. 1976:77). Their notable “horse-shoe” shaped rock piles and their log cabin, constructed in 1876, were still visible and standing in 1945 (Gaylord 1993:20; Giniger et al. 1976:77; Holstine 1987:15). The Chinese worked the Pend Oreille River from the

Canadian border to Ione; Ah Yen had reportedly recovered over \$40,000 in placer gold from Chinaman's Bar (Gaylord 1993:20).

Chinaman's Ditch is one of the few remaining place-names in the area referring to the Chinese in the area and serving as a reminder of their presence on the Pend Oreille River (Gaylord 1993:20; Holstine 1987:15). By the 1890s, the Chinese had all left Metaline Falls, possibly due to a large flood of the Pend Oreille River that all but destroyed the early town of Metaline Falls (Gaylord 1993:20). **Figure 2.13** is a photo labelled "Chinaman's Cabin," supposedly located two miles north of Metaline Falls (Libby 1968). The "Chinaman's Cabin" was constructed in 1876 and is presumably associated with Chinaman's Bar and placer mining ditch (Libby 1968).

LOWER SIMILKAMEEN RIVER REGION

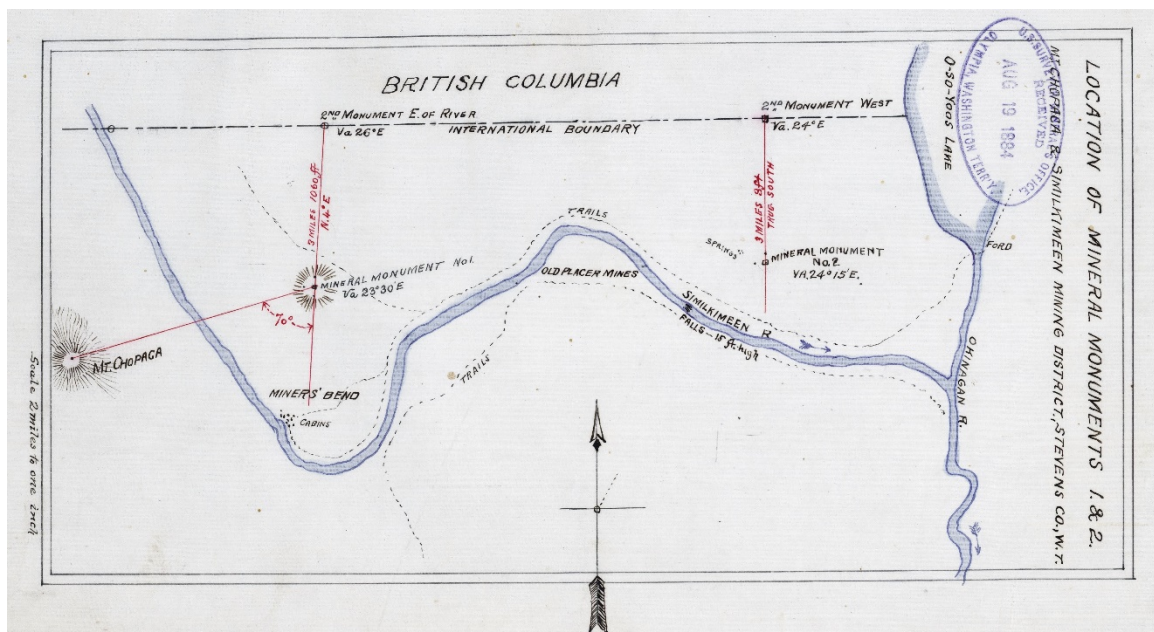


Figure 2.14: 1884 map of lower Similkameen River (near present day Nighthawk and Oroville) (Surveyor 1884).

The initial gold discovery of the lower Similkameen River was at Rich Bar (originally Compton Bar), about five miles upriver from Oroville. **Figure 2.14** shows an 1884 map of the lower Similkameen River, from its confluence with the Okanogan River to the Canadian Border; created for the purpose of locating hard rock mining claims, this map indicates the locations of “Miner’s Bend” and “old placer mines” (center of image, above north arrow) (Surveyor 1884).

Very little historic and archival information was located confirming the heavy presence of Chinese placer miners said to have worked the lower Similkameen River. “[The] persevering, quite, hard-working, Chinese placer miners were very much a part of the Okanogan scene for 40 years, from the early 1860s to about 1900 [and] ... worked the lower Similkameen” (Wilson 1990). Gjerde (1965) said that Euro-American and Chinese men had placer operations on the river at the same time, with segregation once again present: “the white man was on one side of the river and the ‘Chinks’ on the other.”

Art Gjerde (1965) described a later gold rush along the Similkameen River in 1886. Miners Bend, approximately two miles southwest of Nighthawk, was the popular destination and the tent camp location. There were supposedly Chinese miners working the river during this later rush. Much of the placer gold recovered from the Similkameen River was supposedly “bootlegged” across the Canadian border, limiting the available knowledge of the prospectors.

Placer gold is very fine (flour gold) along the lower Similkameen River therefore, gold panning remained the most popular and efficient technique to recover the gold. Sometimes concentrated placer deposits of gold were discovered on a bar near the “Salts plant,” about one mile from Oroville, yielding up to \$150 per day (Gjerde 1965). When

Gjerde (1965) visited Rich Bar (date of visit unknown), he claimed “some spots were literally gold plated.”

Chesaw: Chee Saw

Chesaw was an old mining town located near Oroville, in the northeastern corner of Okanogan County, along Meyers Creek. Prior to the opening of the north half of the Colville Indian Reservation for mineral entry, an old Chinaman named Chee Saw (Chesaw) had settled here with his Native American wife Julia Lum, and built a cabin on his wife’s Indian Allotment along Meyers Creek in 1884, on the old trail between Oroville and Rock Creek (Mires et al. 1904:550).

When the reservation was opened for mineral entry in 1896, many prospectors flocked to the area, reporting that the Chinese were already mining near the later town of Chesaw. The town, officially platted in 1900 when the area opened for homestead entry, was named Chesaw after its early settler. This “... is believed to have been the first instance of an American town named in honor of a Chinaman” (Okanogan; Mires et al. 1904:550).

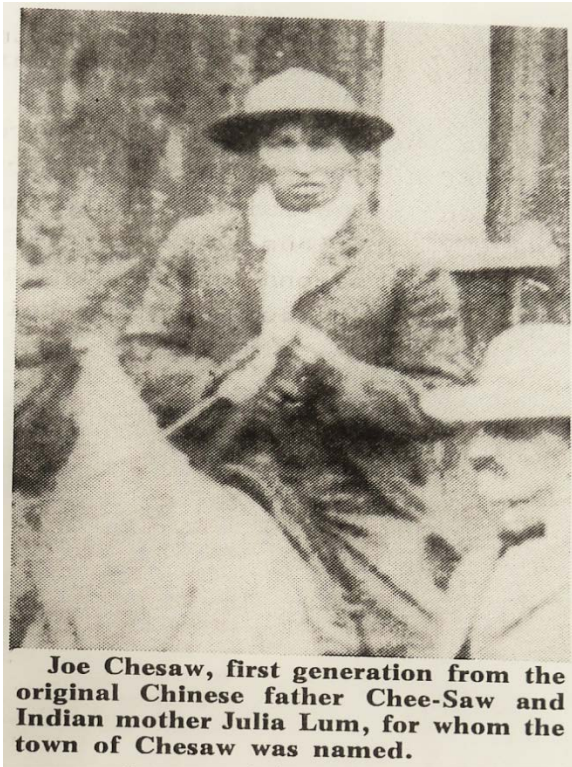


Figure 2.15: Joseph Chesaw, son of Chee Saw and Julia Lum (Mooney 1976).

Chee Saw and his Native American wife, Julia Lum, together had a son named Joseph Chesaw (pictured in **Figure 2.15**); they may have had four children in total (*Omak Chronicle* 1969). Chee Saw was the same store owner and operator from the Chelan Falls Chinese camp on the Columbia River, having moved up the Okanogan River when the area was opened for mineral entry (Hodgen n.d.; Mather 1937:34). He and his wife later operated a store out of their home along Meyers Creek, selling miscellaneous items to the Euro-American miners who moved into the region after the north half of the Colville Indian Reservation was opened for mineral entry in 1896. After Chee Saw's death in 1902, his wife and their son Joseph left their cabin (*Omak Chronicle* 1969; Gaylord 1993:11).

CHAPTER 3: ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

For the purpose of this project, archaeological sites related to Chinese placer mining activities during the late nineteenth century need to be discussed in order to better understand the material artifacts and scope of these Chinese operations. To do this, the located Chinese archaeological sites in the northeastern Washington project area have been summarized for their content related to Chinese placer mining activities and affiliations in the region. The archaeological sites identified for this thesis were located through the Washington State DAHP WISAARD index. **Table 3.1** is an exhaustive list of the archaeological sites within the project area identified as having Chinese affiliations by the recording archaeologist. The table includes the Smithsonian numbers (site number), their locations, county, dates of occupation (if available), and the features of the site related to Chinese mining in northeastern Washington.

SITE #	COUNTY	LOCATION			DATE(S) OF USE	FEATURES				
		TOWNSHIP (NORTH)	RANGE (EAST)	SECTION(S)		ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRAD.	STRUCTURES	PLACERING	OTHER
CH-00004	Chelan	21	22	16, 17		X	X	X	X	X
DO-00200	Douglas	30	28	10			X		X	
DO-00247	Douglas	31	29	35			X		X	
DO-00250	Douglas	31	29	34	1870-1885	X	X	X	X	X
DO-00259	Douglas	30	29	8		X	X	X	X	X
DO-00263	Douglas	30	29	8			X	X		X
DO-00411	Douglas	27	23	29	1870-1890s	X	X	X		
FS-01186	Ferry	38	34	14, 15, 16	Pre-1902		X		X	
FS-01021	Pend Oreille	40	43	14	1870s		X	X	X	
ST-00052	Stevens	37	38	16		X	X	X	X	X
ST-00057	Stevens	37	38	16		X	X	X	X	X
ST-00076	Stevens	39	39	16	1930s	X	X		X	X
ST-00091	Stevens	40	40	23			X		X	X
ST-00096	Stevens	40	40	30				X	X	X
ST-00180	Stevens	37	38	29		X	X	X	X	X
ST-00209	Stevens	38	38	7		X	X			X
ST-00354	Stevens	40	40	30	1880-?	X	X		X	X

Table 3.1: Archaeological sites in northeastern Washington culturally affiliated with Chinese placer mining operations.

It should also be noted here that the archaeological sites in **Table 3.1** have not undergone excavations. The majority of these sites were originally located during surveys of the Columbia River region prior to the creation of multiple dams throughout northeastern Washington, and therefore were primarily subject to surface evaluations only. The material artifacts represented at these sites (subject to “salvage” archaeology) were observed and recorded through these surface surveys, indicating various other artifacts may have been located just below the surface sediments, now inundated by the rivers. It is a strong possibility that numerous other Chinese placer mining sites were

either not recorded during this process, or were assumed to have Native American associations (based on similar features or prior use of the same site).

To better interpret the Chinese affiliation of these archaeology sites, the features present at each site have been broken into five categories (**Table 3.1**). Artifacts refers to historic materials observed on site believed to have been culturally connected to the Chinese occupation. Oral tradition refers to an ethnographic connection of Chinese placer miners indicated through oral interviews or by a popular belief of local community members. Structures indicates the site contains any sort of culturally connected Chinese structure or building construction, including: dugout depressions, cabins, lean-tos, semi-subterranean structures, or simply the remnants of a foundation or “Chinese oven.” Placering includes any feature known to have been connected to placer mining activities, including: depressions, ditches, trenches, flumes, rock walls, sluice channels, etc. The “other” category is reserved for features at the site which are non-related to the Chinese placer mining occupation, such as a ferry landing, townsite, non-Chinese constructed structures, later historic artifacts, etc.

