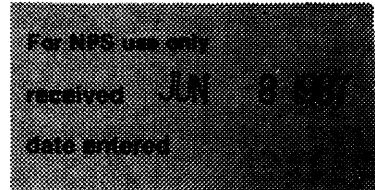


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Inventory
Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1 of 3

NAME: Miners Ridge Lookout

LOCATION: Mt. Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest; Congressional District 2, Darrington Ranger District, Darrington, Washington (53), Snohomish County (061).

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

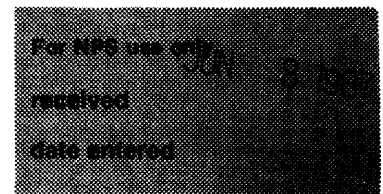
Good Altered Original Site

Miners Ridge Lookout is located on a grassy knoll at +6,210 feet, on the highest point of Miners Ridge. It is situated at a remote location within the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area approximately five miles west of the Pacific Crest trail. The closest trail head is 16 miles west of the Lookout. The first nine miles of this Forest Service trail closely parallels the Suiattle River, while the east 6-1/2 miles are a steep climb through subalpine meadows and forest. The Lookout is on a 20 foot high timber tower from which panoramic views are dominated by Glacier Peak, in close proximity to the south.

This one story, one room, 14' x 14' cabin is held aloft by a 20 foot high tower of creosoted timbers anchored to concrete piers. Transport to this isolated site necessitated the cutting and splicing of the built-up 2 x 8 upright members which are rigidly cross-braced and tied by a guy anchorage system. The cabin was constructed according to a revised standard Forest Service plan issued in 1936 and includes a catwalk and variant shutter support system. The typical pyramidal roof is covered with new cedar shingles and galvanized metal ridge flashings. A solar panel and repeater antenna are also located on the roof. Standard lightning protection system is in place. Exterior walls are composed of two-over-two fixed and pivoting sash with 1 x 6 v-groove shiplap siding below. All original shutters, constructed of horizontal 1 x 6 shiplap with double z-bracing, are held open by 2 x 4 ceiling joists which overhang 3'-0" and utilize an eyebolt and nut to secure shutters to blocking at the joist ends. The only significant alteration is the relocated and reconstructed two-tier access stair. Due to a serious accident in 1951, the original stair was removed and a new stair was built in order to more safely enter the Lookout through the catwalk rather than the cabin interior. The original entry hatch remains visible from below. Intact interior finishes are 1 x 6 shiplap on walls and ceiling and linoleum over standard 1 x 4 fir flooring. The interior also exhibits typical simply constructed furnishings which include original built-in shelves, cabinets and storage drawers, table, fire finder and stand and lightning stool. Ground cover disturbance west of the tower indicates evidence of a former ground house lookout on the site.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2 of 3

SIGNIFICANCE:

Specific Dates: 1938 (stair reconstruction 1952)

Builder/Architect: Constructed per standard Forest Service Plan L-4 (revised 1936). Built by Claude Brazelton, Hugh Ritter and possibly a CCC crew.

History

This Lookout is recorded to have been constructed in 1938 as a replacement for "the old L.O. house on Miners Ridge." The site was in use as a lookout point as early as 1928, when Forest Service records show a fire report from Miners Ridge. This is the same year a Forest Service trail crew member, Donald "Scotty" McMurchie, was there to put in a phone line from the ranger station through Canyon Creek and up 33 miles to the top of the ridge. He reported at that time there was no structure, only a fire finder instrument, and the lookout slept in a tent at the crossroads to Suiattle Pass (probably at Sunnybrook, a couple of miles below the summit) and hiked up to the ridge each day to spot fires. The original 10' x 10' lookout structure, of which there is ground disturbance evidence, may have been built around 1930. McMurchie only remembered that it was constructed with cedar shakes from trees on Miners Creek.

There is some uncertainty regarding who constructed the present lookout, which closely follows revised Forest Service L-4 plans from 1936. Claude Brazelton was the Forest Service foreman in charge of the project, and he stated that it was constructed with the help of "seven or eight CCC kids." A Civilian Conservation Corps side camp was established at the Sauk Ranger Station in 1933 and may have provided part of the crew. Bundles of construction materials were typically hauled to the site by pack horses. The 21-foot long members for the timber tower proved to be too long for transport up the steep switchbacks, thus the Regional Office was persuaded to allow them to be cut and then spliced together on site.

In 1951, District Ranger Warren Presentin accidentally fell through the lookout floor hatch 20 feet to the ground. A helicopter was sent to pick him up and crashed while landing on the ridge north of the lookout. The old fuselage remains near the lookout. Everyone survived the incident, but, as a result, the stairway was relocated in 1952 to access the cabin through the catwalk rather than the cabin interior. The lookout has continued to be staffed, now by volunteers, during high fire danger since its original construction. Due to continued use and relative isolation, the Lookout has been maintained and is less vulnerable to vandalism.

Statement of Significance

Miners Ridge Lookout is an excellent example of the Plan L-4 Lookout House typically constructed on Region 6 after the 1932 standard plans were upgraded and were revised in 1936. It is the only intact example of this later L-4 Lookout House style to remain on the Forest, and it is among only a few extant fire lookout buildings that once functioned as a part of an extensive fire detection and suppression network, which served to protect and conserve timber and other natural resources. Miners Ridge Lookout represents an essential part of the system as a uniquely functional building type which was specifically designed for construction in the kind of isolated and challenging environment in which it is located. As the only example of the

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3 of 3

GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

Acreage: less than one

UTM Reference:

<u>Point</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	10	6465000	5341000

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Miners Ridge Lookout is located in a portion of NW 1/4 of NW 1/4, Section 8, Township 31 North, Range 15 East, Willamette Meridian. Nominated property includes lookout house, timber tower, and reeled guy anchorage system, and immediate access trail within a 50 foot radius of the center of the Lookout as described on Green Trails map Glacier Peak, Wash.--No. 112

Significance Statement Continued:

upgraded and revised Plan L-4 Lookout House on the Forest, the property possesses exceptional significance despite being less than 50 years old.