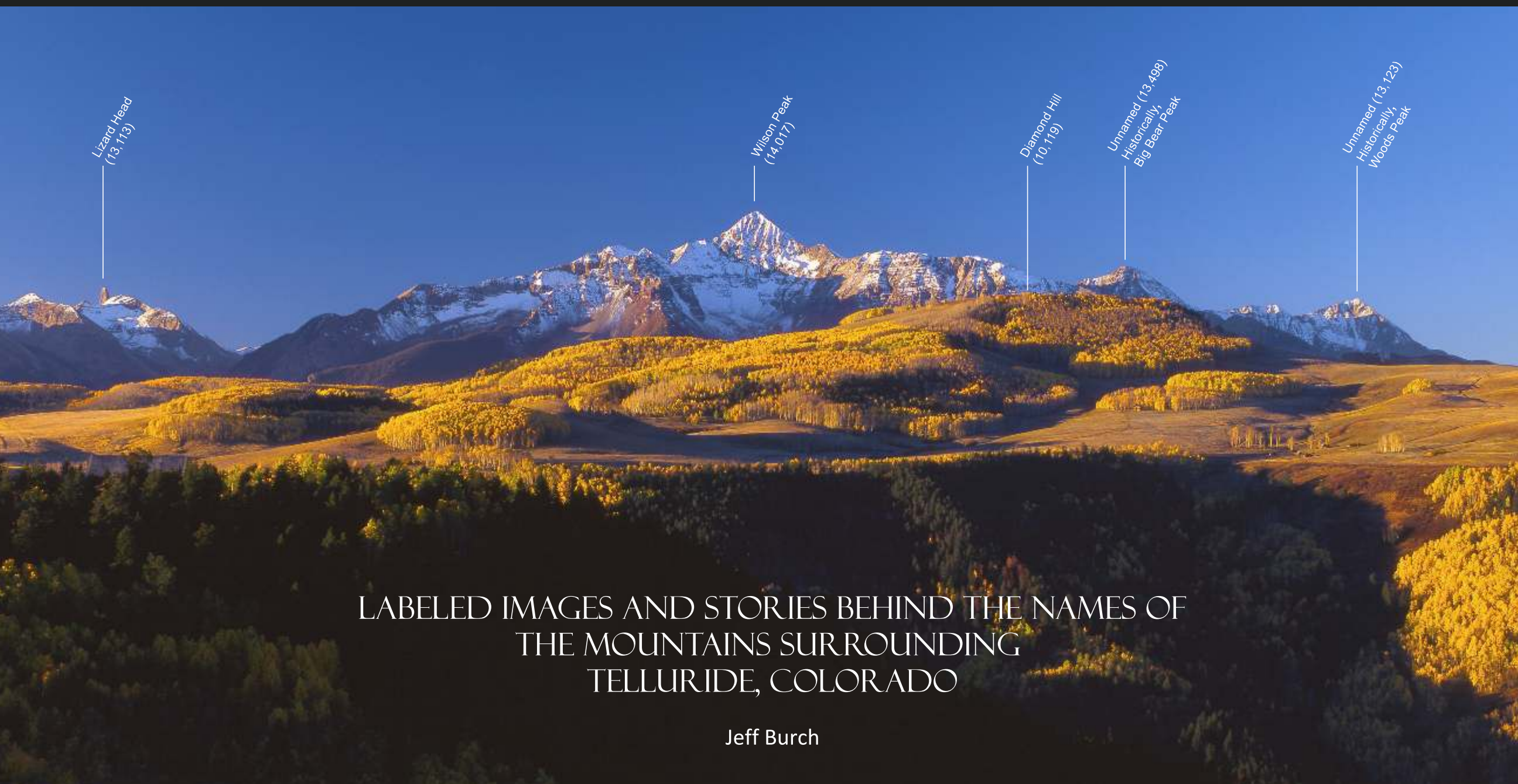


THE PEAKS OF TELLURIDE



Lizard Head
(13,113)

Wilson Peak
(14,017)

Diamond Hill
(10,119)

Unnamed (13,498)
Historically,
Big Bear Peak

Unnamed (13,123)
Historically,
Woods Peak

LABELED IMAGES AND STORIES BEHIND THE NAMES OF
THE MOUNTAINS SURROUNDING
TELLURIDE, COLORADO

Jeff Burch



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Left: Mount Emma and Greenback Mountain from Society Turn

WHAT MOUNTAINS ARE IN THIS BOOK?

