

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

_____
Name of Property
_____
County and State
_____
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: MP100002774


Date Listed: 08/06/2018

Property Name: Cougar Peak Lookout

County: Sanders

State: MT

-----  
This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

8/6/2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Resource Count**

The total number of contributing resources should read: 3.

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The Forest Service regional FPO and Montana SHPO were notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MP2774

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cougar Peak Lookout

Other names/site number: 24SA0542

Name of related multiple property listing:

L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1), 1932-1967

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Plains / Thompson Falls Ranger District, Lolo National Forest

City or town: Thompson Falls State: Montana County: Sanders

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      x statewide      x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A      \_\_\_ B      X C      \_\_\_ D

<u>Jane Clark</u>	/ Regional Archaeologist	<u>6/21/2018</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>USDA Forest Service Northern Region (Region 1)</u>		
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.		
<u>Mark F. Saunders</u>		<u>6/4/2018</u>
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>State Historic Preservation Officer Montana State Historic Preservation Office</u>		
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

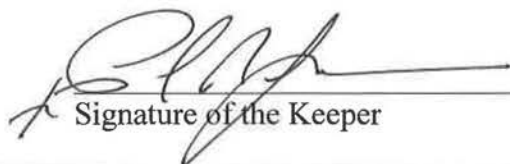
Cougar Peak Lookout  
Name of Property

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County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

8/6/2018  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT

OTHER / Fire Lookout

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Hotel (USFS cabin rental)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: 1936-plan "readicut" L-4 Lookout House

### Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE / Granite

Walls: WOOD / Weatherboard; GLASS

Roof: WOOD / Shingle

Other:

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Cougar Peak Lookout is a 1936-pattern L-4 Lookout House erected on a talus outcrop atop Cougar Peak. Sitting at an elevation of 6,680 ft. above sea level the lookout provides views of the Clark Fork River valley and the Montana – Idaho divide. To the east the point overlooks the drainage basins of Deep Creek and Graves Creek-both west-flowing tributaries of the Clark Fork River. Besides the lookout, other improvements include an outhouse, a shallow cavity that may represent a storage cellar, and a small enclosure for a radio repeater. A unique feature of this lookout is the inscriptions (historic and modern) etched on talus slabs that are stacked around the base of the lookout. The earliest date is 1894, with some from the 1920s, 1930s, 1960s, 1970s, and many with more recent dates. Until 2017, on-site vegetation consists principally of grasses and forbs, with dense stands of timber on the steep north and west-facing slopes below the lookout. However, a wildfire during the summer of 2017 destroyed most of the vegetation.

Cougar Peak Lookout retains most of the seven aspects of historical integrity. For the most part, restoration efforts have followed Secretary of the Interior's Standards, with replacement of deteriorated elements done "in-kind." The exception is the use of treated timber in the reconstructed catwalk that surrounds the lookout cab.

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## Narrative Description

**Cougar Peak Lookout (one contributing building):** Cougar Peak Lookout is a 14 ft. by 14 ft. wood frame building with a pyramidal roof built. Unlike most L-4 lookouts, Cougar Peak lacks a tower. Rather, it is built on foundation of locally sourced, mortared stone. Simple drop (V-Rustic) wood siding covers the lower portion of the exterior walls. The pyramidal roof is covered with sawn cedar shingles with metal ridge finishes. A stainless steel stove pipe extends above the roof's south slope. The cab is secured to the ground with woven steel cables or guy wires at each corner.

The entry into the lookout house is located at the east end of the south wall and contains the original wood door with four lights above one panel. Four, nine-light windows are located west of the door. The remaining three walls each contain a ribbon of five, four-light wood window sashes. The center sash in each wall opens casement style, while the remaining four are fixed. The lookout has two, top-hinged, wood window shutters on each side that can be fixed in an open position by bolting them to outriggers.

A 3-ft. wide catwalk extends along all four walls of the lookout house. It is accessed from a dimensional lumber stair east of center in the south wall. The catwalk deck (made with 2 x 6 in. boards) is supported by 4 X 4 in. treated-timber legs that set directly on the talus. The railing is made with 4 x 4 in. treated-timber posts, topped with a 2 x 4 in. rail.

The one-room interior retains its original finishes, including fir flooring and V-Rustic siding on the wall below the windows and in the ceiling. The interior space contains a stand equipped with an Osborne fire finder, wood platform beds, a table, and a small wood stove (Figure 1).

