

Fire Lookouts on the Umatilla National Forest

A Chronology

The table below lists all the known fire lookouts at this point in time and includes the succession of lookout structure styles over the years at each location. Information about the lookout locations and their structures is compiled from the following sources:

1. Ray Kresek's book , *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest* (1998)
2. The 1935-37 Osborne panoramic photos (date is indicated); elevation to floor of cab is indicated on photo [though not always accurate]
3. Cultural resource site reports
4. Gerald Tucker's manuscript, *History of the Northern Blue Mountains* (1940)
5. Recent site visit or photo
6. Sam Wood's book, *Poems and Writings of Sam R. Woods* (copy supplied to author by Michael Duffy)
7. Records at the National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region
8. Internal Umatilla NF correspondence or records (as indicated)
9. Historic maps showing a lookout station at site [not necessarily any structure]
10. Historic photo
11. Newspaper article
12. Michael Duffy, Tower Mountain L. O. staff, 1990-97, who has done considerable research on Tower Mtn.

An asterisk (*) after the name of the lookout indicates a panoramic photo was taken from the lookout in 1935-37.

Under "Location" the "(WA)" indicates the lookout station is in Washington (all others are in Oregon).

Information about the building/structures is more comprehensive for the lookouts that are gone. The extant lookouts are described in more detail in their inventory reports.

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Ant Hill*	T8S,R26E,S13	??	Crow's nest	Gone	8. Mary Keith's email to Steve Lucas 12/2/92
		1935	L-4 / 24' pole tower	L-4 cab removed 1956; tower remains	1.; 5. photo

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Arbuckle Mountain*	T4S,R29E,S30	ca.1920?	90' crow's nest w/ straight and spiral ladder	Gone	6.
		ca. 1930	24' pole platform	Gone	1.
		1947	L-4 / 83' CT-4 tower	Gone by 1989	1.; 7. 4/30/46 Memo from Ward Gano, RO Eng. to files
Balloon Tree*	T3N,R39E,S19	pre-1935	65' crow's nest	Abandoned, unknown if remains present	
		1935	7' x 7' cab on 50' pole tower, no cat walk, inside ladder	Gone	
		1937	Ground house, 3-room, 18' x 20'	Gone	

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Black Mtn.	T1N,R37E,S6	1916-30+?	Unknown	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records – indicate whether fires were reported during these years; probably replaced by Goodman Ridge LO.
Bobsled	T3N,R37E,S20	ca. 1930-1948	Lookout tree emergency lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records -1931-39; 9. 1940-48
Bone Point*	T7S, R31E,S6	1920s 1930s pre-1935 1930s? 1947 1961	Cupola cabin 40' wooden live-in; or 33' Ground house Outhouse 30' steel live-in 40' steel live-in	Gone Gone Gone Still standing, poor condition Gone Standing, not manned	1.; on Whitman NF at this time 1. 40'; 2. 1935 - 33' 2. 1935 - appears ~330 degrees N of LO 5. Site visit, would have been NW of house 1.; transferred to Umatilla NF in 1947 5. Site visit
Bone Spring*	T5N,R39E,S28	1930 1932 1935 1936 1946 1949	“Cabin, old style, 2 rm., 19x15 Pole tower, 48', wood, cab 7x7 Garage, single, 16x20, F-25 cupola cabin 7' x 7' cab / 40' pole tower R-6 Standard 1936 14' x 14' house/ 82' or 83' TT-1 tower	Gone Destroyed 1949 when new tower built Gone Gone N/A Gone	8. PWB 4/45 & 4/46 8. PWB Ibid.; 7. 10/48 inspection report; 2. 1935 view from 60' tower [height probably an error], shows a 1 1/2-story gable roof house and gable roof garage 8. PWB Ibid. 1. [uncertain if this info. is correct] 1. [date is probably incorrect, this must be the same as the 1932 tower] 7. 3/9/49 Purchase Orders; 8. PWB Ibid.
Canyon Butte*	T1N,R36E,S15	Unknown	Potential lookout location, probably not utilized	None	2. 1937, elevation was 0' suggesting there was no structure at this time
Clearwater*	T8N,R42E,S5(WA)	1916-33 1933 1939 1940s?	Lookout station, no structure? Aermotor 7' x 7' steel cab / MC-39 or -40 ~87' steel tower lumber tent frame ~25' x 15' gable roof ground house w/ porch	Gone Still standing, emergency use Gone Still standing, used as Cabin Rental	8. Fire dispatch records 4. pg. 148 – built by CCC; 5. site visit, measured height 4. pg. 150 “. . . built near the Clearwater tower for use of the Lookout” 5.; no records of construction date