The information in the “other” category tells us that the land had a multiple occupations and uses, or re-uses. Prior to settlement of the Pacific Northwest, Native Americans were the sole occupants of the region; however, after the West was tamed, American and foreign-born people settled throughout the region in search of agricultural and industrial pursuits. Of these pursuits, mining was a popular enterprise along the Columbia River gravel bars previously camped by Natives. Due to the destructive nature of mining, many of these bars were modified or dug-up by Chinese placer miners, searching for gold (Zhu 1999:55). In addition to pre-1900s Chinese placer mining

activities, a mining revival during the early twentieth century encouraged a regional pursuit of gold at previously worked locations. Thus many of the Chinese placer mining sites show signs of multi-use and functions for the same location, creating the “other” category.

The vast majority of the sites identified here occur along the Columbia River or its tributaries. Unfortunately, many of the archaeological sites poorly recorded during salvage documentation prior to inundation by the multiple dams along the Columbia River, revealing little data about the sites. The sites that are not presently inundated are in very poor condition and are heavily eroded by the rising and lowering of reservoir pool levels or cattle grazing activities.

Many Chinese placer mining camp and operation sites were not archaeologically recorded before dams were constructed along the Columbia. This was in part due to the limited historical knowledge regarding the regional Chinese populations. As they were seen as a threat to white laborers, and heavily discriminated against, there is a lack of historical documentation regarding the Chinese activities. Archaeologists conducting these cultural resource inventory surveys before the dams were completed were most likely unaware of the strong Chinese presence throughout the region, and therefore did not identify many archaeology sites with a Chinese cultural affiliation.

Figure 3.1 shows the general locations of the archaeological sites located within the project area. In order to ensure the integrity and protection of the archaeological sites identified in this thesis, the information provided regarding the sites has been limited, as it is considered protected information. No exact locations will be provided, only the generalized information.

KITTITAS COUNTY (REFERENCE)

The western boundary of the project area is essentially the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers. Archaeology site *45KT01020* is located outside of the project area, lying just west of Cle Elum, and does not represent Chinese placer mining activity. It is examined here because it is a pre-1900s Chinese railroad labor camp, including various Chinese habitation artifacts and two depressions determined to be semi-subterranean

dugout dwellings of the Chinese laborers who occupied the site. Examining this site demonstrates features that might be useful in identifying other Chinese sites. It is also important because it is still available for future investigation. **Table 3.2** indicates the components of 45KT01020, **Figure 3.2** shows its location.

SITE #	COUNTY	LOCATION			DATE(S) OF USE	FEATURES				
		TOWNSHIP (NORTH)	RANGE (EAST)	SECTION(S)		ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRAD.	STRUCTURES	PLACERING	OTHER
KT-01020	Kittitas	20	15	31	1850-1860	X	X	X		

Table 3.2: Archaeological data for site 45KT01020 (located outside of project area).

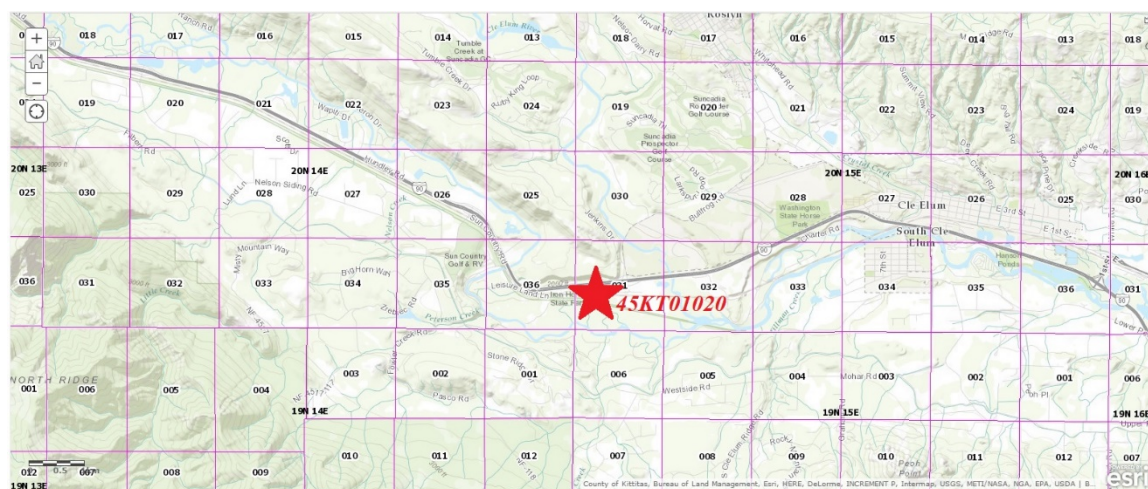


Figure 3.2: Map showing archaeology (reference) site 45KT01020.

45KT01020

This site lies in Kittitas County, outside the project area for this thesis, in Township 20 North, Range 15 East, and Section 31 of the Willamette Meridian, just west of Cle Elum along Interstate-90. This site consists of a historic “Chinese camp” dating prior to 1890 “... based on the olive green wine bottles” (Powell 1994).

Two depressions are the prominent features of this site; they seem likely to represent "... semi-subterranean dwellings typical of turn-of-the-century Chinese habitations" of the Chinese railroad workers in the area (Powell 1994). Artifacts observed at the site include: "Chinese rice bowls, opium tins, olive green wine bottle fragments, hole-in-top cans, fragments of Saki jug," and a broken shovel head (Powell 1994). The opium tin has a Chinese seal and is made from copper-based materials (Powell 1994).

A revisit to *45KT01020* in 1999 included testing; additional historic artifacts ("food cans") were observed, as well as two precontact flakes (Schablitsky 1999). Shovel Test #1 revealed an additional olive green bottle fragment and a post-1910 railroad circuit breaker, Shovel Test #2 "... contained a Milwaukee, amber colored bottle base dating from the late 19th century," and Shovel Test #3 was void of cultural materials (Schablitsky 1999). The following year, ten additional shovel tests were done: Shovel Test #5 contained a glass shard; Shovel Test #7 revealed a glass shard and an elk bone; Shovel Tests #8 and 9 exposed cut and hand-forged nails (pre-1890), olive green alcohol bottle fragments (pre-1900), and light green glass fragments from champagne or wine bottles; and Shovel Test #10 included "... three Chinese porcelain bowl fragments with the 'three circles and dragonfly' pattern" (Schablitsky 2000).

Though *45KT01020* is located outside the project area, the numerous Chinese culturally associated artifacts, as well as the proximity to present railroad lines and the "coal and slag found in the historic-period deposits indicate an association with steam-powered train locomotives," are indicative of an occupation by Chinese railroad laborers dating around 1860-1900. This site is important for this project because it definitively represents a clear association between culturally Chinese artifacts, semi-subterranean

dugout habitation style, and oral tradition, all representing a Chinese labor connection.

Since these cultural connections are unique to Chinese laborers in Washington State prior to 1900, they are useful in identifying Chinese cultural elements in other labor camps, as well, such as placer mining operations.

This site was occupied sometime between 1860 and 1900 (based on artifact association), the same time span as the majority of Chinese placer mining operations in the Columbia River region. Identification of similar features and/or artifacts at other sites with an oral tradition indicating a possible Chinese connection, provides high probability of it being definitively connected to Chinese occupation. This site will be used for comparison with similarly recorded dugouts along the Columbia River at known Chinese placer mining operations, at sites: *45DO00411*, *45ST00052*, *45ST00057*, and *45ST00180*.

CHELAN COUNTY

***45CH00004* (China Mine Site)**

The China Mine site consists of a precontact open camp site located on a sandy shore on the western bank of the Wanapum Reservoir at Columbia River mile 450.8, in Township 21 North, Range 22 East, Sections 16 and 17 of the Willamette Meridian. The northern boundary of this site is located just south of Dry Gulch and about one mile north of Colockum (Colockin) Creek.

Originally recorded in 1961 by Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd the site contained at least 5 housepit depressions, ranging from 6 to 18 meters in diameter (Chambers 2005). Materials observed on site included: bone, shell, charcoal, and flakes; materials collected included: iron nails, a metal button, two iron fragments, and trade beads (Chambers

2005). These observations represents a precontact Native American camp that was possibly used as a “fish drying camp” and may have a historic component (based on the historic materials collected) (Chambers 2005; Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd 1961b).

45CH00004 was revisited in 1994 and 2001, expanding the boundaries and incorporating additional features (Chambers 2005; Freiberg et al. 2001b). The 2005 National Register of Historic Places form lists 11 features for site *45CH00004*; Feature 1 is a historic rock alignment – a cobble and boulder alignment with vertical wood posts – which may represent a structural foundation (Chambers 2005).

In the original 1961 site record, a site map diagram shows a “Miners Cabin” located just south of the site boundary and depressions (Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd 1961b). However, there has been no mention of this cabin in any of the site records. It is possible that Feature 1, the rock and vertical post structure recorded in 2001, is the remains of this “Miners Cabin” (Chambers 2005; Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd 1961b; Freiberg et al. 2001b). Chambers speculates that Feature 1 may have been the remnants of a pre-reservoir foundation or hunting blind (Chambers 2005).

Unfortunately, the specific features and artifacts recorded and recovered from *45CH00004* do not represent any Chinese cultural affiliation. However, the “Miners Cabin” cannot be ignored and may represent a possible feature of the Chinese placer mining on the landform. Archaeology site *45CH00003* is located just south of *45CH00004* and was also called “China Mine;” the 1961 site report also includes the hand-drawn site map listing “Miners Cabin” with only precontact features being recorded (Freiberg et al. 2001a; Greengo 1961a). In 2001 archaeologists noted the site, “... was originally recorded by Emerson, Greengo, and Kidd (1961b), and named ‘China Mine’

because of its proximity to an old nearby cabin” (Freiberg et al. 2001a). Site *45CH00003* has not been included as a possible Chinese site due to the lack of historic materials at the site location; however, it should be considered for reevaluation in the future due to its proximity to the nearby Miners Cabin with a possible Chinese cultural affiliation identified by archaeologists working there.

DOUGLAS COUNTY

45DO00200

This site was originally recorded by Lee Lyman in 1975; it consists of two ditches cut in the gravels, supposedly representing “Chinese placer mines” (Lyman 1975). Site *45DO00200* is located in Township 30 North, Range 28 East, and Section 10 of the Willamette Meridian. The features were determined to be affiliated with Chinese miners through oral tradition given by local informants, brothers Fred and Harold Weber (Lyman 1975; Salo and Munsell 1976a). *45DO00200* was revisited in 1976 by Salo and Munsell. At that time it was recorded as a “historic commercial (placer mine)” site consisting of sluicing channels culturally linked with “Euro-Americans” (Salo and Munsell 1976a).

This site is currently inundated. No other information can be obtained from the site record. It is recommended that this site be reevaluated through future archaeological investigation to determine more information about the site specific features and the Chinese cultural affiliation.

45DO00247

This site represents historic placer mining sluice channels, culturally connected to the Chinese through oral tradition (Hamilton et al. 2000a). Site 45DO00247 is located in Township 31 North, Range 29 East, Section 35 of the Willamette Meridian, just downriver from Hopkins House (45DO00245) and north of China Creek and Alameda Flat, on a narrow gravel bar with all placer mining features intact. Placer features include rock piles and troughs, among other features (Hamilton et al. 2000a). This site was previously recorded by Salo and Munsell in 1976; they suggested a “Euro-American” affiliation, with no additional details recorded (Salo and Munsell 1976b).

This site is not currently inundated and should be reevaluated to map the specific site features and investigate for additional Chinese affiliations. It is recommended that this site be included with the resurvey of the Alameda Flat Chinese sites.

45DO00250 (China Placer Bar)

China Placer Bar was originally recorded in 1976 by Salo and Munsell as a historic placer mine in Township 31 North, Range 29 East, and Section 34 of the Willamette Meridian just south of China Creek on the China Placer Bar at Alameda Flat (Salo and Munsell 1976c). The sluice channels here are up to 20 feet deep and culturally affiliated with “Sino-Americans,” or Chinese (Salo and Munsell 1976c). The site was revisited in 2000 by Hamilton et al. and recorded as a “Chinese Placer Mine (1870-1885)” (Hamilton et al. 2000b).

