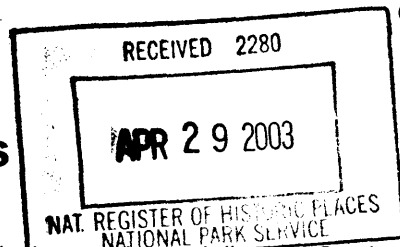


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



518

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Devils Head Lookout

other names/site number Devil's Head Lookout / 5DA960

2. Location

street & number South Platte District, Pike National Forest [N/A] not for publication

city or town Sedalia [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Douglas code 035 zip code 80135

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 [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title: Serquiana Cortezgulia, State Historic Preservation Officer, Date: 3/31/03

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title: Teri L. Lissman, Date: 4/14/03

USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- [X] entered in the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper: Edison A. Beall, Date of Action: 6/13/03

Devils Head Lookout  
Name of Property

Douglas County, CO  
County/State

**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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
6	1	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/natural feature

Recreation and Culture/outdoor recreation

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/natural feature

Recreation and Culture/outdoor recreation

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood/Weatherboard

\_\_\_\_\_

roof Wood/Shingle

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Devils Head Lookout

Name of Property

Douglas County, CO

County/State

**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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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
- # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Conservation

**Periods of Significance**

1912-1952

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person(s)**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society  
South Platte Ranger District, Pike NF

Devils Head Lookout  
Name of Property

Douglas County, CO  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** 2.5

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	13	491213	4345500
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	13	491380	4345500
	Zone	Easting	Northing
3.	13	491380	4345434
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4.	13	491213	4345434
	Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

(additional material by OAHF staff)

name/title Barbara Machann et al (Based on previous draft nomination by Jonathon C. Horn)  
organization Sedalia Historic Fire House Museum date May 2002  
street & number P. O. Box 408 telephone 303-688-3571  
city or town Sedalia state Colorado zip code 80135

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Pike and San Isabel National Forests [Al Kane, Resource Program Manager]  
street & number 2840 Kachina Drive telephone 719-553-1505  
city or town Pueblo state Colorado zip code 81008

**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. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service  
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Devils Head Lookout  
Douglas County, CO

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## DESCRIPTION

Rampart Range is the first and eastern most part of the Rocky Mountains rising up from the eastern plains. The highest point of the Rampart Range is a granite outcrop called Devils Head. At an elevation of 9748 feet, this craggy crest is visible from a great distance on the eastern plains of Colorado from Denver to Colorado Springs. From Devils Head, a vast panorama can be viewed from the Continental Divide to the west, Pike's Peak and the Spanish Peaks to the south, western Kansas to the east, and Long's Peak and southeastern Wyoming to the north. Devils Head Lookout is within the South Platte District of the Pike National Forest, and although it is manned only during the summer months, it receives several thousand visitors each year.

The site is reached via a 1.37 mile long trail that starts at the Devils Head Campground. This trail climbs at a moderate rate from north to south through a forest of Douglas fir and blue spruce, gaining 948 feet in elevation. The trail winds through a gap in some granite outcrops that leads to a small valley known as Devil's Half Acre. Large, prominent granite outcrops form high steep cliffs on the east and west sides of this small wooded valley that contains a cabin, three outhouses, and a metal staircase that accesses the lookout.

Constructed in 1951, the stairway is an alternating series of steps and platforms—six separate flights of stairs interspersed with five landings enclosed by a metal pole handrail. The 243 steps climb over 200 feet to the top of the granite rock prominence. At the top of the stairs is a wooden pole anchored to the railing for a power line. A path largely cut out of solid rock leads across the prominence to the area that has served as the lookout. Where the path is not naturally enclosed, a pole and wire fence guard rail has been installed. (Photographs in 1990 show wire fencing attached to the poles. It is not known when the current vinyl coated chain link fencing replaced the older material.) Along the path, about 30 feet north of the lookout and outside the wire fencing, is a flag pole anchored to the rock with a brass cap marked: "U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey/Reference Mark/ Devils Head/ No. 1/1953." The flag pole is where a phone line post was located in 1919. Another old phone line pole is located on the rock outcrop north of the stairway.

The current lookout was built in 1951, replacing one that was constructed in 1919. It is a square, one-story, wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. Measuring 14½ feet on a side and surrounded by a wooden deck with a wooden railing, the overall dimensions are 20 feet square. The low-pitched hipped roof has wood shingles with sheet metal strips covering the ridges. An elaborate lightning protection system of metal rods and coils covers the roof. With the exception of the east side, which has four windows and a door, the other three sides of the building have five windows. Running the full width of each wall, these tall, fixed sash windows have four lights. The center windows on each of the three sides are hinged on the side and open out. Sheets of plywood serve as shutters for each of the windows. These shutters are hinged at the top and open outward. Wide pine boards serve as window surrounds and horizontal tongue and groove siding fills the area below the windows. The interior is a simple one room space with a stove in the southeast corner and the fire finder set on a plywood pedestal in the center of the room.

