Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

PH0507431

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY RECEIVED 18 1977 AUG 2 4 1977

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES		MAR 3 0 1978		
SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN <i>HOW</i> TYPE ALL ENTRIES -	TO COMPLETE NATION - COMPLETE APPLICAE		3	
NAME				
HISTORIC				
Prospect Peak Fire Looko	11+			
AND/OR COMMON	<u>uc</u>			
Prospect Peak Fire Looko	ut			
LOCATION No. 50 A	, and the second			
STREET & NUMBER	post.	j		
Not applicable (on summit of P	rospect Peak)	NOT FOR PUBLICATION		
CITY, TOWN		CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	ICT	
	X VICINITY OF Mineral	First	CODE	
STATE California	CODE .	county Shasta	089	
CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY OWNERSHIP	CTATUC	DDEC	ENT USE	
_DISTRICT X_PUBLIC	STATUS OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM	
XBUILDING(S) —PRIVATE	X_UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK	
STRUCTUREBOTH	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDEN	
SITE PUBLIC ACQUISITION		ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS	
OBJECTIN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC	
BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION	
	NO	MILITARY	X_OTHER: None	
AGENCY  REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable) National Park Service - W  STREET & NUMBER 450 Golden Gate Avenue -  CITY TOWN		STATE		
San Francisco —	VICINITY OF	Cali	fornia	
LOCATION OF LEGAL DESC	RIPTION			
COURTHOUSE REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Shasta County	Courthouse			
STREET & NUMBER P.O. Box 880				
CITY, TOWN	——————————————————————————————————————	STATE		
Redding			fornia	
REPRESENTATION IN EXIS	TING SURVEYS			
	Into oca varo			
TITLE				
None				
DATE	FEDERAI	_STATECOUNTYLOCAL		
DEPOSITORY FOR		LUCAL		
SURVEY RECORDS				
CITY, TOWN		STATE		

### 7 DESCRIPTION

#### CONDITION

CHECK ONE

**CHECK ONE** 

\_\_EXCELLENT

✓DETERIORATED

\_\_RUINS

LUNALTERED \_\_ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

\_\_GOOD

\_\_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 siting 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.

SPECIFIC DAT	ES (19/2 18)	BUILDER/ARCI	HITECT	
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	INVENTION		
¥1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIEV)
1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<b>★</b> _CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	

#### 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.

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Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

NOV 1 8 1977

DATE ENTERED

MAR 3 0 1978

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

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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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION 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.

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