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Clearwater* cont.		pre-1967	Modern heliport office & storage buildings	Still standing, in use	5. site visit
		Modern	Outhouse w/ wooden horizontal shiplap siding	Still standing, in use	5. site visit
Collins Butte	T7S,R24E, S14	1931	Lookout station, no structure?	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records, only year reported; 9. 1931 map; not used by 1935 (no panoramic)
Desolation Butte*	T8S, R34E, S30	pre-1921	Lookout station or crow's nest?	Gone	3. reference on 1978 site report to a statement made in 1965 by George W. Langdon, Dale district ranger (on Whitman NF) from 1921-1942 – "In 1921 and '22 he took a Mr. Harriman to the Desolation Lookout by using a two-horse hack."
		1923	6' x 6' cab / 50' or 60' LX-24 steel tower w/ outside ladder [possible Aermotor]	Gone	1. 50' tower; 2. 1935, tower elevation 60'; 7. Correspondence 3/8/48 from UMANF to RS Eng. requesting plans for self-supported inside stairway for Desolation Butte and Tamarack like done at Mt. Emily [now on Wallowa-Whitman NF]; plans sent 3/16/48; 10/6/48 Inspection report recommends converting tower to support a 14' x' 14' standard house and have an inside stairway [unknown if changes made].
		1923	1-story, pyramidal hip roof house w/ porch	Gone	1.; 2. 1935, WSW view shows house [probably located where radio bldg. is]
		1923?	Garage/storage bldg. w/ gable roof, split cedar siding	Still standing, poor condition	5. site visit; cedar shakes cover horizontal single "V" rustic shiplap siding
		1961 Modern Modern	"R-6 Flat" house / 67' TT tower Outhouse Radio building	Still standing, in use Still standing, in use Still standing, in use	1.; 5. site visit 5. painted vertical board & batten siding 5. fiberglass exterior
Diamond Peak*	T7N,R42E,S3(WA)	1916 – ?	Lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records
		1928	Phone line	Gone	4. pg. 147 – phone line built from Mt. Misery to Diamond Peak
		1931	Gable roof L-4 w/ catwalk / 20' pole tower	Burned 8/24/53	8. Fire dispatch records; 11. <i>East Washingtonian</i> , 7/16/31, pg. unknown – A lookout house weighing 6000 pounds was