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Devils Head Lookout  
Douglas County, CO

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The location of the original lookout created in 1912 is still visible on a large boulder about 30 feet east of the present lookout. Four cut off pieces of pipe set in the boulder in a rectangular pattern 18 by 24 inches mark the fire finder stand. Surrounding this are other cut off pieces of pipe set in the boulder that served as a protective guard rail. On the highest point of the boulder is a brass cap marked: "D.M.W.M./DEVILS HEAD/1932."

Down below in Devil's Half Acre are the auxiliary buildings. Northwest of the base of the stairs is a wood frame cabin enclosed by a pole fence. The pole fence begins at the base of the stairs, runs about 110 feet north-west, then turns a right angle and runs another 150 feet to an abrupt rock outcrop. A metal pole gate is located in the center of the south side of the fence through which a trail passes running northeast about 75 feet to a retaining wall below the cabin. This retaining wall of unshaped, dry laid, irregularly coursed stone is about 3 feet high. At the east end of the retaining wall is a set of six stone steps. The cabin replaced an earlier (ca. 1914) log cabin that was located along what is now the south fence line.

Built in 1951, the cabin is comprised of a main front gabled section (17' x 18 ½') with a smaller gabled extension (8' x 14 ½') off the west. The wood frame cabin sits on a poured concrete foundation and has wide horizontal siding with metal corner channels. Tongue and groove vertical boards with a slight scalloped edge face the gabled ends. Louvered vents are positioned in the apex of each gable end. Wood shingles cover the cross-gabled roof with its slightly overhanging boxed eaves. A stone chimney breaks the south slope of the west extension. The chimney, uncut irregularly coursed stone set with concrete mortar, is topped with a metal stove pipe. The window openings are covered with board and batten shutters and a sheet of plywood covers the door. On the south side, three stone steps lead to the centrally positioned single leaf door on the main section while a window opening pierces the extension. The west side has two evenly spaced window openings. The east elevation has a central window opening. The north side has a central window opening on the main section and a window opening on the wall of the extension. The windows are all wood frame sash with three horizontal lights and simple wide board surrounds. The windows on the extension are all coupled—one a fixed sash and the other a casement. The opening on the north side of the main section contains a triple window with a central fixed sash flanked by two casements. The east side has four windows. At one time all of the windows had decorative shutters attached to the sides. It is not know when these were removed.

The interior of the cabin is finished in knotty pine on the walls and ceiling. Plain boards surround the doors and windows with quarter round molding at the floor and ceiling. Fir strip floors are found throughout the house but have been covered with linoleum in the kitchen. The kitchen has linoleum counters, plain board cabinets, and a fancy scalloped board above the sink between the cabinets. The cabin is equipped with electricity but has no piped water.

Nearby the cabin are three other buildings. The trail from the Devils Head Campground enters Devil's Half Acre from the north, passing west of the cabin and its pole fence enclosure and then south to the head of the stairs. As the trail enters the small valley, there are three outhouses on the west side of the trail. It is believed that the two smaller outhouses were constructed in 1951, while the larger ADA outhouse is a recent addition to the site. Despite the differences in size and date of construction, all three outhouses are painted reddish-brown.

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Devils Head Lookout  
Douglas County, CO

The northernmost outhouse is a large new wheel-chair accessible building with accommodations for both men and women. Constructed with at-grade access, the side gabled building has a lower shed roof extension built below grade on the west end. The rectangular plan building has plywood siding and two large metal doors on the east side. Composition shingles cover the roof and a large metal stove pipe projects from the east slope. Due to its more recent construction, this building is noncontributing.

The middle outhouse is a small wood frame construction with a square plan, lap siding with cornerboards, and a front gable roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. Wood shingles cover the roof with a metal ridge cap that terminates at each end with a small angled ball finial. The door, comprised of wide vertical boards with a screen vent, is on the north side. Mesh screen fills the gabled end above the entrance. A small square screened vent is off set on the south side.

The south outhouse is similar in construction to its companion further north. It is also a small, square building with lap siding and a wood shingle gabled roof. Corner boards and a metal ridge cap with finials are also present. The door, comprised of narrow vertical boards and a screen vent, is on the south side. A small square vent is centrally positioned on the north side.

Approximately 75 feet southeast of the cabin is a covered cistern that measures 6 by 7 feet. This cistern has concrete walls with a shed roof made of boards. Runoff water from the cliffs east of the cabin is channeled down to a 4 by 4 foot stone catchment structure at the edge of the rock outcrop that houses a pipe that leads into the cistern. The catchment is made of large flat granite stones with concrete mortar.