**Outhouse (one contributing building):** The outhouse is located roughly 100 ft. northwest of the lookout. This one-story wood frame building measuring roughly 4 ft. by 5 ft. rests on a concrete foundation. It has a gable roof covered with sawn wood shingles and its exterior walls are covered with vertical wood boards and battens. The vertical board door is located in the east wall. Like the lookout, the outhouse is secured to the ground with guy wires at each corner.

**Storage Cellar (one contributing site):** A shallow cavity in the bedrock is located roughly 20 ft. north of the northeast corner of the lookout and likely represents a storage cellar. It is about 36 in. wide and deep, with enough room for a person to stand in it. A piece of milled lumber is located on the ground surface in the cavity.

**Radio repeater shed (one noncontributing structure):** A small wood frame shed containing a radio repeater is located about 75 ft. northwest of the lookout. The repeater box measures 4 ft. tall, and 3 ft. square. It is enclosed with plywood; a door on the south wall provides access to the interior. A small rectangular solar panel sits atop the repeater shed and an antenna is fixed to the exterior on its east side.

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Figure 1. 2012 photograph of the interior. National Historic Lookout Register

In addition to the buildings and structures at Cougar Peak Lookout, this property displays some small-scale features that appear to represent a cultural tradition unique to this site. Etched stones are stacked around the base of the lookout and contain the names of people who manned the lookout, as well as names of visitors to the site. The earliest date is 1894, with some from the 1920s, 1930s, 1960s and 1970s. However, those left by visitors appear to be more common than those that date to the period when the site was actively used as a lookout point. One interesting piece is a flat slab etched with a compass face, including a north arrow, and letters designating the cardinal directions, the initials JWY and the date, 1932. While these objects are not counted as contributing resources, they contribute to the historical character of the property.

### Integrity

Cougar Peak Lookout retains all seven aspects of historical integrity. It occupies its original site, and because of its isolated location, the property's integrity of setting, feeling and association remain exceptionally strong. The only modern intrusion to the setting is the small radio repeater shed. The lookout house retains integrity of materials, workmanship and design. The lookout stands as an exceptional example of the once-common 1936-pattern L-4 Lookouts once included in the Lolo National Forest's fire detection system.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Politics / Government

Conservation

Architecture

Engineering



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**Period of Significance**

1952 – 1967

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1952 (year built)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Clyde Fickes, designer

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Cougar Peak Lookout is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C, at the local and state level of significance. Under Criterion A, it is significantly associated with the US Forest Service's fire detection program, which relied on a series of fixed lookout points from which to locate forest fires. Under Criterion C, Cougar Peak Lookout is an excellent example of a 1936 pattern L-4 Lookout House.

The Cougar Peak Lookout meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the *L-4 Lookouts on the Lolo National Forest Multiple Property Document* under the context *Role of the L-4 Lookout House in the development of the US Forest Service Region 1's Fire Detection System* and the *L-4 Lookout* property type. The period of significance identified for this property extends from its construction in 1952 through 1967, the end of the historical period of significance; it conforms to the MPD cover context period. Cougar Peak Lookout was manned as a primary lookout point from 1952 to 1967.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Forest Service personnel on the former Cabinet National Forest established a lookout point on Cougar Peak sometime prior to 1930, when the first L-4 lookout (a gable roof variety) was built atop the peak's west summit.<sup>1</sup> According to the original classification applied to lookouts, Cougar Peak's location suggests that it functioned as an "intensive" lookout, i.e., a lookout selected to cover areas of particularly high fire liability, such as valleys with large amounts of merchantable timber and a corresponding large number of homesteaders—like the Clark Fork River valley. A 1936 map of the Cabinet National Forest shows Cougar Peak (then only accessible by pack trail) as a combined "lookout and triangulation point."<sup>2</sup>

The current 1936-pattern L-4 lookout house was built in 1952.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the forest replaced the earlier structure a year before the regional office initiated its lookout reconstruction and replacement program indicates that Cougar Peak likely functioned from the beginning as a "primary" lookout—i.e., a lookout integrated into the forest's routine fire program. After 1954, when the Sanders County portion of the old Cabinet National Forest was incorporated into the administrative boundary of the Lolo National Forest, Cougar Peak Lookout continued to be occupied each fire season. In 1967, it was one of twenty-six lookouts manned on the forest.<sup>4</sup> It continued to be used as a primary lookout through at least 1992, when it was among the ten Lolo National Forest lookouts scheduled to be occupied during the fire season.<sup>5</sup>

The first work to restore Cougar Peak Lookout occurred in 1995 as a Passport in Time (PIT) project. Volunteers working under the direction of the region's historic preservation team rebuilt the original windows, replaced the roof shingles in-kind, rebuilt the catwalk, and painted the exterior and interior of the lookout cab as well as the shutters. Soon after completion of the initial restoration, the forest added the lookout to its cabin rental program. Most recently, PIT volunteers built new shutters and painted the interior and exterior of the lookout. It continues to be used during the spring, summer, and fall, as a cabin rental. A wildfire during the summer of 2017 burned over the top of Cougar Peak. Forest Service personnel saved the lookout and its associated improvements by wrapping the buildings and by dropping fire retardant on the site (Figure 2).