Feature 1 is a shallow circular depression, 2.5m in diameter by about 0.3m deep; half of this feature has sloughed and eroded out of the cutbank (Hamilton et al. 2000b).

This feature is believed to be associated with the placer mining activities of the China Placer Bar. Artifacts were salvaged from Feature 1, providing "... unprecedented artefactual information in the CJRP area for Chinese placer mines" (Hamilton et al. 2000b). Recovered from this pit were artifacts culturally consistent with Chinese occupation, including "cans, metal container lids, motif red and black lacquer [*sic*], wood, hinges from a box, worked antler, worked bone, complete bottle, etc. ... consistent with the age of the mine (1870s-1885);" a pointed metal rod, amber bottle fragment, green glass fragments, leather, and a complete dark olive green bottle were also recovered (Hamilton et al. 2000b).

The placer mining constructions (Feature 2) at *45DO00250* included "large rectangular excavations ... and long linear channels and cobble piles" (Hamilton et al. 2000b). Feature 2 consists of two parallel rock alignments (suggested to have been a later addition to the site), occurring roughly one meter apart, which may represent trough edges of the placer workings (Hamilton et al. 2000b). Unfortunately, the 2000 site record is missing continuation pages, so Feature 2 is only partially described.

This site appears to lack information regarding the dugout from which materials were recovered. Also, *45DO00249* is located within the boundaries of China Placer Bar and has been adversely affected by the later placer mining activities of the bar, with two parallel cobble alignments, similar to Feature 2, crossing through the site (Hamilton et al. 2000b). It is recommended that the entire shoreline around Alameda Flat be resurveyed and evaluated for a cultural connection to the Chinese placer miners who were described here historically.

45DO00259

This site is located in Township 30 North, Range 29 East, Section 8 of the Willamette Meridian, also occurring just north of *45DO00263* (China Store), below Alameda Flat at Columbia River mile 573.2. *45DO00259* is a placer mine, which “consists of trenches, tailings piles, and a large ditch,” in addition to artifacts: “metal strapping and a fragment of an enamel basin or preserving kettle,” and wire cable (Seymour 2002). Local informants, the Weber brothers (mentioned in *45DO00200*), suggest there was also a large inland trench or ditch running parallel to the Columbia River, channeling water from Strahl Canyon to the mine, which was “... supposedly worked by Chinese during the last half of the 19th century” (Seymour 2002).

The specific placer mining features at *45DO00259* include four v-shaped trenches with cobble tailings piled on either side. The northern trench is 90’ long x 12’ wide x 4-5’ deep; this trench has tailings consisting of “... rounded to sub-rounded pebbles, cobbles and small boulders” (Seymour 2002). The other trenches are not as definable, being generally 2-3’ deep with tailings that are generally 13’ long x 6’ wide by 1.5-2’ tall; the distance between the tailings piles, or “rocker settings” fluctuate between 3-7’ wide (Seymour 2002).

The ditch at *45DO00259* “runs parallel to the river and is about 20’ wide and 3-4’ deep” (Seymour 2002). “There are also some broad oval depressions near the back end of the site, between the tailings and the ditch” (Seymour 2002). The depressions at this site may represent dugout habitations, due to the proximity to *45DO00263* (China Store). However, no information was recorded regarding these features. The site should be

revisited, if possible, in attempt to define the depressions and locate additional culturally Chinese features or artifacts.

45DO00263 (China Store)

The site *45DO00263* is a “Historic Ferry Crossing Complex,” located in Township 30 North, Range 29 East, and Section 8 of the Willamette Meridian and includes the foundation of a historic commercial store, recognized as the “China Store,” the foundation of which was reportedly relocated due to inundation of the site by the Banks Lake/ Columbia River dam project (Hamilton et al. 2000c). In 1976, the foundation of the store was the only remaining features of this site, though Salo and Munsell (1976e) reported the foundation was partially inundated at the time of their visit.

The *45DO00263* China Store had a concrete foundation and “... was reportedly run by Chinese merchants,” according to Fred and Harold Weber of Grand Coulee (Salo and Munsell 1976e). In 2000, the site condition was poor, with one feature burnt so that only the foundation remained, and the other two (unknown/ not described) features being presumably inundated (Hamilton et al. 2000c). Unfortunately the site records are incomplete and do not designate what each of the three features represents.

This site was inundated prior to being originally recorded; archaeologists were only able to view the burnt structural foundation (partially inundated), said to represent a Chinese trading post. This site should be reevaluated for artifacts or placer mining features consistent with Chinese operations, to confirm their occupation of the landform.

As very little cultural and historic information is known regarding the abovementioned archaeology sites near China Placer Bar and Alameda Flat (*45DO00200*,

00247, 00250, 00259, and 00263); it is extremely important that these sites be reevaluated and resurveyed as soon as possible, to prevent further loss of knowledge.

These sites include numerous Chinese associated artifacts (including: wood hinges, non-diagnostic metal fragments, wood, metal container lids, worked bone, bottle fragments of various colors, leather, etc.) and oral tradition places the Chinese as the responsible party of the placer mining operations on the bar. Thus these sites are critical to understanding the features of Chinese mining sites.

45DO00411 (B-2)

This site is the location of a historic trading post, located on the eastern shore of the Columbia River, across from Chelan Falls and the mouth of the Chelan River in Township 27 North, Range 23 East, and Section 29 of the Willamette Meridian. The site was recorded by Fletcher-Harvey in 1981. However, the site was based only on ethnographic information, as “no cultural remains were observed in the survey” (Fletcher-Harvey 1981). Oral tradition claims this site was the center of Chinese operations in the Big Bend Country; at this site they had “a prosperous trading post that had a pack train of forty horses, which indicated considerable mining must have taken place” (Fletcher-Harvey 1981). This was supposedly the “first commercial enterprise in North Central Washington ... the trading post was abandoned by the 1890s” (Fletcher-Harvey 1981).

The only observed artifact at *45DO00411* was a single fragment of purple glass; there were also four depressions of possible historic origins at the site (Lyons 1990). No additional information can be obtained through the site records regarding the four

depressions mentioned in 1990. The site has suffered various disturbances, including plowing and flooding, as well as present inundation by the Rocky Reach Reservoir (Lyons 1990).

This site is situated at the presumed location of the Chelan Falls Chinese settlement/ village, located directly across from the mouth of the Chelan River. Historic information indicates there was a prominent Chinese store at this location, as well as a garden, gaming house, and various semi-subterranean dugout dwellings, which were visible from the western shores of the Columbia River (Mires et al. 1904: 670). Due to the historic importance of this site and the numerous placer mining operations within the Big Bend Country, this site should be revisited in the near future, if possible, to determine if additional features are present, and to define the four depressions mentioned by Lyons in the National Register of Historic Places form (Lyons 1990).

FERRY COUNTY

***45FS01186* (“Chinese” Placer Workings)**

Located in Township 38 North, Range 34 East, Sections 14, 15, and 16 of the Willamette Meridian, the “Chinese” Placer Workings site consists of parallel “windrows” of cobbles and boulders along the St. Peter’s Creek floodplain in Ferry County (Perry 1991). There appears to be between one and six parallel rock alignments, 6-30’ wide, being “separated by channels or ditches of approximately the same width” (Perry 1991). These features may extend into private land for another mile and a half to the southeast, according to local informants (Perry 1991). The site was revisited in 2001 during the Lenora Fire *Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation* (BAER) project (Kramer 2002). The

site had been burned over; however, there was no evidence of negative effect due to the Lenora Fire (Kramer 2002).

It is popular belief, expressed by informant Alvin Johnson, that the Chinese were responsible for the placer workings here; the constructions were present when Johnson's family moved to the area in 1902 (Perry 1991). As Perry states: "If this site can be reliably linked to early Chinese activity, it will be an extremely important site. Chinese activity is very poorly documented in Eastern Washington and even more poorly represented by sites. Any demonstrably Chinese site in this area is a very significant site" (Perry 1991). It is recommended that this area be further investigated for a definitive connection to Chinese placer miners.

PEND OREILLE COUNTY

***45FS01021* ("Chinaman's Ditch")**

The Chinaman's Ditch site is located along the Pend Oreille River and Lime Creek, in Township 40 North, Range 43 East, and Section 14 of the Willamette Meridian. This site includes a placer mining sluice dating to the 1870s, constructed using a combination of earthen ditch and alternating segments of wooden flume (Ogmundson 1989). Archaeologists recorded an estimated total length of ditch/ flume construction at 4,000 feet (determined by pacing); they also recorded an associated "lean-to" where the flume crosses Lime Creek (Ogmundson 1989). *45FS01021* consists of five features (A-E).

Feature A of the earthen ditch runs for nearly 3,000' (934 pacing meters) and is approximately 4' wide x 2' deep, bermed on both sides with "... intermittent evidence of

channeling” (Ogmundson 1989). Feature B of the wooden flume runs approximately 350’ and “... extends out onto a manmade, horizontal rock shelf,” being supported by an 8” diameter by 30’ tall post (Ogmundson 1989). Feature C is the second ditch segment and runs for approximately 150’. Feature D is the second flume segment and intermittently continues for about 900’ until it intersects Lime Creek (Ogmundson 1989). Segments of the flume segments appear to be constructed of 1” x 12” boards and is supported by 6-10” diameter log posts of varying height (5-36’), using both round and square nails (Ogmundson 1989).

Feature E is the lean-to structure, about 8’ wide x 17’ long x 6’ tall, consisting of four stumps/ corner posts (5-6’ tall) with a horizontal log atop two stumps (5-8” diameter x 17.5’ long); a round-headed nail is visible on top of the log (Ogmundson 1989). Two additional logs lie on the ground, having possibly been squared (10-11” diameter x 12.5’ long) (Ogmundson 1989).

Historically, Chinaman’s Ditch (45FS01021) was connected to the Chinaman’s Bar placer mining operations headed by Ah Yen in the 1870s (Gaylord 1993:20). The *Cultural Resources Inventory of the Colville National Forest*, Project Report 32 was included in the site record for 45FS01021, confirming the historic connection: “In the 1870s a Chinese merchant in Spokane reportedly grubstaked a number of Chinese miners from Canada on a fifty-fifty basis. Their main camp, known as Chinaman’s Bar, was located on the east side of the Pend Oreille River about two miles north of Metaline Falls” (Giniger et al. 1976:77). Also, “... traces remain of the ‘Chinaman’s Ditch,’ which ran for about one and a half miles in the lime Creek-Lucky Strike area” (Giniger et al. 1976:77). *Forgotten Corner: A History of the Colville National Forest, Washington*

“echoes” the same descriptions of the Chinaman’s Bar and Ditch workings (Holstine 1987:15; Ogmundson 1989).

The archaeological features recorded at this site, in conjunction with the provided historical documentation of Chinaman’s Ditch, indicate this site was in fact worked by Chinese placer miners during the 1870s. “Chinaman’s Cabin” was also located (through historical documentation) about two miles north of Metaline Falls, supposedly built in 1876; the Chinaman’s Cabin was last occupied in 1940 and will still standing in 1968 (**Figure 2.13**) (Libby 1968). Giniger et al. report “evidence of their placer workings remained ... as well as a sturdy log cabin with a stone fireplace” (Giniger et al. 1976:77).

Images of the ditch and flume sections and the lean-to at site *45FS01021* are very difficult to view and should be updated with higher resolution images upon a future visitation to the site. Also, it does not appear that the Chinaman’s Cabin has been archaeologically recorded and a WISAARD search did not reveal any similar sites. It is recommended by this writer that future archaeological evaluations in the area of Chinaman’s Bar, Ditch, and Cabin be conducted in order to record the historic and cultural significance of the Chinese placer mining operations along the Pend Oreille River.