This book is about the mountains surrounding Telluride, Colorado. It offers photographs of them, labels to tell you what they are called and how high they are, and then stories to tell you the histories behind their names.

This is not a hiking or climbing guidebook.

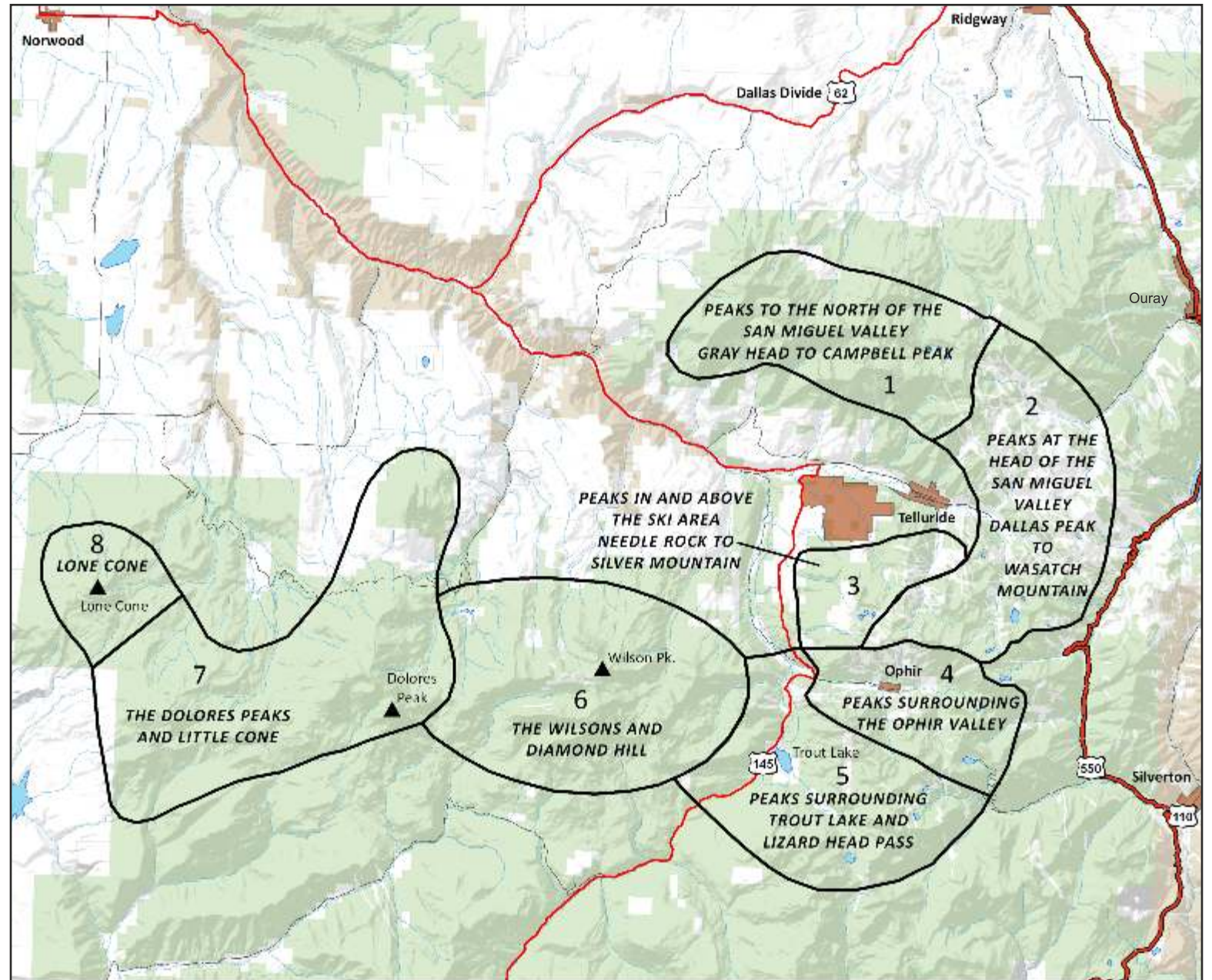
To see the general areas we talk about here, refer to our Vicinity Map, at right. To see maps of the specific peaks, see the U.S. Geological Survey maps, from MyTopo.com, at the beginning of each section.