At the base of the granite outcrop about 25 feet south of the stairs is the remains of an earlier concrete cistern that serviced the original log cabin. Like the current cistern, runoff from the rocks above was directed into it. A pipe used to direct the water is still visible in the crack behind the cistern. Inside dimensions of this concrete box are 6 by 6 feet and 34 feet tall. Walls are five inches thick and finished on the inside. A pipe exits the bottom of the cistern near its northwest corner. It is exposed about 20 feet away near the Devils Head information sign. At one time the pipe probably led directly into the original log cabin.

Several other features, both old and new, are present in the Devil's Half Acre. South of the trail near the base of the stairs are two large wooden benches and the Devils Head Lookout information sign. Between the new outhouse and the two older ones is the remnants of an older trail. Until 1936, access to the lookout was by way of a trail leading from Watson Park and Jackson Creek through rugged country to the west and north of the lookout, then swinging south into Devil's Half Acre. In 1936, the Civilian Conservation Corps built a trail from Devils Head Campground south to the lookout on an entirely new route that turned east into Devil's Half Acre through the present location of the outhouses. (The present trail from Devils Head Campground was constructed in 1951, utilizing portions of these two earlier trails.)

Horn (1990) noted five other features from earlier use of the Devil's Half Acre located farther south of the present trail. Feature 1 is located about 125 feet south of the gate through the cabin's pole fence. It is a 10-foot diameter depression filled with branches and other vegetative debris that appears to be at least two feet deep with soil mounded around the outside. Feature 2, about four feet farther south, is a

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Devils Head Lookout  
Douglas County, CO

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shallow depression about three feet in diameter. While the purpose of these two features is unclear, they may be related to clean-up efforts after the new lookout and cabin were built in 1951. Feature 3, about 75 feet northwest of Feature 1, is an artifact scatter at the base of the granite rock prominence on the west side of the small valley. Measuring about 5 by 10 feet, it appears to be a large trash disposal pit or possibly an outhouse pit used for trash disposal as numerous whole cans, a mirror fragment and a copper jacketed bullet are visible. Feature 4, located 20 feet south of Feature 3, is a probable outhouse foundation built against the base of the rock outcrop. The concrete foundation has an overall dimension of 4 by 5 feet (north-south axis) with a concrete dividing wall, probably for an outhouse pit that would have measured 2½ by 5 feet against the rock. A vent pipe exits the south side of the pit foundation and continues uphill on the ground for several feet. Feature 5 is a fairly level area about 150 feet south of the stairs identified as the site of a barn. A photograph taken in 1919 shows the roof of a building south of the base of the stairs, and oral informants (Flynn 1990; Daley 1990) indicate that this was the location of a small barn or stable. Several round nails, can fragments, sawn lumber, burned wood, and wire were found within the 35 by 45 foot area (east-west axis). This building was dismantled when the new lookout and cabin were built in 1951.

Resource Count

- Contributing site* (1)
- Contributing buildings* (4)
  - lookout, cabin, 2 small outhouses
- Contributing structure* (1)
  - staircase
- Noncontributing building* (1)
  - handicapped accessible outhouse



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Douglas County, CO

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Devils Head Lookout site is historically significant under criterion A for its long association with the conservation efforts of the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado. In 1907 the newly created Forest Service planned seven principal lookouts along the Front Range of the Rockies between New Mexico and Wyoming. The 9,748 foot Devils Head was selected to be the location of one of these lookouts. It was one of only four lookouts that were eventually established. The site has been in continuous use since 1912 and is the last full time lookout in Colorado. In addition, Devils Head was the duty station of the first female fire lookout in America.

Devils Head Lookout sits on the highest point of the Rampart Range, the first and eastern most part of the Rocky Mountains. It was reported that a fire lookout was "located on Devils Head because of the exceptional stretch of country commanded from the eminence and because of the high percentage of clear days at this particular spot" (*Record-Journal of Douglas County* 16 December 1921). Fires can be reliably spotted for a distance of 50 to 75 miles [some sources claim 100 miles] depending on the clarity of the atmosphere.

The peak was first noted by the F.V. Hayden expedition in 1869. It was named Turk Mountain on the map because the rock outcrop resembled a fez. By 1880, it was commonly known as Platte Mountain, for the nearby South Platte River. However, the more popular name was Devil's Head because it was thought to resemble the head of a devil in profile. When the Board of Geographic Names officially designated the peak Platte Mountain in 1912, efforts spearheaded by the newly formed Colorado Mountain Club created such a furor that they overturned their decision in 1923 and accepted the name Devil's Head (Daley 1976a).