STEVENS COUNTY

45ST00052

Site *45ST00052* is located in Township 37 North, Range 38 East, Section 16 of the Willamette Meridian, along the western bank Columbia River at miles 712-713, near Evans. The site contains three areas (A-C); areas A and C are “aboriginal campsites” and

area B is a historic structure (Matsen 1986a). Area B consisted of “two semi-subterranean structures cribbed with boards. Both were ca. 2.5m x 3.5m, with narrow cribbed entranceways... These structures may have been connected with the extensive placering of these flats. It is said that the Chinese were responsible for the placering” (Chance 1967: 49; Matsen 1986a). The roofs of the dwellings were non-existent when Chance recorded the site in 1967 (Matsen 1986a). There was apparent looting at this site, as “several articles claimed to be Chinese and supposedly from the area of Evans are displayed in the antique shop at Evans,” the name of the shop is unknown (Chance 1967:49; Matsen 1986a).

A 1995 relocation attempt was unsuccessful, however, during revisits to 45ST00052 in 2003 and 2004 by National Park Service (NPS), archaeologists located nine additional features of the site and a modern industrial dump (45ST00052 2004). Features 1-7 are depressions and Features 8-9 are ditch or trench placer mining constructions; additionally a ditch/ trench complex (Feature Complex) was located, as well as placer tailings and a probable modern trash dump (45ST00052 2004).

Feature 1 is a 5m diameter x 1.4m deep depression; Feature 2 is a 2m diameter x 0.6m deep depression; Feature 3 is a 5m diameter x 1.8m deep depression; Feature 4 is a 2.5m diameter x 0.6m deep depression; Feature 5 is a 3m diameter x 0.8m deep depression; Feature 6 is also a 3m diameter x 0.8m deep depression; Feature 7 is a rectangular depression, 8m north-south x 3m east-west x 1m deep and may represent two connected pit depressions; Feature 8 is a ditch or trench running east-west for 90m, bermed on both sides about 1.5m apart x 1.4m to the bottom of the trench (0.5-0.7m above ground); Feature 9 is another ditch or trench running parallel to the placer tailings

for about 100m and is less than 0.2m deep with a shallow berm (45ST00052 2004). In addition to these nine site features, the “Feature Complex” contains a series of shallow ditches or trenches, all less than 0.1m deep and could be related to the “Placer Tailings,” which are rumored to have been worked by the Chinese (45ST00052 2004). In the southwest area of the site is a historic or modern trash/ debris field and is not considered relevant to the Chinese placer mining occupation at this site.

It is unclear as to whether the depressions recorded at 45ST00052 are related to habitation or occupation. It is recommended that this site be further evaluated for a connection to the ethnographic information regarding Chinese mining operations at this site. It is also pertinent to the cultural affiliation with the Chinese miners that the “... several articles claimed to be Chinese ... displayed in the antique shop at Evans” be investigated for their contributions to the historical and archaeological value of the site (Chance 1967:49; Matsen 1986a).

45ST00057 (Antler)

The Antler Site is located in Township 37 North, Range 38 East, and Section 16 of the Willamette Meridian, also at Columbia River miles 712-713, on the western bank or the river near Evans. This site is an “aboriginal camp” and historic site; ovens (1m high x 3m base diameter), “... several shell middens, bone fragments, mortars, and a few choppers” and numerous other precontact features were observed by Chance in addition to historic placer mining features (Chance 1967:59; Matsen 1986b). The historic component of this site includes three 1m long trenches, less than 1.5m deep, cutting through the precontact materials (Chance 1967:59; Matsen 1986b).

Based on the incomplete field work in 2001, the site has been divided into three loci (Hamilton et al. 2001). Locus 1 upriver $\frac{1}{3}$ of the site contains precontact fire cracked rock (FCR), "... placer mining features, and a historical 'dug-out'," in addition to a "... broad surface scatter of prehistoric and historic-era artifacts" (Hamilton et al. 2001). The historic placer mining activities at Locus 1 were believed to have been done by Chinese immigrants in the area, "... as suggested by the 'dugout' habitation ... a type known historically to have been used by overseas Chinese miners" (Hamilton et al. 2001). Culturally Chinese artifacts at Locus 1 included "a Chinese coin and a piece of Celadon ceramic" (Hamilton et al. 2001). Locus 2 and only contains precontact associated materials and is located in the center of the site (Hamilton et al. 2001). Locus 3 is on the back side of the landform, yielding a "... distribution of artifacts" during shovel testing (Hamilton et al. 2001). This site endured a later historic occupation which disturbed various portions of the site (Hamilton et al. 2001).

This site was possibly flooded by the Columbia River in 1967 and was observed being inundated during field work of the site in 2001 (Hamilton et al. 2001; Matsen 1986b). Due to the lack of information recorded regarding the dugout habitation feature, "... a type known historically to have been used by overseas Chinese miners," it is recommended that this site be revisited and evaluated for culturally Chinese associations and to determine the parameters of the dugout at *45ST00057* (Hamilton et al. 2001).

45ST00076 (Paprich)

The Paprich site is located across the Columbia River from the mouth of Onion Creek, at river mile 730, in Township 39 North, Range 39 East, and Section 16 of the

Willamette Meridian. *45ST00076* is an aboriginal camp with a late placer mining component, including a “‘grizzly’ sluicing device” and “... many square nails at the southeast end of the site suggesting association with the earlier Chinese placering on the bar to the southeast” (Chance 1967:73; Matsen 1986c). The site boundaries were updated in 2009 to include a Native American cemetery (Covington et al. 2009a).

Site informant, “Mr. Paprich was told by an Indian now dead that there was an Indian camp here in historic times which washed out in the flood of 1898. After that date the Indians never returned. It was thought that the Chinese did not placer mine the campsite itself because it was then inhabited by Indians” (Chance 1967:73). Paprich’s father reportedly placered some of the site “... during the depression” (Chance 1967:73).

The extent of placer mining features at this site is unknown and should be further evaluated to describe the individual features. The sluicing device should also be photographed and archaeologically described, if it is still present.

45ST00091 (Fowler)

The Fowler site is located along the Columbia River at miles 740-741, in Township 40 North, Range 40 East, Sections 22 and 23 of the Willamette Meridian, east of the Fowler Ranch. *45ST00091* contains an “aboriginal campsite” on the river terrace which has been “... disturbed by placer mining” (Chance 1967:77-78; Matsen 1986d). As a child, Mr. Fowler (informant) “... saw a Persian wheel on the river-bank, which had supposedly been used by the Chinese to obtain water for placering. He also said that a large canal was made by the same agents for transporting water to the diggings from Nigger Creek [*sic*]” (Chance 1967: 78). Chinese miners often used a type of water wheel

to feed their placer operations; an example of their water wheels was observed with Mr. Fowler's Persian wheel (Zhu 1999:51-52).

The ditch Fowler is referencing was clay-lined to avoid seepage (Chance 1967: 78). It is possible that Fowler is referencing the same ditch referenced at Moraski Flats; the Chinese placer miners had built a three mile long ditch or canal from Goodeve (Nigger) Creek to their placer workings at Moraski Flats (Chance 1967: 78; Goodwin 1998: 6). Chance also reports "... there was formerly a small log cabin built into the riverbank which had a fireplace and chimney built in the corner," which had supposedly been washed away by flooding; it is unclear if Chance is suggesting that the cabin was semi-subterranean, or if the phrasing ("... built into the riverbank...") is misleading (Chance 1967: 78).

The ethnographic information at *45ST00091* suggests the Chinese were responsible for the placer mining at this site, and possibly the cabin structure. This site should be archaeologically investigated in the near future to determine the placer working details as well as a possible culturally Chinese association.

45ST00096

This site contains precontact housepits and a possible historic component of a possible "Chinese oven" (Matsen 1986e). Located along the east bank Columbia River, just west of Deep Creek, in Township 40 North, Range 40 East, Section 30 of the Willamette Meridian, at river miles 736-737. The precontact site information consists of two circular depressions, 6m in diameter x 0.5m deep, with no entranceways (Chance 1967: 69; Matsen 1986e). The western edge of the site contains a "... deeply concave

heap of boulders ... [resembling] a 'Chinese oven' observed on the Snake River"

(Matsen 1986e). The oven measured 1m in base diameter x 0.6m tall (Chance 1967: 69).

In 2009, the housepits and Chinese oven were described as much larger than Chance suggested: Housepit #1 is 10.5m diameter x 0.8m deep; Housepit #2 is 11m at 235° from #1, and is 8.5m in diameter x 0.55m deep (Covington et al. 2009b). The Chinese oven is 45m at 250° from Housepit #2 and is 2m in diameter x 0.45m tall, consisting of "... numerous large sub-rounded cobbles and small sub-rounded boulders" (Covington et al. 2009b). A small cairn was also located about 45m at 90° from Housepit #1, consisting of "... nine rounded cobbles," possibly the Chinese oven (Covington et al. 2009b).

Much of site *45ST00096* has been disturbed by placer mining activities, except the small bench where the Chinese oven occurs (Chance 1967: 69). In 1996, Galm et al. reports "no visible signs of a site were here; what Chance (1967) described has apparently eroded into the river ... colluvial erosion severe in places due to horse and cattle traffic" (Galm et al. 1996).

As the placer mining features are not described, and the Chinese oven does not have a definitive connection, it is recommended that *45ST00096* be reexamined through archaeological investigation to determine the extent of placer features, as well as a cultural affiliation to the Chinese oven. It is also recommended that the two housepits be reevaluated for a cultural affiliation with the Chinese semi-subterranean dugout habitation style which has been observed throughout the region.

45ST00180 (Marcus Island)

The Marcus Island site is located on the north side of the island (now peninsula) on the eastern side of the Columbia River, at miles 708-709, in Township 37 North, Range 38 East, and Section 29 of the Willamette Meridian. This landform is presently used for recreation as NPS Marcus Island campground.

In 1979, McKie originally recorded the site as nine dugouts in various places on the island, with associated ceramics, vessel glass, and metal objects being "... at times associated with the dugouts" (McKie 1979). Historically, *45ST00180* was attributed to Chinese miners (ca. 1864); in 1986, the only other known Chinese dugouts were near Evans, just north of Marcus Island, at *45ST00052* (Matsen 1986f). Associated artifacts in 1986 included: "A few sherds of brown glazed ceramic, believed to be Chinese ... mingled with late nineteenth century trash, including glass" (Matsen 1986f).

In 1995, ten dugouts were observed as 4m in diameter x 1m deep, with "tail-like" entranceways; eleven other, smaller pits, an abandoned railroad bed, a historic trench, and thirteen rock cairns were also observed (Spencer 1995). The cairns or rock piles, aligned roughly east to west in the center of the site, were not likely precontact related "... due to the lack of prehistoric cultural material" (Spencer 1995). Artifacts observed in 1995 included: "... wire nails, industrial bolts, metal fragments ... vessel fragments of green, brown, and amethyst glass, a brown glass fragment with the inscription "Sanford" ... and brick concentrations" (Spencer 1995).

In 2003, NPS archaeologists investigated Marcus Island, "... [resulting] in the discovery and partial evaluation of more than 30 historic features" (Kaberline et al. 2003). Three historic documents are associated with Marcus Island (*45ST00180*): 1) 1890

plat map of East Marcus (eastern portion of site), 2) 1909 plat map of Marcus Heights (western portion of site), and 3) 1910 Marcus townsite articles of incorporation (Kaberline et al. 2003). These articles suggest the island was occupied by three historic communities between 1890 and 1940, sharing a common site boundary with *45ST00037* (Marcus) (Kaberline et al. 2003). A total of 27 depressions, a concrete structural foundation and a railroad grade, and various twentieth century historic artifacts were recorded at the site (Kaberline et al. 2003). The artifacts observed in 2003 include: various metal items (cut and wire nails, tin, railroad spikes and tie [1929]), stove parts, enamel pans, kerosene lantern fragments, various glass fragments (olive green glass, brown glass, flat glass, a bottle base [1916-1929]), shoe fragments, ceramic, and a marble, among others (Barton 2006; Kaberline et al. 2003).

A 2006 site addendum expanded the boundaries of *45ST00180* to include artifact scatters east of the previous boundary designation (Barton 2006). In 2010, the site was revisited and observed as being actively eroded by seasonal inundation and the presence of recent looting pits (McCullough and Retzer 2010). It is recommended that *45ST00180* be further evaluated for additional cultural associations with Chinese placer miners known to have inhabited the area prior to 1900, and to determine if the smaller pits and trench were associated with placer mining in the area.

