



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: Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout

Other names/site number: Building 75

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1916-1942

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

2. Location

Street & number: Lava Beds National Monument

City or town: Tulelake State: California County: Siskiyou

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>NPS FPO</u>	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
	<u>6/15/17</u>
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<u>Jenan Saunders, Deputy SHPO, California State Office of Historic Preservation</u>	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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:)

Jan Edson H. Deall 9.5.17
Signature of the Keeper 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>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/fire lookout

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/fire lookout

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Rustic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: concrete, stone masonry, wood frame and shingles

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.)

Summary Paragraph

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout is located atop Schonchin Butte in Lava Beds National Monument in northeastern California, approximately 45 miles south of Klamath Falls, Oregon. Lava Beds National Monument, established in 1925, preserves a volcanic landscape with over 700 lava-tube caves—the highest concentration in North America—as well as lava fields, cinder cones, and other volcanic features. Schonchin Butte is a sparsely forested 5,302 foot cinder cone on the 850 square mile Medicine Lake shield volcano; the cone once served as a vent for a volcanic eruption. The lookout is perched among a basaltic lava rock outcropping on Schonchin Butte and is accessed by a 0.7 mile hiking trail. The views reach across the entire monument as well as into the adjacent Modoc National Forest. The building, constructed in 1940-1941 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, is rustic style, wood-framed, and one-story with a basement. Character defining features include the wood catwalk, the basaltic lava rock veneer, and the observation room with windows on all sides. The building blends into its setting through its location on the cinder cone plug, the wood exterior, the lava rock veneer and the lava rock rubble piled around the lookout base. A wood pit toilet with a shake roof is set downhill and east of the lookout. The lookout is the single contributing resource, and it retains excellent integrity to the historic period.

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Narrative Description

Lava Beds National Monument, set on the Medicine Lake shield volcano in northeastern California, contains more than 46,000 acres of lava flows, cinder cones, high desert and over 700 lava tube caves. The 7,913-foot volcano, which covers nearly 850 square miles, was created by eruptions beginning 500,000 years ago; evidence of thirty separate lava flows is visible in the monument, with the youngest flow only 950 years old. Schonchin Butte, a cinder cone, was formed as pressure and gases in magma beneath the surface caused an eruption that discharged lava into the air. The lava cooled and fell as cinders around the vent, creating Schonchin Butte. It is set in the center of the park and rises to an elevation of 5,302 feet on the volcano's north flank. On a clear day, views from the lookout reach across the park in all directions, and extend to Mt. Shasta to the southwest, the Warner Mountains to the east, and even to the south rim of Crater Lake in Oregon.¹

The lookout was built in the rustic style in 1940-1941, with wood frame construction and a lava rock veneer below the windowsill line. In addition to the veneer, lava rock rubble—rocks of irregular shape and size—has been placed around the basement level and secured with mortar. This gives the appearance that the lookout is growing out of the cinder cone, and the lookout is unique among American fire lookouts for its use of lava rock in this way. The lookout represents National Park Service (NPS) design philosophy about park structures between World Wars I and II, where native materials were used to make buildings and structures blend in with their environment.

The lookout is accessed by a 0.7 mile hiking trail that climbs at a moderate grade through Western juniper, mountain mahogany, big sagebrush, and other shrubs before reaching the lookout. The trail culminates in stone stairs at the lookout. The stairs are lined with uncoursed lava rock rubble walls that wrap around the lookout's east and north sides before reaching a landing paved with lava rock and enclosed with the same type of uncoursed rubble walls. The landing contains a plank bench that is set parallel to the north side of the building. From the landing, five lava stone steps lead to the catwalk. The rubble walls direct pedestrian flow to the steps and the catwalk, and prevent the public from accessing the west and south side of the lookout's basement level, where the butte falls steeply away.

The building is one-story with a basement, and both stories contain one open room. All construction above the basement is wood frame. Lava rock veneer continues up from the basement level to the windowsill line of the observation room exterior. The top of the rock has been covered with a smooth layer of mortar, about one foot wide, that has been painted the same color brown as the lookout building. This created a level surface that allows visitors to sit or lean on the top of the rock. The lookout is stabilized by guy wires at each corner. It is capped with a pyramidal, standing seam, galvanized tin roof with wide eaves that shelter a catwalk. Solar panels on the roof of the lookout building charge the repeater, radio, and lights.

¹ U.S. Geological Survey, Volcano Hazards Program, Medicine Lake, online resource at http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/medicine_lake/medicine_lake_geo_hist_23.html.

