

Iowa Hill Boardinghouse

This two-story, log boardinghouse was built in 1876 to house miners who worked at Colonel A.J. Ware's Iowa Hill Placer Gold Mine. Old newspapers, found on the walls of the structure before it was renovated, attest to the date of construction. The building's seven multi-paned windows provide sufficient interior light. The large, sparsely-furnished structure has two doors and a corrugated galvanized-tin roof. The rebuilt wood floor looks a lot better now than it must have 125 years ago when miners, wearing dirty, heavy boots, trampled on it.

The boardinghouse is perched on the side of a hill. Visitors need only look down the hill to see the destructive effects of hydraulic mining on the environment. A form of placer mining, hydraulic mining forced water under tremendous pressure



through giants or nozzles aimed at steep slopes of soil and gravel. The voluminous barrage of water loosened dirt, gravel and rocks, denuding the hillsides while exposing the gold-bearing gravel.

Directions: From Blue River Plaza in Breckenridge, take State Highway 9 north (toward Frisco) approximately one mile to Valley Brook Road. Go left (west) on Valley Brook to Airport Road, turn right (north) onto Airport Road and then, at the Iowa Hill Trail sign,

turn left (west) onto a gravel road. Drive a very short distance on the gravel road and park at the entrance to the Iowa Hill Trail where the hike to the boardinghouse begins. The trail divides after a short distance. The right fork is the more direct but steep route. If you take the left fork, which meanders, stay right at the next fork.