



HISTORIC GRIZZLY GUARD STATION

The Grizzly Administration Building was completed in 1922 as part of a proposed tree nursery and research center. Designed by Ranger McClanahan, it was in use until 1929 when the office moved to Walden. The Station also included the ranger's house and barn. In 1932 the house was torn down and the administration cabin became a residence for up to two employees working in the area. By 1961 the foundation was rotting, the roof was in bad shape, but otherwise the structure was sound and still used for seasonal housing.

In 1980 the Medicine Bow Forest proposed moving the station to a museum in Wyoming. The Routt Forest did not have money for needed repairs, and since the cabin was no longer in use, it was almost moved. However,

when the issue was discussed by Jackson County, the people voted to keep the building here. In 1982 Grizzly Guard Station was nominated for historical status.

RESTORING GRIZZLY

In 1999 groundwork started on Grizzly to determine how extensive repairs would be. It had not been lived in since 1987 and was overrun by critters. The foundation had open holes allowing foxes and skunks underneath. Rodent nests filled the space under cabinets, appliances were unusable, and the rusted sink was connected with duct tape. Daylight could be seen through the roof. Light fixtures were broken. Three doorways had to be widened for universal accessibility. The original cement and stone stoop was crumbling and needed replaced by an entry ramp.

That was just the beginning. Because of the historical status, repairs had to be in keeping with historic accounts of the building. Added to that, changes made between 1922 and 1999 had to be corrected if possible. A fence could easily be built to resemble one from 1930 photos, and the new propane tanks had to be hidden from view.

By 2002, eighty years after it was built, the station was repaired to historic and safety standards.

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WELCOME! TO GRIZZLY GUARD STATION



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

*For more information contact
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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

On July 1st 1905 the Forest Service was officially created in an effort to unify the administration of National Forest Reserves. The original goal in creating public land was to equally distribute grazing and timber rights in an effort to protect the forests for future use.

In 1909 the goal expanded. At the time the forest management strategies available were from Europe; it was becoming apparent that western forests were in a category of their own. Research began at the forest level, at individual guard stations, to determine the best management plans for watersheds, timber products, grazing impacts, and fire prevention.

The roaring twenties brought money as well as new opportunities into the Forest Service. World War One had made new technology available for use. Planes offered new mobility to fire watches. Telephone wires were laid where previously horseback messenger had been the only conveyance of news. Two-way radio became available, trails were constructed to increase access, and more guard stations were built on the forests for administration.

RANGERS ON THE ROUTT
FOREST

In 1906 JH Ratliff, and NG Bellairs, became two of the first Rangers in the newly appointed Forest Reserve. They had the difficult job of convincing friends and neighbors to pay for things that had previously been free, timber, firewood, and grazing rights. In some cases they were met with respect, more often with resistance or violence.

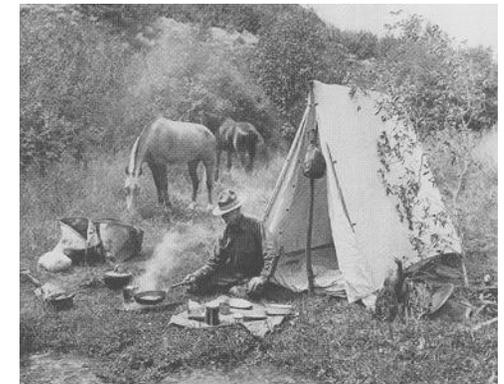
Ratliff and Bellairs, like all Rangers in the early 1900's, were selected through practical written and field examinations. Each man was required to know the basics of ranching, livestock, surveying, mapping, lumbering, cabin construction, and assessing forest conditions. They were field tested in riding, roping, shooting, working with a compass, and sometimes even cooking.

"The same spirit that kept cowboys loyal to their outfits, kept the Rangers loyal to their outfit and proud of their brand, the tree set in a banner." JH Ratliff

Anyone who passed the exams was eligible for hire at \$60 per month. Rangers had to furnish their own equipment and horses. During the early years of the Forest Service they were not provided with housing. On their tours of duty Rangers would often stay on the same ranches they were fighting against for grazing and timber fees.

THE FOREST GUARD
STATION ERA

By the time grazing and timber permits were well established, the Forest Service had discovered that forest management was complicated. Rangers were now responsible for not only timber and grazing permits, but also fire prevention, trail construction, and game and fish regulations. It was no longer feasible for one Ranger to cover the amount of territory assigned to Ratliff and Bellairs. Remote outposts were built within a day's ride of each other to station more men on the forests.



The Ranger on the district was typically responsible for building the station as part of his general duties. The property included a barn and enough land to pasture several horses. At some stations the ranger bunked in the office itself, at others there was an additional house for the ranger and his family. The construction of the stations varied according to the skill of the ranger and the materials available.