***45ST00209* (Sino Apex)**

The Sino Apex Site is situated in China Bend, along the Columbia River at mile 723, in Township 38 North, Range 38 East, and Section 7 of the Willamette Meridian. The site appears to be either a precontact site or an historic site with Chinese cultural

affiliations (Sino generally refers to Chinese in origin), as indicated by the original references of Chance in 1978 (Kreshak 1995; McCullough 2013). Precontact artifacts of the site include thermally altered rock and animal bone fragments, based on the observations of Chance (Kreshak 1995). Historic artifacts at *45ST00209* include: stove cooktop pieces, metal spikes, wire fragments, and non-diagnostic metal (Kreshak 1995).

Additional precontact and historic artifacts were observed in 2013, including an aqua glass fragment and a metal rod (McCullough 2013). *45ST00209* appears to have historically been associated with the townsite of Ryan, Washington, established in 1896, as a ferry landing (McCullough 2013).

It appears as though Chance is the only indication of a culturally Chinese affiliation at *45ST00209*, as no cultural Chinese connection can be obtained from the artifacts and historic site information. It is recommended that further evaluation of this site be done in an attempt to establish the suggested Chinese cultural relationship.

45ST00354

This site is located near Northport, in Township 40 North, Range 40 East, Section 30 of the Willamette Meridian, along the Columbia River and appears to be an “Aboriginal and Ethnohistoric Camp” (Pratt 1985). The local residents have apparently collected precontact artifacts from the site (Pratt 1985). *45ST0054* was historically a camp of the Colville Indians (1880-?); boots and a Chinese coin have also been recovered from the site, relating to a Chinese man who resided in a cabin on site (Pratt 1985).

There is no indications of an archaeologically observed cabin, or other features of Chinese occupation at this site. *45ST00354* should be reevaluated to determine the mentioned cabin feature.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

OVERVIEW

A total of seventeen archaeological sites were located within the project area that contained a definitive Chinese cultural affiliation identified by the recording archaeologists. It is not always clear how the archaeologists determined the cultural significance of the site; occasionally features or artifacts of potential Chinese implication are indicated within the site record and not described, leaving questions yet to be answered by future evaluation.

To better understand how to identify Chinese archaeological occupation, the individual features of each site relating to Chinese placer miners of northeastern Washington have been explored. The sites were evaluated and broken into four categories that contribute to cultural significance: artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placering (see **Chapter 4, Overview**). The fifth category (“other”) represents the presence of non-Chinese features on site (including precontact habitation or artifacts, post-1900 historic townsites, ferry landings, etc.). This archaeological data table can be viewed in **Appendix A: Archaeological Site Data**.

DESIGNATION IN TEXT	CAMP AND/ OR OPERATION NAME	COUNTY	TOWNSHIP (NORTH)	RANGE (EAST)	SECTION(S)	CONFIRMED ARCHAEOLOGY SITE(S)
Rock Island	Ringlow Bar	Douglas	21	22	16	CH-00004
Chelan Falls	China Gold Bar/ Rich Bar	Douglas	27	23	29	DO-00411
Alameda Flat	China Placer Bar	Douglas	30	29	8	DO-00200, 00247, 00250, 00259, 00263
Hawk Creek	Hawk Creek	Grant	27	35	12, 13	-
Hunters	Rogers Bar	Ferry	29	35	10	-
Daisy	Charley Francois Bar	Stevens	33	37	5	-
Marcus	Six Mile Bar/ Nine Mile Bar/ Twelve Mile Bar	Stevens	37	38	29	ST-00052, 00180
China Bend	China Bar/ Fifteen Mile Bar	Stevens	38	39	6, 7	ST-00057, 00209
Boundary	Fort Sheppard Bar	Stevens	40	41	4	ST-00076, 00091, 00096, 00354
Chesaw	-	Okanogan	40	30	21	FS-01186
Metaline Falls	Chinaman's Bar	Pend Oreille	40	43	14	FS-01021

Table 4.1: Historic Chinese mining camp locations in northeastern Washington.

The major Chinese placer mining camps and operations (described in **Chapter 2**) have been connected to the archaeological record; **Table 4.1** indicates for each camp the geographic reference within the project, the Chinese operation or camp, county, locations, and confirmed archaeology sites described in **Chapter 3**. A total of seventeen archaeological sites were evaluated in this project for their Chinese cultural affiliations within this project. Through the historical accounts, it is clear that large populations of Chinese immigrants were living in northeastern Washington State, regardless of the official census records. The population peaked at nearly 1,500 Chinese during the 1870s, outnumbering white miners two to one. Of the major Chinese operations located, there were eleven major camp locations, consisting of at least fourteen large Chinese placer mining operations within the project area (indicated in **Table 4.1**).

Of the seventeen archaeological sites evaluated in this project, ten contained cultural artifacts, sixteen were connected to Chinese through some sort of oral tradition, ten sites contained Chinese associated structures, fourteen contained placer mining features, and twelve sites were associated with other features.

From these archaeological locations, Chinese cultural affiliations present have been categorized into four components: artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placer mining features. An “other” category is also noted in the charts; this other component indicates multi-use or reuse of cultures who occupied the archaeological sites (such as a Chinese placer mining site previously occupied by Native Americans, or a later reused by Euro-American miners during the depression). Individual archaeological site component details can be observed in text format in **Chapter 3: Archaeological Context** and in table format in **Appendix A: Archaeological Site Data**. The four components, indicating different features of archaeological sites culturally associated with Chinese placer miners, are to follow.

Artifacts

Culturally affiliated artifacts observed at the 1880s Cle Elum Chinese railroad labor camp (45KT01020) include: champagne, wine, or other alcohol bottle fragments (olive green, light green, and amber), Saki jug fragments, opium tins (constructed of copper-based materials, with a Chinese seal), porcelain rice bowl fragments, hole-in-top cans, cut and hand forged nails, elk bone, and a broken shovel head, among others. Additionally, there were two semi-subterranean dugout habitation structures.

Throughout the seventeen archaeological sites within the project area, only ten contained cultural artifacts. The artifacts observed at these sites include: tins, metal fragments, tins, metal rods, glass fragments of various colors and purposes, worked bone, leather, hinges, a marble, square nails and hand-forged nails, bolts, etc. The most common artifacts of a Chinese site are bottle glass of various colors (green, amber, brown, purple, and aqua), nails (iron, square, cut, and wire), and non-diagnostic metal fragments. Unfortunately, these artifacts were observed through surface evaluations and most of the sites did not undergo excavations prior to inundation by the Columbia River.

Though these sites appear to be lacking common Chinese artifacts, they should not be dismissed as these common artifacts may be present under surface sediments and most likely remain available for future evaluation, assuming the site has not been completely destroyed through the seasonal inundation processes. In comparison to *45KT01020*, commonly identified Chinese artifacts are missing from the sites located within the project area, such as porcelain fragments, opium tins, and Saki jugs. Other scholarly works indicate popular Chinese artifacts also include tobacco or opium pipes and Chinese coins, which are also absent from the archaeological site located in northeastern Washington.

At the Chelan Falls Chinese settlement, the Chinese village reportedly contained a gambling or gaming house. Artifacts associated with gaming and gambling (such as tokens, marbles, and other gaming pieces) would be of high cultural value if located. In at least one location, it was indicated by a local settler that the Chinese would often have a big opium smoke to relax after long periods of sustained labor. If this is generally true, opium tins should be present within the regional Chinese placer mining sites, similar to

45KT01020; the presence of opium and Saki artifacts would definitively connect a site or feature to Chinese immigrants.

Oral Traditions

The oral traditions associated with the Chinese sites located in the project area include popular belief (oral tradition), local informants with direct knowledge of Chinese occupation, and place-names that refer to Chinese occupation (such as Chinaman's Bar, China Placer Bar, China Bend, China Creek, etc.). Historic information observed throughout the Columbia River region places large Chinese camps in the vicinity of Rock Island, Chelan Falls, Alameda Flat, Hawk Creek, Hunters, Daisy, Marcus, China Bend, Boundary, Chesaw, and Metaline Falls. Archaeological investigations occurring in the vicinity of any of these sites should be carefully evaluated for a possible Chinese association.

Structures

Most of the sites that contain structures also contained culturally associated artifacts, with dugout depressions being the most common structure associated with Chinese placer mining operations in northeastern Washington, aside from the actual mining features. Primary habitation structures of the Chinese laborers within the project area were semi-subterranean dugout structures, rather than the typical frame-built homes popularly observed at dominant Euro-American mining operations. However, that is not to say they did not build other structures; Boise Basin, Idaho saw Chinese living (often

with white roommates) in frame houses, and Chinese in the Rocky Mountain region built log cabins from the abundant timber supply (Zhu 1999:55).

As Chinese in northeastern Washington's Columbia River basin primarily used dugouts constructed of organic materials (locally available timber and grass), the archaeological indications of these once-dugout structures usually consist only of landscape depression scars. Through the historical record, these dugouts have been described as roughly circular semi-subterranean, earthen depression habitations built of cedar boards, split from the log like shakes or whipsawed, secured to a vertical support post, and roofed with additional logs, brush, and sod. The Chinese would often construct bunks along one side with a narrow, timber-cribbed entranceway (like a tail) at one end and a hearth opposite. Archaeological data has observed these dugouts to be approximately 7.5' x 10.5' (oval), though no organic materials were recorded within the dugouts.

Chinese operated merchant trading posts/ stores have been observed throughout the Columbia River region and its tributaries, including the major operations at Rock Island, Chelan Falls and Pateros, Alameda Flat, Daisy, and Chesaw. Ah Tai and his brother Ah Nem ran the Daisy store (post-1877-1930s), Mr. Wing operated the Rock Island store (1863-1880s), Chee Saw operated the Chelan Falls and Pateros stores (1863-1884) and the Chesaw store (1884-1902), and the Alameda Flat store was said to have been operated by Chinese (1870-1885).

The construction of these stores was quite similar to their dugout habitations, being described as simple dugout stores built into the riverbank, supported by a vertical post with a couple of small windows in the front. This description may have visually

appeared as a semi-subterranean lean-to, similar to a child's fort (Borg 1986: 17; Hodgen n.d.). The Chinese stocked staple foodstuffs and mining tools and equipment, serving the community at-large (Hodgen n.d.; Schmidt 1973b:2). At Chelan Falls, it was reported that the Chinese village also included a garden and gaming or gambling house, however, these features were not described in the historical or archaeological records.

Occasionally, Chinese placer mining sites are connected with a miners' cabin, such as Chinaman's Cabin near Metaline Falls at Chinaman's Bar. *45CH00004* was reportedly culturally connected to Chinese placer miners due to the presence of a "Miners Cabin" located on the landform just south of the precontact site. Unfortunately, it does not appear that either of these cabins were recorded and therefore should be subject to future archaeological inventory, if possible.

Placer Mining Features

Placer mining features consistent with Chinese operations in the region, include: small and large excavated depression areas (6-15' wide x 1-6' deep), occurring larger close to the river channel; rock piles (or tailings) of varying sizes; parallel cobble alignments ranging 10-300' long x 4-12' wide x 0.5-5' deep; linear canals (channels, trenches, troughs, ditches, flumes, or a combination of all), ranging from a few hundred feet to five miles, ranging 1-20' wide x 1-4' deep.

The parallel cobble alignments were most likely used to set-up the placer mining sluice box, rocker box, or long tom device being used on site and are often clearly sorted and organized in neat stacks (a contrast to the disorganized scatter of tailings observed in Euro-American sites). As indicated in the 1998 Moraski Flats report by Goodwin, the

cobbles within the alignments are void of sediments, suggesting they were removed from elsewhere, being redeposited in the alignment feature during construction, after being washed of sediment and other materials. The cobbles, often being of sub-rounded to rounded form, suggest they were removed from near a past or present flowing water source, such as the Columbia River, or were worn down from glacial deposition, which is another strong possibility.