The peak may have first been used to observe the surrounding country for fires by William R. Kreutzer, the first Forest Ranger in the United States who served what was to become the South Platte District between 1898 and 1905 (Daley 1976a). In 1907, the Forest Service planned a series of seven principal fire lookouts spanning the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains from Wyoming to New Mexico (Daley 1976a). Apparently only four were actually established—three in Colorado and one in Wyoming. In addition to Devils Head, there were Twin Sisters near Estes Park, Squaw Peak near Mt. Evans, and Medicine Bow Peak in Wyoming. Of the four, Devils Head was considered to be the most prominent (*Happy Home Chats*, 31 August 1936).

In 1964, there were 47 lookouts in use by the Forest Service in the region. Because of the increased accuracy and cost effectiveness of aerial surveillance, only 17 lookouts were in operation in 1977, and many of these were only on a short-term basis during periods of high fire danger (*Rocky Mountain News*, 4 July 1977). As of 2002, Devils Head is the only full time lookout in Colorado, with only one other manned during periods of high fire danger. The benefit of the lookout has changed somewhat since 1912, though its vast view and protection of forest lands are key to its continued operation. Increased use of the surrounding forest by the Denver area's swelling population and suburban expansion to the edges of the forest have resulted in more frequent fires and the possibility of greater property loss, making it necessary for full-time surveillance so that fires can be detected immediately and suppressed quickly.

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Devils Head Lookout  
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*Historical Background*

As early as the 1870s, there was a growing concern that unrestricted use of the forest and mountainous areas of the western United States was depleting valuable timber lands and eroding watersheds of major rivers. In 1891, Congress granted the President the authority to create Forest Reserves in an attempt to curb the depredations of unchecked fires, uncontrolled and wasteful timber cutting, and excessive grazing. President Benjamin Harrison issued proclamations in 1892 creating two forest reserves that would later become the bulk of the South Platte Ranger District. Active resource management of these areas, however, did not begin until the Forest Reserves were transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture. This occurred in 1905, after considerable opposition. That same year, the Plum Creek, South Platte, and Pikes Peak Forest Reserves were combined into the Pike's Peak Forest Reserve, and the managing agency for these forest reserves officially became known as the Forest Service. The Forest Reserves were renamed National Forests in 1907.

At one time the Pike National Forest had several fire lookout towers. Many of these early lookouts were nothing more than tents placed at the top of a good vantage which were manned only when needed. Later more permanent structures were built and manned during the entire summer. Ranger William Kreutzer first recognized Devils Head as a good location for a fire lookout and a permanent fire lookout was established there in 1912.

The first lookout station was established on Devils Head in 1912 when a table with a fire finder was attached to a rock on the highest point of the peak, 30 feet east of the present tower. This table was anchored to the rock by four upright pipes and surrounded by a protective pipe guardrail to keep the person manning the lookout from falling off the mountain. A small log building, 4-by-6 feet and 4-feet tall with a shed roof, was erected on the summit adjacent to the fire finder so that some protection was possible during storms. This small building also housed a telephone (*Rocky Mountain News*, 20 August 1916). Because of the sheer sides of the granite prominence, climbing to the top of the peak was quite precarious. The first ladder was a large tree felled against a crack in the cliff, to which board cross pieces were nailed as steps. A one-room log cabin (12x16 feet) was constructed in 1914 to provide living quarters for the lookout in Devil's Half Acre below the lookout at the base of the present stairs (Horgen 1925). A log barn was also built for the horses in 1913 or 1914 (Daley 1976a).

The original lookout was used until 1919 when a 10 by 10 foot wood frame observatory with a hip roof and windows all around was installed about 30 feet to the west (Horgen 1925; Daley 1976b). This observatory, which housed the fire-finder and the telephone, was used extensively, often six months a year, for the next 32 years. A ladder made of 30-foot-long poles with small boards nailed every 10 inches replaced the felled tree. At the same time, the log barn was converted into a bunkhouse and store house, while the 1914 cabin was abandoned (Horgen 1925). The converted building had a shed extension on one side (Flynn 1990). Photographs of the area taken in 1919 indicate that another structure, possibly a barn or stable, was present as well. A new wooden stairway and railing were installed in 1921 (Daley 1976a). By the late 1940s, the converted building was being used for storage and remnants of the 1914 cabin were still visible (Flynn 1990).

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In June 1951, Company A, 973rd Engineer Construction Battalion from Ft. Carson, Colorado, using 100 men and 71 mules (Flynn 1990; Daley 1976b), began to dismantle the old tower and construct a new one. Materials were transported to Devil's Half Acre by mule (each carried up to 200 pounds), then by aerial stairway to the lookout site from a lower outcrop of rock to the west (Flynn 1990). Plans also included the rebuilding of the trail, the stairway and cabin. The tower was finished in September; the trail and cabin were completed later that fall. A new metal staircase to the lookout was installed and the old cabin was cut up for firewood.

