

PH0507431

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	RECEIVED
RECEIVED	NOV 18 1977
DATE ENTERED	AUG 24 1977
	MAR 30 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Prospect Peak Fire Lookout

AND/OR COMMON

Prospect Peak Fire Lookout

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

NE of Mineral

Not applicable (on summit of Prospect Peak)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Not applicable

VICINITY OF Mineral

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

California

06

Shasta

089

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: None

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service - Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

450 Golden Gate Avenue - Box 36063

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Shasta County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 880

CITY, TOWN

Redding

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Prospect Peak Fire Lookout is a square wood frame building with a pyramidal roof. It is about 14 feet on a side, and has a belt of rather tall windows entirely encircling the building, with horizontal ship-lap siding both above and below the windows. It has a shingled roof whose corner angles were sheathed in metal. The building has one door, glazed to match the windows. The window on the door was double-hung; the remainder were a single sheet of fixed glass. The building had a chimney pipe in one corner. The building was secured against wind by guy wires strung from the corners under the eaves to a pin in the ground. The building was originally painted white.

Today, the building is deteriorated, but still intact. All the roof shingles are missing, as is most of the corner metal sheathing. The glass is entirely gone from the windows, and all the paint has weathered off. Inside, the built-in sitting table, and other loose furnishings are intact, although weathered as is the remainder of the wood. The guy wires are, with one exception, hanging loose, and some planks are missing from the roof.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

C. 1912 (?)

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The abandoned U. S. Forest Service Fire Lookout on the summit of Prospect Peak in Lassen Volcanic National Park is of regional level of significance in the category of conservation as one of the oldest surviving U. S. Forest Service fire lookouts in the United States. Although abandoned and exposed to the elements for years, the glass in its windows and shingles from its roof long gone, the building is basically intact both inside and out, including essential furnishings, possesses integrity of site, and embodies distinctive characteristics of type, method, and construction worthy of preservation here. It may be the last surviving building of its type in the United States, although once there were others, as it represents one--perhaps the first--of a number of standard designs for Forest Service fire lookouts.

The precise age of this fire lookout is not known from available data, but it was probably built in 1912, or at least soon thereafter. By the end of that year there were seven fire lookouts in Lassen National Forest of which this was one, but whether or not this building constituted the 1912 Prospect Peak lookout is unknown. The first two permanent lookouts were frame structures of lumber precut and assembled in Red Bluff during the winter of 1911-1912, then packed one each, disassembled, during the summer of 1912 to the summits of Lassen Peak and Turner Mountain for erection on the site. These replaced earlier and more primitive facilities; the first lookout in this national forest was apparently the Turner Mountain lookout which existed as early as 1908, but what the nature of the facility was prior to 1912 is unknown; a Lassen lookout prior to 1912 consisted of no building, merely a table for the alidade and the protractor, and possibly a tent. But by 1912 there were reportedly additional lookouts on Colby Mountain, Pegleg Mountain, Prospect Peak, Harvey Mountain, and McGee Peak. Whether that means that this particular building stood on Prospect Peak in 1912 is unclear, but if it was not built in 1912 it must have been built soon after, probably no more than a year or two later, and almost certainly before the creation of Lassen Volcanic National Park superseded the national forest in 1916. Buildings of this sort were generally manned by June 1 and remained in service until about October 10 each year. All were connected by telephone to one another and to the Forest Supervisor's Office in Mineral (which moved to Red Bluff after the onset of winter weather ended the fire season and the lookouts were discontinued).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Abbey, Robert Harvey, "Early Day Experiences in the U.S. Forest Service." Ms., copies in NPS Western Regional Office, San Francisco, in Park Library, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Mineral, and in Forest Supervisor's Office, Plumas National Forest, Quincy, California. pp. 33-35.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.9

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	64,009,0	4,49,25,1,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary is a square, 200 feet on each side (40,000 square feet), centered on the peak of the roof of the lookout, which marks the center of the building.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Gordon Chappell - Regional Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service - Western Regional Office

DATE

June 16, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

450 Golden Gate Avenue - Box 36063

TELEPHONE

(415) 556-4165

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

SEP 22 1977

YES

NO

NONE

Wxm

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

D. Hall

TITLE

Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE NOV 10 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. M. ...

DATE

3.30.78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Watkinson Cole

DATE

3.16.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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It may be inferred from a description of the first two lookout buildings compared with the existing structure on Prospect Peak that it was of the same or similar design. Forest Ranger Robert Harvey Abbey described the pioneer Turner and Lassen Lookouts in his memoirs:

At Red Bluff, during the winter of 1911-12, 2 lookout houses were made and set up temporarily to see what they looked like. They were made collapsable so they could be packed either by man or pack animal to the high points on the mountain that was chosen for the lookout house station. Light lumber, preferably shiplap for siding, 2 x 4 for studding and framework. The longest pieces in the whole structure were the 4 rafters, 9 feet. When the house was set up it was 10 x 10 in size. The walls were about 4 feet in height; 8 feet to the eaves. Glass windows filled the balance of space. These windows were placed on all 4 sides of the house. Through these windows the station lookout man sighted the fires. In the center of the house was a raised platform with a table. In the center of the table a protractor was placed over a map of the forest. From this station the stationman located the fires. From year to year more lookout houses were built. After 2 or more houses were completed, cross shot readings were taken. This enabled the rangers and fire fighters to know quite accurately the location of the townships, ranges, and sections.

The Prospect Peak lookout station may be a little bit larger than the two Abbey described, or Abbey's estimates of a ten foot square building may be several feet short of the actual measurements. If not identical to the first two in size, it seems to have been identical in pattern, and for Lassen National Forest, at least, was a "first generation" lookout station in design. (As of the date of this nomination the National Park Service has seven other fire lookouts listed as historic structures, the earliest of which dates from 1928; the Chief Historian for the U.S. Forest Service indicates the earliest fire lookout nominated by the Forest Service to the National Register dates from 1925, and believes the Prospect Peak lookout "might be the oldest such structure surviving . . .") By the 1920s, the U.S. Forest Service began to use in most instances lookouts on steel towers, and the earlier generation of small wooden buildings soon passed into obsolescence.

Resource Management

The significant values to be preserved here are the building, its interior furnishings, and its historic scene. Preservation of the building will necessarily entail some restoration, specifically replacing missing boards from the walls and roof with boards of the same type, reshingling the roof and resheathing the pyramidal corners with metal, reglazing all windows to render the building comparatively weather-tight, and repainting the exterior and treating interior wood and furnishings with a preservative. Replacement material should match the original in substance and form.

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Clary, David, Chief Historian, U.S. Forest Service, Correspondence with NPS Western Regional Historian, dated March 28, 1977, March 29, 1977. Copies on file in NPS Western Regional Office, San Francisco, and Lassen Volcanic National Park, Mineral, California.

Steen, Harold K., The U.S. Forest Service: A History. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1976).

Strong, Douglas Hillman, "These Happy Grounds"; A History of the Lassen Region. Red Bluff: Loomis Museum Association, 1973. pp. 2, 30-35, 49, 50, 56.