



## Flathead National Forest

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# News Release

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## Two Sites on the Flathead National Forest Designated Historic Districts

*KALISPELL, MONTANA - January 23, 2015* – It is literally a historic day for the Flathead National Forest (FNF). Two sites on the FNF become designated National Historic Districts in the National Register of Historic Places today in a ceremony in Helena, MT. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of those cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.

### ***Big Creek RS National Historic District:***

Established in 1908, the Big Creek Ranger Station Historic District reflects construction dating to 1927 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its historical associations with the creation and administration of Flathead National Forest programs, and fire management in USFS Region One and the western United States. The property has added significance for the qualities of the buildings which reflect Craftsman influences combined with a rustic aesthetic, a typical format for USDA Forest Service buildings in the west and particularly Region One.

The buildings at the Big Creek Ranger Station retain a high level of integrity and reflect typical design patterning established by Forest Service architects of the 1920s and 1930s that pervaded throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The simple, pattern-book designs evidenced in the buildings incorporate many aspects of agency design, from the utilitarian emphasis on rural self-sufficiency, to the Craftsman detailing discernable in gently-sloped rooflines, shingle siding, inviting porches, exposed rafters and purlins, multi-paned horizontally-banded windows.

### ***FNF Backcountry Administrative Facilities National Historic District:***

The Flathead National Forest's system of administrative sites in the backcountry of the Middle and South forks of the Flathead River includes the Ranger District headquarters, guard stations, and the trails and communications systems that connect them. The system is listed in the National Register of Historic Places because it is representative of USDA Forest Service management policies and of the aesthetics that guided the agency's permanent improvements program. Unlike the service's front-country facilities, these physically isolated resources reflect the principals of limited development as it applied first to designated primitive areas (established in 1931) and, in 1940, to the service's own wilderness area policy.

The period of significance extends from 1906, when the forest service first initiated construction of the South Fork Trail to 1965, when the forest built a new cabin at Silvertip Guard Station to replace improvements lost during a massive flood that impacted the Middle Fork in 1964. Passage of the federal Wilderness Act in 1964 ensured that the backcountry infrastructure is maintained in a manner consistent with the wilderness principles first espoused by the Forest Service in the early 1920s. The nomination includes 66 buildings, 12 structures, the connecting trails and the 45 miles of functioning ground-return phonline with seven phones.

Although the National Register is a program of the [National Park Service](#), it is administered at the state level by each respective state. In addition to the recognition that listing provides, registered properties are afforded a measure of protection from projects that are funded, licensed, or executed by the federal government. National Register properties may also be eligible for historic preservation tax incentives.

For additional information please contact the Forest Archeologist, Tim Light, at (406) 758-5258.

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