

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Timberline Lodge

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Mount Hood National Forest

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Government Camp

\_\_ VICINITY OF

1st

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Oregon 97028

41

Clackamas

005

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- OTHER: Ski Lodge  
Resort Hotel

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

\_\_ VICINITY OF

D. C.

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Clackamas County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

8th and Main Streets

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Oregon City

Oregon

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1970

\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Parks and Recreation Branch, Oregon State Highway Division

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Salem

Oregon 97310

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The following description is excerpted from two reports submitted to the National Register by Paul Hartwig and Warren Olney.

Constructed 6,000 feet above sea level, the lodge is a little more than 3 miles from the summit of Mt. Hood.

"Seen from a distance, Timberline Lodge seems less large than it is because of the immensity of its mountainous surroundings. The building is 360 feet in length, four stories in height, and covers an area of approximately 40,000 square feet.

From ground to first floor level, the exterior walls are of heavy rubble masonry-uncut boulders rim the mountainside. Above the first floor level the walls are of heavy timber construction to the eaves. The roof, pitched at an acute angle to prevent too great an accumulation of snow, is shingled with Oregon-manufactured cedar shakes laid ten inches to the weather. A number of hipped and shed roofed dormer windows break the roof line.

The central section of the building, hexagonal in shape and sixty feet in diameter, culminate in a six-sided stone chimney stack topped by a weathervane. Flanking this section, which is known as the Head House, are two wings, the longer one to the west, the other southeast. The huge central chimney of the Head House is ninety-two feet in height and fourteen feet in diameter at its base. Actually six distinct chimneys in one, this shaft carries smoke from six fireplaces, three in the ski lounge and three in the main lounge. Each fireplace opening is seven feet high and five feet wide.

Woods used in building and finishing Timberline Lodge include red cedar, Port Orford cedar, Douglas Fir, Ponderosa pine, oak, Western juniper, and hemlock. All of these woods were grown in Oregon, many of them within a short distance of the lodge. Approximately 13,000 square yards of Stayton stone were hauled to the site and used for terrace paving and fireplace hearths.

Across the front of the Head House at main-floor level is a wide, uncovered terrace with a low rail and with steps at either end all built of native stone. The main entrance opens on this terrace.

Framing the main entrance is a massive architrave composed principally of two Douglas fir columns and a lintel of the same material. Near the top of each vertical column is a hand carved mountain ram's head. Vertical columns and lintel are further embellished by carvings that represent, in native Indian symbolism, "everlasting life and abundance."

(Continued)

# 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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Recreation
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      1935-1938                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT    W. I. Turner, Howard Griffin, Dean Wright, Linn A. Forrest and Ward Ganno

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Widely regarded as the finest example of 1930's "mountain architecture," Timberline Lodge is sited on the south slope of Mt. Hood. Conceived by the Federal Works Progress Administration the structure is a remarkable example of the WPA ideal at its best-- artists and craftsmen, builders and architects working to create a major building, beautifully appointed. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the Lodge in 1937.

Elizabeth Walton Potter describes its history:

"At about the time skiing became a fast-rising winter sport, and the number of visitors to Mt. Hood National Forest annually approached the 200,000 mark, the lodge at timberline took shape.... Because of the unprecedented scope and variety of work offered Oregon artists and craftsmen in a public commission, and because of the recreational need it fulfilled, the project was considered a model of social usefulness as well as distinctive design.

The site is at the foot of Palmer Glacier on the Timberline Trail which circumscribes the mountain at an elevation of approximately 6,000 feet. A system of radiating trails converge at the lodge, resume in the summit trail and culminate at 11,245 feet. To avoid the hazard of building near the edge of a deep canyon, construction was commenced at a point approximately a quarter of a mile north and up the slope from the site originally under consideration.

The lodge was oriented to command a view of not only the summit, but other major peaks of the Cascade Range to the south, including Mt. Jefferson, Three Fingered Jack, and Mt. Washington. Considerable grading was required to adapt the structure to existing contours. Consulting landscape architect A. D. Taylor pointed out as a consequence of inspection trips in the early phases of construction the fragile nature of the surface soil, which is predominantly volcanic ash, and that the alpine vegetation could be easily disturbed. To minimize long-term effects of disturbing the natural ground, Taylor stressed attention to root structures of existing groups of trees, the width and alignment of the final section of approach road, the placement of footpaths, disposition of excavation materials, and provision of outlets for surface drainage from natural gullies upslope from the site. He recommended that building plans which had been drawn for the location earlier selected be modified slightly to better conform to the site under preparation. He suggested changes in the grade line of the west wing, and he felt terrace areas which were designed for summer use should be carefully related through steps and and contour to the natural topography "rather than to assume a definite semi-circular form," which he thought would create a barrier between the building and the landscape."