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
		1931	Ground house with gable roof and horizontal siding	Gone	delivered to Mt. Misery where it will be packed in to Diamond Peak on horses – 32 pack horse loads. The lookout house is described as 14 x 14' in size and mounted on a 20-foot tower; 10. Photo of burning. 4. pg. 148 “built by Fire Asst. John Clouston, Asst. Sup. Lester Moncrief, Junior Forester Fred Monroe and Ranger Blake. George Bosley of Bartlett, OR packed the lumber in on pack horses. Ernie Colwell finished the house in 1932 while on duty there as lookout-dispatcher;” 2. 1935 – N view shows house
Goodman Ridge*	T1N,R37E,S5	1931	Lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records 1.; 3. 9/78 report references “Meachum Dist. Report I: Studies Umatilla History” (G. Tucker 1948) – The CCC started construction on the lookout house in 1936, and it was completed in 1937. The garage was built in 1936.” 7. 5/27/36 “Schedule Showing Relationship Between Working Drawing Priorities and Site Plans;” 5. site visit 3. was located west of lookout tower; see above
		1936-37	7' x' 7' wooden cab w/ catwalk / 67' TT tower [or possibly an L-6]	Still standing, poor condition, not in use	
		1936-37	Ground house w/ cross-gabled roof	Still standing, poor condition, not in use	
		1936	Garage	Burned 1983 after roof blew off	
Grassy Butte*	T7S, R26E,S16	1931-39+?	Lookout station; possible crow's nest, 85' high	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records; 2. 1935 photos show simple railing in all views and table top in one
Griffin Peak*	T7N,R39E,S10(WA)	1931-48+? 1933	Lookout station L-4 / 30' tower	Gone Destroyed 1950	8. Fire dispatch record; 9. 1931 GLO map 8. PWB 4/45 & 4/46 – 30' tower, 14x14' cab; 2. 1935 elevation of tower -20', N photo shows gate and fence
Hardy Ridge	Approx. T8N,R43E,S2 or 10	1931-39	Lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records; unknown if there was a structure
High Ridge*	T2N,R38E,S6	1931	Lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records 2. 1935 – elevation of tower 20'
		pre-1935	24' tower	Gone	

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
High Ridge* cont.		1941	L-4 / 24' tower	Gone	1. [possibly same tower as above]
		1959	R-6 Flat cab / 67' TT tower	Still standing, emergency use	1.; 5. site visit
		Modern	Outhouse	Still standing	5. site visit
Hoodoo Ridge*	T6N,R42E,S31	Pre-1933, est. 1920s	Crow's nest	Accidentally cut down in 1992	1. ca. 1933 [probably built at earlier date]; 8. re: cut down – E-mail from Steve Lucas 12/2/92
		1933	Aermotor 7' x7' cab / MC-39 or - 40 ~101' steel tower	Still standing, not in use	4. p. 149 – built by CCC; 5. Site visit, measured height; 2. 1935 – elevation recorded as 110'; 8. PWB 4/46 also indicates 110'
		1933	Ground house, 2 room	Being restored for Cabin Rental	4. p. 149 – built by CCC; 5. Site visit
		1933	Garage	Still standing, not in use	4. p. 149 – built by CCC; 5. Site visit
		Unknown	Outhouse	Still standing, not in use	5. Site visit [may be restored for use by cabin renters?]
Horseshoe Ridge	Approx. T1N,R36E, S20, 29,32 or 33?	ca. 1931- 39	Emergency Lookout Station, Meacham RD	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records
Jim Creek Ridge	Approx. T8N,R40E, S27 or 34(WA)	ca. 1931- 39	Emergency lookout station, Touchet RD	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records
Jumpoff Joe	T9N,R41E,S12(WA)	ca. 1937	L-4 / tower, unknown height	Gone	1. Located ¼ mi. NW of summit
Lookout Camp	Unknown	ca. 1931- 39	Emergency lookout station, Meacham RD	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records
Lookout Mountain*	T4N,R40E,S3	unknown	Crow's nest	Gone	5. Interpretive sign marks location along Road 62.
		pre-8/1935 1948-49	60' wooden tower Standard 1936 L-4 cab/ 83' C-4 wooden tower	Gone Still standing, usually in use, but structural damage has made it unsafe; waiting for funding to make repairs	1.; 2. 8/4/1935 7. Numerous correspondence between UMA NF and RO; 5. Site visits including with Facility Engineer
		Unknown Modern	Outhouse Radio Bldg.	Still in use Still in use	5. Site visit 5. Site visit