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<sup>1</sup> Ray Kresec, *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest* (Fairfield Washington: Ye Galleon Press).

<sup>2</sup> 1936 Map of Cabinet National Forest, drawn by J. F. Shields. Digital Collection: Mapping Montana and the West, Montana Memory Project, Montana Historical Society, Helena Montana. Accessed 2/26/2018 <http://cdm15018.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15018coll5/id/811>

<sup>3</sup> Ray Kresec, *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*, (Fairfield Washington: Ye Galleon Press 1984:344).

<sup>4</sup> "List of Lookouts in R 1 1967." Folder: 5100 Lookouts Historical 2 of 2, Box 45, RG95 Historical Collection, National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle, Washington (Hereinafter NARA, Seattle).

<sup>5</sup> Press release dated February 1992 "Seventy-Two Lookouts to be Operated This Summer Down from 800 Used in 1938," Folder: Historical: Lookouts, Box 46, RG95 Historical Collection, NARA Seattle

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Figure 2. Cougar Peak Lookout wrapped in "cabin wrap."



Figure 3. Post-fire photo of Cougar Peak Lookout.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)  
Kresek, Ray. 1984 *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*. Fairfield Washington: Ye Galleon Press.  
RG 95 Records of the US Forest Service, National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle, Washington.

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 24SA0542

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Roughly 1.75 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 47.744667                      Longitude: -115.383486

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of this property is an arbitrary line drawn to encompass the area on top of Cougar Peak that contains the lookout and its associated improvements.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encloses the primary improvement at this location, namely the lookout house and its associated outhouse and storage cellar.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Janene Caywood  
organization: CRCS  
street & number: 1002 South 6<sup>th</sup> St. West  
city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59801  
e-mail [crs@montana.com](mailto:crs@montana.com)  
telephone: 406 728-9190  
date: April 25, 2018

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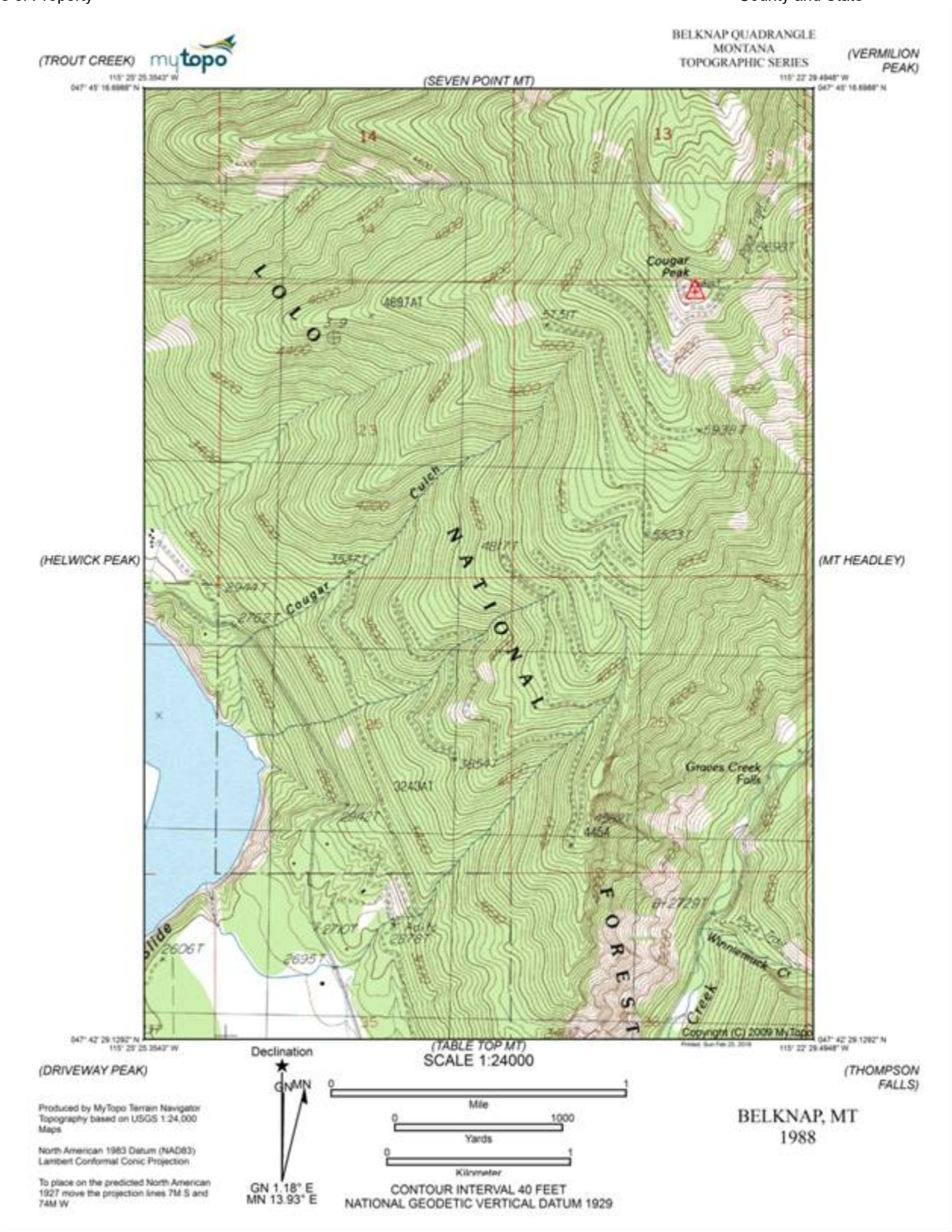
**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Cougar Peak Lookout  
Name of Property