Canals or ditches were pertinent features to the Chinese placer mining operations in the region, as these supplied water to their placer workings, which required a steady flow of water to function. Hawk Creek contained a 3¼ mile long canal supplying the Chinese mining on an island three miles north of the confluence of Hawk Creek and the Columbia River. This island was observed containing a “China House” in the 1885 cadastral survey (**Figure 2.7**). China Ditch is another prominent ditch feature of Chinese origin, feeding the placer workings at China Gold Bar, approximately five miles from its headgate on the Methow River. Remnants of this ditch are still visible today (**Figure 2.3**). No archaeological sites have been observed as being connected to China Ditch.

COMPARISONS

Given the fragmented history, ephemeral populations and camps, and heavy regulation of Chinese miners in Washington State, the archaeological evidence observed at Chinese sites outside the project area does not always match the archaeology found within the project area. This may have partially been caused by the lack of large Chinatowns at northeastern Washington Chinese placer mining operations along the

Columbia River and its major tributaries; Chinatowns are features commonly seen in other Chinese occupied regions of the Pacific Northwest.

Previous scholarly works will often discuss archaeological evidence supporting some component features common to Chinese placer mining operations within the project area, while other scholarly works will contrast the features observed in northeastern Washington sites. The following information has been compiled from other writers as a comparison of material artifacts and features observed at Chinese placer mining operations outside the project area; the resulting data provides the different types of artifacts that may be found if future archaeological investigations and excavations are conducted at the probable Chinese placer mining sites in northeastern Washington.

Artifacts

Chinese household goods commonly differed from Euro-Americans by the Chinese use of ceramics. “Almost every Chinese household in [Boise Basin] possessed a number of Chinese ceramic objects, ranging from coarse stoneware to fine porcelains,” including “rice bowls, soup bowls, plates, spoons, saucers, and teacups ... and stoneware containers [including] soy-sauce pots, ginger jars, and pickle jars” (Zhu 1997:71). Chung (2011:154) indicates the archaeological investigations (1999-2001) at Island Mountain, Nevada, included “Chinese tableware and ceramics, Chinese liquor jars, Chinese medicine bottles, and cans or ceramic food containers;” 94 percent of the ceramic artifacts (mostly fragmented) observed were either of Chinese origins, or were Chinese-styles made in the United States or Europe.

According to Rohe (2002:50), “the sites of Chinese mining camps can often be easily distinguished from Euro-American ones by an artifact assemblage that includes food remains and food preparation utensils characteristic of traditional Chinese diets, parts of opium containers and opium-smoking paraphernalia, Chinese liquor bottles, gaming pieces, and many artifacts showing adaptive reuse.” Chung (2011:8-9) continues to indicate “Chinese mining sites had an abundance of fragments of Chinese imported goods, such as dishware and food containers, evidence of the reuse of cans, other metal artifacts, and different types of containers demonstrated that the Chinese were very frugal.” Bone fragments have also been observed, indicating food consumed, in addition to the western and Chinese foodstuffs (Chung 2011:9).

Clothing styles can also be observed occasionally in the archaeological record, indicating Chinese did use Euro-American clothing styles once their more traditional attire needed to be replaced, incorporating “flannel shirts, Levi’s, and overalls” into their outfit (Zhu 1997:72). Blue or gray cotton blouses and trousers, as well as flat-bottomed shoes, broad-brimmed bamboo or straw hats, and silk caps would also indicate a Chinese outfit (Zhu 1997:71).

Chinese continued to eat traditional foods (when they were capable of importing the foodstuffs) and adopted many dietary habits similar to those of Euro-Americans in the region. The Chinese diet consisted of “a healthy combination of rice, beef, pork, chicken, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, potatoes, beans, onion, squashes, carrots, beets, turnips, tomatoes, melons, pickles, cucumbers, sugar, and tea” (Zhu 1997:72). Therefore, remains of food processing would appear similar to that of Euro-Americans, aside from the containers foods were imported in.

Chinese were known to have played non-gambling games during their off hours; “recent archaeological excavations near Idaho City by the Forest Service have shown that Chinese miners also played Chinese chess and Go” indicating gaming pieces would be common to the Chinese archaeological signatures (Zhu 1997:81). Chinese often smoked tobacco, more often than they drank whiskey, confirmed by the archaeological record through artifacts including chewing tobacco containers (Zhu 1997:81). Chinese would smoke their tobacco through long pipes, which “were used for all types of smoking, [though] contemporary white observers almost always mistook Chinese tobacco smokers for opium addicts” (Zhu 1997:81). Due to their multiple forms of use, these long pipes may also be misidentified in the archaeological record.

Fong’s (2007:4) article indicates the “theory of replacement” where archaeologists, or other interpreters, “categorize artifacts by their supposed ethnicity and then calculate ratios to ‘scientifically’ reach conclusions via statistics;” using this method, (to oversimplify) commonly observed Euro-American artifacts observed at a Chinese mining site would indicate an “assimilated population,” overlooking the external factors involved in creating the scenarios where Euro-American artifacts would have ended up in the hands of Chinese. Limited access to traditional Chinese foods, tools, clothing, alcohol, etc. would heavily influence the assumed assimilation of Chinese into western cultures, and would encourage more “Euro-American” items to be associated with Chinese cultural sites.

Oral Traditions

In 2002, Valentine (37) noted Chinese miners (85 percent of the 1850s Chinese immigrant population) “supposedly did not have any [specific] mining experience when they arrived.” However, the writer continues to suggest their mining skills were adapted from their existing agricultural and water management technologies of building ditch, dam, and pump systems. It is also indicated that Chinese were using techniques to placer mine iron sand, tin, and other materials prior to their arrival in the U.S. and continued using the same methods while in the country (Valentine 2002:43-44). This knowledge of Chinese having traditional skills in water management, can corroborate the placer mining ditch and flume features observed throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Structures

Zhu’s (1999:55) work describes the adaptability of Chinese miners to the environment and their ability to construct comfortable housing in any geographic setting (from log cabins in the timbered Rocky Mountains to stacked-rock shelters in the Snake River basin). Structures observed elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest include depressions, tents, saltbox structures, and log cabins, and most styles in between. In many cases, Chinese miners often resided in “tents and as a result constructed more cobblestone and earthen hearths for cooking outside” (Rohe 2002:50). Long-term “Chinese mining camps often show the use of terraced building sites and gardens ... [and] commonly planted a particular plant, Tree of Heaven (*Alanthus altissima*), at their camps” (Rohe 2002:50).

Chinese often built their camps or Chinatowns away from Euro-Americans, attempting to avoid hostility and conflict. Due to this attempted distance from white

miners, Chinese often “located their camps in areas thought unproductive or abandoned as worked out,” and later moved their camps to terraces above the floodplains (Rohe 2002:34). It is important to note here that the Columbia River in northeastern Washington saw a much different flood pattern of the uncontrolled river than what is seen today with the dams controlling seasonal flooding. Prior to damming of the Columbia River, flooding primarily occurred during mid-spring and early summer, rather than early spring as seen in river systems elsewhere. Large Chinese camps in northeastern Washington were a product of the unfavorable climate conditions during the winter months, not due to flooding.

As Rohe indicates (2002:33-34), similar to northeastern Washington, “a Chinese mining camp was a temporary settlement of Chinese miners, typically consisting of ... an almost entirely male population of not more than a few hundred.” In many cases, if a Chinese camp was of any mass, it would include merchant buildings, such as a store, blacksmith shop, and gambling hall. These camps were often ephemeral, consisting of temporary structures that “fell to ruin after the Chinese moved on or died” (Rohe 2002:34). The structures commonly found early in the California gold rush were “small tents and brush houses near their [Chinese] claims, generally on the banks of a stream” (Rohe 2002:34).

“Some Chinese mining camps consisted almost entirely of residences with a common eating-place that shared a centrally located store ... with several adjacent Chinese camps” (Rohe 2002:50). This may be the theme of the Chelan Falls Chinese mining settlement discussed later (see **Chelan Falls Village**). These Chinese stores often served multiple purposes at Chinese mining camps, including “opium smoking,

gambling, eating, [and] praying, and served as news outlets and social centers” (Rohe 2002:50). The Chinese merchants were often contractors for “small mining companies, provided the goods necessary for the miners to survive, and created organizations offering them protection, recreations, services, and maintenance of important traditional festivals (Chung 2011:182).

Chinese were also observed residing in log cabins in “California, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, British Columbia, and elsewhere ... Undoubtedly, the Chinese occupied some of these log cabins after their original Euro-American occupants abandoned them... But the Chinese also built their own cabins, using Euro-American techniques” (Rohe 2002:36). Liping Zhu (1997:66) indicates Chinese often constructed single-story saltbox style “board-and-batten [structures]” in Boise Basin, Idaho. In Chinatowns, Chinese residents often built “bomb-proof” or fireproof structures as a precaution against arson, often using materials of cans, bricks, tin, clay, adobe, etc. and had “iron-doored storage cellars covered with earth” (Rohe 2002:43).

According to the *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, in 1875, “underground residences [were] also popular. A big square hole [was] dug into the hillside, covered with sticks, straw, and an occasional plank. The door [was] naturally furnished by the eastern slope” (Rohe 2002:43). Long term resident of Gold Creek, Nevada, Peter Bastida had said “the Chinatown ‘huts’ looked very much like frontier sod houses – depressions dugout of the hillside with rock or log foundations and timber or poles set close together to make a base for the layers of dirt (similar to the mud bricks of South China) piled on top” (Chung 2011:153-154). As the years passed and the buildings turned to ruin, only dugout depressions of the once structures would remain visible (Chung 2011:168).

Placer Mining Features

Valentine indicates, “in contrast to Euro-American placer miners ... the Chinese replicated the kind of organization practiced in China. Namely, a group of professional miners acted under the leadership of a ‘manager’ who furnished capital, mining expertise, and knowledge of local conditions” (Valentine 2002:45). Chinese throughout the region would band together and construct large irrigation-style ditches to feed their placer operations, constructing dams to divert water from streams into their ditch. Valentine suggests these dams may have been in the *hang-tu* style (or tamped-earth), as seen at other Chinese sites in Oregon; the writer indicates “not many other cultures created dams using *hang-tu*, and this can be viewed as an indicator of a Chinese presence” (Valentine 2002:45-46).

Chinese river mining sites, or placer mining operations “often revealed a systematic, careful manner of working, and their workings displayed a certain neatness about them” (Rohe 1996:17). The placer “tailings” are seemingly organized “piles of gravel excavated out of the mine and discarded after gold was removed” (Valentine 2002:46). This is also why the cobble alignments are often observed as being void of other sediments (Goodwin 1998). “Euro-Americans would prospect the gravel as they excavated and only wash ‘paystreaks’ (zones of gravel containing high amounts of gold), and their tailings piles often look disorganized” (Valentine 2002:46). As Sue Fawn Chung (2011:8-9) reports, “one common feature at Chinese placer sites dating from the 1860s and 1870s was neatly stacked piles of rocks,” or tailings (much different than the

scattered tailings of Euro-American mining operations), theorized to have originally held sluice boxes and other placer mining devices.

Though many of the archaeology sites in American Canyon, Nevada, and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest contain “a distinct Chinese signature,” many of the placer ground was re-mined during the 1930s (as also observed in sites throughout northeastern Washington), destroying much of the earlier works (Valentine 2002:37-38).

RECOMMENDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

It is now known that there were large numbers of Chinese immigrants living in northeastern Washington at multiple large camps and placer mining operations throughout the upper reaches of the Columbia River and its tributaries. However, only about 17 archaeology sites have been located through this project, having a definitive Chinese cultural affiliation (based on a combination of artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placering activities).

The knowledge of large operations and high populations of the Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington prior to 1900 suggests there should be many more Chinese related archaeology sites. Additional archaeology sites were located through an extensive search of northeastern Washington’s major river tributaries, as well as through keyword search (placer, mining, Chinese, dugout, China, Sino, etc.) for Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, and Stevens Counties. A total of forty-four archaeological sites were observed as having culturally similar features to those indicative of Chinese placer miners. This is not an exhaustive list, however, as additional sites may have been overlooked.