When first used as a fire lookout, Devils Head was an extremely difficult point to reach. It was accessed by trail over rugged terrain from Watson Park and Jackson Creek to the south and east. A day-long pack trip from the Forest Service Guard Station at Watson Park was required. The route was so demanding that the small valley below the rocky prominence was dubbed "Devils' Half Acre" by Forest Examiner W. I. Hutchinson (*Happy Home Chats*, 31 August 1936). In 1916, the fire lookout began receiving some publicity when the *Rocky Mountain News* (20 August 1916) touted it as "Probably the most unique fire lookout station in existence." The publicity surrounding Miss Helen Dowe in 1919 and 1920 brought the lookout firmly into the public eye. This publicity, along with the expansion of roads into the Rampart Range, the explosion of automobile travel, and the lookout's proximity to Denver, resulted in it becoming a favored destination for weekend tourists seeking rejuvenation from the rigors of city life.

By 1921, it appears that an auto camp and picnic area had been established at the base of Devils Head, probably at the present Devils Head Campground, from where a rather steep 3/4-mile-long trail led to the fire lookout (*Record-Journal of Douglas County*, 16 December 1921). Several articles were written enticing visitors to Devils Head with glorious descriptions of the scenic beauty of the area, comfortable camping accommodations, and incredible vistas from the top of the peak (*The Denver Post*, 3 June 1930; *Denver Municipal Facts*, March/April 1925). In 1930 it was reported that those who made it to the top of the peak were rewarded by the ranger with green and white Forest Service buttons entitling them to membership in "the Devils Head Club" (*The Denver Post*, 3 June 1930). This tradition is continued today. Visitors to the lookout station are presented a membership card to the "Ancient and Honorable Order of Squirrels". At the same time the residence cabin and fire lookout were replaced in 1951, a new trail was constructed from Devils Head Campground to Devil's Half Acre. This was longer, one and three-fourths miles in length, but wider and considerably less steep. The new trail made visitation even easier and the lookout continues to be a very popular destination. In 1990, there were 9,625 visitors to the Devils Head fire lookout on the summit. It is estimated that only half of the people who make the trek from the campground to Devil's Half Acre are stout-hearted enough to climb the stairs to the top of the peak.

### *Helen Dowe*

Devils Head was the duty station for the nation's first female fire lookout. Miss Dowe served as fire lookout on Devils Head from 1919 through 1921. Due to the shortage of able bodied men brought about by World War I, Helen Dowe applied and was hired as the fire lookout during the summer of 1919, giving her the distinction of the first woman fire lookout in America. Her position drew national notice, making her a role model for women throughout the country. This was noted by *The Denver Post* (19 September 1920) that reported, "The success she has attained as the first woman fire lookout, and the

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widespread publicity she has received in magazines and motion pictures, have led thousands of girls throughout the country to make applications for similar positions.” It was reported that she had received thousand of letters from women nationwide desiring to follow in her footsteps. The paper further stated that, “She has demonstrated that a woman is fully as efficient as a man as a forest fire lookout – probably more so.” Helen Dowe spent three seasons as the lookout on Devils Head. She was assisted in 1919 by Nina St. John of Ottawa, Kansas, and by her aunt the following year.

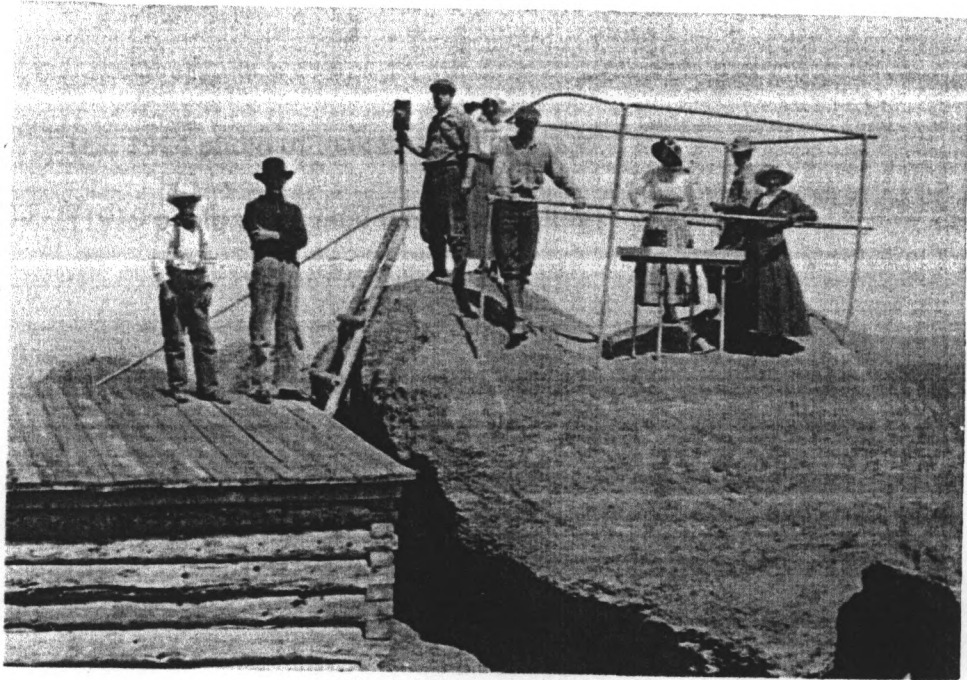
Helen Dowe was born in Denver on November 19, 1889. She grew up in Denver and graduated from West Side High School. She spent several summers at a resort at Palmer Lake where she was a riding instructor. In 1909, she is listed in the Denver City Directory as a teacher. It appears she began working for the *Rocky Mountain News* in 1910 and is listed as a librarian for the *News* in 1912. She apparently began working for the *Denver Times* later in 1912, where she was employed for nearly eight years as an artist colorizing photographs. While stationed at Devils Head, she reportedly spent her spare time colorizing photographs of mountain scenes for the Forest Service and preparing a topographic map of the forest (*Denver Times*, 18 July 1919; *The Denver Post*, 19 September 1920).