The idea is to show you the mountains as you see them. Most photos are from just-off-of commonly traveled locations. Some, like the images from the balcony of the Peaks or Colorado Avenue, are recognizably from a single spot, with features in the image you can identify. Some are from high places to give perspective, like the images of the Ophir Valley, or Telluride from St. Sophia Station. And the mountains often look different from different perspectives, or in different seasons, so we have also included a number of pictures of the same mountains.

We have organized the peaks into nine areas. We start with the broad view, then, in nine sections, go in a huge circle beginning with peaks just above and behind (north of) the airport, and moving clockwise. Along with the mountains immediately above Telluride, we have reached out to the mountains of Ophir, Trout Lake, the Wilsons, Lone Cone, and mountains we see in Utah.

These are the mountains of the Telluride Region. These are "The Peaks of Telluride!"

Right: Vicinity Map - Mountains included in this book. La Sal Mountains in Utah (Section 9) not shown.





T0 (13,735)

Historically, West Dallas Peak (13,741)

Dallas Peak (13,809)

Unnamed (13,543) Unofficially, Block Tops



SECTION I: PEAKS TO THE NORTH OF THE SAN MIGUEL VALLEY - GRAY HEAD TO CAMPBELL PEAK

(Looking West, Northwest, and North from Telluride above the Airport and Aldasoro Ranch)

Gray Head Mountain VABM* (10,982): Seen from the southwest, such as from the northeast point of Sunshine Mesa, or from the entrance to the Mountain Village on Colorado State Highway 145, this mountain, in silhouette, takes the appearance of a reclining head, with the green vegetation of the upper slopes looking like hair, and the gray geology of the lower slopes looking like a face. Reclining bodies are common shapes perceived in mountain skylines of the west. There are three sleeping Indians in this area of southwestern Colorado: one just east of Ridgway as seen from the Montrose area, one in the West Elks as seen from Crawford Reservoir, and another nearby in southwest Colorado (Sleeping Ute, just north of the Four Corners). The Sneffels Range has “The Corpse,” the shape of a reclining body covered with a shroud, on the ridge between S-9 and Hayden Peak on the western end of the range seen from just west of Dallas Divide. (The Corpse may be seen in *Peaks of the Uncompahgre*, by Jeff Burch and Don Paulson, 2012.)

Last Dollar Mountain (Approximately 11,125): There are various stories about this name. One is that in the early days of Telluride, at the Roma Bar, a disgruntled miner named Joe King, in frustration over his failure to find the gold he had worked so hard to find, threw down his “last dollar” on the bar, buying drinks around, as far as it went (Fetter et al., 1979/2008). The mark on the bar can still be seen in Honga’s Lotus Petal Restaurant, as of this writing. Other stories that sound similar are to the effect that hopeful miners and prospectors came to Telluride seeking gold and silver, and spent their “last dollar” before giving up.

