

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

REGION: Rocky Mountain      PARK/AREA NAME: Glacier National Park      PARK NUMBER: 1430

STRUCTURE NAME: Gunsight Pass Shelter      STRUCTURE NUMBER: 520

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE: Gunsight Pass; junction of      QUADRANGLE NAME: Mt. Jackson, MT  
 Gunsight Pass Trail and the Continental Divide

Zone Easting Northing      QUADRANGLE SCALE: 7.5-minute  
 UTM A: 12 298200 5387450

CLASSIFICATION:

NUMBER OF RESOURCES:

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:		CATEGORY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Objects
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed/private & public	<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TOTAL

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The Gunsight Pass shelter is a one-story, gable-roofed talus rock cabin with five log purlins extended beyond the eave. A combination of corrugated metal and boards covers the roof. The walls, of locally quarried, undressed stone, are randomly coursed with cement chinking and stone spalls. Fenestration includes an entryway centered in the south wall and small window openings to the east and west. Metal or boards cover the wood-framed window openings. A low chimney extends through the north gable end and a stone firepit inside the structure has been vandalized. The structure is in fair condition. Construction of the Gunsight Pass shelter cabin began in September 1931 with work completed in June 1932 at a cost of \$638.10. All materials except the stone used in construction were transported on pack horses from Sun Camp ranger station after being brought from Roes Creek dock by barge. Drawing G309, submitted by the Landscape Division, specified at 14x16-ft. building with rock walls and flagstone floors. Other materials included wooden roof joists, 1-in. roof decking, and 28-gauge corrugated iron sheeting for the window and door lintels.<sup>1</sup> The craftsmanship of the Gunsight Pass shelter cannot be compared to the nearby Sperry Chalet. That two-story hotel, constructed by the Great Northern's Italian stonemasons, stands among the finest stone buildings in the state. Rather, the stone shelter represents the Park Service's use of locally available materials in a simple, functional building located on the Continental Divide and able to withstand the onslaught of winter. The Gunsight Pass shelter maintains good integrity and is a significant example of an early backcountry rustic building in Glacier.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1931-1932

One of the early administrative duties in Glacier was to site and construct shelter cabins at dangerous areas along popular trails. The buildings were not meant to accommodate overnight camping parties but to provide shelter to stormbound travelers. In 1917, Glacier Supervisor S.F. Ralston, civil engineer George Goodwin, and Horace Albright discussed the construction of five shelter cabins at Iceberg Lake, Piegan Pass, Red Eagle Lake, Triple Divide, and Gunsight Lake. At that time, a shelter constructed from debris of the ruined Gunsight Chalet was authorized at the Lake. Albright also suggested constructing a shelter at the saddle of Gunsight Pass.<sup>2</sup> The intent, design, and materials of early shelter cabins in Glacier National Park were pat-

STRUCTURE NAME: Gunsight Pass Shelter

STRUCTURE NUMBER: 520

tered after cabins built by the Appalachian Mountain Club in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.<sup>3</sup> The National Park Service did not construct the Gunsight Pass shelter until 1931, although its need had been agreed upon for many years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Gunsight Pass shelter is a significant resource, both architecturally and historically. Therefore, it meets the eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria a and c.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE:

<sup>1</sup>George E. Goodwin, Civil Engineer, to Horace M. Albright, July 17, 1917, "Buildings: General," File: 620.0, Part One from December 1913 to April 1922, Glacier National Park, National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>2</sup>Horace Albright to George Goodwin, August 2, 1917, *ibid.*; S.F. Ralson to Horace Albright, March 16, 1917, *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>George Goodwin to Horace Albright, July 27, 1917, *ibid.*

FORM PREPARED BY:

DATE: June 1984

NAME/TITLE:

ORGANIZATION: Historical Research Associates, P.O. Box 7086, Missoula, MT 59807-7086