

# Lookout Styles

## Nez Perce National Forest

By Cindy Schacher, Archaeological Technician - May 2010

### The L-4 Model

The L-4, also known as an "Aladdin", is a standard 14 x 14 foot frame pre-cut lookout house built from 1929 through 1953. It has a peaked roof and wooden panels that are mounted horizontally over the windows. The panels provide shade in the summer and are lowered over the windows in winter. Early models have a gable roof; later models have a hip roof.



***Blackhawk Lookout, 1950s.***  
*This pole L-4 tower was 20' tall with a gable roof. Built in the 1930s, Blackhawk Lookout was located eight miles east of Elk City on the Red River Ranger District. It was removed in the 1950s.*  
*USFS photo*

***Shissler Lookout, 1992.***  
*This treated timber L-4 tower is 10' tall with a hip roof. Built in 1953, Shissler Lookout remains staffed and is located three miles north of Moose Creek Ranger Station on the Moose Creek Ranger District within the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.*  
*Cindy Schacher photo*



## The L-5 Model

The L-5 is a 10' x 10' frame pre-cut lookout house (smaller version of the L-4) built mostly at secondary lookout points in the 1930's. The term "L-5" was also given to a handful of 14' x 14' gable-roofed log cabins in Idaho and Montana.



**Square Mountain Lookout, 1960.**  
*An L-5 style, this log lookout is a ground cab with a gable roof. Built in 1931, the lookout has been restored and is used on an emergency basis. Square Mountain Lookout is located on the Salmon River Ranger District. USFS photo*

## The L-6 Model

The L-6 is an 8 x 8 foot frame pre-cut lookout house, an even smaller version of the L-4. It was built atop tall wooden towers with separate living quarters on the ground.



**Dairy Mountain Lookout, 1940s.**  
*This pole L-6 tower was 50' tall with a gable roof. Built in 1945, Dairy Mountain Lookout was located twenty miles NNE of Riggins on the Salmon River Ranger District. It was removed in 1960. USFS photo*

## The D-6 Model

The D-6 is a cupola house design with a 12' x 12' main floor and a 1/4- sized second-floor observatory, built mostly during the 1920' s. D-6 refers to District 6 of the U.S. Forest Service (Pacific Northwest Region), which later became Region 6. Very few remain in the Northwest.

### ***Corral Hill Lookout, 1949.***

*This D-6 two-story frame cabin with cupola was built in 1929. Corral Hill Lookout was located fourteen miles ENE of Grangeville on the Clearwater Ranger District. It was replaced with an L-4 in 1953.*

*USFS photo*



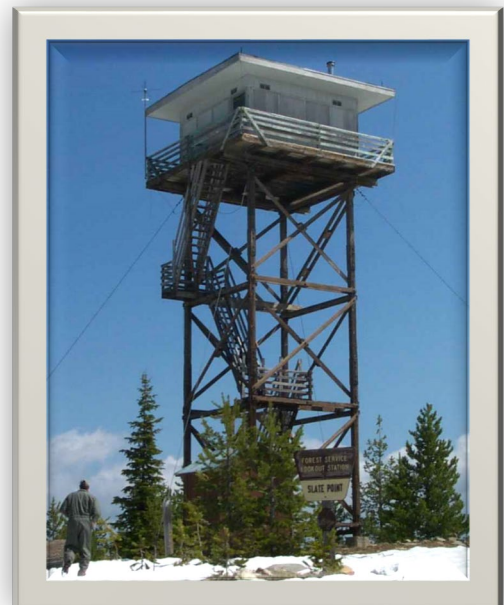
## The R-6 Model

The R-6 is a standard 15' x 15' frame lookout house built from 1953 forward. The roof is flat and extends beyond the cabin a few feet to provide shade. R-6 refers to Region 6 of the U.S. Forest Service, the originator of the design.

### ***Slate Point Lookout, 2003.***

*This R-6 flat timber tower is 41' tall. It was built in 1979 and is located fifteen miles NE of Riggins on the Salmon River Ranger District. It is staffed every summer.*

*USFS photo*



## Aermotor Model

Aermotor refers to the Aermotor Company of Chicago, Illinois, famous for their windmill towers. The lookout towers of this type are more frequently found in the southeastern United States and are somewhat rare in the Pacific Northwest.



**Quartz Ridge Lookout, 1953.**  
*This 100' steel Aermotor tower was built in 1934. It was located twelve miles SE of Grangeville on the Clearwater Ranger District. It was removed sometime after 1969.*

*USFS photo*

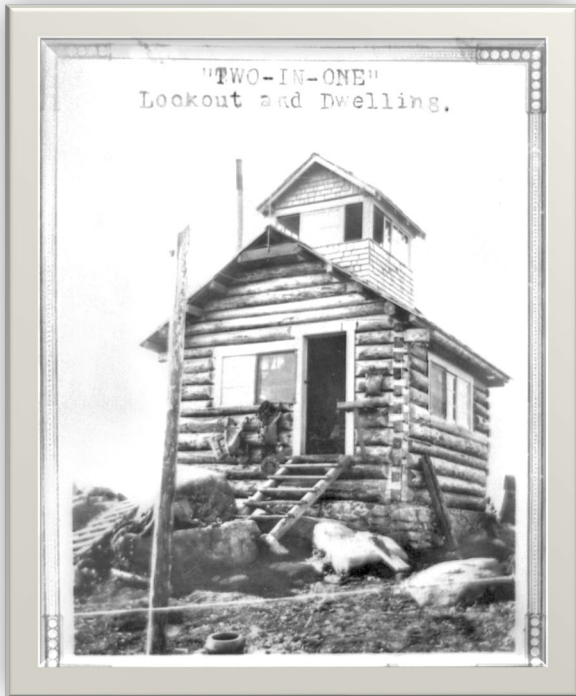
**Elk Summit Lookout, 1952**  
*This 100' steel Aermotor tower with a 7' x 7' cab was built in 1934. It is located six miles NW of Elk City on the Red River Ranger District.*

*USFS photo*



## The Nez Perce Model

The Nez Perce Log Lookout House is a log cabin with a cupola. The idea for this style of lookout is said to have been borrowed from the R-3 log cabin with cupola of the Flathead National Forest. The plans call for the structure to be either 12' x 14' or 14' x 14'.



### ***Black Butte Lookout, circa 1928.***

*This "Nez Perce" log cabin with cupola was built in 1928. It provided both an elevated place to look out and a place for the fire lookout to live. Black Butte Lookout was located twenty-two miles ENE of Riggins on the Salmon River Ranger District.*

*George V. Ring photo*

### ***Sourdough Lookout, 1928.***

*This lookout closely resembles the "Nez Perce" log cabin with cupola. It varies from the standard plan with its expansive windows and dimensions of 15' x 15'. Sourdough Lookout is located twenty miles SE of Grangeville on the Red River Ranger District. It has been restored and plans are to place it on the Forest Service Cabin Rental Program.*

*USFS photo*