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Lucky Strike*	T3S,R32E,S26	pre-1935	Small cab (i.e. 7x7) on 60' tower	Gone	2. 1935 – shadow of tower, elevation indicated; [seems like this tower would have been built several years before a replacement was needed] 3. Report for Tower Mtn. L. O.; 12.; [the ground house may have no longer been needed when the live-in L-4 was constructed] 1.
		ca. 1933-1942	Ground house reportedly built by CCC	Moved to Tower Mtn. L. O. in 1949; still in use there	
		1936	L-4 / 67' wooden tower	Destroyed 1957	
Madison Butte*	T5S,R27E,S29	1916	Lookout station, no improvements	N/A	3. 1978 Tickler form – reference to records at the National Archives, PNR, Misc. Reports, Box 6 of 13: “Madison Butte Lookout is listed as an administrative site with no improvements and none planned.” [these records were not relocated during my trip 3/02] 1. 1. 1.; 5. site visit 5. site visit 5. site visit
		1923	D-6 Cupola	Gone	
		1932	Ground house	Gone	
		1957	13' 4" flat-roofed cab, clad in metal with steel catwalk / 37' steel tower	Still standing, in use	
		Modern Modern	Radio building Outhouse	Still standing, in use Still standing, in use	
McIntyre Point*	T4N,R38E,S19	1932	“House, L.O. ground type, FC-1, 14x14, one room,” 2' above ground, hip roof L-4, 1932 version	Destroyed 1964	8. PWB 4/46 description and date: 2. 1935 – elevation indicated 2'; hip roof according to Walter “Butch” Bosley, , retired Walla Walla RD employee, interview, 1992; 2. 1935 – appears in photo; 8. PWB Ibid., also Bosley indicated a two-car garage was located “back up the hill”
		1935	“Garage, single, 16x20, F-25,” gable roof	Gone, possibly same as L.O.	
Meacham	See Summit RS				
Mt. Misery	T8N,R42E,S35	ca. 1923	Lookout point, no known structure	N/A	8. Albert Baker Diaries, 1923, transcribed – In August, Baker visited Mt. Misery and “went out to Lookout point.”

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Oregon Butte*	T7N,R41E,S4	9/14/1931	Gable roof L-4 on ground	Still standing, staffed by volunteers, Charles & Beverly Heebner	8. Oregon Butte L. O. Evaluation Report by Jodi Clifford, 1994; info. from Heebners; 5. Site visit
Owing Butte	T4S,R32E,S25	1931-48+?	Emergency Lookout Station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records
Paradise Ridge	T6N,R39E,S17(WA?)	??	??	??	1. Kresek lists in WA, but highest point is in OR; 8. Fire dispatch records
		1941	Cabin	Abandoned, gone?	1.
Pearson Ridge*	T6S,R33E,S28	??	Crow's nest	Gone	2. 1935 – ESE view shows crow's nest from newer 100' tower
		1935	7x7 cab / 93' wooden tower	Gone sometime between 1978-89	1. Emergency use in 1978, quarters were at guard station 1 mile north [may be same tower panoramic photo taken from in 1935]
Porcupine Ridge*	T5S,R28E,S17	pre-1935	Crow's nest, 60' high	Gone	2. 1935 – height of tower; 8. 12/2/92 Mary Keith email to Steve Lucas
		1941	Unknown tower	Gone	1. Date; 7. 2/28/46 Memo from UMA Forest Supervisor to RO Engineering listing lookout photos enclosed [not available]
Potamus Ridge*	T6S,R29E,S28	pre-1935	60' tower	Gone	2. 1935 – height of tower
		1941	"camp"	Gone	1.
		1946	"Lookout tower"	Gone	7. ref. in 2/28/46 memo same as Porcupine
		1946	"Lookout Ground Cabin"	Gone	7. Ibid.
Red Hill*	T6S,R27E,S26	1922	Lookout station	Gone	3. Report indicates lookout appears on 1922 Forest map
		1931-57	Emergency lookout station, possible L-5 cab on 30' pole tower	Abandoned 1957	8. Fire dispatch records; 2. 1935 – Height of tower; 10. Possible L-5 cab on pole tower; 3. date abandoned per Mary Keith
Round Prairie*	T8N,R43E,S2(WA) Same as Smoothing Iron , see below				