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2017 Google Earth aerial view of Cougar Peak Lookout

Cougar Peak Lookout  
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**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**All Photographs**

Name of Property: Cougar Peak Lookout

City or Vicinity: Thompson Falls

County: Sanders State: Montana

Photographer: Erika Karuzas

Date Photographed: 7/21/2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of \_\_\_\_.



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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0001. Looking northwest to the south (front) and east walls of the lookout.

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0002. Looking southeast to the north (rear) and west walls of the lookout.

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0003. Looking north to the south (front) wall of the lookout.

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0004. Looking northwest to the south and east (front) walls of the outhouse.

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0005. Looking west to the radio repeater shed.

Cougar Peak Lookout  
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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0006. Looking south to storage cellar.

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0007. Detail of etched talus slab "J. W. Youngblood July 21<sup>st</sup> 1932"

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0008. Detail of etched talus slab “Bob Kathman 1966”



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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0009. Detail of etched talus slab “Aug 1924 D. K. May / Aug 4 1930 F. W. Cox / David Sime 1958.”

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MT\_SandersCounty\_CougarPeakLookout\_0010. Detail of talus slab etched with a compass and the initials “JWY” and “1932.”

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



COUGAR PK.

Micah Farber

BOY'S CLUB





COUGAR PA









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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Cougar Peak Lookout

Multiple Name: L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1), 1932-1967 MPS

State & County: MONTANA, Sanders

Date Received:  
6/26/2018

Date of Pending List:  
7/20/2018

Date of 16th Day:  
8/6/2018

Date of 45th Day:  
8/10/2018

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100002774

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Appeal

SHPO Request

Waiver

Resubmission

Other

PDIL

Landscape

National

Mobile Resource

TCP

CLG

Text/Data Issue

Photo

Map/Boundary

Period

Less than 50 years

Accept

Return

Reject

8/6/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Cougar Peak Lookout is of state level significance under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Conservation, Politics/Government, Architecture and Engineering. The modest, 14' x 14', wood and glass building represents an excellent example of a 1936-plan, readicut, L-4 type Forest Service lookout, in this case set atop a mortared stone foundation directly on the bedrock talus. The 1952 lookout is associated with the Forest Service's significant, early twentieth century fire detection and conservation programs. The property meets the Registration Requirements of the associated Forest Service Lookout MPS.

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept NR Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 08/06/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



File Code: 2360  
Date: June 21, 2018

J. Paul Loether, Keeper, National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1849 C St., NW - Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240



Dear Mr. Loether,

Enclosed please find the following nomination for your consideration for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

**Cougar Peak Lookout,**  
in Sanders County, Montana

**The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the National Register nomination for the Cougar Peak Lookout for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.**

Please be advised that owners and public officials were notified in excess of 45 days prior to the Preservation Review Board meeting. The Review Board unanimously recommended that this property be nominated and I concur with its recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jorie Clark  
Regional Archaeologist, Delegated Federal Preservation Officer  
U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region

Enclosure