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One of the lookout's character defining features is a wood catwalk that extends continuously around the building. The catwalk is 2'6" feet wide, painted the same brown as the rest of the building, with three wood plank railings and six upright wood plank posts per side. The railings are lower than the windowsills so that the view from the lookout interior remains unobstructed. One interpretive panel is set on each side of the catwalk railing and a flagpole has been placed near the northeast corner of the catwalk. 4" by 4" braces support the catwalk.

The building's main room, accessed by a wood four-light door on the east side of the building, is an observation room that measures 16'6" on all four sides and contains 306 square feet. Windows wrap completely around the upper story on three sides. Five windows occupy each of the north, west, and south sides; three fixed single-light sash windows alternate with two double-hung sash windows. The exception to this pattern is the east side, which contains the door to the observation room as well as four windows. The door is flanked by two double-hung sash windows. Two fixed single-light sash windows are set to the outside of those. All four walls contain one louvered opening centered above the windows, for ventilation. Wood awnings that open to the inside of the room are used as shutters for the vents. Wood panels are inset into the spaces where four additional louvered vents were originally set. Above the door, on the louvered vent trim, is a small brass plate that contains the lookout's building number: 75. Outside the front door, a section of concrete on the floor of the catwalk is inscribed, "8/26/42 Schonchin EL [elevation] 5293." The building was completed in 1941; the date corresponds to the year that additional modifications, such as the pouring of a concrete floor in the basement, were completed. The official elevation of the butte has since been determined to be 5,302 feet.

The interior of the main room contains an Osborne Fire Finder, an instrument used by a fire spotter to obtain bearings on smoke from fires. The fire finder is the second in the lookout's history and was installed in 1966. The podium on which the fire finder rests is original. The room's walls, beneath the windowsills, and ceiling are paneled with vertical boards, painted light green. Built in cabinetry occupies the west wall, underneath the windows. The lookout is furnished with a twin bed and a desk.

The 375 square foot basement is accessed by a wood door on the east side of the building. The basement is covered with a thick veneer of rough, irregular, reddish volcanic rock, gathered from the site. The basement contains a single room with a concrete floor and a cylindrical cistern. The cistern, no longer used, was originally fed by gutters and supplied non-potable water to the lookout. A trap door and a ladder originally led from the observation room to the basement, and boards have replaced the opening. One small window, on the west side, illuminates the basement.

A pit toilet is set about 100 yards downhill and east of the lookout, and is accessed by a short spur trail off the main trail. It measures 4' x 5' and is wood framed, with wood siding and a wood shingle roof. The building is locked and is not open to public use, and branches and rocks have been scattered on the spur trail to deter public interest. As a small-scale, utilitarian, and modified building, at a distance from the lookout, the pit toilet is not included in the resource count.

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Integrity

The lookout has undergone only minor alterations. Staff have replaced rotting boards on the catwalk, as well as the carpet and light fixtures, and repainted the building. The replacements were done in-kind. Louvered openings originally were set above every window, and only one such vent is still extant on each side. Some parts of the landing and stairs have undergone repair, and the new mortar is lighter in color than the original mortar. Solar panels occupy a section of the roof, and interpretive panels as well as a radio repeater and an antenna have been added to the catwalk railings. The alterations are minor and the building largely retains its original appearance.

The lookout retains excellent integrity to the historic period. The location on the top of Schonchin Butte remains the same, as does the setting, a rocky, sparsely forested cinder cone in Lava Beds National Monument. Access to the site is still by trail. The design has remained the same, and the few materials that have been replaced have been replaced in kind. The character defining features of the fire lookout—the observation room and catwalk, and the lava rock veneer—appear as they did in 1941. The workmanship of the CCC crews that constructed the building is still evident. Feeling and association are apparent—the historic character is still intact, and the building conveys its association with the CCC and with the rustic architecture of the 1930s. The building is still an operational fire lookout with extensive views of the region, and is manned by a fire spotter in the summer; it also continues to attract and accommodate visitors.

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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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

CONSERVATION

Period of Significance

1940-1942

Significant Dates

1940

1941

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

National Park Service

Civilian Conservation Corps

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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.)

The Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout is significant under Criteria A and C at the state level of significance. It is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation and Conservation for its association with the twentieth century movement to develop national parks for public enjoyment and recreational use and to conserve natural features. It is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its association with rustic architecture in national parks. The period of significance begins in 1940, when the lookout's construction began, and ends in 1942, when crews put the finishing touches on the lookout. The end date also corresponds with that of the associated *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1916-1942* Multiple Property Submission. Fire lookouts are included as a property type in the Multiple Property Documentation Form. As stipulated by the registration requirements, Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout uses naturalistic techniques that harmonize the manmade features with the natural surroundings, retains the physical characteristics of buildings developed for the area during the New Deal, reflects the practices and principles of park landscape design practiced by the NPS during this time, and retains all aspects of integrity.² The building remains a working fire lookout as well as a destination for visitors.