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Saddle Butte*	T7N,R43E,S19(WA)	1931	Lookout station	Gone	8. Fire dispatch records; 4. pg. 147 – “. . . a telephone line was built from Mt. Misery to Saddle Butte. . .” 1.; 4. pg. 148 – “Dick Shafer who was the Lookout there that year packed the lumber in on pack horses and assisted in the construction. Wilbur Colwell and Curtis Davenport helped on the job; 10.; 2. 1935 – N photo shows a tent and possible clothesline set up.
		1932	“Lookout house” – 1932 version hip roof L-4 cab on 20’ pole tower	Gone	
Sheep Creek					8. Fire dispatch records, page missing with info.
Silver Butte*	T8S,R35E,S6	pre-1935	14x14’ cab w/ catwalk / 20’ pole tower	Gone	2. 1935 (was on Whitman NF until 1947) – height indicated, and catwalk shows in WSW view; 1. Indicates type of cab but with 30’ pole tower 2. 1935 – Appears in ESE view
		pre-1935	Outhouse	Gone	
Slide*	T2N,R36E,S26	1937	Potential lookout station, probably never utilized	N/A	2. 1937 – No height indicated suggesting no structure
Smoothing Iron*	T8N,R43E,S2 (WA)	1933	“Emergency lookout house,” ground lookout, type unknown	Gone	4. p. 148 – built by the CCC; 2. 1935 – Height 2 feet, photo shows telephone line and possible railing or fence (fallen down) around lookout.
Spout Springs*	T3N,R38E,S10	ca. 1928	Platform on top of 30’ log tower w/ tent	Gone	8. Interview with Barry Park, 12/2/1993 by Butch Bosley and Larry Frank – He helped build 1 st lookout tower built at Spout Springs “about 1928. . . Was just a platform on top of a log tower. . . No living quarters were built on top. Was not completed . . . ran out of money;” 1. adds tent. 8. PWB 4/1946 8. PWB Ibid. 7. 10/18/43 Letter from Umatilla Forest Engineer, Edward Peltier to Forest Supervisor recommending replacing the tower with a new tower and 14x14 house on top; 2.
		1932	“Cabin, old style, 2 room, 16x20”	Gone	
		1935	7x7’ cab / 45’ timber tower, inside ladder	Condemned 1945, razed and burned	

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Spout Springs* cont.		1948	L-4, Standard 1936 / 83' CT-4 Tower	Fell down in ice storm 1990, not replaced	1935 height indicated as 58' 7. Correspondence 2/25/46 to 10/29/47 between RO and UMA NF; 8. PWB 4/1946
Summit Ranger Station*	T1S,R37E,S17, on former Meacham RD	pre-1935	"L.O. tree" or crow's nest, 62' high	Gone	8. 1935 Site Plan for Summit RS [now Guard Station]; 2. 1935 – views show railing of crow's nest; height indicated on photo.
Table Rock*	T6N,R39E,S3	ca. 1916 ca. 1929 1949-50	Lookout station, probably no structure D-6 cupola, 11'x11' Standard 1936 L-4 / 1-story concrete understory	N/A Torn down when new lookout built Still standing, in use, heavily modified 1989	8. Fire dispatch records 10. 1930 FS photo #248008, by F. W. Cleator; 8. PWB 4/1946 - dimensions 1. 1949 date; 8. PWB 1949 date; 7. Correspondence 1947-48 between Forest Supervisor, District Ranger and RO discussing design 8. A recent (ca. 1990s) handwritten memo to Jeff Bloom (WWRD) indicates on 8/8/1950 the Table Rock L.O. was being built.
Tamarack Mountain*	T8S,R26E,S18	1922-24 1925 1933 or 1934 1933 or 1934 1933?	Lookout station and "camp," unknown if structure 100' tree platform or crow's nest Aermotor 7 x7' cab / possibly an LX-24? ~100' steel tower; originally had outside ladder, replaced by inside wooden stairway sometime after 3/48 Gable roof ground house w/ possibly smaller gable roof porch facing east Gable roof garage	Original structures, if any, gone Gone Still standing, emergency use Accidentally burned down 1966 After house burned in 1966, converted to house; currently a Cabin Rental	3. Ref. to John C. Kuhns (For. Sup.) diaries – 6/24/1924 went to Tamarack Mtn. camp; other records ref. to incl. one that lists a lookout/fireman there in 1922 1.; 2. 1935 – appears to have been 180° from steel tower in photo 1. 96' tower; 2. 1935 – 103' tower 5. site visit; 3. Note: CR site report erroneously indicates this is a modern tower; [Because of the date of construction, tower, house, and garage may have been built by the CCC]; 2. 1935 – shows roof and front porch in WSW view, was north of garage [possibly built by CCC?] 2. 1935 – shows roof in WSW view; 5. site visit; [possibly built by CCC?]