During the summer of 1921 she participated in a survey of forest lands in southern Colorado. John Burgess, who had been a surveyor and draftsman for the Forest Service beginning in 1916, was one of the surveyors on the project. Miss Dowe served as “chainman.” Burgess and Dowe announced their engagement on October 1, 1921, and were married that December (*Record-Journal of Douglas County*, 16 December 1921). Burgess continued working for the Forest Service until 1923, then became an engineer for the Water Commission in Denver, a position he held for over 35 years. After her marriage, Helen served as a topographer for the Forest Service and later worked as a draftsman for the Bureau of Reclamation. She died December 22, 1975.

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Ca. 1914 photograph of original lookout on Devil's Head. Firefinder is attached to rock surrounded by pipe framework. Small log cabin for telephone and protection from storms to left. View to east.

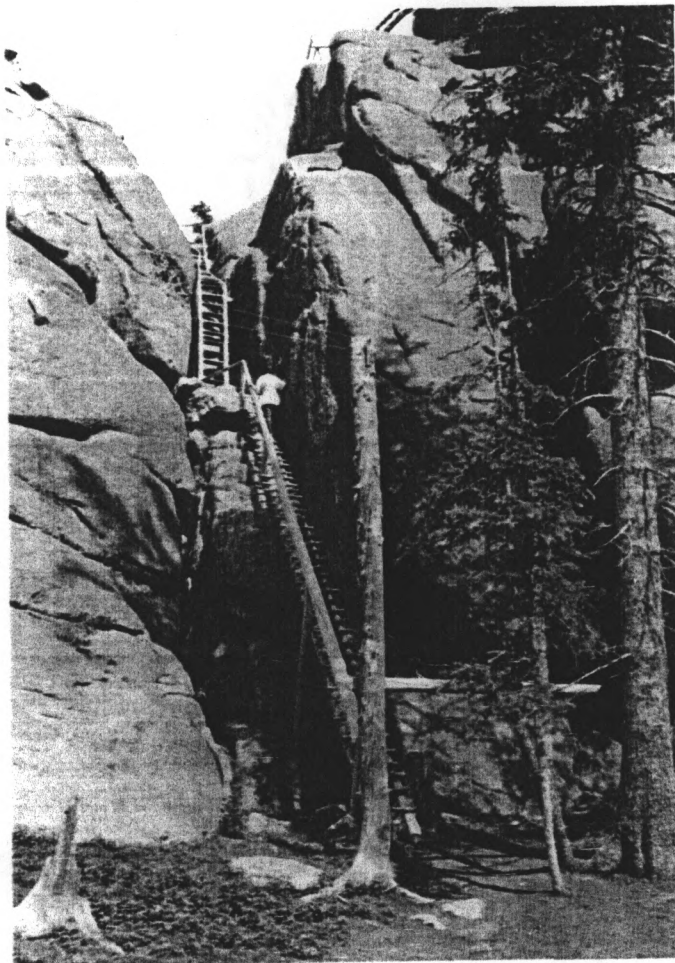


1919 photograph of Miss Helen Dow standing next to new lookout building, replaced in 1951. View to south.