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The main door is five feet wide by ten feet high and weighs a thousand pounds. It is made of hand-adzed Ponderosa pine, and its ornate hinges, knocker, latch, escutcheons and metal trim are of hand-forged iron. The planks that form the door weigh six hundred pounds, and the hardware four hundred.

The Head House contains the ski lounge and great balcony on the second floor above.

The main lounge occupies the first-floor level. There are three huge fireplaces, on alternate faces of the hexagonal central chimney that create an atmosphere of comfort and intimacy. They are equipped with andirons wrought out of rail-road rails and with sliding curtain screens of intermeshed chain. The main lounge floor is of random width oak, jointed and held in place by counter-sunk screws, the heads of which are concealed by oak plugs to simulate full dowelled joints. Walls and ceilings are of pine. A stairway which rises from the main lounge to main lounge balcony has treads of solid Douglas fir timbers. Six massive Ponderosa pine timbers rise from the main lounge to support the main lounge balcony and cross-members of the roof. These timbers, like the central chimney, hexagonal in form, are forty-two inches in diameter and forty feet in height, and weigh approximately seven tons each.

A stairway with hand-carved rails and balusters leads up to the wide balcony that circles the main lounge. There are several writing-nooks, equipped with natural pine desks and benches. Two plate-glass observation windows, seven by eleven feet in size, frame vistas of Mount Hood to the north, of Mount Jefferson and other lofty peaks of the Cascade range to the south.

The newel posts were hewn from discarded cedar telephone poles--there are rustic symbols of animals (badgers, beavers and bears) made into finials carved from the post itself.

The west wing is given over entirely to guest rooms and dormitories above and a gift shop below. The east wing contains a ski grill on the first floor, a dining room on the first floor with kitchen and service rooms beyond and guest rooms on the floors above.

The interior furnishing was directed by Marjorie Hoffman Smith who utilized native crafts with great style and excellent taste--using pioneer and Indian motifs and incorporating wildlife and plantlife found in Oregon. The make-work project also re-used material, fabrics for curtains and hooked rugs were made with castoff scraps of fabric. A great deal of the iron work was devised from old railroad tracks notably the andirons in the six main fireplaces.

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"Flagstone for the hearths of fireplaces at two levels in the six-sided chimney and the exterior terraces was obtained from quarries near Stayton. Roughhewn pine and oak furniture was ornamented with wrought iron and rawhide. Lighting fixtures evocative of the Oregon Trail migration were formed of singletrees, wagon wheels, and ox yokes. Paintings and murals by noted Oregon artists decorated public spaces. Color schemes of the guest rooms were inspired by natural colors of meadows and forests. Each guest room had a distinct decorative scheme, and in several were displayed watercolor renderings of the wildflowers which inspired the particular scheme. Hand woven upholstery and bedspread textiles fashioned with Oregon flax and wool, and hand-appliqued cotton or linen draperies and hooked rugs were made of scraps and cuttings salvaged from WPA sewing units and discarded uniforms and blankets from camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps."<sup>1</sup>

The lodge's collection of metal craft is famous and includes ornamental wrought iron made into andirons, lighting fixtures, window grilles, smoking stands, foot scrapers at the entrances and chair and bench supports.

Currently these materials are being maintained and where necessary replaced (fabrics) as the result of a massive restoration program now underway.

<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Potter notes a WPS report, Color Schemes of the Bedrooms at Timberline Lodge, U.S. Work Projects Administration, Oregon, c. 1942

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Executed in the chalet style, some call it "Cascadian," the large year-round recreational facility was proposed by E. J. Griffith, Director of the WPA in the State of Oregon, financed by the Portland based Mt. Hood Development Association and designed and supervised by the U.S. Forest Service Regional Engineer's Office. The design team were W. I. Turner, Supervising Architect; Dean Wright, Linn A. Forrest, and Ward Ganno. The consulting architect was Gilbert Stanley Underwood, architectural advisor to the U.S. Treasury Department, consulting landscape architect was A. D. Taylor; Lorenz Brothers of Portland were general contractors, William Wechner was superintendent of construction. Margery Hoffman Smith, Supervisor of the Oregon Art Project, directed the interior decoration, Ray Neuffer was in charge of wood carving and furniture construction, and O. B. Dawson supervised metalcraft and smithing.