Name	Location	Date	Lookout/Tower Type/ Associated Structures	Current Status	Source of Information/ Additional Information
Tamarack Mtn. cont.		Modern	Outhouse	Still standing, in use	5. Site visit
Thorn Spring Butte	T8S,R26E,35	Post-1935	L-4 cab	Abandoned	1.; no other info. available
Tower Mountain*	T6S,R34E,S14	1914	Wood tower [possibly w/ just a platform due to the date]	Gone	11. <i>Daily East Oregonian</i> , 7/29/1914, no pg. - Built by Rangers Walter Allison and Bun Moore [at that time the mountain was called Lookout Mtn., but it was changed to Tower Mtn. in 1925 to avoid confusion with the other Lookout Mtn. (per Oregon Geographic Names)], references supplied by Michael Duffy
		pre-1928	6x6' cab / 60' pole tower	Gone	1.; 10. 1928 photo
		pre-1928?	Gable roof ground house w/ board and batten siding, front porch	Burned down ca. 1948 by lookout staff person	1.; 2. 1935 – Appears in photo; 3.; 10.; ca. 1947 photo; 12.
		ca. 1932- 33	Aermotor 7x7' cab / 88' MC-39 or -40 steel tower	Still standing, in use	1.; 12. measured height; 5. site visit; 8. Ltr. 10/20/1981 from Dave Price, Dist. Ranger to Forest Superv. Indicates tower was erected in 1932 [source info. has numerous date errors]
		ca. 1933- 42	Ground house, originally at Lucky Strike, reportedly built by CCC	Moved to Tower Mtn. in 1949, still standing, in use	1.; 12.; 5. site visit
		pre-1935	Garage	Sold to Tom Curtiss, Pendleton, in 1983, for \$20.30, he reassembled at his home	2. 1935 - Appears in photo
		ca. 1933- 42	Outhouse	Burned down ca. 1993	12. possibly built by the CCC
		1992	Outhouse	Still standing, in use	12.; 5. site visit
		Modern	Radio building	Still standing, in use	5. site visit
Ukiah Ranger Station	T5S,R31E,S14	1939	7x7' cab / 57' TT tower, atop water tank at ranger station	Gone	7. June 1939 "Invitation, Bid, and Acceptance" for 7x7' lookout house

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Wheeler Point*	T7S,R24E,S18	1936?	Crow's nest w/ tent cabin	Gone	1. Date appears to be inaccurate; 2. 1935 photo shows part of house and outhouse, tower height 65' 7. 2/28/46 Memo to RO Eng. from Umatilla Forest Supervisor ref. photos enclosed incl. Wheeler Point 1.; 3. 10. undated photo 10. part of structure appears in undated photo [possibly the pre-1946 ground house or a garage]
		Pre-1946, possibly pre-1935	Lookout tower and ground house	Gone	
		1959	R-6 Flat cab / 67' TT tower	Torn down in ca. 1983	
		??	Wooden ground building, either a garage or house	Gone	
Whitetail Butte	T7S,R25E,S12	Unknown	Crow's nest with pole ladder	Tree gone, ladder remains were present in 1992	3.; 8. Mary Keith's email to Steve Lucas 12/2/92
Yellowjacket Point	T5N,R38E,S13	1941	Unknown	Gone	1.