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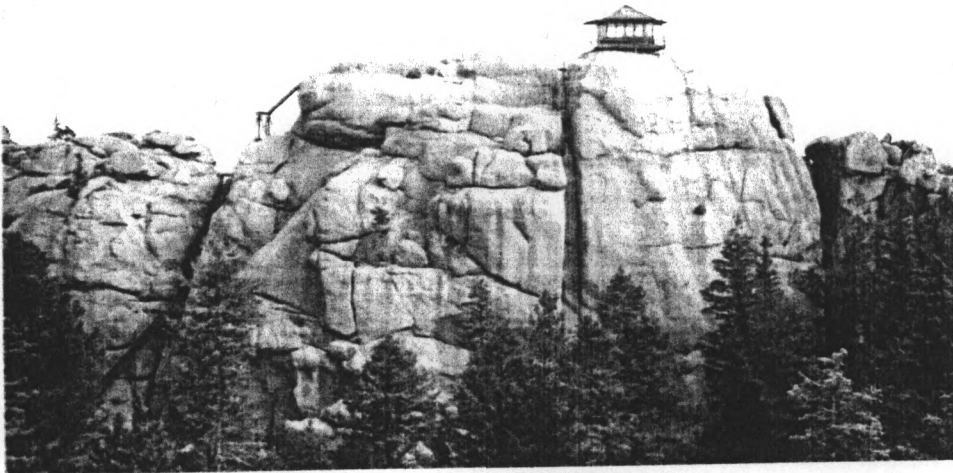


1919 photograph of wooden stairs leading to  
lookout. View to east.

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Overview of Devil's Head Lookout with stairs at left. View to east. 1990



East elevation of lookout building. View to west. 1990

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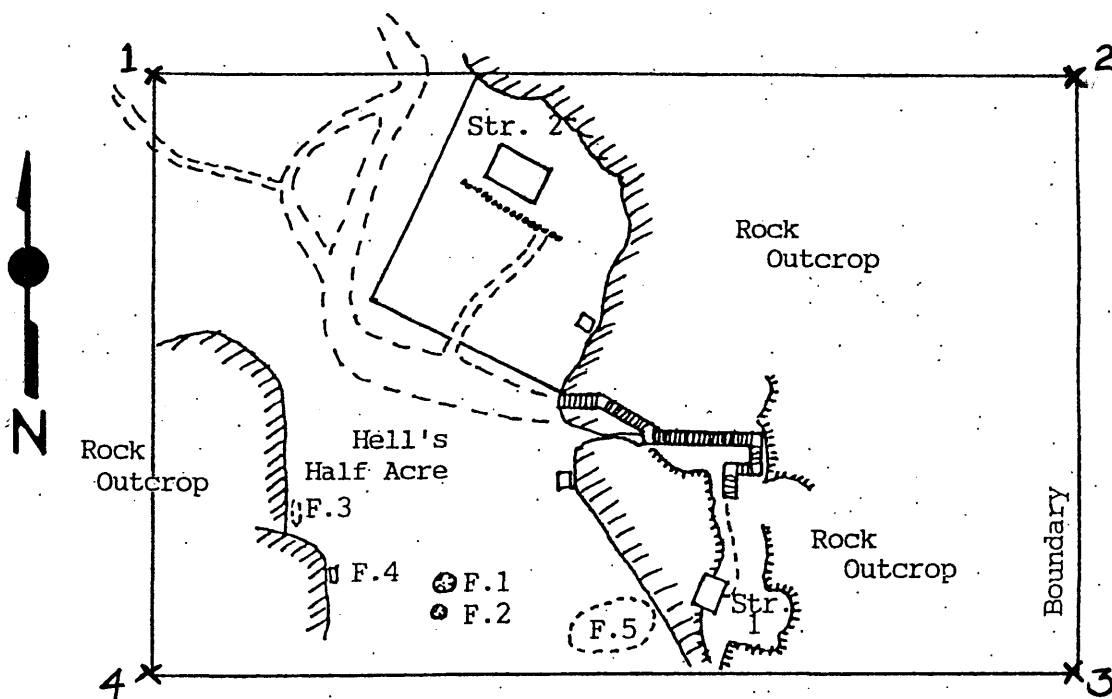
**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated parcel is delineated by a polygon whose vertices are marked by the UTM reference points noted.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is primarily defined on the basis of the site's natural features. The eastern and a portion of the northern boundary includes the promontory known as Devil's Head. The western boundary is the edge of the adjacent rock outcrop. The northwestern and southern boundaries were drawn to encompass the full extent of the concentration of man-made resources within the small valley known Devil's Half Acre. The boundary includes the natural topography—including the promontory and the small valley below, the buildings, structures, and historic archaeological remains that have historically been part of the Devils Head Lookout.



