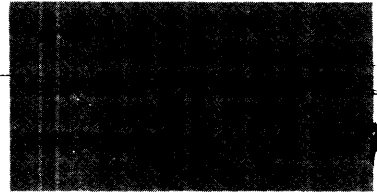


EXP. 12/31/83

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NAME: Park Butte Lookout

LOCATION: Mt. Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest; Congressional District 2, Mt. Baker Ranger District, Sedro Wooley, Washington (53), Skagit County (057).

ADDRESS: USDA Forest Service
Mt. Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest
1022 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

CLASSIFICATION/CATEGORY: Building CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES: 1 building
NONCONTRIBUTING: 0

DESCRIPTION:

Condition

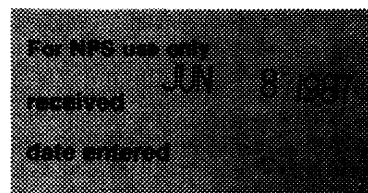
Excellent/good Altered Original Site

Park Butte Lookout is located on a steep ridge of basaltic outcroppings with subalpine fir and cedar trees in close proximity to the cabin. The Lookout is immediately SW of the Easton Glacier of Mt. Baker, at an elevation of +5,400 feet. It is currently accessed by a 3.5 mile long Forest Service Trail which crosses Sulphur Creek and glacial meltwater, transverses fir and hemlock forests, heather meadows and loose rock outcrops. Panoramic views from the Lookout are dominated by Mt. Baker as well as Mt. Blum, Hagan Mountain, and Bacon Peak.

This one-story, one room, 14' x 14' cabin is wood-frame construction and built according to standard Forest Service Lookout House plans from 1932. The floor framing system is supported by and anchored to indigenous rock and cross-braced timber posts on concrete pads. Imprinted in the concrete pads at the foundation are the names of the builders, "C.A. Larsen 9/23/32" and "USFS Wm. Thompson 1932". Cabin includes a catwalk constructed per standard plan with 2 x 4 decking and handrail. A particularly noteworthy feature is the access stair which is constructed around and supported by old tree roots. Typical pyramidal roof is covered with relatively new cedar shingles and galvanized metal ridge flashing. Lightning protection system is in place. Exterior walls composed of two-over-two fixed and pivoting sash with v-groove 1 x 6 shiplap siding below. Window shutters, constructed from 1 x 6 shiplap with varied double-z bracing, are in place except on the east elevation. Some shutters have been purposely removed and stored on site due to concerns based on their difficult and dangerous operation by short-term and transitory users. Shutter support hardware is in place and 2 x 2 shutter bases, which secure to the catwalk rim joists, are stored in the Lookout. Original panel door with four lights above is in place. Typical intact interior finishes are 1 x 4 T & G paneling on walls and ceiling and fir flooring. Standard 2 x 2 interior window supports remain in place. Interior exhibits typical simply constructed original furnishings which include the standard table, cabinets and open shelves and lightning stool and original wood stove. The firefinder and stand have been removed. A turnbuckled cable tie of undetermined origin runs north-south at ceiling level. Alterations of note are limited to minor structural repairs and shutter and firefinder removal.

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SIGNIFICANCE:

Specific Dates: 1932

Builder/Architect: Constructed per standard Forest Service Plan L-4 1930 (revised 1932).
Built by C.A. Larsen and Wm. Thompson. Packer Roy Evans.

History

Park Butte Lookout was constructed in the fall of 1932 by a small crew of Forest Service personnel which included C.A. Larsen and William Thompson (who both worked as fire lookouts), and a hired carpenter. Roy Evans was the Forest Service packer responsible for packing in bundles of pre-cut construction materials with a team of 7-8 pack horses for this Lookout and for four other fire lookouts constructed between 1932 and 1934. Mr. Evans stated that the materials were supplied by the Aladdin Company, Portland, Oregon, and shipped to Concrete where they were then hauled by truck to the Baker River Ranger Station. Approximately 20 trips were required to then pack the materials to Park Butte. Fire report records from 1926 show that Park Butte was in use for lookout purposes before the construction of a permanent Lookout House. Apparently, the fire guard camped in a tent on the bench below the summit and climbed a tall fir tree on the site in order to "look out." Roy Evans stated that the construction crew blasted the tree out in order to construct the Lookout House and that a portion of the roots still remain and are used to support the entry stair. Some of the difficulties encountered during construction of the Lookout were pre-cut members which were oversized and unexpected heavy snowfall before completion. The Lookout was regularly used for fire detection and suppression purposes until 1961. In 1962, the Skagit Alpine Club, having acquired a special use permit the previous year for Hidden Lake Peak Lookout, entered into a special use permit with the USDA Forest Service for Park Butte Lookout. Since that time this volunteer organization has carefully maintained and used the Lookout for recreational purposes. Roy Evans has continued to visit and work on the Lookout as well. Club members have priority use of the facilities, but otherwise it remains open to hikers and climbers.

Statement of Significance

Park Butte Lookout is an intact example of the typical Plan L-4 Lookout House typically constructed on Region 6 between 1932 and 1936. It is among only a few extant fire lookout buildings on the Forest that once functioned as part of an extensive fire detection and suppression network which served to protect and conserve timber resources for over 50 years. This unaltered and well-maintained Lookout represents a crucial part of that system as a uniquely functional building type which was specifically designed for construction in such isolated and challenging environments as Park Butte.

GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

Acreage: less than one acre

UTM Reference:

Point
A

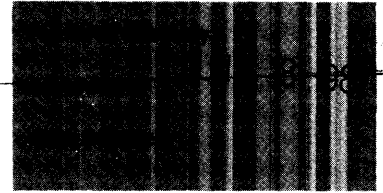
Zone
10

Easting
584225

Northing
5396350

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Park Butte Lookout (Building #4003) is located in a portion of SE1/4 of SE1/4, Section 2, T.37N, R.7E, Willamette Meridian. Proposed nomination to include lookout house, related rock and root foundations, lightning protection system and immediate access trail within a 50 foot radius of the center of the Lookout per Green Trails map HAMILTON, WA - NO 45.