***VABM:** Peaks are often labeled on maps with VABM following the name. VABM stands for “vertical angle benchmark,” which indicates that in any surveys of the surrounding area, that particular peak was used as a benchmark for triangulation.

Another story, however, is told about the origin of the name. A story attributed to Al Hill, an old-time cowboy from the region, and passed along by Joe Ryan of San Juan Huts, went like this: it is not Last Dollar, it is Lost Dollar. During the transport of money to or from Telluride on horseback or by mule, the story goes, one of the money bags had a hole in it, and was “leaking” silver dollars. For years, the cowboys riding across Hastings Mesa would be on the watch for the “lost dollars.” Somehow, this got converted to “Last Dollar” and from there, it became Last Dollar for every other use of the name. The name Last Dollar has been used for other mines in Colorado, and so the conversion from Lost Dollar to Last Dollar may have been through that association.

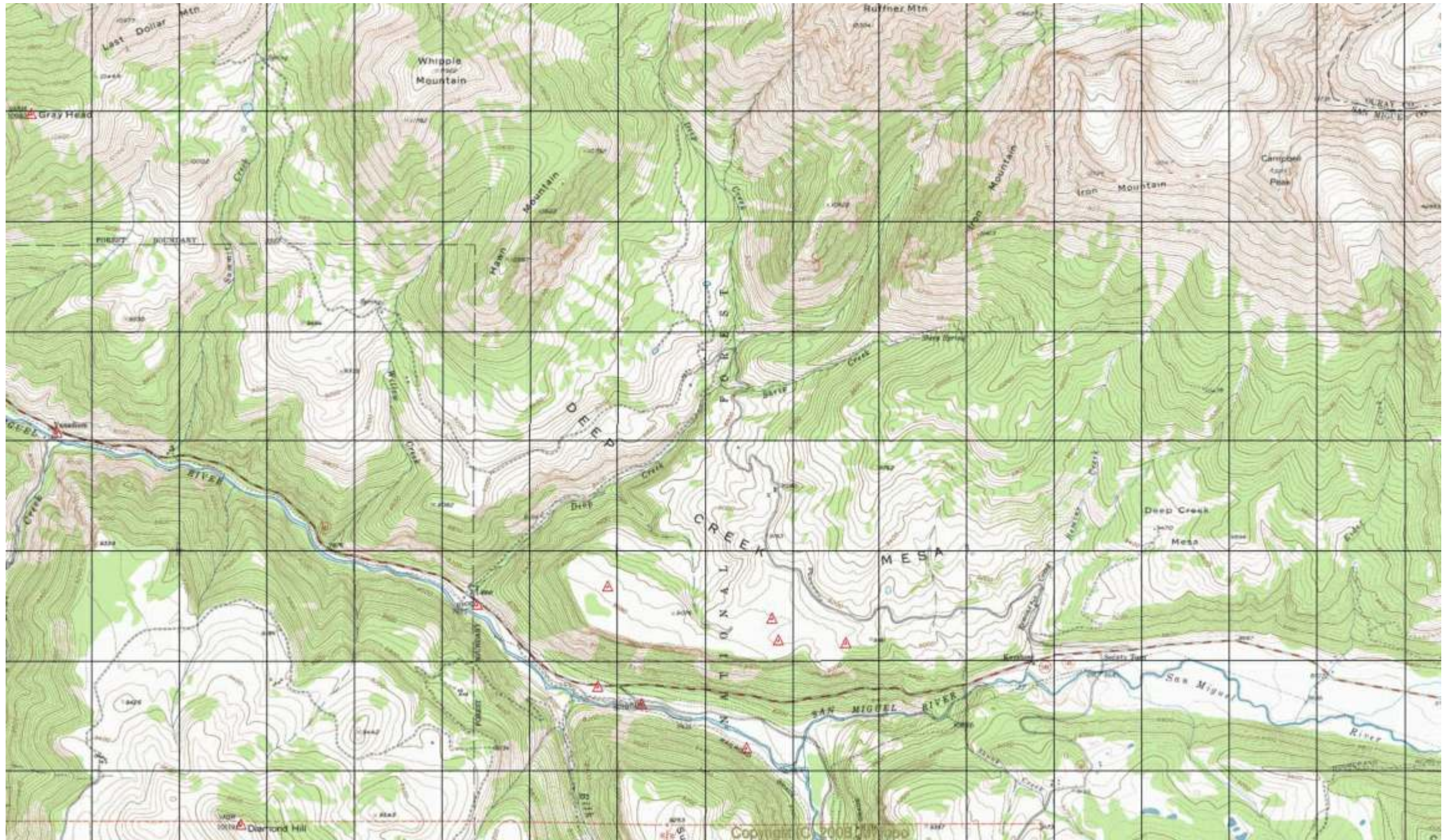
The idea that it was Lost Dollar, as well as the timing of the naming, seems to be confirmed by the label “Lost Dollar” on a mine just west of Last Dollar Mountain, as shown by Fischer in his 1891 (but not 1886) maps of the region (Fischer, 1886 and 1891).