The design process went through a number of preliminary sketches until a solution was reached. Mrs. Potter writes:

"A rendering of the executed scheme, signed by Linn A. Forrest and dated 1936, was a quantum jump from the conventional preliminary concepts. Yet, it incorporated some of the more successful features of the early designs. The focus of the building and the dominant element of the exterior is a three-story hexagon with pyramidal roof which houses ambulatory space around a colossal stone chimney. The massive core is said to have been intended to echo the conformation of the mountain summit. Although the handling of this feature was completely individual, the form was not without precedent. A colossal chimney was used in the Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone National Park. The large pavilion is reminiscent of the multi-storied, conical-roofed, ballroom section of the opulent Hotel Del Coronado (1887) in San Diego, California....The average level of snowfall at Timberline is 20 feet. As prevailing winds are from the west, deposition tends to build up on the lee side, or, in effect, in the entry area inside the west wing. Skiers are provided access to the lodge by a portable tunnel which is put up each winter to shelter the ground level entrance.

Despite development of ski facilities on the opposite slope of the mountain in recent years, the demand for additional chair lifts and overnight housing at Timberline is pressing. Forest Service officials have begun to implement a plan to relieve the Lodge of its intensive use by skiers and, in the interest of economical management, to extend the capacity of the Lodge for full year-round use. A new convention wing is under construction on the northeast in a sympathetic but straightforward contemporary style consistent with qualities of the original structure. The interior, which has undergone minor remodeling over the years, will be returned to its original organization, with slight revision of use of certain of the public spaces of the ground level. Fittings and furniture are to be scrupulously preserved."<sup>2</sup>

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As of this writing the lodge has been restored meticulously even to hand weaving and replacing the original fabrics.

"The importance of Timberline Lodge as a collaboration of creative arts activity in Oregon under WPA auspices scarcely can be overdrawn. Even performing arts were brought into play. The Federal Theatre produced a series of dances in connection with formal dedication of the Lodge in September 1937. Against the backdrop of Mt. Hood were performed "Indian Celebration Dance," "Dance of the Flax Scutching Machine," and "Dance of the WPA Workers." In 1939 plans for a Paul Bunyan summer festival at Timberline were laid in which Portland and Seattle Federal Theatre companies were to join forces in a production of E. P. Conkle's "Paul Bunyan and the Blue Ox" on the open stage of the amphitheatre."<sup>3</sup>

On September 28, 1937, President Roosevelt dedicated Timberline Lodge as a "monument to the skill and faithful performance of workers on the rolls of the Works Progress Administration."

<sup>1</sup>Vaughn, Thomas (Editor) and Virginia Guest Ferriday, Associate Editor, Space, Style and Structure, Building in Northwest America, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, 1974, Vols. I and II, Essay by Elizabeth Walton Potter, page 532.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 534-537.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 538.

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Gohs, Carl, "The House the Artists Built," Oregonian, Northwest Section, (January 5, 1969), 5-11.

Churchill, Claire Warner, "Mt. Hood Timberline Lodge," a 12 page mimeographed pamphlet prepared for the Writer's Project, Works Progress Administration, E. J. Griffith, Administrator, N.W., 1937.

"Timberline Lodge," an eleven-page pamphlet prepared by the Works Progress Administration, E. J. Griffith, Administrator, 1938.

Corning, Howard McKinley, Dictionary of Oregon History, (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1965), 245.

American Guide Series, Oregon: End of the Trail (Portland: Binford and Mort, Oregon State Board of Control, 1940), 498.

Works Project Administration, 1940, Mt. Hood, New York, J. J. Little and Ives Company.

Whitwer, Donald H., 1965, Visitor Information Service Reference Book of the Mt. Hood Area, pp. 246-284, Mt. Hood National Forest, Portland, Oregon.

Vaughn, Thomas, Editor and Virginia Guest Ferriday, Associate Editor, Space, Style and Structure, Building in Northwest America, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, 1974, Volume II, pages 529-538 essay by Elizabeth Walton Potter.