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

The lookout was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and was part of the effort to develop national parks during the New Deal. It remains as a link to one of the most popular and successful of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs. The building was one of a number of buildings and structures constructed at Lava Beds National Monument by the CCC between 1933 and 1942. The lookout had two functions—wildfire detection, and public enjoyment and education. It is one of only four extant fire lookouts built by the CCC in California's national parks.

The lookout exhibits the rustic style that dominated in national parks between World Wars I and II. Schonchin Butte, along with other lookouts built in National Parks, represented a new lookout type, with its appearance, methods of construction, and function that are distinctly different from those built before 1929. It retains the physical characteristics of the style that was developed by the National Park Service and it retains its original functions, both as a fire lookout and a site for interpretation and recreation. It is one of only four remaining rustic style fire lookouts in California's national parks, and one of only five extant lookouts designed by the National Park Service and built by the CCC in California.

² Linda Flint McClelland, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1916-1942*, August 8, 1995, 194-195.

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Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1916-1942 provides context for identification and evaluation of resources related to historic buildings and landscapes designed by the National Park Service in national and state parks from 1916 to 1942.³

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout is part of a larger group of facilities at Lava Beds National Monument constructed between 1933 and 1941. The monument was established in 1925, and remained under U.S. Forest Service management until 1933, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order transferring all national monuments from the Forest Service to the National Park Service. There had been little development in Lava Beds under Forest Service management. That changed once the NPS assumed operations and New Deal programs in the 1930s provided the means for national parks and monuments to develop or expand infrastructure.

Lava Beds National Monument benefitted from both Public Works Administration (PWA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews. The PWA was created under the National Industrial Recovery Act, and its work typically focused on large-scale public works projects such as highways, bridges, and dams, though at Lava Beds crews built roads and cave trails between 1933 and 1934. The CCC, created as part of the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) program, deployed crews to Lava Beds from 1933 to 1942 and had the greater impact on the monument's landscape.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the ECW program in 1933 as part of the Federal Unemployment Relief Act. The program was one of Roosevelt's solutions to the economic calamity of the Great Depression, and one that was based on the president's own interest in the conservation of natural resources. The unemployment rate had reached 25 percent in 1933, and the number was even higher for young men. Legislation establishing the ECW passed at the end of March, only three weeks after Roosevelt's inauguration. The CCC was established to carry out the work of the ECW and to employ large numbers of young men in conservation work on public lands.

By July of 1933, only three months after Congress passed the ECW legislation, almost 250,000 men had enlisted in the Corps. At its peak in August of 1935, about 506,000 men served in 2,900 camps across the nation. Throughout the Depression, the CCC employed around 5 percent of the male population of the United States. Each man was paid thirty dollars per month, and he was required to send twenty-five dollars of each paycheck back to his family. Government officials hoped not only to simply employ young men, but to teach job skills, instill a love of the outdoors, and impart a "wholesome outlook on life" through hard labor. In national parks, where much of the work was carried out, CCC workers engaged in projects including maintenance and construction of visitor facilities and infrastructure, forest improvement, erosion control, and landscape work. Crews built a wide variety of buildings and structures, including administration buildings, fire lookouts, staff housing, campgrounds and landscape features, and these

³ McClelland, *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1916-1942*.

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transformed the experience of both visitors and staff in parks. CCC companies also constructed fire breaks, fought insect outbreaks, and eradicated unwanted plants.⁴

The program was one of the most popular of the New Deal, and some tried to make the CCC a permanent government organization. However, World War II mobilization reduced the numbers of available men and increased the number of higher paying jobs in the United States. Despite the continued support of President Roosevelt, Congress discontinued the CCC in 1942. By that time, 2 million enrollees had worked in 198 CCC camps in 94 national park and monument areas, and 697 camps in 881 state, county, and municipal areas.

