

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**  
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

PH0668419 724

FOR NPS USE ONLY		DATA SHEET
RECEIVED	MAY 5 1978	
DATE ENTERED	AUG 2 1978	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Shadow Mountain Lookout

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

*SE of Grand Lake in*

Rocky Mountain National Park

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Grand Lake

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

STATE

Colorado

VICINITY OF

CODE

08

COUNTY

Grand

CODE

049 ✓

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet Street, P.O. Box 25287

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Within the boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park,

STREET & NUMBER

created from public lands by Act of Congress of

CITY, TOWN

January 26, 1915.

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

List of Classified Structures Inventory

DATE

On-going

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Shadow Mountain Lookout (elevation 9923 feet) is a seventeen-foot square, three-story structure located near the summit of Shadow Mountain, and this location once enabled it to survey the lodgepole pine forests around Grand Lake.

The fire detection tower, which rests on a concrete foundation, has two lower stories of uncoursed rubblestone and an upper story of frame construction.

The first floor, which was used as a museum and visitor contact station, is entered at the east elevation through a board and batten door. At all the elevations of this floor there are window openings with casement sash. The interior has a flagstone floor and a redwood water storage tank.

The second floor is entered through a board and batten door at the north elevation, and has a small window opening at the southern exposure. The floor is supported by log floor joists, which are exposed on the lookout's exterior and run on a north-south axis. This floor was used as quarters.

The observation area, the third floor, is fenestrated at all elevations with a band of 1/1 fixed sash, which gives the observation room all-round visibility. The frame observation room is entered at the west elevation, and is surmounted by a wood shingled pyramid roof.

The observation room is encircled by a plank balcony that has log balusters and railing, and is supported by log trusses.

All the upper floors are reached by an exterior, quarter-turn stairway, with a landing, which begins at the north elevation. The stairway's handrail, balusters, and stringer are of log construction.

The lookout's balcony and stairway are beginning to show signs of deterioration.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW					
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1932-33

BUILDER/ARCHITECT National Park Service,  
Landscape Architecture Division

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Shadow Mountain Lookout is the only remaining fire detection tower in Rocky Mountain National Park. The lookout, which is presently abandoned, is representative of the early fire protection methods and policies of the National Park Service, and is a significant example of the rustic design employed by the National Park Service during the first half of this century.

Early National Park Service policy dictated that all fires, whether natural or man caused, be immediately suppressed. That policy required the early detection of forest fires, and therefore a means of accomplishing that task - fire lookouts.

The construction of four such lookouts in Rocky Mountain National Park was begun in the early 1930's, and they were situated at strategic points: Shadow Mountain, near Longs Peak, Twin Sisters Peak, and the north fork of the Thompson River.

In 1930 the superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, Edmund B. Rogers, reported in his annual report the construction of a fire trail and telephone line up the side of Shadow Mountain, and that a fire watch had been manned there. The site was apparently successful, for a year later preparations were made for a permanent structure.

The plans for the lookout were done by the National Park Service's Landscape Architecture Division in San Francisco, but the original plans were rejected for various reasons. The new plans, which were completed in 1932, were done in accordance to recommendations made by the National Park Service's Chief Forester, John Coffman, whose responsibilities included fire protection.

Construction of the Shadow Mountain Lookout, like all fire detection towers, was a difficult task. Its location on Shadow Mountain meant that materials, such as cement, cut boards, hardware, shingles, and glass panes, had to be packed on mules to the site. However, materials which would be too costly or impossible to move, such as stone and long logs, were obtained from local sources.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Good, Albert H. Park and Recreation Structures. Vol. I. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. ~~Government~~ Printing Office, 1938.

U.S. "Annual Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park to the Director of the National Park Service." Reports for the years 1930-1933.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,3	43,072,0	4,45,34,60	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Only the lookout is being nominated.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE D. Ferrel Atkins, Ranger Naturalist  
James Muhn, Architectural Historian (Consultant)

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>National Park Service</u>	<u>August 8, 1977</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>Rocky Mountain National Park</u>	<u>(303) 586-2371</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Estes Park</u>	<u>Colorado</u>

# 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES  NO  NONE

*Arthur C. Farnsworth*  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

*Chief, Div. of Cultural Resources Mgmt.* DATE 7/6/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*W. M. ...* DATE 8-2-78  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
DATE 8-1-78

ATTEST:

*Charles ...*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 5 1978

DATE ENTERED AUG 2 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The structure was completed in 1933, and was judged an architectural success. Albert H. Good in his 1938 book, Park and Recreation Structures, felt that the Shadow Mountain Lookout was one of the best designed fire detection towers; being "illustrative of the happy results where a masonry structure can appear to grow out of a natural rock outcrop."

The lookout, which was first manned in 1933, was usually occupied by a married couple that would share turns keeping watch over the nearby forested lands, but they also had other duties to perform. The seasonal rangers had contact with the public, and so became involved with public relations. For that purpose the tower's ground floor was used as a museum, which probably had exhibits on fire protection and the park's wildlife, and a visitor contact station. With the introduction of radio to the park, the lookout's personnel had to repeat messages, when necessary, between rangers at lower elevations, where trees and mountain might cause interference; and they also established contact with bordering National Forests when conditions dictated.

The development of new fire policies; new methods of fire detection, such as the reporting done by public and private aircraft; and the use of modern repeater stations all contributed to the decline of fire lookouts; and after the 1968 summer season the Shadow Mountain Lookout was abandoned.

Today the Shadow Mountain Lookout is abandoned and boarded-up. The park staff at Rocky Mountain National Park has not developed any plans for adaptive use in the near future; although, they have recognized the lookout's historic and architectural significance.