Originally, the section of Last Dollar Road from on the Telluride side of the pass was called the Schmeck’s Toll Road, built and managed by Valentine Schmeck (spelled Smack, by L.G. Dennison in his *Telluride, Tales of Two Early Pioneers*). The toll station was where the old cabins are still partially-standing on the west side of the road northwest of the Gray Head property. This road was the one that Dave Wood used to haul freight to and from Telluride. As the road passes over the Uncompahgre Plateau, it still retains his name, the Dave Wood Road (Personal communication, Greenbank and others). The old Last Dollar Mine is on the flanks of this mountain.

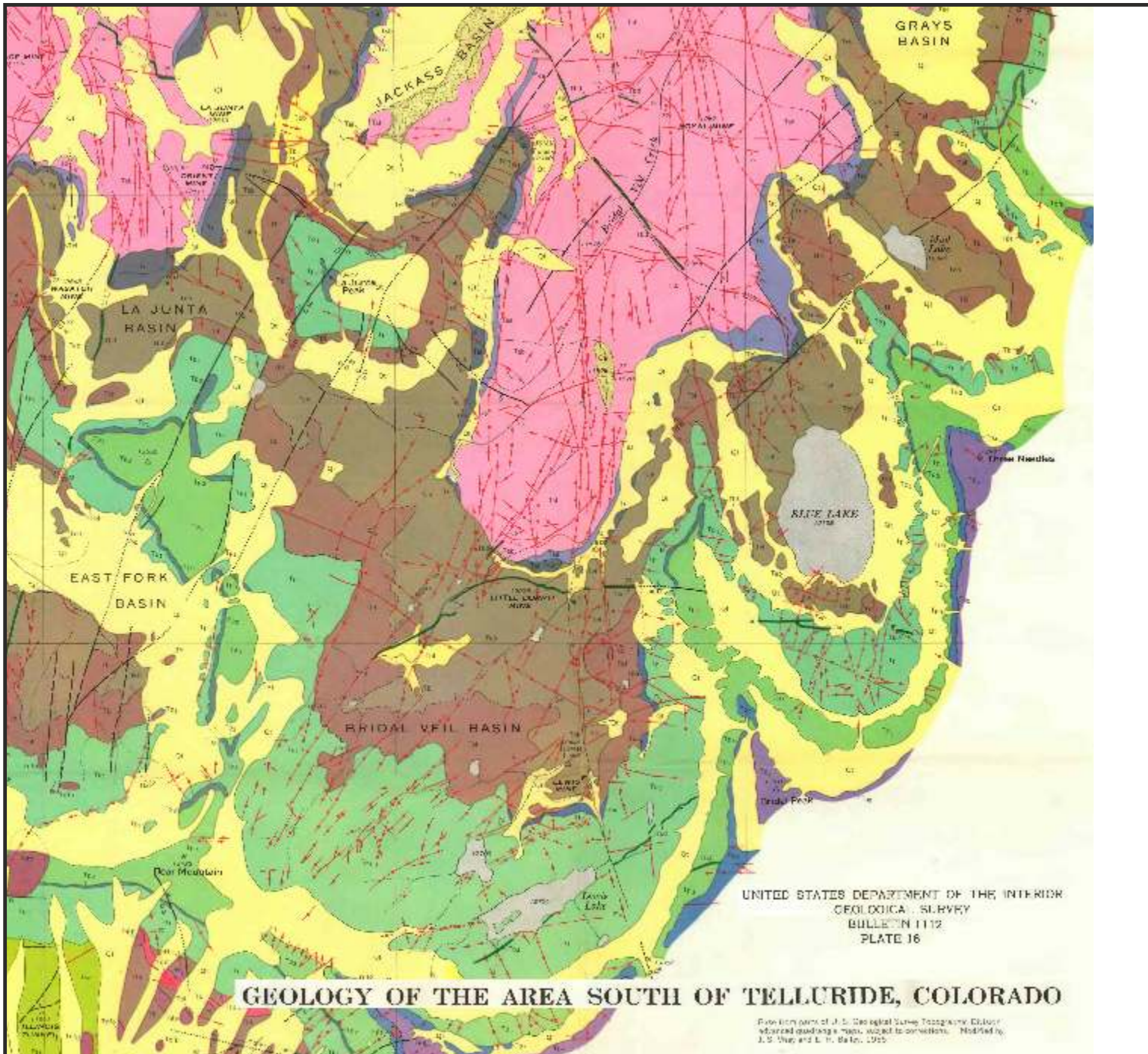
Locally known as Mountain Flower Mountain (10,522): This is the low hill that comes off the southwest shoulder of Ruffner Mountain (Personal communication, Stevens, 2013). We do not know the origin of the name.

