



United States Department of Agriculture

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
2468 Jackson Street
Laramie, WY 82070
307-745-2300
www.fs.usda.gov/mbnr



News Release

Media Contacts: Bridget Roth (USFS)
(970) 870-2148, broth@fs.fed.us
or Meg Tully (Historic Routt County)
(970) 875-1305, meg@historicrouttcounty.org

Hike and BBQ planned to showcase Hahns Peak Lookout

(STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo.) Sept. 21, 2016 – A public celebration will take place this Saturday, Sept. 24 to highlight the restoration of Hahns Peak Lookout on the Routt National Forest. The event coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act and National Public Lands Day. It will be hosted by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Historic Routt County, and is the culmination of years of hard work to make the Lookout a year-round destination for back-country enthusiasts.

The day will start with a family-friendly, guided hike to the Lookout in north Routt County. It begins at 11 a.m. at the Hahns Peak Trailhead, north of Steamboat Lake State Park. The trailhead is accessed off County Road 129, then Forest Road 490, and finally Forest Road 418. The hike will be cancelled if the weather is inclement, but the next portion of the party will continue rain or shine.

From 3-5 p.m., all are welcome to join the celebration at Steamboat Lake State Park Visitors Center. Food will be served, information on the project will be provided, and there will be opportunity to meet key partners. Food will be from Moe's BBQ.

Originally a stone shelter, Hahns Peak Lookout was built by the USFS in 1908 at 10,759 feet elevation. Four years later, more than one ton of cement and building materials were packed up to the site at the top of Hahns Peak, known traditionally as Old Baldy, to build a permanent lookout tower. The Lookout was enlarged and modernized circa 1942, however, use of the site decreased in the late 1940s. The conclusion of World War II eliminated the need for staffing fire lookouts as a part of the war effort and Hahns Peak Lookout was taken off-line.

Historic Routt County (HRC) was selected by the USFS to manage restoration of the Hahns Peak Lookout. HRC is an award-winning, nationally-recognized, nonprofit historic preservation membership organization. Their mission is to preserve and to promote the historic character of Routt County communities and rural areas by saving the places that tell the story of the county and its people.

HistoriCorps was hired by HRC in 2015 to lead the restoration work. HistoriCorps is a nonprofit organization that provides volunteers, students and veterans of all skill levels with a hands-on experience preserving historic structures on public lands across America. Volunteers and students work with HistoriCorps field staff to learn preservation skills and to put those skills to work saving historic places that have fallen into disrepair. In addition to HistoriCorps, the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) also was hired to work on the project for the past two years. HistoriCorps worked closely with Mountain Architecture Design Group to ensure that the work followed the project's construction drawings and standards.

A total of 10 weeks of work focused on the Lookout's stone base, windows and doors, the lookout cab, as well as stairs, grading, and external systems. The RMYC also worked for a week this year under the leadership of the USFS to improve the trail leading to the Lookout. The lower trail was cleared of loose rocks and debris, and the trail from the saddle to the summit was clearly marked, making it safer for hikers enjoying the trek to the top.

“HistoriCorps has done a great job leading the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and volunteers from all over the country to restore the Lookout back to what it looked like in 1942. Often dealing with back-breaking labor, cold weather and rain – even snow last year! – the team of HistoriCorps and the RMYC has been impressive,” said Meg Tully, Executive Director of HRC.

The following partners have made this project possible: U.S. Forest Service, Historic Routt County, Colorado State Historical Fund, Museum & Heritage Fund Advisory Board of the Routt County Commissioners, National Trust for Historic Preservation Peter Grant Fund, HistoriCorps, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Job Corps, and Steamboat Lake State Park Visitors Center.

2016 marks the 50th Anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 signed by President Johnson (amended in 2014). Passage of the Act was a watershed event that marked a fundamental shift in how Americans and the federal government regarded the role of historic preservation in modern life. The Act established the legal framework and incentives to preserve historic buildings, landscapes and archeology.

The Forest Service manages more than 371,000 recorded cultural resources on national forests and grasslands for public use, enjoyment and education. Of these, 1,200 sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 23 National Historic Landmarks. The Forest Service is a recognized leader in historic preservation.

For questions concerning the event, contact Hahns Peak/Bears Ears District Archeologist Bridget Roth at (970) 870-2148, broth@fs.fed.us, or Meg Tully, Executive Director, Historic Routt County at (970) 875-1305, meg@historicrouttcounty.org. Please RSVP to Meg Tully if you plan to attend.

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