Table 4.2 contains the recommended archaeological investigation sites which may be connected to pre-1900s Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington State. It is the belief of this writer that if these sites are evaluated for the above mentioned Chinese components, they may yield pertinent information to the Chinese mining industry of the region.

SITE #	TOWNSHIP (NORTH)	RANGE (EAST)	SECTION(S)	COUNTY	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRAD.	STRUCTURES	PLACERING	OTHER
CH-00003	21	22	16	Chelan		X			
CH-00255	24	21	6	Chelan			X		
CH-00264	25	21	9	Chelan				X	
CH-00273	27	23	32	Chelan				X	
CH-00274	28	23	35	Chelan		X	X	X	
CH-00275	28	23	23	Chelan			X		
CH-00307	22	21	25	Chelan			X	X	
CH-00403	28	23	26	Chelan			X		X
CH-00655	21	22	9	Chelan				X	
DO-00067	29	24	6, 7	Douglas			X		
DO-00068/ 00391	29	24	7	Douglas			X	X	
DO-00194	29	30	12	Douglas				X	X
DO-00209	29	30	12	Douglas				X	
DO-00219	30	30	35	Douglas				X	
DO-00249	31	29	34	Douglas	X		X		
DO-00252	31	29	34	Douglas					X
DO-00253	30	29	3	Douglas			X		
DO-00255	30	29	3	Douglas			X		
DO-00257	30	30	35	Douglas				X	
DO-00314	30	29	4	Douglas			X	X	X
DO-00322	29	30	1	Douglas			X	X	
DO-00419	24	21	5	Douglas			X	X	
DO-00427	26	22	7	Douglas				X	X
DO-00434	28	23	26	Douglas				X	
DO-00475	22	21	27	Douglas			X	X	X
DO-00503	28	24	18	Douglas			X		X
FE-00586	38	37	32	Ferry			X	X	X
OK-00372	30	25	27	Okanogan					X
OK-00414	40	26	11	Okanogan				X	X
OK-00926	31	30	31	Okanogan				X	X
OK-01372	40	26	18	Okanogan				X	

SITE #	TOWNSHIP (NORTH)	RANGE (EAST)	SECTION(S)	COUNTY	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRAD.	STRUCTURES	PLACERING	OTHER
OK-01499	40	25	13	Okanogan			X		X
OK-01667	40	26	13	Okanogan			X	X	X
CF-00614	34	43	18	Pend Oreille			X	X	X
CF-00625	34	43	5	Pend Oreille			X	X	X
FS-01267	35	42	26	Pend Oreille			X		X
ST-00034	33	37	5	Stevens				X	
ST-00065	38/ 39	38	1, 2/ 36	Stevens					X
ST-00087	40	41	16	Stevens			X		
ST-00427	33	37	5	Stevens	X			X	
ST-01097	40	41	16	Stevens				X	
ST-01113	40	40	14	Stevens		X		X	
ST-01114	40	40	21	Stevens	X			X	
ST-01132	40	40	21, 28	Stevens				X	

Table 4.2: Recommended archaeological sites to be evaluated for a Chinese cultural affiliation.

This writer believes an excellent starting point for future evaluations would be to reevaluate site *45ST01113* (River Mile 742 Placer Mine). This site was previously recorded without a Chinese cultural affiliation; however, the Moraski Flats report by Jim Goodwin (1999) indicates *45ST01113* is located at the same location as the Moraski Flats placer mine, but with more confined boundaries. Archaeologists indicate the region around Moraski Flats and *45ST01113* had been reportedly worked by Chinese miners, however, no definitive cultural connections were made.

In Goodwin's report, he asserts a Chinese cultural association at this site, based on numerous oral traditions by local residents. Goodwin indicates a belief that the site was constructed and operated by Chinese placer miners between 1860 and 1892, and hopes that more knowledgeable individuals will further assess the site. The information provided by Goodwin is consistent with the Chinese historical context described in **Chapter 2: Historical Context**, and is valuable for the historic contributions. However,

the report Goodwin has created is not a published, professional archaeological report and should not be considered as fact without further investigations.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

Chinese immigrants were some of the earliest to mine the placer gold deposits located along the Columbia River and some of its tributaries, including the Pend Oreille and Similkameen Rivers. When the first gold rush of Washington Territory occurred in the Colville Valley in 1855, Chinese miners were already there, suggesting Chinese had arrived in the territory shortly prior to the start of the Colville gold rush.

As gold was discovered throughout northeastern Washington a within a few years, large numbers of Chinese immigrants entered the region. At one point, the Chinese population was so vast, Chinese outnumbered Euro-American prospectors two to one along the upper stretches of the Columbia River, having 1,000-1,500 laborers during the early 1870s (Esvelt 1977:3-4; Jones 2010:9). In many areas, white miners had quickly scraped the abundant flour gold off the top of the placer deposits before moving on, which allowed Chinese miners to rework the diggings; in other areas, Chinese came first and mined the river bars prior to Euro-American arrival. Chinese were so efficient in their labor, they managed to remove larger profits than others could have.

Chinese placer miners in the northeastern Washington region had large winter camps at Rock Island, Chelan Falls, Alameda Flat, Hawk Creek, Hunters, Daisy, Marcus, China Bend, Boundary, and Metaline Falls (**Figure 2.1** shows the locations of these camps). They had large placer gold mining operations at: Ringlow Bar (Rock Island), China Gold Bar and Rich Bar (Chelan Falls), China Placer Bar (Alameda Flat), Hawk Creek, Rogers Bar (Hunters), Charley Francois Bar (Daisy), Six Mile, Nine Mile, and

Twelve Mile Bars (Marcus), China Bar (China Bend), Fort Sheppard Bar (Boundary), and Chinaman's Bar (Metaline Falls) on the Pend Oreille River. They also had various operations in the Similkameen River and Chesaw areas. **Table 5.1** indicates occupation periods for these large Chinese placer mining operations; however, it has been observed that some Chinese continued to occupy these regions after the larger, organized mining operations had ceased (such as Ah Tai near Daisy who remained until his death in 1937).

CAMP	DATES	
Rock Island	1863	1880s
Chelan Falls	1863	1886
Alameda Flat	1870	1885
Hawk Creek	1864	1883
Hunters	1860s	1880s
Daisy	1877	1900
Marcus	1860s	1890s
China Bend	1860s	1890s
Boundary	1860s	1892
Chinaman's Bar	1870s	1890s
Chesaw	1886	1902

Table 5.1: Timeline of large Chinese placer mining operations.

The Chinese also ran some of the earliest merchant stores in the northeastern Washington region, being located at their large winter camps throughout the reaches of the Columbia River. Stores have been recorded at: Rock Island, run by Mr. Wing; Chelan Falls and Pateros, run by Chee Saw; Alameda Flat, though no historical documents have been located regarding this store; Daisy, run by Ah Tai and Ah Nem; and Chesaw, also run by Chee Saw, after he moved north up the Okanogan River.

Seeing as the Euro-American miners quickly moved on to hard-rock or lode mining during the early 1870s, it appears the Chinese had been left to freely mine the remaining placer deposits of the Columbia River and its tributaries with very little competition. This indicates the majority of placer deposits located in the region were

most likely operated by Chinese miners at some point during the late nineteenth century. Unfortunately, minimal archaeological investigations have been conducted in regards to the Chinese placer mining operations throughout the region. A total of seventeen archaeological sites were located and evaluated in this project for the culturally significant features relating to Chinese placer miners. The features were categorized as four Chinese cultural components: artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placer mining features.

CONCLUSIONS

This project is important in aiding the historical mining record of northeastern Washington, providing a historical context for the analysis of Chinese archaeological sites in the region. Chinese were often the main contributors to the collection and processing of placer gold from the region's river bars. Historical and archaeological information relating to these Chinese placer miners has been lacking for this particular region of Washington and the Pacific Northwest, up until this point, as this project has synthesized the available resources to illustrate the undertakings of Chinese placer miners at their various major camp locations throughout the Columbia River and its tributaries, including the Similkameen and Pend Oreille Rivers.

This research has also created a criteria for establishing Chinese cultural archaeological sites in northeastern Washington by analyzing the available archaeological data and creating a list of components to be identified in probable Chinese sites. These components are to aid in the identification of the ethnicity of archaeology sites throughout the region, especially those on public lands. This work will also help bridge

the gap between the historical and archaeological information regarding these Chinese miners.

While other scholars have discussed the overall representation of Chinese throughout the Western mining frontier and continue to encourage further detailed investigations of Chinese, this research focuses on the smaller, local perspectives of Chinese mining activities that these other scholars have been promoting. Chinese placer miners in northeastern Washington State would have had similar mining techniques and skills to other Chinese throughout the Pacific Northwest; however, Washington State's restrictions and laws against Chinese created a different cultural experience for those Chinese miners in the northeastern Washington project area.

Due to the lack of historical information prior to inundation of the Columbia River, many of the archaeological sites were not known to have a Chinese cultural affiliation and were not recorded as such. Of the sites that were recorded with a Chinese connection, the limited information can present a guide for future archaeologists to use when evaluating a placer mining site or a cultural affiliation to Chinese. Again, it is important to keep in mind that the majority of Washington's archaeological sites were not excavated and only included surface evaluation of artifacts; therefore, when reevaluating these sites, they should not be dismissed due to lack of obvious Chinese artifacts (opium tins, Chinese coins, ceramics, etc.), and other features should be considered in place of these obvious Chinese artifacts (semi-subterranean dugout depressions, organized tailings, etc.).

Of the archaeological research conducted, only a few sites were observed to have a proven representation of Chinese placer mining activities, as indicated in **Table 3.1**.

These sites have revealed the four following significant cultural components that should be identified when evaluating a possible Chinese affiliated placer mining site (artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placer mining features).

Artifacts to be considered include: various non-diagnostic metal fragments, alcohol bottle fragments (colors varying, but prominent olive green), square and hand-forged nails, ceramic rice bowl fragments, Chinese coins, cans and tins, opium tins (Chinese seal), Saki jugs, etc. The presence of gaming pieces (like marbles) would also be a strong indication of a Chinese cultural affiliation.

Oral traditions to be considered include: traditions of local communities, informants (especially those whose families have lived on-site for generations), and place-names. China Creek, China Bend, China Placer Bar, Chinaman's Ditch, China Ditch, etc. are all examples of Chinese related place-names that should be considered important during Chinese cultural affiliations.

Structures including semi-subterranean earthen dugouts (ranging from 7.5-10.5' diameter) with tail-like entranceways should be considered a strong cultural Chinese connection. These dugouts were often organic in construction, with bunks and hearths on the interior, and therefore may only be visible in the form of an on-site depression. Additional structures include semi-subterranean dugout stores, often protruding from the riverbank, lean-tos, and occasional cabins (e.g. Chinaman's Cabin).

Placer mining features common to Chinese placer workings include the presence of parallel cobble alignments, used for sluice boxes, rockers, and long toms. Long ditches, often running for miles, provided water for their placering operations and should be located within the vicinity of nearly all mines worked by Chinese immigrants.

Additional placer mining features may include excavated depressions, cobble tailings piles and linear canals. The presence of a sluice box, rocker box, or long tom would also be indicative of placer mining operations, which could potentially be connected to Chinese miners through the addition of another culturally Chinese component.

Due to the limited data of previous historical and archaeological investigations regarding the Chinese placer mining operations in northeastern Washington, it is recommended that the sites listed in **Recommended Archaeological Investigations, Table 4.2**, should be reevaluated for cultural Chinese connection, using the components indicated in this project. Future archaeologists looking to evaluate a potential Chinese placer mining operation in northeastern Washington State should be able to consult this project to determine Chinese cultural affiliations. Two or more of the abovementioned Chinese cultural components (artifacts, oral traditions, structures, and placer mining features), in addition to the historic context compiled in this project, represent a clear indication of Chinese cultural associations. Further cultural resources evaluation is suggested to not only to aid the archaeological record, but also to help answer the missing data questions in the historic regional mining record.