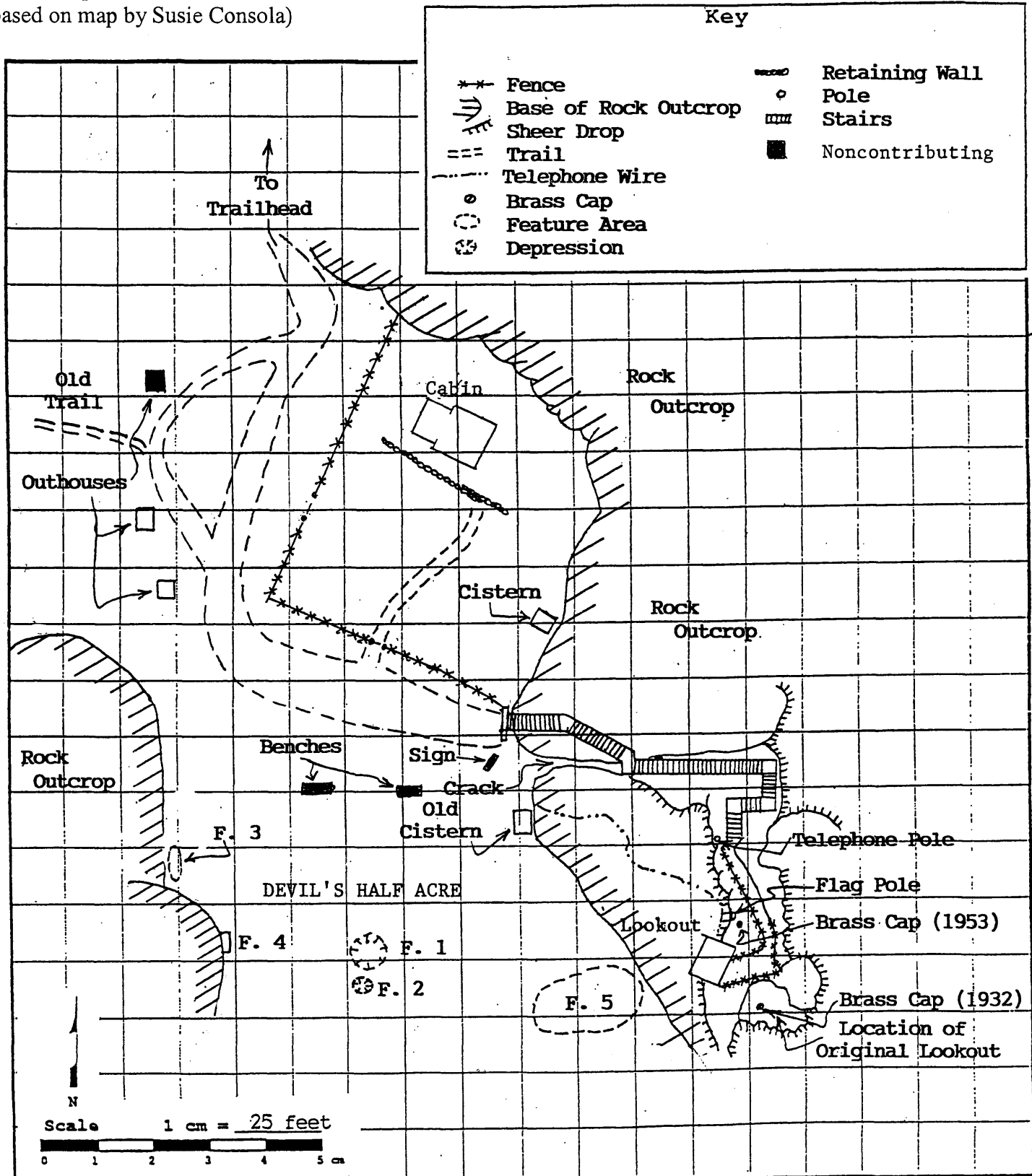
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- 2) 13 491380 mE 4345500 mN
- 3) 13 491380 mE 4345434 mN
- 4) 12 491213 mE 4345434 mN

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Sketch Map  
(based on map by Susie Consola)



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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property: Devils Head Lookout  
Location: Pike National Forest, Douglas County, Colorado  
Photographer: Mary Douglas Young  
Date of Photographs: 25 April 2002  
Negatives: Sedalia Fire House Museum, Sedalia, Colorado

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Photo #	Photographic Information
1	south façade of cabin; camera facing N
2	southeast corner of cabin; camera facing NW
3	northwest corner of cabin; camera facing SE
4	north (rear) of cabin; camera facing S
5	south side of southernmost outhouse; camera facing N
6	north side of southernmost outhouse; camera facing S
7	northeast corner of middle outhouse; camera facing SW
8	southwest corner of middle outhouse; camera facing NE
9	“rules” sign and view of valley from cabin gate; camera facing S
10	information sign and stairway to lookout; camera facing E
11	lookout from top of stairway; camera facing S

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**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**  
Devils Head Quadrangle, Colorado  
7.5 Minute Series