The first Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews arrived at Lava Beds in 1933. Between 1933 and 1937, the monument was only served by seasonal CCC camps. A permanent camp, Camp Lava Beds, was finally established in 1937. Enrollees initially performed road maintenance, trail construction, and fire hazard reduction. They constructed trails as well as ladders and handrails in the monument's caves. In 1937-1938, they built a ranger's residence, later called the Superintendent's Residence, offices, and log picnic tables in the campground and the Fleener Chimneys picnic area. The young men improved utilities, roads and the campground, and constructed service buildings such as a gas station and equipment shed.⁵

However, Lava Beds had no building or structure that aided in fire detection. Despite the monument's name, which conjures images of a stark, barren landscape, ponderosa pine, Western juniper, bitterbrush and other trees and shrubs all thrive in the monument and are vulnerable to fire. It was not unusual for a national park to lack a fire lookout during this time. Before 1929, the NPS relied on the Forest Service to build, maintain, and staff fire lookouts in national forests near national parks. At Lava Beds, the NPS depended on Forest Service staff manning the Timber Mountain Lookout for reports of smoke in the monument. However, the view from Timber Mountain encompassed only a part of Lava Beds, leaving the majority of the landscape vulnerable to fire. Most western national parks were similarly unprotected.⁶

The NPS began designing and building its own fire lookouts, as well as formulating plans for fire control, in 1929. Later that year, the NPS landscape division in San Francisco began to develop standardized plans for lookout buildings. Fire lookouts in national forests did not easily accommodate visitors, and the buildings were not considered a tourist destination. NPS architects thought about the buildings differently, and they expected that park visitors *would* trek to the new lookouts to take in scenic views. As a result, they designed the buildings with both fire detection and recreation in mind. In designing the new buildings, NPS architects took inspiration from the observation towers which provided scenic views to tourists in various national parks. The lookouts that resulted were often multi-story, with one level for observation and living space

⁴ John C. Paige, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History* (Washington DC: National Park Service, 1985), 78-80; Linda Flint McClelland, *Building the National Parks*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 332-333.

⁵ Matthew Godfrey, *Layers of Meaning: An Administrative History of Lava Beds National Monument*, National Park Service, 2006, 68-69.

⁶ Sampson Brainerd to the Regional Forester, December 1, 1940. Lava Beds National Monument Files.

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and lower levels for storage. To facilitate public use, architects included a catwalk around the top floor where visitors could take in expansive views, and they designed the lookouts with stairs, rather than ladders, which provided a safer visitor experience. Besides the recreational aspect, NPS architects differentiated their lookouts from those built by the Forest Service through their choice of paint colors—brown rather than green or white. After ECW programs began in 1933, the NPS had the resources, in the form of additional architects, to design lookouts for parks on an individual basis, rather than using only standardized plans.⁷

At Lava Beds, Schonchin Butte was chosen for a lookout due to the fact that spotters could see the entire monument from the site. From the summit staff could also see into the Medicine Lake region of the adjacent Modoc National Forest, and so the NPS would be able to provide the Forest Service with information about fires in that area.⁸

Like other buildings constructed in the monument during this time, the lookout was designed in the rustic style, which had become the dominant style of construction in national parks during the 1920s and 1930s. This style was an attempt by the National Park Service to build functional buildings that harmonized with their environments. Architects sought to preserve the natural character of a site by “harmonizing manmade improvements with the natural setting and topography,” and they accomplished this through a number of techniques. Architects took into account the color, scale, massing, and texture of natural features of the landscape when designing buildings. Buildings were screened with native vegetation and built with native materials so that they blended into the natural environment. Native materials, such as logs, wood, and stone, were used. It was not enough to simply use local products, however—the materials had to look rustic and unfinished. Buildings and structures were meant not only to function practically, but to enhance visitors’ experiences in the natural world.

Fire lookouts posed a particular challenge to architects, since they were necessarily sited on mountain tops, without vegetation that might obscure the view. The use of native timber and stone, as well as the simple rectangular shape and a hipped roof, enabled the buildings to remain inconspicuous. Lookouts built in national parks during this era exhibit some conventions of standard fire lookout design, which also incorporating ideas about visitor use and rustic architecture. Typical features of an NPS fire lookout built during this era included a catwalk that surrounded the observation room and stone masonry.⁹

The National Park Service codified the rustic style in 1935 for the agency with the publication of *Park Structures and Facilities*, an instructional manual edited by architect Albert Good. The

⁷ Albert Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Vol. 2*, (Washington D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 88; McClelland, *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1917-1942*, 93-94.

⁸ Samson Brainerd to the Regional Forester, December 1, 1940. Lava Beds National Monument Files.

⁹ Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998), 338-360; William Tweed, Laura Soulliere and Henry Law, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*, (National Park Service, Western Regional Office, February 1977); Linda McClelland, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916-1942*, (Washington D.C: National Park Service, 1993); Steven Mark, *Mt. Harkness Fire Lookout*, National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2014, 15.

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book offered recommendations and plans for numerous buildings and structures, including fire lookouts. Good's *Park and Recreation Structures*, published in 1938, served as a revised and enlarged manual of rustic design. Good believed that fire lookouts should have continuous fenestration, stairs rather than ladders, and catwalks, for both fire detection and public enjoyment. He recommended that where feasible, lookouts should "appear to grow out of a natural rock outcrop."¹⁰ Lookouts also had to withstand lightning strikes, high winds, and winter storms, as well as lookout staff and visitor use. The Schonchin Butte lookout incorporated all of these character defining features.