Right: Mountain Flower Mountain from across from the entrance to the Ski Ranches on State Highway 145





USGS Topographic Map of Gray Head to Campbell Peak from 1:24,000 scale quadrangle maps (not to scale as shown). Used with permission from MyTopo.com.



Ingram Peak (12,552): Named for J.B. Ingram who, with J.F. Gundaker and John Summa, staked the original Smuggler claim in Marshall Basin. Stories vary, but it is apparent that he and his two friends staked this claim in between existing claims that were mis-measured, or even on top of other claims that simply had not been perfected. At the time of Ingram's entry into the basin, this was called Ansborough Mountain (spelled "Ausborough" in some sources, citing illegible writing on old maps and claims) after one of the first claims staked there. The Ingram name is also attached to Ingram Falls and Ingram Gulch (Lavender, 1987).

Trico Peak (13,321): So named because it is the common point among three counties: San Miguel, Ouray, and San Juan.

Three Needles, also Three Needles Peak (13,481): As we describe under Ophir Needles, a "needle" is a common term for a sharp pinnacle of rock. This peak has three. In one early newspaper article, it was referred to as Tripod Peak (*Telluride Daily Journal*, 1902).

We note that Three Needles Peak and Bridal Peak (below) are the least-seen mountains in the Telluride area. They cannot be seen from any motorized travel-way in the Telluride area except for a short section of Tomboy Road, and to attain any real view of them requires considerable hiking.