This insight has created a tool for archaeologists to use in identifying Chinese archaeological sites within the project area, or to adapt a similar technique for the evaluation of the hidden cultural components of other under-told ethnic populations. This tool also encourages land managing agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and National Park Service to investigate and reevaluate the archaeological sites indicated in **Table 4.2** for their Chinese cultural affiliation.

Limitations of Data

It is important to note that limitations do exist with the data gathered for this project. Historical documents used in research were obtained from very few archival repositories. There are many more institutions which contain additional archival materials relevant to this project and should be consulted for future investigation of the project data. Furthermore, problems exist with conducting a keyword search through the WISAARD database, such as assuming the author listed a Chinese connection in the site description (visible in the keyword search). Also, as there is no WISAARD keyword search available for the text within each archaeological site report (unless each document is individually reviewed), therefore, the sites referenced in this project may not accurately represent a complete list of all known Chinese affiliated archaeology sites.

Also, only searching for archaeological sites within WISAARD does not take into consideration current projects and archaeological investigations for sites not yet formally integrated into WISAARD by the DAHP. To demonstrate this limitation, it has also recently come to the attention of this writer that archaeological site *45ST00061* should also be included in the known Chinese archaeological sites, as new information is emerging regarding this site. WISAARD does not currently indicate any Chinese affiliation with this particular site; however, recent (unpublished) investigations at *45ST00061* reveal definitive Chinese artifacts (such as numerous ceramics, Chinese coins, clay pipes, and opium containers), as well as the location of a nearby historic Chinese mining operation (near Nine Mile Bar at Bossburg), placer mining features onsite, and oral traditions.

Additionally, the majority of the archaeology sites known to have been associated with Chinese placer miners were not formally excavated; during the CRM work along the Columbia River, prior to the construction of dams during the 1940s, surface surveys reported very few Chinese cultural artifacts. This lack of excavation has provided limited connections between placer mining operations and Chinese in the archaeological record of northeastern Washington. While it is not suggested that excavations be immediately conducted (destroying the site), it is recommended that archaeology sites not be dismissed for their lack of familiar artifactual evidence (such as opium containers and Chinese coins) on the surface.

Another limitation of this project is the narrow focus and project area. Washington did not always have its current state and country borders (developed during the mid- to late-nineteenth century) and therefore, Chinese placer mining would not be subject to our present understanding of said boundaries. As an example, Chinese operated large mining camps just a few miles north of the United States and British Columbia border, in Rossland (and elsewhere); Chinese were also observed near Albeni Falls, Idaho, just east of the present Washington and Idaho boundary, along the Pend Oreille River (though it is not clear if these Chinese were only railroad laborers or if they were also placer miners).

For example, in the 1987 report, C.J. Miss and L. Hudson evaluated ten artifact collections associated with the Albeni Falls Dam Project Area, Idaho. Their artifact analysis gave precedence to projectile points; however, the report continues to discuss historic artifacts observed in private collections, which include beads (ceramic and metal), marbles, buttons (glass and metal), coins, rifle (slugs, balls, cartridges, and gun

flints), military insignia, religious medals, ax heads, jewelry, tokens (trade and tax), pipes (ceramic), and other (knife, incised brass, slate pencil, and “opium” bottles) (Miss and Hudson 1987:8-11, 70).

Of the historic artifacts observed at Albeni Falls, only a few were thought to be Chinese: ten Chinese coins, probably from Northern Pacific Railroad construction in 1880; opium bottles from near the railroad tracks along Lake Pend Oreille; several clear medicine or cosmetic bottles, embossed with a Chinese symbol or letter; 11 clay marbles; over 20 white clay pipes, “commonly found in 19th century sites,” and pipe bowls, commonly associated with HBC and military operations; and four tokens, one being from China (the other three were Euro-American associated) (Miss and Hudson 1987:71-75). The report also indicates there was a Chinese railroad labor camp at Hope, Idaho, during the 1890s; however, the report does not discuss Chinese any mining (Miss and Hudson 1987:86).

Though it is unclear if other, non-railroad Chinese laborers were revealed by the artifacts of the Albeni Falls dam project area, it does represent a definitive Chinese cultural association for a location just east of the present Washington and Idaho boundary. The Albeni Falls information shows the insignificance of the present state boundaries in the archaeological and historic records and the narrow focus of this research project.

APPENDIX A: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE DATA

SITE #	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRADITIONS	STRUCTURES	PLACER MINING FEATURES	OTHER
45CH00004 (China Mine Site)	Iron nails, metal button, iron fragments, trade beads	Oral tradition	"Miners Cabin" (site sketch)	Cobble/boulder alignment (contains vertical wood posts, may be foundation remnants)	Precontact open camp: 5 housepit depressions (6-18m diameter)
45DO00200	N/A	Local informants (Weber brothers)	N/A	2 ditches/ sluicing channels (cut in the gravels)	N/A
45DO00247	N/A	Oral tradition, place-name (China Creek)	N/A	Sluice channels (on a narrow gravel bar): rock piles and troughs.	N/A
45DO00250 (China Placer Bar)	Cans, metal container lids, red and black motif lacquer, wood, hinges (for a box), worked antler and bone, pointed metal rod, amber bottle fragments, green glass fragment, dark olive green bottle (complete), leather etc. (date: 1870s-1885)	Place-name (China Placer Bar, China Creek), Sino-Americans (unknown determination)	Depression (2.5m diameter x 0.3m deep)	Sluice channels (up to 20' deep), large rectangular excavations (possible reservoirs), long linear channels and cobble piles (1m apart)	Precontact site (45DO00249)
45DO00259	Metal strapping, fragment of an enamel basin (or preserving kettle), wire cable	Local informants (Weber brothers)	Depressions (between tailings and ditch: dugouts?)	Trenches (V-shape, N. trench is 90' long x 12' wide x 4-5' deep, others are generally 13' long x 6' wide x 2-3' deep x	N/A

SITE #	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRADITIONS	STRUCTURES	PLACER MINING FEATURES	OTHER
				1.5-2' tall), cobble tailings (sub-rounded pebbles/ cobbles/ and small boulders, rocker settings/ distance is 3-7'), large ditch, inland trench (parallel to the river, 20' wide x 3-4' deep)	
45DO00263 (China Store)	N/A	Local informants (Weber brothers)	Historic commercial store foundation (China Store)	N/A	Historic ferry complex
45DO00411 (B-2)	Single fragment of purple glass	Oral tradition	Historic Chinese trading post, four depressions (possible historic origins)	N/A	N/A
45FS01186 ("Chinese" Placer Workings); CNF-00857	N/A	Local informants (Johnson), oral traditions	N/A	1-6 cobble alignments (6-10' wide parallel cobble windrows, separated by channels/ ditches; may extend onto private land for another 1.5 miles SE)	N/A
45FS01021 ("Chinaman's Ditch")	N/A	Ethnographic information (Ah Yen), place-name (Chinaman's Bar, Chinaman's Ditch)	Lean-to (8' wide x 17' long x 6' tall, with a horizontal log and four cut stumps [5-6' tall], round and square nails, two additional squared logs were present: 5-11" diameter x 12.5-17.5' long)	4 sections of earthen ditch/wooden flume (4,000' in combined length, 4' wide x 2' deep, bermed in ditch sections, flume supported by 6-10" diameter x 5-36' tall log posts, constructed of 1" x 12" boards)	N/A

SITE #	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRADITIONS	STRUCTURES	PLACER MINING FEATURES	OTHER
45ST00052	Unknown (supposedly held at Evans antique store)	Oral tradition	2 semi-subterranean depression structures (2.5m x 3.5m, with narrow/ cribbed entranceways)	9 depressions (Features 1-6 are circular depressions: 2-5m diameter x 0.6-1.8m deep; Feature 7 is rectangular: 8m N-S x 3m E-W x 1m deep; Features 8-9 are ditch/trench constructions: 90-100m long x 0.2-1.4m deep x 1.5m apart x 0.5-0.7m above ground; a ditch/trench complex: shallow ditches or trenches <0.1m deep); placer tailings	Two precontact campsites, historic/modern refuse
45ST00057 (Antler)	N/A	Oral tradition	Historical "dug-out" habitation structure.	Trenches (2m long x <1.5m deep)	Precontact campsite (associated artifacts)
45ST00076 (Paprich)	"Grizzly" sluicing device, square nails	Oral tradition, informant (Paprich)	N/A	"Grizzly" sluice device	Precontact campsite
45ST00091 (Fowler)	N/A	Informant (Fowler)	Log cabin (unknown if this represents a semi-subterranean structure: built "into" the bank)	Canal (3 miles, clay-lined, from Goodeve Creek to the Chinese operations)	Precontact campsite, small log cabin
45ST00096	N/A	N/A	"Chinese oven" (similar to those of the Snake River)	Unknown: site disturbed by placer mining	Precontact housepits (two depressions)

SITE #	ARTIFACTS	ORAL TRADITIONS	STRUCTURES	PLACER MINING FEATURES	OTHER
<i>45ST00180</i> (Marcus Island)	Sherds of brown glazed ceramic, cut and wire nails, industrial bolts, tin, metal fragments, vessel fragments (green, brown, and amethyst), a brown glass fragment ("Sanford"), stove parts, a shoe, a marble, brick concentrations, railroad spikes and tie (1929), and late-nineteenth century refuse debris, etc.	Oral tradition (unknown)	9-27 dugout depressions (some have tail-like entranceways)	Small pits, trench	Abandoned railroad bed, 13 cairns (or rock piles) Marcus Island townsite, Marcus Heights townsite, and possibly part of the original Marcus townsite
<i>45ST00209</i> (Sino Apex)	Stove cooktop pieces, metal spikes, wire fragments, non-diagnostic metal, aqua glass fragment, and metal rod.	Place-name (China Bend, China Bar)	N/A	N/A	Precontact site (or historic with Chinese affiliations), Ryan townsite, ferry landing
<i>45ST00354</i>	Boots and Chinese coin. Local residents had collected precontact artifacts, it is possible historic artifacts were collected, as well.	Oral tradition (Chinese man occupied site)	N/A	N/A	Precontact site

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CJRP: Chief Joseph Resurvey Project (archaeological project).

CRM: Cultural Resource Management.

DAHP: Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

FCR: Fire-Cracked Rock (archaeological interpretations).

FMR: Fire Modified Rock (archaeological interpretations).

FS: Forest Service.

HBC: Hudson's Bay Company (fur traders).

N.d.: no date.

NPA: National Park Service.

WISAARD: Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological
Records Data (managed by DAHP).

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VITA

Author: Lindsey M. Evenson

Place of Birth: Glendale, Arizona

Undergraduate Schools Attended: Olympic College,
Eastern Washington University

Degrees Awarded: Associate of Arts, 2010, Olympic College
Bachelor of Arts, 2012, Eastern Washington University

Honors & Awards: Graduate Service Appointment, *Student Research and Creative Works Symposium Coordinator*, Undergraduate Studies Office, Eastern Washington University, 2013-2015

Graduated *Cum Laude*, Eastern Washington University, 2012

Papers & Publications: *Peruvian Cranial Alterations*. 14th Annual Student Research and Creative Works Symposium, Eastern Washington University, 2011

Pre-1900s Chinese Mining in Northeastern Washington State. 68th Annual Northwest Anthropological Conference, Eugene, Oregon, 2015

Pre-1900s Chinese Mining in Northeastern Washington State. Graduate Research & Creative Works Symposium, Cheney, Washington, 2015

Pre-1900s Chinese Placer Mining in Northeastern Washington State: An Archaeological Investigation. 69th Annual Northwest Anthropological Conference, Tacoma, Washington, 2016

Professional Experience: Field School, *Huari-Ancash Bio-Archaeological Project – Peru*, 2011, Huari, Huaraz, Peru, 2011

Field School, 2013 *Kalsipel/ EWU Archaeological Field School*, Usk, Washington, 2013

Archaeological Cultural Resources Lab and Archival Research Internship, Archaeological and Historical Services, Spokane, Washington, 2014

Archaeologist Technician (GS-0102-05), US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Spokane Border Field Office, Spokane, Washington, 2014

Archaeological Technician (GS-0102-07), US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Spokane Border Field Office, Spokane, Washington, 2015