In 1940, after CCC crews working at Lava Beds built an access road to the butte base as well as a trail and a telephone line to the top, work began on the Schonchin Butte Lookout. Wood and iron were fabricated by workers in camp and then the materials, eleven tons in all, were carried to the lookout site by hand so that construction activities impacted the natural landscape as little as possible.¹¹ The resulting building was one story with a basement, wood framed, and lined with windows on the upper story. Interior cabinetry provided ample storage on the interior. A wood catwalk encircled the building. Lava rock was also used for veneer below the windowsill line, and for steps. An Osborne fire finder was installed in the observation room so that fire spotters could accurately pinpoint a fire's location. Lookout construction was completed in 1941, though additional improvements, such as the addition of a pit toilet and a concrete floor in the basement, occurred in 1942.¹²

NPS architects intended the lookout to be "nearly invisible," and it was perched atop the basaltic plug—a lava rock outcrop formed when magma cools and hardens at the vent of a volcano—at the top of the cinder cone. Uncoursed lava rocks were assembled into roughly built walls around the lookout in order to further the illusion. The building was lined with thick lava rock veneer to the windowsill level in order to keep the lookout unobtrusive within its setting; other CCC-constructed buildings in the monument also have this same veneer. The way the building blends into its volcanic setting and appears to grow out of the basaltic plug of the cinder cone makes the Schonchin Butte Lookout unique among the four remaining rustic lookouts in California's national parks.

The park superintendent was pleased with the result, and he anticipated that it would be a success both as a fire detection lookout and a visitor attraction. He called the lookout "modern in every respect" and predicted that monument visitors would flock to the "wonderful views" from the top. "The area covered from this point," he stated proudly, "is greater than any lookout in Northern California and will be of great value, not only to the Monument Ranger force, but to all the neighboring agencies."¹³ The lookout remains a popular destination of monument visitors.

¹⁰ Albert Good, *Park and Recreation Structures*, (Boulder, CO: Graybooks, 1990), 159.

¹¹ J. Volney Lewis to Regional Director, NPS, February 21, 1939, Lava Beds National Monument Files.

¹² Annual Report of the Lava Beds National Monument for the 1943 Fiscal Year, 3. Lava Beds National Monument files.

¹³ Annual Report of Lava Beds National Monument, 1940. Lava Beds National Monument.

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The Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout is one of five surviving lookouts in California that can be classified as National Park Service rustic architecture. All five incorporate native stone and a catwalk, and have at least one story plus a basement. Each was designed and built under NPS auspices. The Schonchin Butte lookout is unique for its lava rock veneer and setting within the plug of a cinder cone, and it retains integrity to the historic period. It is one of four surviving rustic fire lookouts in California national parks. The others are Crane Flat and Henness Ridge lookouts in Yosemite National Park, and Mt. Harkness in Lassen Volcanic National Park. The fifth NPS-designed extant rustic fire lookout is the Gardner Fire Lookout in Mount Tamalpais State Park. The lookout is staffed in summer for fire detection, and it remains the only fire lookout in Lava Beds National Monument.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Archival Collections

Administrative files of Lava Beds National Monument, Lava Beds National Monument.

Secondary Sources

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McClelland, Linda Flint. *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1917-1942*. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, August 8, 1995.

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_____. *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916-1942*. Washington D.C: National Park Service, 1993.

Paige, John C. *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History*. Washington DC: National Park Service, 1985.

Tweed, William, Laura Soulliere, and Henry Law. *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*. National Park Service, Western Regional Office, February 1977.

Online resources

U.S. Geological Survey, Volcano Hazards Program, Medicine Lake,
http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/medicine_lake/medicine_lake_geo_hist_23.html.

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

Siskiyou, California
County and State

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: Lava Beds National Monument

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.738074 Longitude: -121.529079

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

The boundary of the property extends twenty feet from all sides of the fire lookout.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the lookout and associated landscape features, such as lava rock walls, steps and walkways, created by the CCC. It does not include the pit toilet, which is 100 yards distant and a small-scale, noncontributing resource.

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

Siskiyou, California
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christy Avery
organization: National Park Service
street & number: 909 1st Avenue, 5th Floor
city or town: Seattle state: WA zip code: 98104
e-mail: Christine.Avery@nps.gov
telephone: (206) 220-4127
date: July 2014; Revised May 2017

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.)