Unnamed (13,510) T11, historically Bridal Peak: We believe that, through omission by USGS mappers, Bridal Peak has been lost. In the 1962 publication by the USGS, *Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Area South of Telluride Colorado*, Geological Survey Bulletin 1112-G, we see the following peaks listed as the "prominent" high points in the area surrounding Bridal Veil Basin: Lookout Peak (13,661), Unnamed Peak north of Lookout Peak (13,614), Wasatch Mountain (13,555), Bridal Peak (13,510), Three Needles (13,481), La Junta Peak (13,472), Silver Mountain (13,470), Palmyra Peak (13,319), and Ballard Mountain (12,804) (Geological Survey Bulletin 1112-G, 1962). As we trace the location of each of the named peaks and elevations on current-day maps, we see a 13,510-foot peak not named on current USGS topographic maps, but consistent with location

Left: Taken from USGS Bulletin 1112-G, Plate 1. (USGS, 1962)

Notice Bridal Peak east of Bridal Veil Basin

Right: Bridal Peak from Blue Lake



Unnamed (13,434)

Unnamed (13,510)
T11/Historically,
Bridal Peak



Unofficially,
the Block Tops
(13,543)

Gipin Peak (13,694)

Mount Emma (13,581)

Greenback Mountain
(12,997)

Historically,
Virginius Gap

St Sophia Ridge

Mendota Peak
(13,275)

Chicago Peak VABM
(13,385) Historically T6

Unnamed (13,095)
Locally known as
Tomboy Peak

Greenback Mountain (12,997)

Chicago Peak (13,385) Historically T6

Locally known as Bobtail Mountain (12,203)

Ajax Peak (12,785) Historically Telluride Peak
Unnamed (13,230)
Locally mistaken for Telluride Peak





Mount Wilson
(14,246)

Gladstone Peak
(13,913)

Unnamed Point on
Wilson Peak Ridge
(13,368)

Wilson Peak
(14,017)

APPENDIX C - WHAT IS TELLURIDE GOLD?

Telluride gold is not the same as pure gold, or "free gold." (See the inset photos for a comparison of what free gold looks like, compared with telluride gold, in ore form.) Tellurides are various elements, sometimes including gold, bonded with the element Tellurium (Te).



Telluride gold in the form of petzite (the dark mineral in this picture) in quartz

The following article by Harvey S. Eastman, Ph.D., is reprinted from "Gold-bearing Tellurides," as it appeared in *The Gold Nugget*, September 1999. This is the publication of the Gold Prospectors of the Rockies:

"Gold-bearing tellurides loom large in the history of gold mining in Colorado. These mineral species are found in the San Juan Mountains, the La Plata Mountains, and at Cripple Creek. Other major localities in the United States include the huge gold fields of the Sierra Nevada foothills in California.

Gold-bearing tellurides are silvery to pyrite-yellow minerals, commonly striated, unlike gold

which is a deeper yellow and rarely crystalline; and many of the lodes carrying gold-bearing tellurides were not discovered until the late 1800's. Placer gold was often found below the Cripple Creek Mine, but the lodes of the area were not recognized until the 1890's. Similar histories are common in other areas where gold-bearing tellurides were the major ore mineralogy. The miners of the 1860's would find gold placers below these vein deposits.

However, the veins themselves were not recognized for what they were until some miner, perhaps cooking a meal on a camp fire surrounded by rocks, noticed gold appearing where a silvery, or pyrite-like mineral had been before.



Free gold in quartz

This discovery led to a second gold rush to find these veins with a silvery to pyrite-like mineral, testing them with fire to determine if that mineral contained gold. Out of this rush came the mining camps of Cripple Creek and Telluride along with other mining camps in the San Juan region of Colorado. Of these, the mining camp of Cripple Creek is the most famous, producing nearly 20 million ounces of gold over a 70-year period from 1891 to 1961 (Smith, Raines, and Feitz, 1985). Additional gold was produced in the 1980's from heap leaching of low-grade gold-bearing mine tailings and "waste" dumps.

A tip on finding tellurides: The mineral commonly has a greenish halo around it when weathered, due to oxidation of the telluride.

Gold-Bearing Telluride Mineralogy

Gold-bearing tellurides are common in gold-bearing deposits throughout the world. The

End of Preview

You may purchase your copy of this book, labeled peak posters and fine art prints at

<http://www.coloradothirteeners.com>