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

Name of Property: Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
City or Vicinity: Tulelake (vicinity)
County: Siskiyou
State: California
Photographer: Christy Avery
Date Photographed: August 6, 2014

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

- 1 of 13 Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout, east side (right) and south side, from the trail. View to northwest.
- 2 of 13 Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout, south side. View to north.

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

Siskiyou, California
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- 3 of 13 Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout, south side, and the top of Schonchin Butte. View to north-northeast.
- 4 of 13 Catwalk and mortared top of the lava rock veneer. View to east.
- 5 of 13 Catwalk. View to west.
- 6 of 13 Detail of lava rock veneer on the east side of the lookout.
- 7 of 13 Lava rock steps on the lookout's north side. View to west.
- 8 of 13 Stone stairs and landing on the north side of the lookout. View to south.
- 9 of 13 Lava rock rubble outside the basement's east side. View to north-northwest.
- 10 of 13 Inscription outside the front door of the lookout.
- 11 of 13 Interior of the lookout's observation room. View to north.
- 12 of 13 The Osborne Fire Finder in the observation room.
- 13 of 13 The pit toilet and the associated spur trail. View to north-northeast.

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.

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

Siskiyou, California
County and State

Location Map

Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout is visible on the crater rim of the cinder cone.

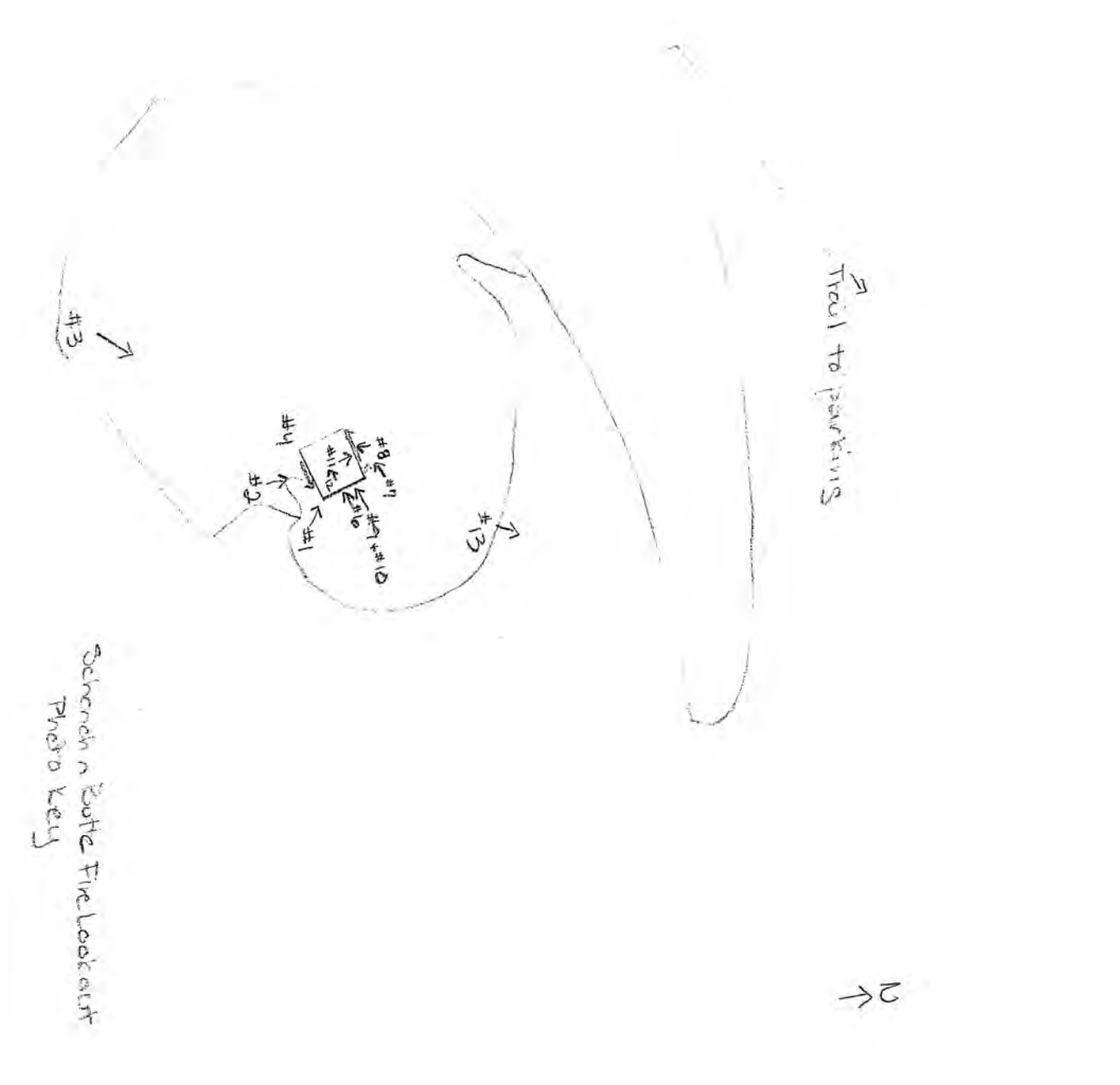
Latitude: 41.738074 Longitude: -121.529079



Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
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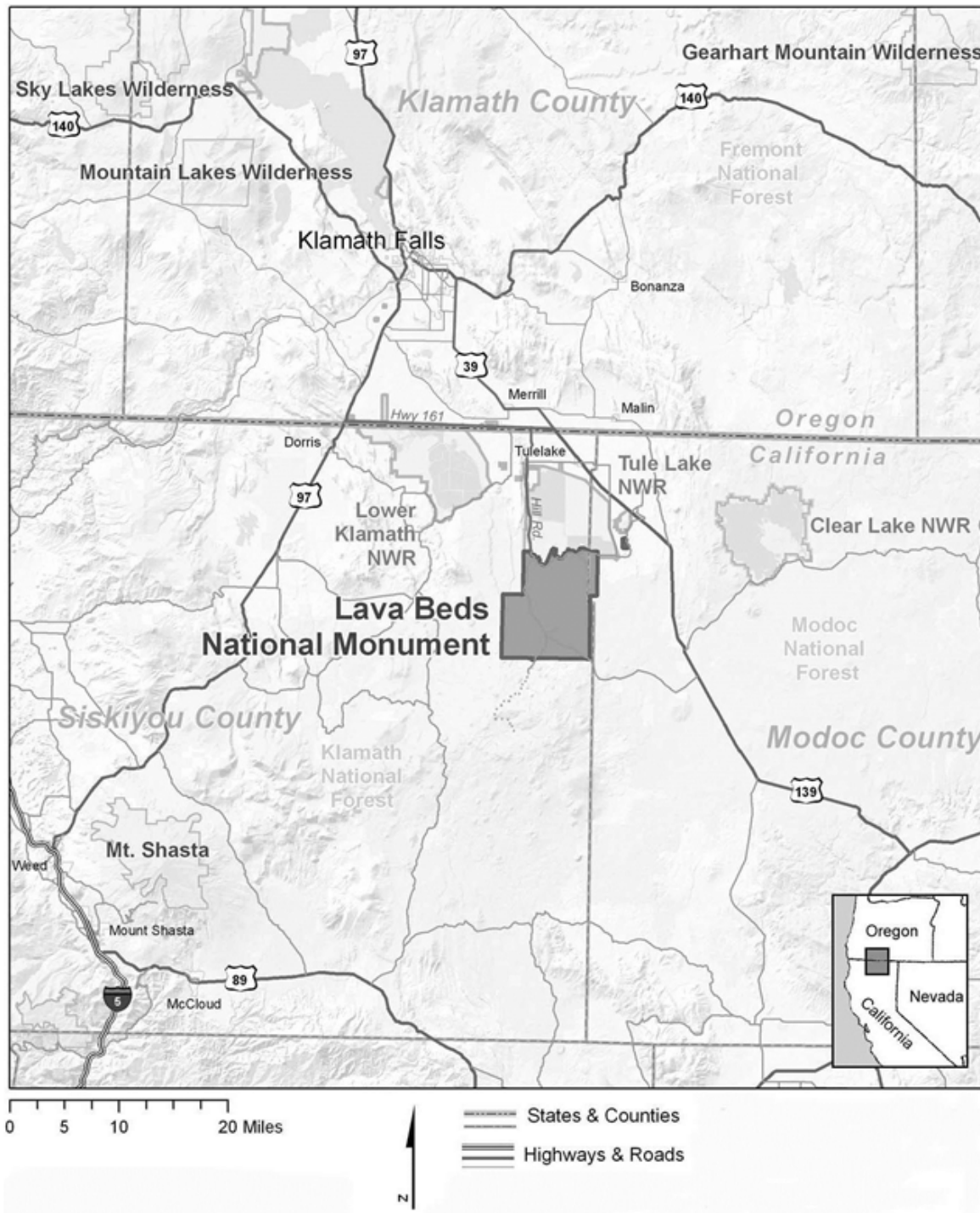
Sketch Map/Photo Key



Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

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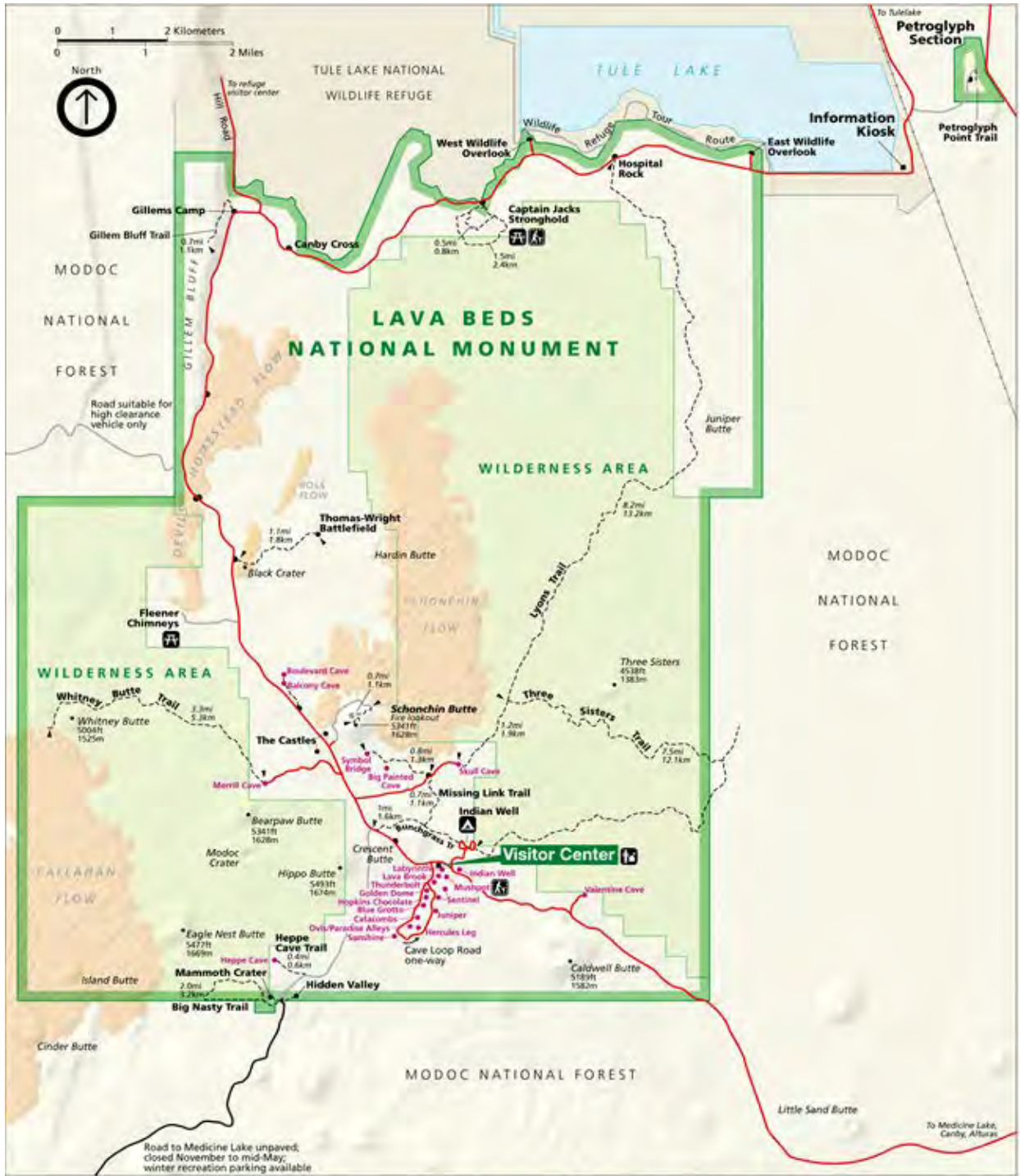
Site Map



Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout
Name of Property

Siskiyou, California
County and State

Monument Map





















8/26/42

SCHONCHIN

EL. 5295







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/21/2017 Date of Pending List: 8/16/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/31/2017 Date of 45th Day: 9/5/2017 Date of Weekly List: 9/7/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 9/5/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall Discipline Historian

Telephone _____ Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

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



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240




H32(2280)

JUN 29 2017

Memorandum

To: Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science 

Subject: Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout, Lava Beds National Monument, Siskiyou County, California

I am forwarding the National Register nomination form for the Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout in Lava Beds National Monument. It is being submitted as part of the Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, 1917-1942 Multiple Property Submission. The Park History program has reviewed the nomination and found the tower eligible under criteria A and C at the state level of significance, with the areas of significance of Conservation, Entertainment/Recreation, and Architecture. If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Spradley-Kurowski at 202-354-2266 or kelly_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov.