

# Kootenai National Forest

*Celebrating 100 Years of History*



Picture taken By Echo Jo Venn

## *The Future of Our Past*



*Funded in Partnership with:* the Lincoln County Commissioners, Communities for a Great Northwest, the Kootenai National Forest, Provider Pals, and the Lincoln County Resource Advisory Council

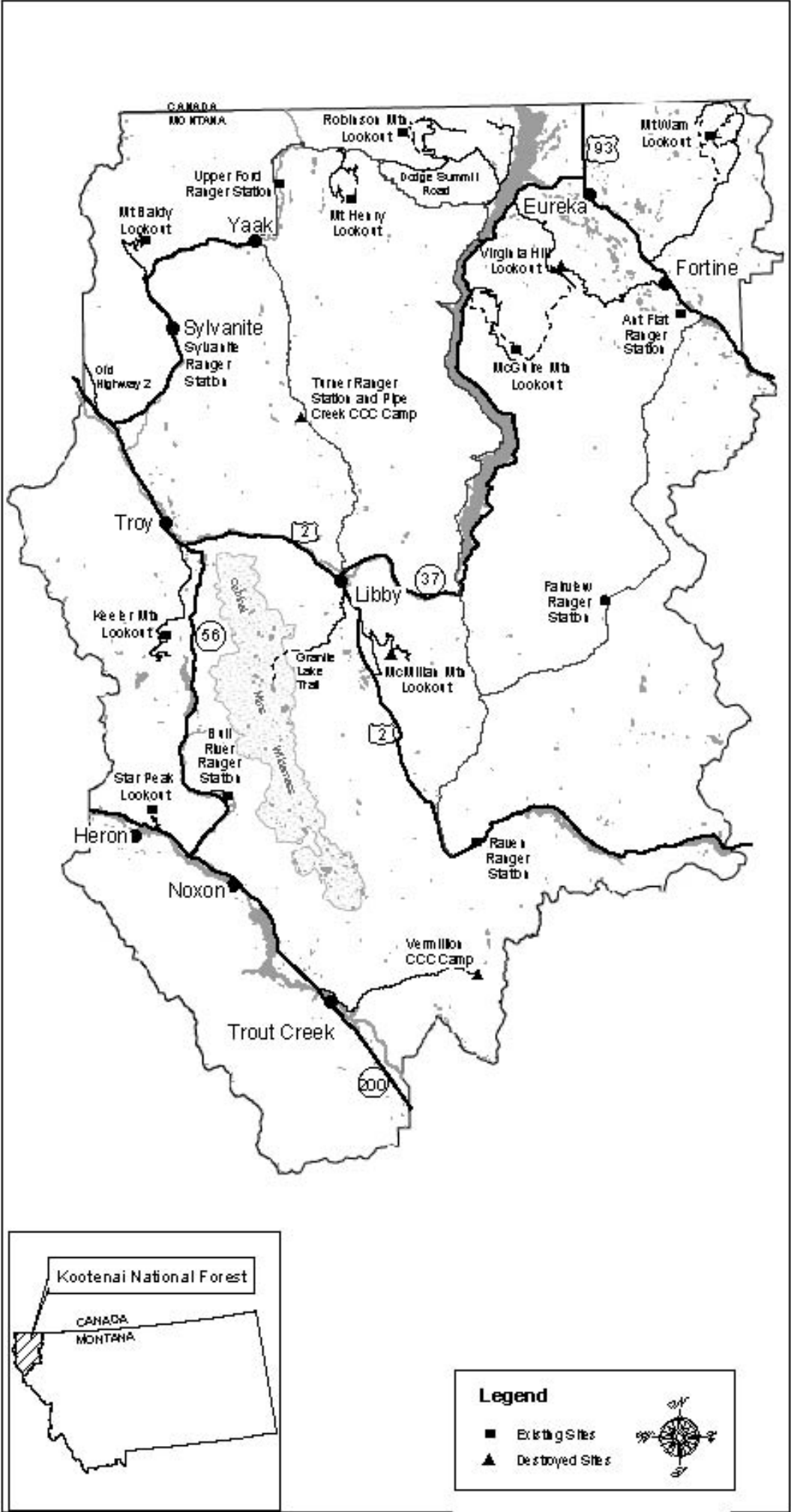
To the Reader

The year 2005 marks the Centennial of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. The Kootenai National Forest celebrates its 100 year birthday in August of 2006. Given this important occasion, the local Libby community supported this effort. Most of the names that you will see as authors are Forest Service archaeologists and historians. One outstanding Libby High School student and several historians also contributed as authors. We also thank Echo Jo Venn for her editorial expertise. We hope you enjoy!

Rebecca S. Timmons  
Kootenai National Forest Archaeologist

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## **National Forest Beginnings**

*Willie Sykes, Bill Peterson, Rebecca Timmons*

Just before he left office, President Grover Cleveland set aside millions of acres of Forest Reserves in Western North America. Known collectively as “Washington’s Birthday Reserves,” they were set-aside on February 22, 1897. By the end of 1892, President Hamilton had created 15 reserves containing over 13 million acres of land. President Cleveland added another 25 million acres. The Flathead and Lewis and Clark Reserves consisted of nearly 4.5 million acres.

Land for the proposed Kootenai Forest Reserve was temporarily withdrawn in December 1901 for forest purposes. The government withdrew from entry all of the land on the north and west sides of the Kootenai River from settlement and since that time nothing has been done toward creating a forest reservation there or again opening the lands or any part of them to settlement. There was a great amount of time between the forest reserves proposal and the actual establishment of the reserves due to the Department (of Interior) not having enough personnel to examine the large tracts of lands in the Western states that laid within the proposed reserves. Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot asserted the delay for the forest reserves was to thwart the railroad from making lieu selections and from corporations getting the best timberlands. He wanted the proclamation of the reserves delayed, and to continue with the temporary withdrawal, to give Congress time to repeal the lieu selection law. The repeal of the lieu selection law came in March 1905.

The Transfer Act of 1905 moved the forest reserves from the Department of Interior to the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Forestry, soon renamed the Forest Service.

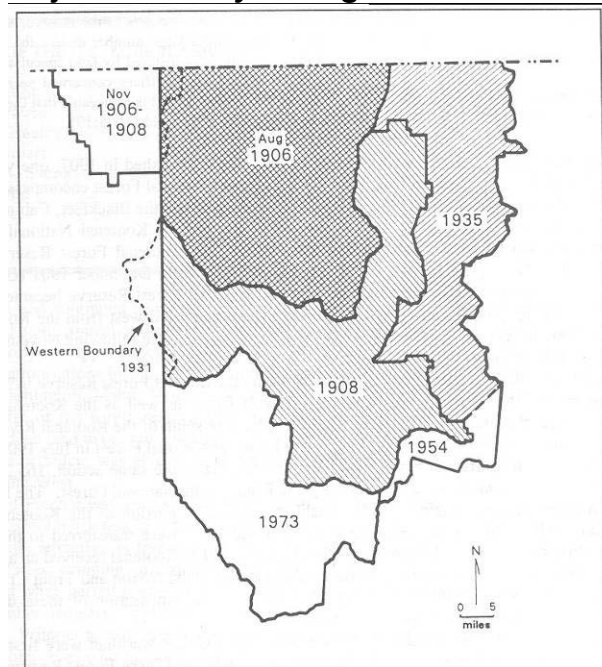
Gifford Pinchot was assigned the responsibility for the administration of the Forest Service, which in the beginning consisted of 60 reserves and 56 million acres. As the man most associated with the formation of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot was the fourth person to take the job as the head of the Division of Forestry. More than any other person, he shaped the National Forest system and was the first to state his management style in the famous line: “The greatest good for the greatest number over the longest time.”

The Kootenai Forest Reserve was established in August 1906 and management was transferred from the Department of the Interior General Land Office to the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Forestry, which was soon renamed the Forest Service. F. N. Haines was the first Supervisor and was in charge of the Kootenai Forest Reserve. Lands south of the Kootenai River were placed within the Cabinet Forest Reserve in March 1907. There was great opposition to the setting aside of the Kootenai Forest Reserve from grazing to agricultural interests. Some of opponents claimed that a portion of this land was already surveyed and settled, and felt that this was a move by the federal government to prevent population expansion. It is important to note that the forest reserves were not only controversial when they were established, but are still under scrutiny today and into the foreseeable future for the Forest Service.

Eventually, the Kootenai Forest would encompass parts of three reserves. Despite some public objection for the establishment of National Forests, mostly related to the removal of these federal lands to settlement, the Kootenai Forest Reserve was established in August 1906. Adjacent forests that would later

become a part of the Kootenai National Forest included: the Flathead Forest Reserve (established in 1897), the Lewis & Clark Reserve (established in 1903), and the Cabinet Forest Reserve (established in 1907).

### **Major Boundary Changes**



**HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF THE KNF**

The Forest Service workforce has changed considerably from a few field-seasoned men to a broad diversity of employees. Today’s workforce of 31,500 employees includes over 5,000 minority employees and 12,000 women. The Kootenai National Forest employs nearly 300 people and another 100 seasonal employees. Personnel consists of a mixture of men and women ranging from seasonal laborers to those with advanced degrees in a broad variety of subjects such as forestry, biology, archaeology, and engineering. Today, each forest literally has an army of people and machinery to handle nearly any management issue that arises.

### **The Forest Service Mission over the Past 100 Years**

*Greg Kujawa*

From its inception, the Forest Service’s mission has evolved to try to keep pace with an expanding population and changing and conflicting societal uses and values placed upon forest resources. The following excerpts from early laws and correspondence and modern communication methods illustrate the changes that have occurred over the past century.

#### ***Organic Administration Act of June 4, 1897 - Designation and Purposes of National Forests***

No national forest shall be established, except to improve and protect the forest within the boundaries, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States; but it is not the purpose or intent of these provisions, or of the Act, to authorize the inclusion therein of lands more valuable for the mineral therein, or for agricultural purposes, than for forest purposes.

#### ***Transfer Act of February 1, 1905***

This is the law that transferred administration and management responsibilities of the forest reserves from the Department of Interior General Land Office to the newly established Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture.

The following is quoted from a letter sent to Chief of the Forest Service Gifford Pinchot by Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson on February 1, 1905, the date the above Transfer

Act was approved by President Theodore Roosevelt:

In the administration of the forest reserves it must be clearly borne in mind that all land is to be devoted to its most productive use for the permanent good of the whole people and not for the temporary benefit of individuals or companies. All the resources of the forest reserves are for use, and this must be brought about in a thoroughly prompt and businesslike manner, under such restrictions only as will insure the permanence of these resources.

The vital importance of forest reserves to the great industries of the western states will be largely increased in the near future by the continued steady advance in settlement and development. The permanence of the resources of the reserves is therefore indispensable to continue prosperity, and the policy of this Department for their protection and use will invariably be guided by this fact, always bearing in mind that the conservative use of these resources in no way conflicts with their permanent value.

You will see to it that the water, wood, and forage of the reserves are conserved and wisely used for the benefit of the home-builder first of all; upon whom depends the best permanent use of the lands and resources alike. The continued prosperity of the agricultural, lumbering, mining, and livestock interests is directly dependent upon a permanent and accessible supply of water, wood, and forage, as well as upon the present and future use of these resources under businesslike regulations, enforced with promptness, effectiveness and common sense.

In the management of each reserve local questions will be decided upon local grounds; the dominant industry will be considered first, but with as little restriction to minor industries as may be possible; sudden changes in industrial conditions will be avoided by gradual adjustment after due notice; and where conflicting interests must be reconciled, the question will always be decided from the standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run.

#### ***2005 – Forest Service Mission and Motto***

##### Mission

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

##### Motto: *Caring for the Land and Serving People*

The phrase, "CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE," captures the Forest Service mission. As set forth in law, the mission is to achieve quality land management under the sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of people: It includes:

- Advocating a conservation ethic in promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forests and associated lands.
- Listening to people and responding to their diverse needs in making decisions.
- Protecting and managing the National Forests and Grasslands so they best demonstrate the sustainable multiple-use management concept.
- Providing technical and financial assistance to State and private forest landowners, encouraging them to practice good stewardship and quality land management in meeting their specific objectives.
- Providing technical and financial assistance to cities and communities to

improve their natural environment by planting trees and caring for their forests.

- Providing international technical assistance and scientific exchanges to sustain and enhance global resources and to encourage quality land management.
- Helping States and communities to wisely use the forests to promote rural economic development and a quality rural environment.
- Developing and providing scientific and technical knowledge aimed at improving our capability to protect, manage, and use forests and rangelands.
- Providing work, training, and education to the unemployed, underemployed, elderly, youth, and disadvantaged in pursuit of our mission.

## What's in a Name?

### Regional Designations

**Bill Peterson**

The Forest Service administration is comprised of administrative units known as “Regions”. Missoula, Montana has had a Bureau of Forestry office since 1904. In 1905, with the formal creation of the United States Forest Service and the transfer from the Department of Interior to the Department of Agriculture, six district offices were created in the western states with USFS lands. The Missoula office became a district office at that time. In 1930, the Secretary of Agriculture renamed the districts regions and Missoula, Montana became the Regional Headquarters for USFS Northern Region 1. Although internal documents indicate, “There is no known documentation as to why Missoula was selected. However, the following facts probably played an important role in the selection process,” a 1973 document written by Frank Harmon of the USFS History Branch gives a detailed account of why Missoula and the forests of Montana were established as Region 1.

### Map of Regions in the U.S.



REGION 1 WWW

Harmon maintains that the primary reason behind making this Region 1, or the Northern Region, is because the area encompasses the all of the Yellowstone Park Timberland Reserve, the nation's first Federal Forest Reserve. The Reserves remained under the jurisdiction of the General Land Office until the creation of the Forest Service in 1905. In 1908, Gifford Pinchot reorganized the Forest Service.

Pinchot described the reorganization as: "Under the District organization, all business now transacted with the Washington office will be transacted with the District office. All correspondence, reports, and papers which the Use Book or subsequent instructions now provide that you should send the Forester, will hereafter be sent to the District Office, from whose officers you will receive your instructions."

"As you are probably aware, the organization of District Offices is the culmination of a plan toward which the Service has been working steadily. It will increase the usefulness of your Forest and of all others by reducing delay, and

by bringing you and your immediate superior officers into closer touch. It will also relieve the Washington Office of the heavy burden of routine which it now carries, and enable each one of us here to spend more time in field work on the Forests. This creation of the District Offices means that the administrative officers from Washington will see more of the field men than they have, and not less, it will unquestionably increase the spirit and efficiency of the whole Service."

In other words, Pinchot designed the reorganization to bring the administration of each forest closer to where they were located. This reorganization established six western districts headquarters - Missoula, Denver, Albuquerque, Ogden, San Francisco, and Portland. As the Forest Service acquired lands east of the Mississippi, additional districts were added until there were ten Regions. In 1930, the Forest Service renamed all districts and district offices regions and regional offices. The Forest Service eliminated Region Seven by combining it with Region 9 in 1966, leaving nine Regions (1-6 and 8-10), with additional headquarters in Atlanta, Milwaukee, and Juneau. As originally conceived, each district reported directly to Washington and the National Headquarters.

***Supervisors of Montana and Idaho  
Forest Reserves***

J.B Collins	1899
F.A. Fenn	1903

### ***Region 1 Regional Foresters***

William B. Greely	1908
Ferdinand A. Silcox	1911
Richard H. Rutledge	1917
Fred Morrell	1920
Evan W. Kelley	1929
C. S. Webb	1942
P. D. Hansen	1944-1956

## Our Early Leaders

**Rebecca Timmons**

Between 1900 -1901, the Kootenai National Forest hired its first rangers, Fred Herrig, Joe Eastland, and Charley Myers. They built ranger stations such as the Bunch Grass Ranger Station on Graves Creek and the Ant Flat Ranger Station. It would be many years before rangers were provided with standard designs for their ranger homes. There were no real working guidelines for rangers of this era to conduct business, but by 1906 a small use manual set initial qualifications.

## ***Patrolling on Horseback***



**KNF ARCHIVES**

A ranger in 1906 had to be able to ride, shoot, pack a mule, cruise and cut timber, survey and map, enforce land laws, prepare a written report, construct buildings, clear trails, fight fires, maintain records, issue permits and deal with people. He had to be able to supply most of his own equipment, including horses, and be willing to work for \$75 per month. Rangers spent their patrol in the woods alone which often caused loneliness, a condition many rangers solved by getting a dog.

***Fred Herrig and dog, Bruno***



HERITAGE MUSEUM

In 1908, when the Forest Service Use Book was published, it clearly stated the qualifications of a ranger, "A Ranger of any grade must be thoroughly sound and able-bodied, capable of enduring hardships and of performing severe labor under trying conditions. He must be able to take care of himself and his horses in regions remote from settlements and supplies. He must be able to build trails and cabins, ride, pack and deal tactfully with all classes of people. He must know something of land surveying, estimating and scaling timber, logging, land laws, mining, and the livestock business...Invalids seeking light out-of-doors employment need not apply".

The early forest supervisors were chosen for their technical expertise in land management issues, as well as their ability to inspire and lead. The first three forest supervisors were assigned to the Kootenai National Forest in 1907 and nineteen others have followed:

1907 – F.N. Haines  
1907 – D.J. Kinney  
1907 – Ed Schoonover  
1908 – Dorr Skeels  
1913 – W.A. Raymond  
1914 – Glen A. Smith  
1919 – C.M. Stevens  
1920 – L.F. Vinal  
1922 – A.M. Baum  
1926 – F.J. Jefferson  
1930 – C.S. Webb  
1936 – K.A. Klehm  
1946 – W. Gurernsey  
1951 – H.E. Ahlskog  
1958 – Robert Cron  
1973 – George Mahrt  
1974 – Floyd Marita  
1979 – William Morden  
1983 – James Rathbun  
1990 – Robert Schrenk  
1999 – Bob Castaneda

In the early part of the 1900's, three other forests eventually became a part of what is now the Kootenai National Forest, each with their own succession of Forest Supervisors:

Lewis & Clark Forest Reserve  
1902 – W. Barnum  
1907 – F.N. Haines

**Blackfeet National Forest**  
 1907 – F.N. Haines  
 1911 – J.P. Preston  
 1912 – R.P. McLaughlin  
 1920 – E. H. Myrick  
 1922 – L.V. Vinal  
 1925 – J.E. Ryan  
 1928 – Wm. Nagel  
 1932 – K. Wolfe

Cabinet National Forest  
1906 – F.A. Silcox  
1908 – Roy Headley



- 1909 – R.H. Bushnell
- 1912 – C.W. Griffin
- 1915 – C.M. Stevens
- 1919 – H.L. Baker
- 1921 – J.E. Ryan
- 1923 – K. Wolfe
- 1929 – R.R. Fittings
- 1933 – A.H. Abbott
- 1940 – C.S. Sutliff
- 1950 – R.S. Space

**Forest Supervisor Ferdinand Silcox**

*Terry Hightower*

Ferdinand Augustus Silcox was the first Supervisor of the Cabinet (S) National Forest (1906-1908). He earned a Masters of Forestry, Yale, 1905, and was hired by the fledgling Forest Service immediately after graduation. He was one of Gifford Pinchot's cadre of young foresters and possessed exceptional "people skills".

***Ferdinand Silcox***



USFS REGION 1 ARCHIVES

***Ferdinand Silcox, first Forest Supervisor of the Cabinet National Forest. His negotiation skills got the fledgling Forest Service off to a good start in western Montana.***

In early spring, 1906, Silcox and his crew started surveying the Bull River country. Their "headquarters" were tents pitched on Berray's Ranch. His Forest Service crews constructed the trail to Squaw/Star Peak in 1907 and accomplished several other projects that year. It was a good work year, and they made a good first impression for the FS. They were also lucky, because there were no fires that summer. He later opened an office in Thompson Falls to stop the rampant timber trespass on public land and to start requesting withdrawals of land for future administrative sites. In addition, he approved or denied claims under the Homestead Laws. While he had his proponents – those people who believed in conservation - most people within Sanders County felt the federal government was taking control of their lives. To say the Forest Service was mistrusted or disliked would be a gross understatement. The fact that Silcox was an educated, refined "easterner" did not help matters. His sincerity, honesty and professionalism overcame these mistrusts and appeased many of the local settlers. His leadership helped the Forest Service get off to a good start.

Silcox's short tenure on the Cabinet National Forest was due to his quick advancement in the agency; he earned 7 promotions in less than three years. In 1911, he became District I Forester and remained there until World War

I. He believed in Pinchot's school of decentralization; decisions are best made at the field level with competent rangers. He established the Savanac Nursery as part of a reforestation plan and also established central warehouses for firefighting supplies and tools. He was transferred to Washington during WWI and worked for the U.S. Shipping Board to handle labor disputes on the west coast. He returned to the Forest Service in 1933 as Chief. A heart attack in December of 1939 ended his career and life, a great loss to the Forest Service.

**Who's the Boss?  
Decision-Making in the Forest Service**

*Rebecca Timmons*

In 1905, the Forest Service Use Manual was approximately ¼ inch thick. Today, the Use Manual has evolved into manual sand handbooks that when combined are 15 feet thick.

In 1909, the Forest Supervisor, Dorr Skeels received a letter from the Regional Office indicating that his priorities were to continue his land survey work and to settle on how to determine which of the valuable timber lands could be claimed by homesteaders as agricultural lands.

A ranger's responsibility for trespass control, fire detection and suppression, surveying, timber cruising, and trail building was self-directed. In the words of an old-timer, "the Forest Supervisor gave me a double-bitted axe and a box and ammunition and told me to 'go to it and good luck.'" Therefore, the men attracted to the profession possessed a high degree of self-sufficiency, individualism and common sense. Scheduling of work followed a pace dictated by travel time and weather. It might take a ranger 1-2 days to get by horseback to a fire, before the firefighting even began. It was not until about 1920 that "Ranger" was used to denote the decision-maker on the district.

***A Ranger's Meeting in the Early 1900's***



HERITAGE MUSEUM

As the U.S. recovered from WW II, the unprecedented housing boom sparked a nation-wide demand for lumber. Western forests became a major source of that lumber. As the automobile became more accessible to more Americans, the National Forests were also asked to supply new recreational opportunities for a mobile public. Rangers' decisions became increasingly influenced by public demand during these evolutions.

By the 1960's, while multiple-use consisted of extraction-based industries such as timber and mining, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 emphasized the balancing of resource extraction with environmental protection. Environmental analysis's were conducted and published allowing the public to become more engaged in the Forest Service decision making. While this act was being implemented, recreational activities continued to grow and the demands for a broader variety of quality recreational experiences increased.

By 1985, conservation was firmly planted in the Multiple-Use formula. The Forest Service reflected the changing American environmental focus by decreasing the emphasis on timber, logging, and mining, and increasing the emphasis on the new conservation awareness. Recreational demands on National Forests continued to grow.

***Fisheries Biologists on the Kootenai***



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

Amplified complexity in the management of forest lands for the next 100 years has increased the degree of skilled specialization. The specialists, including wildlife biologists, foresters, engineers, archaeologists, hydrologists and geologists, provide professional guidance to today's Rangers and Forest Supervisor, who remain the decision-makers in the organization.

In most recent years, the Rangers and Forest Supervisor have turned to community leaders for advice in helping them make informed decisions. The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, identified "The purpose of a resource advisory committee (RAC) shall be to improve collaborative relationships and to provide advice and recommendations to the land management agencies consistent with the purposes of this Act." The act designates three categories of participants that represent the full range of interests in a community.

The county-based committee meets once a month to discuss the dispersal of money collected through timber sales and other forest receipts to forest projects. There has been an emphasis on consensus building in selecting projects to consider and to fund, focusing on building relationships that can be applied to constructive problem solving. Members have found common ground in some areas, but they also respect their differences on natural resource management issues.

***Lincoln County RAC***



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

***RAC meeting at Historic Raven Ranger Station***

Today, ecosystem health figures prominently in the Multiple-use management formula. In this formula, timber, mining, grazing, and recreational interests are all balanced against a scale of environmental and ecosystem health. Pinchot's famous words have renewed relevance.

*"The greatest good for the greatest number for the longest time"*  
—Gifford Pinchot.



Ant Flat Ranger Station

Nancy Anderson

Little was known about Montana’s vast, unmapped wilderness when presidential proclamations set aside U.S forest reserves during the 1890s. In 1904, Ant Flat became one of the region’s first year-round ranger stations. Ample water, land suitable for pasture and domestic gardens, close proximity to heavy timberlands, and access to the Great Northern Railroad made Ant Flat an ideal location. President Theodore Roosevelt appointed his friend Fred Herrig, a decorated Rough Rider, its first ranger.

Imagine with me if you will...  
...It’s 1904 and you have just been appointed district ranger of the Fortine Ranger District on the Lewis and Clark Reserve. Riding your dark bay saddle horse with his silver-studded bridle and accompanied by Bruno, your white Russian wolfhound - you make an impressive sight. You are Fred Herrig, a personal friend of Teddy Roosevelt, who rode with him and the Rough Riders. You carry the pistol that he gave you. Now your life will center on being the “government man” for the Forest Service in northwest Montana.<sup>1</sup>

You choose a beautiful meadow with a small stream running nearby to set up your administrative site. You, being a man of imagination with a flair for the dramatic, see your post as one of beauty, with the natural splendors to be further enhanced by clumps of blooming lilacs. You intend to plant lilac bushes around the log buildings and name the station “Lilac Hall”. After telling your plan to your close friend Byron Henning, ranger at Point of Rocks Station, he rocks with merriment and roars, “Lilac Hall! Hell, Fred, you better come down to earth and name this patch of yours ‘Ant Flat’, seein’ as how you’ve got so many of them gol-durned ant hills in that meadow!”

In the end, “Ant Flat” is the name that sticks. The name, so lacking in both distinction and beauty, has continued to plague and amuse everyone who has ever received mail here. Envelopes have arrived addressed to “Aunt Flat”; “Ants Flats”; and “Ant Hill Station”. Herrig did plant his lilacs, and each spring the old lilac bushes still bring forth their fragrant lavender blooms in tribute to the aesthetic side of Fred’s nature.<sup>2</sup>

Herrig’s first domain was a one-room log cabin, measuring 12 x 18 feet, with a shake roof and a dirt floor. This was replaced several years later by another log structure of three rooms, which housed his home, office, and later a schoolroom. The primitive facility grew; and by the end of Herrig’s tenure in 1920, this strategically positioned district within the Blackfeet Forest Reserve was top-rated for fire prevention, detection, and control. It was originally part of the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve that was created in 1897. With the establishment of the National Forest System, Ant Flat became part of the Blackfeet National Forest on July 1, 1908. The Blackfeet National Forest encompassed the present Fortine District of the Kootenai National Forest and a portion of the Glacier View District on the Flathead National Forest. In 1933, the Blackfeet National Forest was dissolved and the Ant Flat District was split between the Kootenai National Forest and the Flathead National Forest.

The Ant Flat Work Center represents one of the oldest administrative stations within Region 1 Forests. It is located near the small town of Fortine in north Lincoln County. The station was developed in 1904 under Ranger Fred Herrig, and became the hub of the administration of all programs directed and executed on the Fortine Ranger District.

Ant Flat Barn



KNF ARCHIVES

Ant Flat Barn 1928

Eighteen district rangers worked at the Ant Flat Ranger District between 1904 and 1963. In 1963, even though Ant Flat had been enlarged and improved over the years, the Fortine District outgrew the facilities and the administrative site was moved to the newly built and developed site at Murphy Lake. It was renamed the Murphy Lake Ranger Station.

Ant Flat has seen many changes since 1904. Although no original log buildings remain at Ant Flat, the lilac bushes Herrig planted mark the site of the first primitive headquarters. The improvements located at Ant Flat are representative of the development that took place during the 1920’s and 1930’s, when it was used as an administrative headquarters for a ranger district.

Most of the original buildings were burned down to make room for new construction. As use of National Forests increased, the appearance of official facilities became more important and the Forest Service sought to harmonize its buildings with the environment. Ant Flat Station reflects these trends. The property retains representative elements from several different phases of development. It encompasses a wide range of building and construction styles deemed acceptable by the Forest Service.

At one time Ant Flat was home to Forest Service mules and horses. Each spring and fall the meadow held nearly 100 pack and riding animals that carried supplies to lookouts and outstations. The six-stall log barn (1921-1925) recalls the earlier construction phases and the importance of these pack animals. The hand-hewn barn is 28 by 40 feet, with six stalls and a harness room. Worn depressions in the floor of the barn evoke images of the many mules and horses that rested there.

Ant Flat Pack String



KNF ARCHIVES

Bert Wilkie, Fred Herrig’s son, leading the Ant Flat pack string, loaded with materials and supplies, to outfit the district for its season’s work.

The less “rustic” Craftsman style office and warehouse (1927), gas and oil storage building (1932), and garage and mechanics shop (1934) are more formal expressions of the Forest Service ethic. Ant Flat became a seasonal work center in 1963, but its presence chronicles the evolution of the Forest Service from the beginning through the formative 1920’s and 1930’s. These four buildings are the remains of the Ant Flat historic complex.

Ant Flat



KNF ARCHIVES

Ant Flat Ranger Station in the 1930’s

Local school children now use the historic Ant Flat site as a natural resource education center. The inside of the office building has been refurbished, providing laboratory space, a small classroom and meeting room, and historical displays. The site has interpretive signs about its cultural and natural history. There is also a nature trail with interpretive signing with access to an observation platform which places the visitor over two ponds and provides a closer look at waterfowl and aquatic life. The trail continues over rougher terrain from there. Ant Flat is open for day visitation and programs are held throughout the year emphasizing the many aspects of forest management and history.

Ant Flat Preservation Work



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

Preservation work at Ant Flat in 1995 – the scaffolding is in place to replace the roof.

Fortunately, the Forest Service has preserved Ant Flat and has made it available to visitors so that they can capture a sense of the colorful history of the Forest Service and the role the station played in the development of northwest Montana.<sup>1</sup>

Ranger Fred Herrig

Nancy Anderson

Fred Herrig was one of the earliest rangers on what is now the Kootenai National Forest. He received his appointment from the Department of the Interior from 1900 to 1901 on the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve, Northern Division. The Reserve was divided into the Blackfeet and Flathead Forests in 1908. The Blackfeet Forest became part of the Kootenai Forest later in 1933.

Fred Herrig was born in 1860 in Alsace-Lorraine and arrived in the United States in 1875 at the age of 15. Three years later he was making a living hunting, trapping and packing and in Montana and British Columbia. By 1883 Fred had made his way to North Dakota where he worked as a cowboy. He first worked as a wrangler on the Marquis de Mores’ cattle ranch on the Little Missouri River in the North Dakota badlands. Then in 1893, Fred went to work at Theodore Roosevelt’s



Elkhorn Ranch, also on the Little Missouri. Herrig worked there for about five years and then returned to the Flathead and Pleasant Valley country of Montana <sup>1</sup>.

In 1898, Fred was working as a packer - leading strings of mules loaded with ore and picking up his mail in Pleasant Valley, Montana. It was during this time when he received a telegram from Roosevelt in Washington D.C. The telegram invited him to enlist for the Spanish American War.

Herrig went to Cuba for war and glory with Roosevelt’s Rough Riders. While in Cuba, Herrig gained status by tracking down some mules loaded with machine guns that got away during battle. He accomplished this by going behind enemy lines and finding them. He recovered the mules and the guns after others had given up. Roosevelt wrote on Fred’s discharge papers, “One of the bravest and best men in all my regiments. Owing to his ability as a tracker, we were able to recover the mules carrying the Colt guns, after they had stampeded into the jungle. Was a sharp shooter, as well as on the gun detail. There could be no better soldier”<sup>2</sup>.

According to C.W. Guthrie in, The First Ranger, “...Fred returned to Montana and was trying to decide what new adventure he would like to tackle when he heard about a range rider’s job that had been established by the new Chief of Forestry. Fred, not one to go the long way when a short-cut would do, wrote to his friend Theodore Roosevelt, who was then Governor of New York, and asked for a recommendation” <sup>2</sup>.

Fred was appointed Range Rider in 1900 with a district that included everything west of the North Fork of the Flathead River to the Whitefish Divide. Although his own district was vast, he was asked to keep an eye on the country east of the river until a Range Rider was assigned to that area <sup>2</sup>. Fred worked that job for several years until he was appointed Ranger at the Ant Flat Station in Fortine.

Herrig was the first ranger to be headquartered at the newly created forest service site at Ant Flat. He arrived at his new assignment in Fortine and built his cabin in 1903 at Ant Flat, later to become the Ant Flat Ranger District. He had grand plans to plant some lilacs and name the place Lilac Hill Forestry Station. Fred made the mistake of telling some friends his idea for a name. They roared with laughter and told him that he better take another look because the land was covered with ant hills and a more fitting name was Ant Flats. The name stuck.

Not long after Herrig arrived at his new assignment in Fortine, he rode out one spring day dressed in his finest attire. By all accounts, Herrig was an imposing figure. He was remembered as having a large handlebar moustache and for riding a dark bay horse, adorned with silver studded bridle and martingale. He wore high-top boots, a .44 strapped to his belt, carried a .45-.70 in a scabbard, and his ranger’s badge was in plain sight. His constant companion was his Russian Wolfhound Bruno <sup>3</sup>.

On this occasion, he had polished his boots, trimmed and waxed his handlebar moustache, curried his horse and combed Bruno. Fred was on a serious mission. Fred was courting the widow Frieda Wilke, a woman with five small boys that needed a father. He had met her while he worked in the North Fork. They married and the ceremony went well but the honeymoon, a three-week long trip back up to Fortine, did not go well for Bruno. The Wilkie’s had a dog and for Bruno and their dog it was definitely not “love at first sight”. The first night

after the marriage during dinner the dogs got into a savage fight. Fred took them out and separated them. Bruno was gone the next morning and when Fred got to Ant Flat three weeks later he found out that the dog had come back and waited for him but finally left three days before he returned. Fred was heartbroken to lose his loving and constant companion <sup>2</sup>.

**Fred and Bruno**



KNF ARCHIVES

**Ed Stahl, Fred Herrig and Bruno**

Fred, Freida and the five boys settled at Ant Flat. Fred was Ranger at Ant Flat from 1902-1919. When it came time for Herrig to retire in the early 1920’s, he discovered that he would have to work several more years until the Forest Service started a pension program. Due to these circumstances, he served as an assistant Ranger at Ant Flat until 1927<sup>2</sup>.

Fred was always proud of his friendship with Roosevelt. It was one of Fred’s greatest satisfactions to be a close friend of such an honorable man. Only his family meant as much to Fred. Fred was a member of the Roosevelt Rough Riders Association, and not even the fires of 1910 kept him from attending the reunion. When Roosevelt died in 1919, it was plain to everyone that Fred had a suffering heart. He also helped in getting pensions established for the veterans of the Spanish-American War and was involved with the Roosevelt Memorial Association <sup>2</sup>.

Herrig had the distinction of being the first ranger in the Flathead and Kootenai Forests and serving longer at one station than anyone else in the Forest service. Fred’s sons, Robert and Bert Wilkie, followed in Fred’s footsteps and had distinguished careers working for the Forest Service. Fred Herrig passed away on May 17, 1939 <sup>4</sup>.

**Land Classification of the Kootenai National Forest**

*By Mark J. White*

Homesteads in the Kootenai National Forest were tied to the **Agricultural Settlement Act of 1906**. This act was also known as the **Forest Homestead Act**. This came about after the establishment of the Forest Service. The Secretary of Agriculture had to open lands for settlement that were determined valuable for agriculture and not for public purposes. This allowed a filer to occupy up to 160 acres of land for five years in which improvements and cultivation had to take place.

A letter from James B. Adams, Acting Forester to F.N. Haines, the first Forest Supervisor of the Kootenai and Cabinet National Forests, outlined the conditions of this act. The letter

was printed in the February 14, 1907, edition of Libby’s Western News. This letter noted that settlement on the Kootenai National Forest Reserve ‘made subsequent to January 1, 1906, and prior to the creation of the reserve on November 6, 1906, were protected by the President’s proclamation and would not be disturbed if the homesteaders complied with the homestead laws and had filed during the statutory period. Anyone else who settled on forest service lands and had not followed the process required a permit from the forest service before they could make improvements on the land or they would be charged with trespass.

The potential settler had to get a special use permit to build on or make improvements to the homestead prior to the land being listed. As a result of this act, there was concern in the U.S. Forest Service that there would not be enough agricultural lands for ranger stations and guard stations for grazing horses. Forest Service employees selected a large number of sites for administrative stations being about a days ride (by horse) apart. Many people were angered by potential homesteads being tied up by the U.S. Forest Service for administrative sites.

During and after 1906, the first years of the Kootenai National Forest and prior to settlement along the Kootenai River, a number of these administrative sites were located along this Kootenai River. The lands to be listed for homesteads required an examination of Forest Service lands to determine whether they were primarily valuable as agricultural or timber lands. The first lands to be examined were those occupied by settlers prior to January 1, 1906. A shortage of manpower kept the process backlogged in Region One.

**1916 Homestead**



KNF ARCHIVES

**Kootenai National Forest Homestead settled under the Act of June 11, 1906**

The criterion for determining whether potential lands were chiefly agricultural or forest lands was if potential agricultural land contained 4000 board feet or more of merchantable timber per acre. The Forest Service would then set up a timber sale and after the land was cut would list the lands for homestead entry. On the Kootenai National Forest there was pressure from citizens to open a six mile wide strip of land along the Kootenai River for settlement. Later Professor Thomas Shaw was hired by Louis Hill of the Great Northern Railroad to examine these lands in this strip and reported that 300,000 acres of the land were suited for development as fruit lands and dairies. Under pressure Forest Supervisor, Dorr Skeels, responded by putting together a crew to examine potential agricultural lands in the summer of 1910 and complete the examination by fall. Only 9000 of the 300,000 acres in the Kootenai River valley were found suitable for agriculture. In the summer of 1911 forest homestead tracts were surveyed in the Yaak Valley.

The Department of Agriculture became backlogged with the classification of lands in various forests across the United States. As a result on August 10, 1912 there came a statute mandating the land classification of all forests. The legislation stated that the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture

was to “select, classify, and segregate” as soon as possible the lands within the boundaries of the National Forests that could be opened for settlement and entry under the homesteading laws applicable to the National Forest.

The November 12, 1912, edition of the Western News released an article titled ‘Finish Land Examination’, noting that the surveying and examination of agricultural lands in the Kootenai National Forest would be a nearly three year undertaking. There were three crews involved in the survey and examination process. After collecting data and mapping during the field season Assistant Forest Ranger Fratig, who had examined the Yaak during the field season of 1913, and Vern Ketchum, a civil engineer who had surveyed base lines in four townships, spent the winter preparing maps and estimates from data collected during the field season. There had been traverse lines along the length of Quartz Creek, the south and east forks of the Yaak River and a base line from the Yaak River to the Idaho state line. Crews had also gathered forest conditions and other topographical information over four townships.

After lands were approved as being suitable for agriculture, the local newspapers received the information. This led to extensive homestead settlement in Northwestern Montana.

***Homestead along the Yaak River***



KNF ARCHIVES  
***B.B. Hill Homestead by K.D. Swan #210906***

The final result of this examination of the forest lands, from 1909 to 1916, was the **Extensive Classification of the Kootenai National Forest**. This large report completed by Forest Examiner John C. Ketridge and approved on April 19, 1917, by C.F. Marvin, Acting Secretary of the Interior. The report dealt with the agricultural, forest, and watershed values of certain areas of the Kootenai National Forest. There are descriptions of homestead listings, their location, and the status of the listings ever after the report was completed.

These correction memorandums date up to the early 1930's. There is a preface report which gives an overview of the Land Classification of the Kootenai National Forest with the stated purpose being to find the highest use of lands within the forest as well as the separation of lands suitable for agricultural purposes from lands of forest purposes. This was to establish a definite boundary separating the two to make it possible to carry out forestry practices for the proper administration of the forest.

The Extensive Land Classification for the Kootenai contains descriptions of the land in the township, streams, topography, as well as the break down of forest from alienated lands. The book also contains historical photographs of early mining, homesteading, logging, old roads and forest conditions of the Kootenai National Forest during the early twentieth century. The extensive classification volume contains township maps covering the forest.

These township maps show the location of agricultural and forest lands as well as coding for other alienated lands such as homestead patents, mineral patents, railroad selections, timber and stone patents etc. A general description of whether land contains timberland with more or less than 5000 board feet per acre are shown by color coding. There is color coding for burns, alpine, barren and other conditions on the landscape.

This large bound report is still in the possession of the Kootenai National Forest. It chronicles the settlement of lands during the early days of the U.S. Forest Service and is a treasure of information concerning forest and land conditions during the early twentieth century.

**Charles Marshall and the Carnegie Medal**

*By Mark J. White*

Charles Marshall, born in Antrim, Michigan on May 5, 1873, moved to Libby in 1902 where he remained for the next 31 years. He began his career in the Cabinet National Forest in 1907 as a forest guard being promoted to assistant forest ranger. The following year, he became a deputy ranger. Later that same year, the Kootenai National Forest absorbed part of the Cabinet National Forest, and as a result, Marshall became the first Deputy Forest Ranger of the Libby Ranger District. In 1909, he supervised the construction of the Swamp Creek Ranger Station. The ranger station house and barn were built by Marshall, W.L. Davis and H. Weider. Later that spring, Marshall was reassigned as the deputy ranger of the Warland Ranger District. In the spring of 1910, Dorr Skeels, Forest Supervisor of the Kootenai National Forest, appointed Marshall to the position of deputy ranger of District 10 which included the Fisher River, lower Wolf Creek and Pleasant Valley drainages. In late August of 1910, Marshall was in charge of a 100-man crew fighting fire in the Wolf Creek drainage. Marshall became the Ranger for the Libby Ranger District in 1917.

Charles Marshall married Miss Edna Firestone of Libby. Edna Firestone was a schoolteacher in Libby and continued to teach after she married Charles. She later taught the children in the schools about the portable logging camps of the Libby Lumber Company and J. Neils Lumber Company. Charles and Edna had one son named Paul. Charles Marshall died in Libby, Montana at the age of 59 on December 11, 1933. He was characterized as a man of sterling character and highly respected in his community.

***Heroism***

What set Charles Edwin Marshall apart from the rest, however, was when he performed an uncommon act of heroism on June 15, 1910. That day, Mrs. Mattie Roderick and her six-year-old grandson, Frankie Murray, had driven her team and wagon onto a week old ferry to cross the Kootenai River. Other ferry passengers were William Larkin, John Frederick, Beecher Loucks, William Harmon, and A. C. Frantz the ferry operator. The river was running very high and halfway across, the boxing in the wheel broke. The ferry stopped and swamped. Beecher Loucks unhitched the team from the wagon and made the horses swim for shore. The ferry tipped and all were washed overboard. Only John Fredericks was able swam to shore. Mr. Loucks and Frankie Murray sank from sight and drowned. William Harmon and Will Larkin grabbed loose planks of the ferry. Harmon floated a mile and a half and Larkin hung on for two miles before both were able to get to shore. Mr. Frantz was not as lucky and drowned. Mrs. Roderick, clung

onto the ferry railing for over two hours.

Henry E. Kuphal, a mining engineer, reacted to the emergency by going hand over hand on the cable to the swamped ferry. He began working on the ferry wheel to get the boat moving. Logs rushing downstream struck the ferry and one pinned Kuphal’s legs between it and the ferry.

Charles Marshall happened to be on shore and began to travel hand over hand on the ferry cable with an axe tied to his ankle. As Marshall reached the ferry, the steel cable gave way pulling up its larch stump anchor on the Libby side. The cable swung around and killed Theodore Wall and fatally injured John Mullinex. As the log floated free, Kuphal was released and floated down the river where he was rescued by Edward Dawson in his row boat. The ferry was swept down the river where it lodged on a rock thirty feet from shore. Mrs. Roderick was swept off the railing into the box of her wagon. The wagon was then washed off the ferry. Marshall swam to her and managed to get her back to the ferry. Edward Dawson then rowed his boat to rescue both Marshal and Roderick from the ferry.

In October of 1911, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission award eight medals to Montana, three of which went to Libby. Charles E. Marshall won a silver medal and \$1000 toward the purchase of a home for saving Mattie Roderick from drowning on that day in 1910. Harry E. Kuphal also won a silver medal and \$1000 for his efforts. William E. Dawson won a bronze medal and \$1000 to liquidate indebtedness for saving Kuphal, Marshall, and Roderick.

The U.S. Forest Service can take pride in the courage of this early employee of the Cabinet and Kootenai National Forest.

***Ferry on the Kootenai River at Libby***



***Libby Ferry across the Kootenai River, prior to 1910. Photo courtesy of Heritage Museum***

**Profile of Two Early Timber Sales**

*Mark J. White & Nancy Anderson*

***Timber Sale No. 59***

Timber Sale No. 59, probably the first timber sale on the area now known as the Kootenai National Forest, actually took place on the Northern Division of the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve. In December 1903, Hugh Murphy and P.S. Doxie of Marston, Montana, applied to cut 30,000 railroad ties for the construction of the railroad through the area. The sale was on Forest Service land southeast of Dickey Lake. They planned to saw a maximum of 2000 ties each week and live in a tent camp on site. A Forest Service official said that the timber to be cut “lies near the railroad and is liable to be consumed by fire.” The Forest Service advertised the sale in the *Kalispell Interlake* and Murphy and Doxie’s winning bid in April 1904 was: “ we agree to pay the sum of \$1.00 per thousand feet B.M. on a basis of 33 1/3 ft. per standard tie.”



Ranger Fred Herrig came to their camp every two weeks and scaled the timber they had harvested. Herrig reported the sale over at the end of July with 11,074 ties made and "...no more Ties warranted." The timber had been exhausted and the demand for the ties had stopped. Even though Herrig and the contractors believed the sale over, additional examination of the sale area revealed problems including wasted timber - by cutting the stumps too high, not using many of the tree tops, and not piling slash. They had originally paid the government \$700.00 for the timber. The value of the ties cut was \$472.70 and they were fined \$85.53 for wasting timber. The remaining \$141.77 was kept to pay for the cleanup of the sale area<sup>1</sup>.

### ***Brooks Brothers Timber Sale***

One of the old timber sales of the Kootenai National Forest of which there is surviving documentation, both U.S. Forest Service and in the Libby newspapers of the period, is the Brooks Brother Timber Sale. The U.S. Forest Service sold timber in this sale on August 28, 1911, to Charles and Maurice Brooks, contractors for the Bonners Ferry Lumber Company. The two brothers had applied to purchase all of the merchantable timber located on 1720 acres located in the Pipe Creek watershed.

This sale is described in great detail in a surviving prospectus of the sale entitled **'Forest Description and Report, Timber Sale Application Brook Brothers, August 18, 1911, Kootenai National; Forest National Forest'**. This includes photographs, maps and a detailed description of the proposed timber sale area and the timber type and volume located there. There are descriptions and photographs of sections of Bobtail and Pipe Creek as they were at the time.

It was estimated that there was over 9 million feet of yellow pine, 1.9 million feet of western larch and 1 million feet of Douglas-fir in the proposed sale area. The sale included lands around the Pipe Creek Ranger Station. Most of the land in the proposed timber sale application, excluding the Pipe Creek Ranger Station administrative site, had been previously applied for under the Forest Homestead Act of June 11, 1906.

The Western News for August 3, 1911, noted that some of the timberland had already been taken up for homesteading, but "upon which there is more timber than the government allows them." Anything over 4,000 feet of commercial saw timber per acre was to be disposed of by the government before the settlers would be allowed to "prove up" on their homesteads. In order to establish a homestead, one had to show occupation on their homestead in order to "prove up" the claim. The main purpose of the Brooks Brothers sale was related to the homestead listings on the land.

The Brooks brothers' plans for the sale included harvesting the timber and then floating the logs down Pipe Creek to the Kootenai River in a log drive during high water in April and May. The logs would then be decked along the Kootenai River below the mouth of Pipe Creek. 'River Pigs,' or log drivers of the Bonners Ferry Lumber Company, would then drive the logs down the Kootenai River to the sawmill at Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

In the fall of 1911, a crew of men cleared five miles of obstructions from Pipe Creek. A 30-man crew began logging the sale area in the fall of 1911, and continued operations through the winter.

### ***Logging with Crosscut Saws***



KNF ARCHIVES

***K.D.Swan Photo #156153, 1921***

Over 2.5 million feet of logs were decked on rollways along Pipe Creek by April and the drive began on April 10, 1912. The drive was not a great success due to low water in Pipe Creek. Due to this occurrence, a splash dam was built in the summer of 1912 on Pipe Creek at a point just below the mouth of Doak Creek. This dam was to provide the necessary water to float over 4 million feet cut the previous winter. Immediately following the high water on Pipe Creek in April of 1913, a large drive from the logs decked from 1912 and 1913 were sent down the creek.

The drive of April and May of 1913 was marred by two deaths. On April 15, Joe Murphy, a lumberjack from the Brook Brothers camp on Pipe Creek had started work for the company and went to break up a log jam on the creek and succeeded in breaking it up but then went down with the jam and was crushed. He crawled back on the bank and then to the bunkhouse and died two hours later. The second casualty was on April 28, 1913, when Edward Spencer, an 18-year-old born in Libby, attempted to cross Pipe Creek on logs going downstream and was thrown into the water and disappeared under the logs.

### ***Brook Brothers Splash Dam on Pipe Creek***



M.WHITE PHOTO COLLECTION

***Photograph taken circa 1932 by Robert Holiday, The dam was built in the summer of 1912.***

Despite this, the Brook Brothers log drive of 1913 was considered a success. There was one more season of cutting and the last log drive down Pipe Creek was in the spring of 1914. The final total for timber cut in the sale was 5,641,940 feet of timber, far short of the 14,000,000 originally anticipated. There was never a log drive down Pipe Creek again. From 1925 until 1931, logs harvested north of the Kootenai River by the J. Neils Lumber Company of Libby were transported to the sawmill at Libby by logging railroad.

## **Ross "Shorty" Young**

***Nancy Anderson***

E. Ross "Shorty" Young was born in Edison, Ohio, on December 12, 1873. As the youngest and smallest of eleven boys, he was frequently bullied by his older brothers. When Shorty was old enough to escape the burden of his family, he hitched a pack to his back and left. So far as anyone knew, he never went back<sup>1</sup>.

Young became a master machinist and lived in New York City for a time. While there, he built tugboats, guns, and fine watches. In 1901, he hopped a freight train and headed west<sup>2</sup>, going first to California. He walked to Montana from California, hiking until he felt sleepy, and sleeping until he felt like hiking. Once in Montana, he landed in Whitefish and constructed some of the first houses there. At Somers, Shorty designed and helped build one of the first lumber tugs for use on Flathead Lake. He was probably the first, and possibly the only person, to row a boat all the way around Flathead Lake.

Shorty came to the Fortine-Trego country around 1904 and took to the mountains trapping and exploring. He trapped in the early days using traps he made himself. The design of the traps was different than the standard commercial trap. His grizzly trap weighed only six pounds and was reported very effective. According to Olga W. Johnson, "He knew the Whitefish Divide and all the remote and nearly inaccessible regions of the mountains for miles around, as well as most men know the inside of their pockets. Every crag and bald hill, lake and creek, canyon and deer trail, were familiar to him, and with each he associated a personal experience<sup>1</sup>."

As a gunsmith, Young was unexcelled. Shotguns were his specialty, but he would repair any gun, as well as make many of them, often out of very raw material. He also made sights, parts and stocks. His tools did not include milling machines or lathes; he did his work with hand tools. Time and temperature meant nothing to Shorty when he got deep into a gun job. He might work all night until the cabin grew so cold that his fingers would no longer respond.

Shorty's old homestead cabin on Deep Creek was a workshop so fascinating that visitors continually dropped in. His spare-time projects included watch and clock repairing, studying lens grinding, and grinding out the lenses for a telescope he built. With his ingenious mind and skillful fingers, he designed and built any tool he needed.

"As a cook, Shorty could put a great many women to shame," writes Johnson. "He had a special way of frying potatoes and onions, of making a quick rice pudding on top of the stove, and of stuffing and roasting a duck. But his coffee was so strong it could support a battleship."

Shorty Young described his forest service work in Volume 1 of Early Days In the Forest Service as follows:

"My first duty was to help plant some yellow pine trees in the spring of 1913. They were about six inches high then, and they are twenty-five to thirty feet high (1944).

In the spring of 1914 I was cutting a patrol trail from the headwaters of Deep Creek to the headwaters of Whitefish River. There I met two surveyors from Washington, D.C. —Evans and Whaley. They were mapping and contouring the mountains in what is called Whitefish

Divide Range. With a glass, I could see these men at work later on different points. They gave one of the mountains near my camp the name of Mount Young. Shorty Creek was also named for him.

From 1915 until 1932, my usual duties were maintaining trail in spring, spending the fire season on lookout duty, and constructing new trails after fire season until the season ran out. I also helped repair telephone lines in spring and build new lines in fall. In 1917 I suggested that I camp steady at the lookout on Gibraltar, and Ranger Fred Herrig agreed with me. That was the first year that a lookout camped constantly there. I reported 14 fires-the record season for me.

In 1924 when Gibraltar was abandoned, I was moved to Robert’s Lookout, near Fortine. The Forest Service built a new steel tower there that year. As there were no lookout towers manufactured at that time, they made the top half from a water tank <sup>3</sup>.”

According to Kresek, Shorty did all the climbing on the day the mast went up and finished the six-by-six-foot wooden cab at the top. He volunteered to become the lookout’s first resident and then went to work whittling furnishings from natural materials gathered near the hilltop. By the end of the third summer Roberts Lookout had a fancy privy but only a tent to live in.

**Roberts (Shorty’s) Lookout**



PETE KLINKE-USFS

**Roberts Mountain Lookout, 1941**

Children came from miles around to gather at Shorty’s fire tower. He treated them with respect and listened seriously to their opinions. They loved him for his cheery, instructive talk, his hot meals, and the way he had of making them feel important. They ate cookies he baked for them, listened to tall tales of the great outdoors, peered at the marvels of the heavens through Shorty’s telescope and through one of its attachments, saw Mr. Winkley, some three miles away, driving in his turkeys-all upside down. They tried shooting off Shorty’s fine .22 automatic, and learned how to handle a gun with safety and accuracy. He saw to it that every child had a souvenir to take home.

If a child stayed too long after sundown and was nervous about going home in the dark, Shorty would make a palouser – a crude lantern made from a tin can with one side cut out and a lit candle inside. Thus armed, the child would set out bravely and confidently<sup>1</sup>.

Roberts became Shorty’s lookout. By the time he retired, he’d earned the right to call that hilltop his. He had been a lookout for thirty-eight years for the Forest Service, the longest term for such a position in the history of the Service<sup>2</sup>.

**Shorty Young**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

**Making sure that every kid in the valley had a toy, skillfully carved out of pine.**

Shorty had a narrow escape late in the fall of 1941 when he was cooking for a road repair crew. A black bear began to take their food supplies, and got so bold he tried to come in the kitchen one night. Shorty met him near the door. They were about six feet apart in the dark. The bear refused to back up and Shorty shot him with a 12-gauge shotgun, hoping to knock him out. His chances were about one to four with the bear in the dark.

Shorty knew little of fear until, at the age of fifty or so, he lost the sight of one eye when he got a piece of steel in it. Instead of seeking immediate medical attention, he put off seeing a doctor. Infection set in and he lost his sight completely in that eye. As a result, he was afraid that he would lose sight in his other eye. Luckily, his good eye remained clear and strong to the end, and he was able to repair many a gun and sight many a forest fire <sup>1</sup>.

Young was described as one of the best all-around men ever to serve at the Ant Flat Ranger Station and was considered by many to be almost a genius at anything he did. He learned to know the country so well that he became nearly uncanny at directing firefighters.

Shorty retired from the Forest Service on November 30, 1943. He wrote: “I have been on the labor market fifty-four years and have spent thirty of these with the Forest Service in northern Montana. These thirty years have been the best part of my life. I have never lost any pay that I had coming. My enjoyment of my work has been such that when I have been out on the Forest on jobs I felt I was out in the green forest on a vacation and the Service was giving me wages and paying my expenses <sup>3</sup>.”

After he retired, the now abandoned tower became a lonely place and was eventually overgrown by the surrounding forest. Shorty passed away in 1945. In 1979 the town folk, who had come to know Shorty well through the tales told at every community picnic, dismantled, hauled away, and re-assembled the Roberts Lookout Tower in the Tobacco Valley Improvement Association’s historic park in Eureka <sup>2</sup>.

**Ranger Ed Stahl**

*Mark J. White*

Ed Stahl was one of the first rangers of the newly formed Kootenai National Forest but started out in Flathead Country. He attended the first civil service examination for

appointment of forest rangers in 1905 in the Flathead. It was held at Kalispell, Montana for appointment to the Lewis and Clark Forest. He passed and received an appointment as a Forest Ranger in the spring of 1906. He was assigned as a Forest Ranger to work with Fred Herrig at Ant Flat. One of the stories that Ed wrote about was with both his and Fred Herrig’s experience with a toxic plant that grows in the Kootenai National Forest. Ed had heard that a certain plant was wild rhubarb and good to eat. Ed and Fred Herrig tried some and became very sick. Ed wrote four miles to the railway station at Stryker to get a doctor and help for Fred who remained in camp. There, Ed passed out and the doctor had to use strychnine to keep Ed’s heart going. Help reached Fred in time and he survived. The symptoms of eating the plant were spasms, constricted chest and throat. The men recovered for the next week. Ed Stahl later learned the plant was False Hellebore, a very deadly plant growing in the forest.

Ed also worked with Byron Henning in cutting a trail up the Stillwater Valley. He was later transferred by Supervisor F.N. Haines to Indian Creek on the North Fork of the Flathead River. He helped cut the trail on the North shore of Lake McDonald. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1907, he was assigned to the Kootenai National Forest to construct the Pipe Creek Ranger cabin. He wrote that the Forest Service could not spend more than \$500.00 building a ranger station, but due to a severe winter, the cost of building the Pipe Creek Ranger Station exceeded this.

Later in the spring of 1907, he was assigned to cut the trail across the Purcell Range to the Yaak River via Dodge Creek. He met a miner named Solo Joe Perrault placering near the summit. Solo Joe told him that should he ever meet a trapper named Olson in the Yaak River District he was to mistake Olson for a mountain lion and shoot him! Solo Joe described Olson as ‘dingle on the bean’, or crazy, and told how once a bear trap had been set on a trail by Olson for Solo Joe. Stahl noted that in 1908, Forest Ranger William Raymond had written a letter to the Forest Supervisor about the need to have Olson arrested as he was dangerous. Unfortunately, there was no action taken by the supervisor which resulted in tragic consequences. Some time later, two of Ranger Raymond’s laborers headed for their homestead in the Yaak for the weekend. They met Olson coming out of the cabin. Olson had poisoned their sour dough starter can with strychnine. One of the men died while the other survived. Raymond then arrested Olson and took him in.

Stahl wrote that it was very lonely building the trail through the Purcell Range. He finally did get help from a woodsman, packer, and horseman named Cody. Stahl wrote a poem while camping which he called “A Rangers Lament” which he then sent to Acting Supervisor Glen Smith with the hope that it would get some positive results, which it did.

A Rangers Lament by Ed Stahl

I’m on my way, Glen, on my way,  
To pitch my tent by close of day;  
where Dodge Creek springs ‘mid shadows  
strange from a narrow pass in the Purcell  
Range.

The simple life may look good to folks  
who live in the city and know it from books,  
just now with me it’s beginning to pall  
for it’s lonely here when the shadows fall

So I sit by the campfire’s gleam alone,  
And hark to the swaying tree’s low moan,  
Then count the days, about ten more  
when I’ll hike for the Kootenay’s eastern  
shore.



But before I can go, alas! Alack!  
I must plod up the hump with a heavy pack,  
pitch my tent in the canyon deep,  
and flop in a bed where the spiders creep.

I long for a day with Billie and Van,  
Susan and Babe and the rest of the clan;  
for the cheerful notes of a ragtime song,  
or to waltz with a maid ‘mid the whirling throng.

Then back to the woods again wouldn’t tire;  
camp grub cooked by an open fire,  
with big dutch oven and frying pan,  
blackened kettles and a sourdough can.

The poem worked because he was promoted and received a transfer from Glen Smith to a better district in Idaho! Ed wrote that his job was so lonely that his dog couldn’t stand it and left for the Kootenai River where he howled till the ferryman from Gateway came over and took the dog to town. People assumed that when a dog came back that some mishap had befallen the owner. Two people were sent from Gateway and found Ed using his mattock building the trail. The searchers may have been disappointed but Ed was glad there was someone concerned about his welfare.

After mailing his poem to Glen Smith, Stahl received orders for a transfer to a District north of Bonners Ferry on the Pend Oreille National Forest. He lost no time in gathering up his belongings and took the trail down the Kootenai River. His journey, however, was no picnic. He took a poor trail on the east side of the Kootenai River, and while at Stone Hill a freight train killed his pack horse. He then walked to Jennings while leading his saddle horse. He shipped his outfit to Libby and then took the trail above Kootenai Falls. He noted that more than one prospector had lost a horse that had slipped off the trail and down the river below the falls. He finally arrived in Moyie Ranger District and other adventures were to follow.

**Bull River Ranger Station**  
*Rebecca S. Timmons*

The Bull River Ranger Station has a rich history beginning in 1907 with the contentious battle with Merion Cotton over the withdrawal of 83 acres for forest reserves. Many letters were exchanged and in the end, it was determined that Mr. Cotton did not have legal ownership of the land.

Granville "Granny" Gordon, a Wyoming cowboy and personal friend of Teddy Roosevelt was appointed the first ranger of the Noxon District of the Cabinet National Forest in 1907. Rangers were very independent in those early days and Gordon was given free reign on design and construction of his ranger station and house.

Construction of the station, including a phone line that went up the Bull River to Noxon, was completed in 1908 at the cost of \$478. Unique to Gordon’s work are his use of architecture blue-prints for the two-story, three bedroom house with kitchen and sitting room. Also unique is his landscaping plan, calling for the planting of ten different apple trees, planted in 1911.

Bull River Ranger Station provided a comfortable home for Granville, his wife Lena, and their three daughters. Mrs. Gordon had been a cook for Buffalo Bill Cody in Wyoming. She arrived at Bull River with two daughters with a third on the way. Gordon’s gracious hospitality promoted good will between the Forest Service and the local community after the first tense years of conflict. Certainly

though Lena was not just a hostess, but a hard-working hand, driving a horse team ten miles once a month for supplies.

***Bull River Ranger Station 1908***



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST ARCHIVES

By 1920, Granville Gordon had resigned and a new ranger station was established in Noxon. Beginning in the 1960’s and ending in 1973, Bull River Ranger Station was used as a guard station.

Preservation work at the Bull River Ranger Station began in 1989. With the efforts of Forest Service employees and local volunteers, the roof was replaced and the porch windows were repaired. An interpretive kiosk with exhibits on the history of the ranger station was also constructed.

In 1992, the Northern Region Historic Preservation Team replaced sill logs and the foundation, as well as replacing the daubing in the logs. The tongue and groove flooring was also repaired. In 1993, the window and door frames were repaired.

The 2004 work was completely preserving the building to its original design. In addition to the preservation work, period (ca. 1910) furniture was purchased. The Ranger Station is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places and can be rented by the public.

***Historic Preservation Work in 2004***



KNF ARCHIVES

***Region 1 Preservation Team***

**The Gordons**  
*Terry Hightower*

Granville “Granny” Gordon was the first ranger on the Noxon District and served with for Forest Service from 1906-1920. Dubbed an “instant ranger”, Ferdinand Siclox appointed him. Another source stated Theodore Roosevelt appointed him (a personal friend) when the Cabinet National Forest was withdrawn.

Granny and his wife, Pauline Reitmiller Gordon traveled with “Buffalo Bill” William Cody; Granny was a guide for Bill Cody and Pauline cooked for the traveling group. In 1903, some of Buffalo Bill’s group settled in Furlong, MT and some continued on. The Gordons, now with two daughters were logging on homestead lands on the Cabinet National Forest when Ferdinand Silcox, first Forest Supervisor, arrived in Noxon. Granny

was hired to help survey the forest and Pauline, along with other women, cooked, served meals, and tended camp.

When Granny was appointed the first forest ranger, his immediate job was to build a headquarters station. Some of the other duties of the first rangers were fire prevention, dealing with trespasses, inspecting mining and homestead claims, all aspects of timber harvest and the ability to construct all needed building and structures. Rangers also provided their own stock and tools. Plans for the Bull River Ranger Station were approved in the Washington office but Granny was given a free hand in the design and construction of the building. In keeping with Pinchot’s “decentralization” idea, he was allowed to design the ranger station to blend in to the area and reflect local culture. When the station was completed, their home, which was also the first ranger station in the forest, had an orchard, garden and farm animals. Pauline, also known as Lina, had gained a reputation because of her cooking skills. The ranger station soon became the meeting place for the settlers and earned the reputation as the best travelers’ stop in the country.

The 1910 fire came within about a mile of the Bull River Ranger Station. Mrs. Gordon was home alone with the three girls. She had prepared for the worst case scenario - the fire overtaking the ranger station. She had filled a tub full of water and had gunnysacks soaking. If they had to make a break to Bull River, they would wrap themselves in the wet sacks to protect themselves. The fire shifted direction as it got close to the ranger station and headed up Pilik Ridge, sparing their home. After the 1910 fire, Granny remained with the Forest Service but served as a forest guard.

The Gordons moved around the area for a few years until she bought the hotel in Noxon. The Gordon women soon brought in folks from Idaho and other local towns to enjoy their meals and hospitality. The hotel was sold in 1918 after two men died there during the influenza epidemic. They bought a 160-acre ranch on the north side of the Clark Fork River. To make ends meet, she continued to cook, and was regarded as the finest cook in the cedar logging camps of the “Cedar King” (Swan Swanson). Pauline and Granny Gordon lived out their lives on their ranch and are buried side-by side in the Noxon Cemetery.

***Granville Gordon***



USE THIS FOR PHOTO CREDIT

***Granville Gordon (left), first Ranger on the Cabinet National Forest, 1906-1920.***

## **Gone but not Forgotten: The Pipe Creek Ranger Station**

*By Mark J. White*

“Forest Supervisor F.N. Haines has received reinforcements during the week in the addition of A.B. Claflin to his force of rangers, he being transferred to this place from the Lewis and Clarke reserve. During the week lumber was taken across the Kootenai River for the completion of a cabin which the rangers have built on Pipe creek. As soon as this cabin is completed it is planned to build others at convenient places until the entire reserve is provided with suitable habitations for the rangers. The latter part of the week Roscoe Haines, one of the rangers here, will be transferred to Fortine in the Lewis and Clark reserve”<sup>1</sup>.

This article notes the construction of the first ranger station in the original Kootenai National Forest. The first Kootenai Forest Reserve was established by the U.S. Geological Survey and temporarily withdrawn in December of 1901. The boundary of the proposed ‘temporary reserve’ was changed and the Kootenai Forest Reserve was formally established in August of 1906. The Kootenai National Forest was created by Presidential Proclamation on November 5, 1906 and comprised of lands north of the Kootenai River from the Big Bend to the Idaho state line and north to the boundary with Canada. Lands on the south side of the Kootenai River, including lands around Libby, became part of the Cabinet Forest Reserve on March 2, 1907.

The area of the Cabinet National Forest south of the Kootenai River to the Kootenai River and Clark Fork drainage divide were transferred to the Kootenai National Forest on July 1, 1908.

On January 2, 1907, F.N. Haines, the supervisor of the Lewis and Clark Forest, Northern Division, came to Libby to set up the administration of the Kootenai National Forest. He was the first supervisor of the Kootenai National Forest from January 2 until April 1, 1907, when he was transferred back to the Lewis and Clark reserve. His monthly wages as the forest supervisor were \$141.67 a month.

One of the first actions of the new administrators was the construction of the Pipe Creek Administrative Station nine miles north of Libby, not far from the junction of the Pipe Creek Road and the road to Blue Mountain lookout. The station was the first administrative station of the new forest and provided a place for the administrators to eat and sleep. Ed Stahl, one of the first employees for the Kootenai National Forest helped build the station. The Pipe Creek Administrative Station was noted for having a large hump in the middle of the cabin floor. This hump was the result of the cabin being built over a large western larch stump. The story is that as the cabin was being built the stump was kept clear of snow being the only place in the county without seven feet of snow on it! It is unknown whether the source of this story is on the level.

D.G. Kinney replaced Haines in early April 1907. Kinney was the supervisor of both the Kootenai National Forest and Cabinet National Forest (North). He moved his headquarters to Libby and began organizing his work forces. The list of employees for the Kootenai National Forest in April included: A.B. Claflin, deputy forest ranger, Ed .G. Stahl and Glen A. Smith, assistant rangers. Other Kootenai National Forest employees were T.J. Callahan, A. Snyder, F.L. Vinal, and W.A. Raymond’ forest guards. The April 25, 1907, edition of the Western News noted that the field force for Cabinet National Forest (north)

included: H.E. Crossley and B.S. Farnsworth, assistant forest rangers, J.E. Quivey, of Libby and F.H. Bush, forest guards.

The April 25, 1907, edition of the Western News noted that deputy forest rangers made \$90.00 a month while assistant forest rangers earned \$75.00 a month and the guards made \$60.00 a month. The U.S. Forest Service provided tools and a tent to the guards but they had to provide their own horse.

One of the very first assignments was the May, 1907 trail construction on Pipe Creek. The next years May 6th, 1908, edition of the Western News noted that the three men stationed across the river from Libby (Pipe Creek Administrative Station) were improving the road out to Doak’s ranch. This ranch was located just south of the Pipe Creek Station.

The Pipe Creek District was combined with the Libby District in 1930. The old administrative station became obsolete as the administration of Pipe Creek was moved to the Libby Ranger Station on the north side of the Kootenai River near Libby. The Pipe Creek administrative station was burned in the mid 1930’s and nothing remains.

### ***Pipe Creek Station ca. 1923***



M.WHITE PHOTO COLLECTION

## **Fairview Ranger Station**

*Mark J. White*

The Fairview Ranger Station was located in an area used by the Kootenai Indians long before the ranger station was established. On October 14, 1901, Frederick Waltz filed on land along Wolf Creek and he paid \$19 for the 160 acres. The Big Blackfoot Milling Company timber cruise map, dated March 28, 1903, was surveyed by Frank Vogel, a prominent timber cruiser who had worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad and later Anaconda Mining Company, and George Riley. Vogel noted Waltz’s cabin location on the map – it was noted as a small cabin, located on the south side of Wolf Creek opposite of the later Fairview Ranger Station.

Interestingly enough the Wolf Creek trail is shown passing by the cabin and crossing over Wolf Creek to what would later be the location of the Fairview Ranger Station. The trail then continued east-north-east. Early Forest Service records indicate that the original barn from the homestead may have been located on the north side of Wolf Creek and was incorporated into the administrative site. The homestead was withdrawn for the Fairview Administrative Site on December 26, 1907, on what was then the Lewis and Clark Reserve. In 1908, the Blackfeet National Forest was created from the Lewis and Clark Reserve. In the same year that the new forest was established, the office/rangers house was constructed. The original barn, which predated the administrative withdrawal, was used until the late 1920’s when it was replaced with a new barn. This second barn was torn down after the station was abandoned.

Fairview Ranger Station was built for the administration of the Wolf Creek District in the Blackfoot National Forest and by the mid 1920’s was accessible by road and the center of the district’s trail systems. Elk Mountain lookout was one of a series of lookouts tied to this station. Some of the personnel stationed at Fairview included Fred Clark in 1915, F.E. Bowdlear in 1920 as the administrative guard, L.H. Brown in 1922, a Ranger Cramer in 1924, and Ralph Space who was stationed there from 1925 until 1928.

### ***Transplanted Elk***



RALPH SPACE COLLECTION

### ***Elk that had been transplanted to the Fairview Ranger Station***

F.E. Bowdlear undertook the first rebuilding of the station in 1920, by replacing the sill logs of the office and residence which had been built on the ground and had become rotten. He also replaced the stovepipe with a brick chimney. Around 1925, a concrete foundation was poured and logs placed on top of it. Due to the concave surface of the concrete, moisture was held against the sill logs and they had to be replaced again in 2003. Fairview Ranger Station was used as district headquarters until 1930. In 1935, portions of the Blackfoot National Forest were incorporated into the Kootenai National Forest and this included Fairview and the Wolf Creek District.

The addition of bunkhouses in the 1950’s marked the last additions to the Fairview Ranger Station. In later years, the former ranger stations were downgraded to work centers. The station is representative of an early isolated U.S. Forest Service ranger station. In August of 2003, the Region One Historic Preservation Team, with the assistance of Kootenai National Forest personnel, replaced several rotting sill logs and repaired the concrete foundation to permit moisture from being held against the sill logs. The metal roof was also repaired, and currently, windows are being rebuilt and original window sashes repaired. Future work will include replacing rotting floor joists, fixing flooring, and rebuilding the chimney at the ground level.

Fairview Ranger Station continues to stand after nearly one hundred years of changes in forest boundaries and land management. Two of the structures on the site, the office built in 1908 and a small warehouse built in the 1920’s, are on the National Register of Historic Places. It gives a sense of continuity and pride to the U.S. Forest Service, which is reassuring in rapidly changing times. It is hoped that Fairview Ranger Station will serve in its new role as a historic ranger station rental as well as it did as a working ranger station.

### ***Fairview Ranger Station***



RALPH SPACE COLLECTION



## Sylvanite Ranger Station

*Kristen Hauge*

The Sylvanite Ranger Station was the original headquarters for the Yaak District. It entailed the area from the Yaak Falls north to Canada. This remote station was located near the mining town of Sylvanite. The ranger's office had just been built when the 1910 wildfire burnt through the area. The building was lost along with many phone lines, and trails.

### Sylvanite Ranger Station



L.F. VINAL FOR USFS

**Ensemble from S. W., Sylvanite Ranger Station, ca 1920-1921. Note burned vegetation from the 1910 wildfire.**

By 1912, the ranger's office was replaced with a house which still stands today on what was the original Yaak road. Up to 1930, buildings at the station included the ranger's house, a log barn, a corral, a woodshed, a blacksmith shop, a frame garage, a portable cookhouse, a bunkhouse and office facilities. Several lookouts and many miles of trail were administered from this location during that time. The 1912 ranger's office remains to this day and is one of the oldest buildings in the Yaak Valley.

### Garage



UNKNOWN

**This garage, built ca. 1930, is one of the early buildings on the compound that remains today. The log structure is gone.**

### Guard School



KNF ARCHIVE 4-1755

**Guard school practices packing at Sylvanite**

After the 1910 fires, early reforestation efforts included eastern white pine seedlings planted at Sylvanite. In addition, some red oaks were planted behind the ranger's house, reputedly by one of the early ranger's wives. While the location of the white pine is not known today, the oak trees still flourish near the old house.

### Eastern White Pine



E. KOCH FOR USFS

**Planted in 1910 near Sylvanite. Kootenai National Forest, Montana, 1922.**

During the 1920s, much of the territory administered by Sylvanite was divided with a new headquarters at Upper Ford for the northern end. Sylvanite managed the area south to the Kootenai River. This lasted until 1942 when they were recombined to conserve manpower due to the war.

### 1931 Fires



KNF ARCHIVE 4-1750

**Buses from Spokane that brought fire fighters.**

In 1987, the Yaak District had another boundary change due to combining with the Troy District to the south. Improved roads and communications reduced travel time and allowed personnel to cover larger areas. Sylvanite has remained a work center for remote work and fire emergencies.

## A Log Splendor: Raven Ranger Station

*Rebecca Timmons*

It has been a remarkable journey for Raven Ranger Station, marked by people who cared for it with tender hands.

Located south of Libby off of Highway 2, Raven Ranger Station served the U.S. Forest Service from the early days of the formation of that agency (1906) until the late 1960's. The site's early use preceded the construction of U.S. Highway 2 and met the need for a centrally located horse and mule driven supply station for the southern end of the 2.5 million acre Kootenai National Forest. It also served the community as a communication link between the outside world and the growing population of the isolated 4000 square mile wilderness of northwestern Montana.

The ranger station was originally situated across the highway from where it is today. This log, one room cabin was constructed in 1907 by prospectors, but was withdrawn as an administrative site and used as an office

building in 1908. The ranger lived in a tent until 1914.

A two story log cabin, with a large porch was built between 1914 and 1916 at a cost of \$160 in materials and donated labor. The ranger station was reported to have a stove, a bed and "pegs for hanging chaps, stirrups, and pistols".<sup>1</sup> This complex was used until 1928.

### Ranger's Office



ART BENDER COLLECTION

**Art Bender and others**

Its true odyssey began with the Civilian Conservation Corps construction of the eight buildings between 1932 and 1950. In the 1930's a ranger's house, garage, office, and shop/garage were constructed. A bunk house saw shop, and oil/gas house were built in the 1940's. A cook house completed the ranger's complex in 1950.

### Ranger's House



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS

**The first building to be restored by CGNW. It functions as housing for Provider Pal camps.**

The ranger station remained the focal point of the rural community by serving as the local mail drop, providing the first telephone connections, and functioning as a central meeting place throughout the 1960's. In the early 1970's, the government issued a mandate requiring major, expensive renovation within Raven Ranger Station. This, along with other factors lead up to the abandonment of the site. The area was burned over during the 13,000 acre Houghton Creek Fire of 1984; but miraculously, Raven's buildings and 40 acres of large ponderosa pine were left untouched.

Raven holds a special place for so many people who have had the good fortune of being associated with it. A young man fresh out of high school back east was hired in the 1940's to work out of Raven Ranger Station. Upon arriving, his first task was to bury a dead horse! Fifty years later this petroleum engineer declares that year as the best of his life. Another woman who was the cook at Raven remembers chasing off numerous bears which would show up at the door of "her" cook house.

Another man who fondly recalls playing at Raven Ranger Station as a child rescued the site from years of obscurity in 1997. Although the station was boarded up and rat infested at the time, he could see its potential. He was the president of Communities for a Great Northwest (CGNW), a 501c(3) education and information organization. With the support of



the organizations members, CGNW entered into a working agreement with the USFS in preserving the buildings and forested area of Historic Raven in turning it into a natural resource learning center.

Since that time, historic preservation specialists including the Region 1 Historic Preservation Team, Community for a Great Northwest, the Kootenai National Forest, and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, accompanied by Forest Service crews and innumerable community volunteers are bringing the ranger station back to life.

Communities for a Great Northwest has been a remarkable partner in preservation, providing over 17,200 hours of volunteer labor and an annual contribution of \$78,000 in materials and labor.

**Ranger’s House - Preservation Work**



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST  
*Roof being replace by FS Northern Region Preservation team and Forest employees.*

The Historic Raven Natural Resource Learning Center is now home to the innovative educational program “Provider Pals”, a rural/urban student exchange program, which brings hundreds of urban students each year to Raven. Students from cities across the nation come go to Raven for a week at a time during the summer. The urban students are matched up with local, rural middle school students and the diverse groups of peers discover the culture of resource providing in an outdoor learning experience.

The 30 partners involved with the Provider Pals program have provided over \$1.9 million in grants and contributions from such entities as Ford Motor Company, Lincoln County Commissioners, and Montana Ford Dealers Association.

**Ranger’s Office**



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST  
*This building is currently being restored. It functions as a classroom and bunkhouse for Provider Pal campers.*

**Shop/Garage, Pre-Restoration**



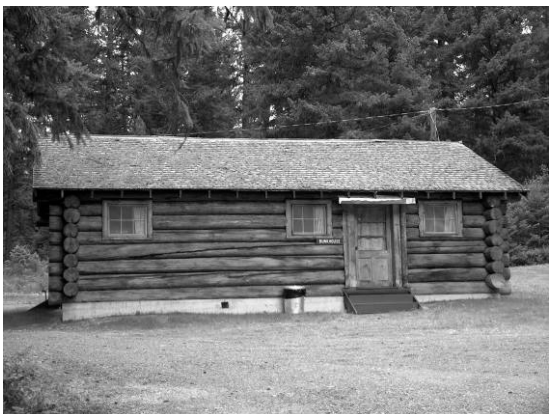
KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

**Shop/Garage Post Restoration**



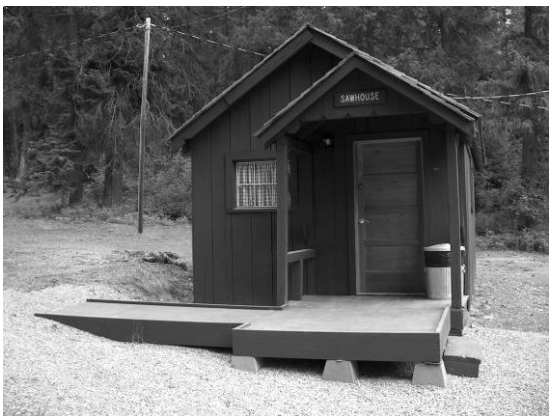
COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*This building functions as a recreation room for Provider Pal campers.*

**Bunkhouse**



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*This building was restored and is functioning as a Provider Pal bunkhouse.*

**Saw Shop**



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*This building was restored and now functions as the Provider Pal counselor’s bunk.*

**Cook House/Pre-Restoration**



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS

**Cook House/Post-Restoration**



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*This building is once again functioning as a cookhouse – this time for Provider Pals.*

**Cook House Preservation Work**

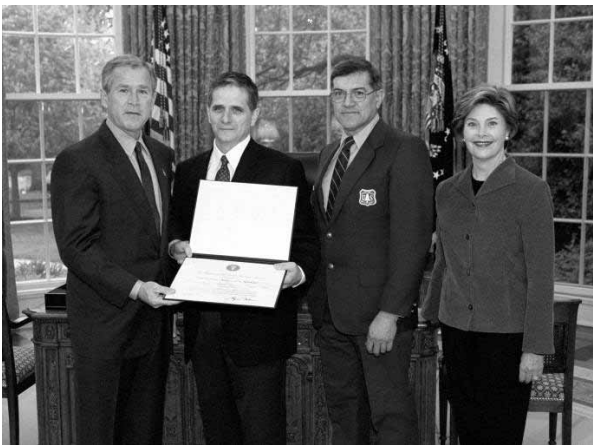


COURTESY COMMUNITIES FOR A GREAT NORTHWEST  
*Kitchen in Cook House after renovation by CGNW crew.*

Gracious contributions are allowing the preservation team to continue their restoration efforts at Raven. Although there are still untouched building on the site, the once abandoned station is once again a magical site for hundreds of people each year.

The combination of the remarkable restoration efforts and the Provider Pal Program’s mission has not gone unnoticed.

**Oval Office Ceremony**



WHITE HOUSE STAFF PHOTO  
*In an Oval Office Ceremony on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004, President Bush and First Lady Laura Bush award Bruce Vincent, Provider Pals Executive Director (center left) and Bob Castaneda, KNF Supervisor (center right) the inaugural Preserve America Presidential Award.*

In 2004, the Forest Service and their partner Communities for a Great Northwest received the inaugural “Preserve America Presidential Award” for:

- Exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of historic properties.
- Highly successful public-private partnerships with significant contribution of volunteers.
- Integration of historic properties into contemporary community life.
- Substantial educational & outreach components.
- Innovative, creative & responsible approaches to showcasing historic assets.

**East Wing of the White House**



COMMUNITIES FOR A GREAT NORTHWEST  
*Raven Ranger Station Partners attended the White House Awards Ceremony. This is in the State Dining Room of the White House.*



Urban Students at Raven



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*Students from across the country gather at Raven to attend the Provider Pals Natural Resource Learning Camp.*

Classroom Time



COURTESY OF PROVIDER PALS  
*Students are learning about the natural resource professions that provide their daily materials while making lifelong friendships.*

The Fire of 1910: the Emergence of Fire Protection

Rebecca S. Timmons & Lorealea Hudson

Wildfire has been an active agent in maintaining northern forests for thousands of years. Fire was used by Indian people for thousands of years as a tool, such as to ease in the harvest and collection of plants and insects, to maintain travel corridors, improve plant and wildlife habitat, reduce fire risk, improve grazing habitat, as well as a tool for communication, to control insects, and as a method of warfare. This activity was curtailed in the mid-1800’s.

When miners, loggers, and homesteaders began to move into the northwestern mountains in the late-1800’s, wildfire became perceived as a threat. Fuels had been building up for over 200 years and the conditions at that time were ripe for the newly constructed railroad to spark the dry fuels. As a result, catastrophic fire spread up and down the Clark Fork and Bull Rivers.

It was not until the fire of 1910 that local inhabitants felt the serious impacts of wildfire. The newly formed Forest Service had only skeleton crews, with little to no knowledge of forest fire fighting and limited trails and roads.

The spring of 1910 arrived without the benefit of spring rains and the dry conditions progressed through May. The forests were littered with dry fuels left behind by the 1890’s fire, and the lack of moisture dried out acres of trees and shrubs. By July, 3,000 firefighters in Idaho and Montana were engaged in fighting blazes.

On the ill-fated day of August 10<sup>th</sup>, lightning storms littered the forests with fires. Every available tool from local hardware stores was purchased to fight the fires and still there was a shortage. A news reporter on the Great Northern Railroad described the scene outside of his window. His reaction is captured in the Eureka Journal on July 22, 1910. “The awful

roar of the giant trees, wrapped in flame, down precipitous mountain sides, the shower of millions of sparks following in the lurid trail, looked like a mad meteor in the heavens. The winds shrieking though the mountain passes, carrying higher and faster the hungry flames, sounded like the demoniac curses of an avenging demon upon nature”.

Firefighters at Risk



KNF ARCHIVES  
*“Fire is hard on clothes. This man had his pants burned off.” 1926 K.D. Swan photo #210897*

By August 19<sup>th</sup>, Forest Supervisor Dorr Skeels reported three remaining fires, one in Wolf Creek, a second along the Vermilion River valley, and a third at the head of Pipe Creek. A total of 172 firefighters were getting the fires under control, when on August 20<sup>th</sup>, winds swept through the area, and joined, creating huge infernos. The Cabinet Forest suffered tremendous losses as fires from the North Fork Coeur d’Alene jumped the river, and continued north into the Bull River Valley.

Roy Engle, leader of a Cabinet forest crew in trying to get his crew to safety, took his crew to the refuge of a rockslide. Five of Engle’s 25-member crew panicked and ran upslope, only to be overcome by flames. Four men died. The remaining members made their way to the Clark Fork the following day. Sparks from the Great Northern Railway started a fire near Stryker and the winds of August 20<sup>th</sup> spread the flames for five miles along the tracks. By August 21<sup>st</sup>, there were at least 17 fires reported in the Western News.

A local eyewitness, Harvey Shelley, later described the events, “On July 23, all hell broke loose and wasn’t finished until August 29. The 1910 fire could be heard for two or three days before it got here. We were living near Schrieber lake...I can remember we made a raft to have in case we needed to go to the lake to save ourselves. Us kids took little buckets and got water from the lake and put out the spot fires in the meadow. During the day, for two or three days, it was as dark as the night and we had to use lanterns. Due to the smoke we had to bandage our eyes with towels and cloth”.

Radio Operator



KNF ARCHIVES  
*Setting up communications in the field*

Rains began on August 31<sup>st</sup>, marked the end of the fire events in 1910. Seventy-two firefighters lost their lives and the fire claimed an additional 13 people. Three million acres were consumed. The bulk of the timber loss was sustained by the present-day Kootenai

National Forest and the Idaho Panhandle National Forest. The public was now keenly aware of the destructive nature and power of fire. This manifested itself in support for the Forest Service’s bid to increase expenditures for fire protection, which Congress doubled. The years following saw a flourish of lookout tower construction.

“Connecting Link of Great National Highway from Ocean to Ocean is Open—Without Question Greatest Road Building in the History of State of Montana”<sup>1</sup>

Becky Timmons

The Lincoln County Commissioners in 1912 sought to establish “a comprehensive system of highways in the county”<sup>2</sup>, setting aside \$125,000 for the effort. One year later a road “from the city of Libby to the Village of Troy”<sup>3</sup> was envisioned as part of a trunkline joining Glacier Park to Spokane, Washington. The American Automobile Association of New York was promoting the road as a part of a trans-continental highway<sup>4</sup>. It was seen as providing an outstanding scenic drive along the Kootenai River, especially above Kootenai Falls. A newspaper article announces that the road would make “a magnificent automobile road” and once completed, “it would not be long until buzz wagons from far and wide would make an effort to take the ride along the Kootenai River”<sup>5</sup>.

Three years in construction, the project began from each end with two work crews in August of 1912. Six miles between Libby and Troy was completed within four months, but then the overwhelming task of constructing five miles through the narrow Kootenai Falls canyon began. For this section the Forest Service was authorized to expend timber receipts toward roads and trails. A work camp consisting of two bunkhouses and a cookhouse was constructed for the 20 person Forest Service crew the winter of 1913. Two months of work resulted in only ½ mile of road construction.

The heavy construction through five miles of solid rock was to take a full year to complete. An adjustment in the construction plans had to be made “when the [east and west] ends of construction were opposite, the line from the east was on the flat near the bottom of the hill, and the line from the west was on the hillside considerably higher up”<sup>6</sup>. By 1915, a crew of 70 men was working on the highway. In the 1910’s the average cost of highway construction was \$57 per mile. The foreboding five miles was finally completed in June of 1915 at the astounding cost of \$30,000, making it the most expensive highway project to date in the state of Montana.

Historic Highway 2



KNF ARCHIVES  
*Modern photo of magnificent rock work*



The highway did not meet expectations for extensive use as it was narrow with several sharp corners. Local residents still preferred to put their vehicles on the train between Libby and Troy. The 1920 Bureau of Public Roads study determined that the road was used primarily by tourists from outside of the immediate area.

The first automobile in Lincoln County arrived in 1913. In an interview with a local resident, Inez Herrig recalled driving the highway as a child. She indicated that it was the most terrifying thing she had ever done and spent most of her time on the floor. The road was so narrow that when a driver met an oncoming car, the car on the downhill slope had to back down until a wider spot could be reached.

**Recreationist along the Highway**



KNF ARCHIVES

Subsequent highway construction has obliterated evidence of this magnificent road. Today, only four miles of the historic highway remain intact. One two mile segment, from Kootenai Falls to Shannon Lake has been turned into a walking trail with interpretive signs. The other two mile segment has not been improved, but its entry points are marked along Highway 2. These walking segments of the old highway provide a glimpse back in time into early transportation.

**A Road to Dodge Summit**

*Kristen Hauge*

In 1931, C. S. Webb, supervisor on the Kootenai National Forest described the forest with “no roads except a very poor one up the Yaak and on over the divide coming out at Rexford” <sup>1</sup>. He was describing the main road early homesteaders in the upper Yaak Valley depended upon for supplies and mail, banding together to brave early winter passages.

The road began as an Indian trail linking the Tobacco Plains with Kootenay Lake in British Columbia. In the spring of 1907, the ranger on the forest, Ed Stahl, was sent up to cut trail across Dodge Summit.

“It was a pretty lonely job cutting trail until a man named Cody was sent up to help me. He was the best all round woodsman, packer and horseman I ever met. He had two half broke horses loaned him to break for their use. He didn’t agree on the route I picked for the trail so I told him he could move over to the western slope and cut trail where and how he chose, which he did. We met at week-ends to go for supplies.”<sup>2</sup>

This trail was widened in 1912 to allow wagon traffic. Travel was slow taking two to three days, and the Forest Service built cabins along the route to accommodate travelers.

During this early time, the road down the Yaak River to the south ended at the old mining

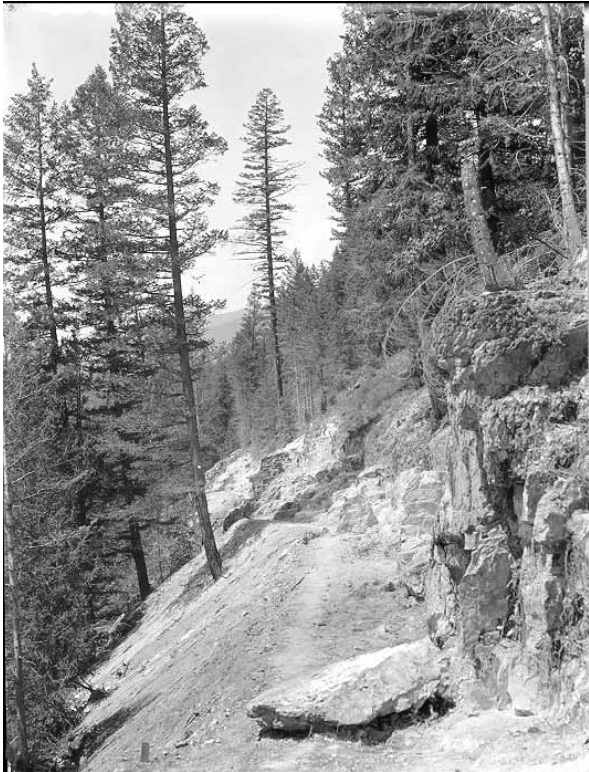
community of Sylvanite leaving Dodge Summit the only road out. By 1918 work began on the road segment that would link the Upper Ford to Sylvanite, and just a few years later the first automobile made the trek. Early ranger Gene Grush relates:

“Some brave soul, not a native, decided to make the trip through with a car. The boys dragged the car through the river at the lower ford with a team and he took off. Later we heard that after prying out rocks and cutting off stumps in the road, what remained of the car arrived in Rexford behind a team of horses <sup>3</sup>.”

In 1926, the segment over Dodge Summit was rebuilt once again. Some of the new route, which went through rocky outcrops, required hand-drilling and dynamite. Over the next forty-odd years, in addition to the supplies and mail for the settlers in the Yaak<sup>4</sup>, the traffic over Dodge Summit included fish going to market, lumber, and excavators.

By the 1970s, this road would draw visitors to the area who had heard of its scenic vistas and would leave pieces of too-large vehicles as they scraped the rocks in the narrow sections of the road <sup>5</sup>. About this time the Sullivan Creek Road was built to accommodate the traffic— log trucks, motor homes and trailers – which were too big for the narrow Dodge Summit Road and the highest section of the older road was closed in the 1980’s. Scattered pieces of the old road can still be found in the woods, and five miles of the road, including the section of narrow rocky outcrops, has been converted to a trail for horse riding, biking and hiking.

**Upper Yaak Road**



K.D. SWAN FOR USFS

**Heavy Rock Work on Upper Yaak Road, 1926**

**By Foot, on Horse and Mules:  
Historic Trails on the Kootenai  
National Forest**

*Lorelea Hudson, Cindy Hemry,  
Rebecca Timmons*

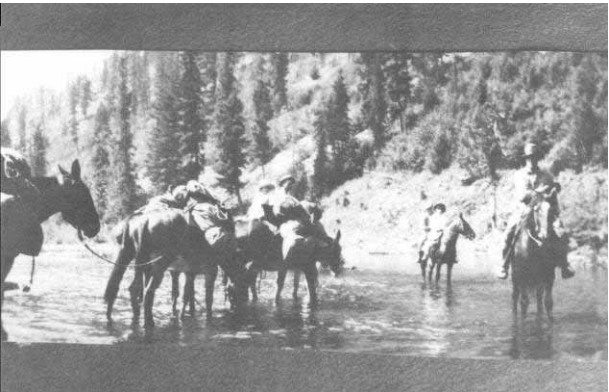
Like the keystone in an arch, transportation played a critical role in the development of the Kootenai National Forest. Trails as transportation systems span the area of the Kootenai National forest throughout prehistory to present time. There are four periods which trails can be viewed, 1) 1800-1860, early development trails, 2) 1860-1882, mining trails, 3) 1882-1910, homestead/settlement trails, and 4) 1910-1950, federally-aided trails.

In the early nineteenth century, Euro-American fur traders entered northwest Montana via trails and river routes established by American Indians that were later used by missionaries, exploration and survey teams, miners, and travelers. Between 1807 and 1811, David Thompson explored the Northwest and kept detailed notes of his experiences. Thompson used most of the major waterways and Indian trails that became the travel routes of later explorers, traders, and travelers. During this part of the journey, Thompson sent his hunters to follow an "Indian road" to seek game, much-needed to feed the party, and to look for any signs of Indians. The trail, which Thompson later referred to on his maps as the Kootenai Road, evidently led southward along the left bank of the Kootenai River

Another trail continued to follow the Kootenai River, probably crossing it somewhere near the mouth of the Fisher (which Thompson called the Rock River) and continuing along the right bank. At the Kootenai Falls, Thompson and his men explored both sides, but found that only the right was practical for portage, although even that side was so steep that Thompson wrote in his journal that "the least slip would have been inevitable destruction" <sup>1</sup>. The terrain was so rocky that each trip to carry goods to the party's campsite on Koot Creek took an hour and a half, with the explorers' shoes cut to pieces by the rocky debris traversed

Despite Thompson's early May departure date, deep snow in some places and mud in others made the Great Road of the Flatheads extremely difficult to follow. With "much suffering and hard labor" they finally reached the Kootenai River where they had left their canoes the previous fall. Resorting to a virtual brigade of canoes to ascend the river, forty-six packs of furs and eight bags of pemmican were sent off. Thompson, James McMillan and one assistant went by land with sixteen horses, following a trail presumably along the right bank of the river<sup>2</sup>.

**Trail Crew**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

**Hauling supplies on horseback.**

Trails and canoes remained the chief modes of transport by the early miners until the 1880's when the Northern Pacific and later the Great Northern railroads were built.

**Laying Phone Line Along Trail**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

**K.D. Swan Photo 210939.**

Beginning in 1910, trails were being constructed by the Forest Service, primarily for



use in fire suppression and later for administration, grazing and recreation. Trail construction was to provide safe and unobstructed passage of loaded animals and foot travelers at a walking gait and in single file and for durability designed to meet expected use and liability of damage from natural causes.

A 1912 Forest Service Manual provides some insight into the placement and construction of the early Forest Service trails. “The most important thing about a trail is its grade. Any other feature of its construction may be improved from month to month or from year to year, but if the grade is not properly established it must in time be abandoned”<sup>3</sup>.

Trail construction for recreational purposes began in earnest in the 1960’s. Today, there are approximately 1,600 miles of trails used for summer and winter recreation.

**Forest Supervisor Dorr Skeels**

*Kristen Hauge*

The second forest supervisor, Dorr Skeels first came to Libby, in May of 1909 <sup>1</sup>. Skeels took over a controversial post, implementing unpopular forest regulations after the previous supervisor, Schonover, died of typhoid fever <sup>4</sup>. Described as ‘very genial and accommodating’ <sup>1</sup>, Skeels came from the Portland, Oregon district office.

His career started arguably at his birthplace in the cork pine region of Michigan, where he helped to clear the family home <sup>3</sup>. With a degree in civil engineering and forestry from the Michigan Agricultural College <sup>6</sup>, he started his career in 1903 in what was then known as the Bureau of Forestry in Texas <sup>3</sup>. Only a short three years later with a post-graduate degree from the University of Michigan <sup>6</sup>, he moved to Montana to work on the newly created Gallatin National Forest and on timber sales on the Teton National Forest. Married in 1907 to Blanch Covell, he moved to the Coeur d’Alene in Wallace, Idaho and became a supervisor there the following year <sup>3</sup>.

Early Kootenai National Forest projects under Skeels’ direction included the new bridge over the Yaak River on the Sylvanite-Leonia wagon road <sup>1</sup> and the sale of timber throughout the forest. He also planted a stand of Michigan white pine near Sylvanite <sup>4</sup>.

***Eastern White Pine***



E. KOCH

***Eastern white pine, planted 1910, near Sylvanite, 1922.***

In 1914, he went to work for the Regional Office in Missoula to take care of large timber sales from the Northwest <sup>3</sup>. The following year he left the Forest Service to become the University of Montana’s School of Forestry’s first dean. In 1917, he interrupted his career to go to France as a captain in the forestry division during WWI, but soon returned to his role as dean at the U of MT and remained there until his retirement in 1932.

Just a few years before his death in 1956, Dorr and Blanch Skeels toured through their old haunts in Montana from their retirement home in Lincoln, Nebraska. Today the Dorr Skeels Campground on Bull Lake still bears his name.

**Granite Lake Trail**

*Mark J. White*

The Granite Lake Trail (trail #136) is a popular recreational trail spanning from Granite Creek to Granite Lake. It is quite probable that this trail has been used since prehistoric times; however, its more formal discovery occurred much later. In early April of 1887, a party of miners crossed the Cabinet Range and traveled down Granite Creek from the vicinity of Wishbone Lake. The party consisted of George R. Blackwell, Jim Rouse, Hank Letterman, Jim Freeman, and Ben Henniger. They went down the creek and crossed over to Flower Creek which they named after some blue flowers growing in bare patches surrounded by snow. Blackwell claimed to have spotted a glacier up from the south fork of Granite Creek which was named after him; Blackwell Glacier. He named Granite Creek after the boulders found in the stream.

The prospecting party later located some silver-lead float in the drainage, which lead to the location and development of a group of silver lead mines including the Silver Crown, Buzz Saw-Pony Lode (later known as the Lukens-Hazel and Glacier Silver and Lead Company), Double Mac, and Victor Empire mines which operated in the Granite Creek drainage from the late 1890’s until the 1940’s. In the summer of 1893 Frank Wegner carried two pails of fish that he planted in Granite Lake, perhaps the earliest documented fish introduction in the lakes of the Cabinet Mountains. A crude trail was noted in the September 01, 1904, edition of the Western News as a ‘very difficult’ trail.

The Cabinet National Forest (North) was established in March of 1907, including the area south of the Kootenai River to the divide between the Clark Fork and Kootenai River drainages. This included Granite Creek and Granite Lake. The reconstruction of the trail, which began in the fall of 1907 by personnel of the Cabinet National Forest, was one of the first projects of Supervisor Kinney. This opened the trail itself for more use, as well as the recreational use of Granite Lake. In July of 1908, the portion of Cabinet National Forest North, which was located south of the Kootenai River and north of the Kootenai-Clark Fork watershed divide became part of the Kootenai National Forest.

In September of 1911, a forest service administrative station was constructed on the north end of Granite Lake. The cabin was built by J.M. Roberts and Louis Hale for the Forest Service for the purposes of storing fire fighting equipment and for the use of campers camping around Granite Lake. Unfortunately, the cabin was abandoned in about 1940.

The reconstruction of the Granite Lake Trail and construction of the Granite Lake Administrative Station were the beginning of early recreational projects in the Cabinet

National Forest (North) and later Kootenai National Forest. According to The Western news in 1913, L.H Faust, a promoter from Libby, advocated having the government create a national park from the portion of the Cabinet Mountains where Granite Lake and Blackwell Glacier were located (January 23, 1913 edition of the Western News). Later, petitions were circulated through the Montana legislature requesting a national park which included Blackwell Glacier, Granite Lake, Dome Mountain, Cedar Lakes, and other lakes at the head of Flower and Parmenter Creek - an area of approximately 100 square miles (January 30, 1913 edition of the Western News). While this national park was never created, it became part of the Cabinet Wilderness in 1964.

The Granite Lake Trail continues to be utilized by recreationists, well after a century of use.

***Facing West up Granite Creek Drainage in 1933***



A-304-33, 116<sup>TH</sup> PHOTO SECTION, WASHINGTON NAT’L GUARD

**Mt. Henry Lookout**

*Kristen Hauge*

Mt. Henry Lookout is one of the longest running lookouts on the Three Rivers Ranger district. Along with only a few others, the use of this mountain as a lookout is documented back to the 1910’s. Early lookouts on Mt Henry consisted of tent camps, including an alidade and a tent for observation. By 1925, a ground cab with cupola was built on Mt. Henry and was used through 1942. In the evenings, the lookouts at different towers would visit with each other using the telephone line. Mt. Henry Lookout is renowned for the time a bear came into the lookout after the bacon cooking in the pan, while the other lookouts listened to the event over the telephone from distant peaks.

***Albert Breitenstein, 1928***



K. BREITENSTEIN COLLECTION

***Albert Breitenstein in front (north) of Mt. Henry lookout in 1928. This picture was taken by his wife during one of her trips up the mountain to bring him supplies. She used her saddle horse and Forest Service pack stock to make the trips.***



In 1942, the current lookout was constructed on Mt. Henry. Even though 7,243 foot Mt. Henry had a treeless peak and required only a ground cab for long-distance viewing, the lookout, George Lang, insisted the new structure be placed on a 10' tower to keep out marauding bears. Lang was the Mt Henry lookout from 1925 to 1949 with the exception of 1928 when Albert Breitenstein served.

***Packing Building Supplies for Mt. Henry***



R. DOWNEY COLLECTION

***Fall of 1940 at Upper Ford Ranger Station, Vern Blanchard and Bill Lockwood packing.***

By the 1970s, lookouts were generally falling into disuse and Mt Henry was suffering from lack of maintenance. During this time, however, heavy fires burned large areas of pine beetle killed timber in the upper Yaak and along the Canadian border. It was clear that there was continued need for fire detection at Mt. Henry. The high cost of the recently constructed Black Butte Lookout convinced them that repair of the old lookout was more cost effective than building a new structure, and so repairs at Mt. Henry were completed in the early 1980s. The lookout remained an active lookout until a storm damaged it in the late 1990s.

***Mt. Henry after the 1983 Renovation***



USFS

***A severe fire season on the north end of the district led to the rebuilding of this previously disused lookout.***

**Mount Baldy Lookout**

***Kristen Hauge & Rebecca Timmons***

Beyond the fact that Baldy Lookout was one of the earliest and longest used lookouts in the Yaak Valley, it holds its own distinctions. It began as a tent camp in 1910, accompanied by a 45 foot pole with an observation platform. After the 1910 wildfires burned over the telephone lines, the lookouts at Mount Baldy communicated with rangers at Sylvanite Ranger Station with the use of heliography. Heliography is the use of mirrors reflecting the sun to transfer Morse code. Today, the rampant regrowth of trees blocks the line-of-sight view between Sylvanite Ranger Station and Baldy Lookout that made the use of mirrors possible.

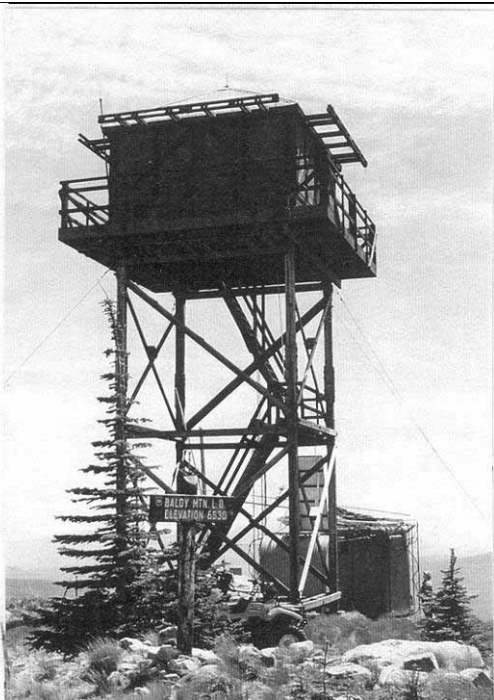
A cupola style log lookout was constructed on the mountain in 1927. Sometime between 1932 and 1920 a cupola cabin on a tower was added. In 1957, a hip-roof tower was built, however the old cupola cabin sat side by side the new tower until 1961.

***1927 Cupola Style Log Lookout Cabin***



KNF ARCHIVES

***1957 Hip-Roof Lookout Tower***



KNF ARCHIVES

**Star Peak Lookout**

***Terry Hightower***

Star Peak (formerly called Squaw Peak) was the first lookout in Montana. In 1910, Granville “Granny” Gordon, first ranger on the Noxon District, along with his wife, Pauline Reitmiller Gordon, constructed a native-stone cabin on Star Peak. The cabin was to serve as living quarters for the fire guard stationed on the mountain. The actual “lookout” at that time was a stacked stone pillar on the mountain apex and this pillar was probably later incorporated into part of the current Star Peak Lookout foundation. Located in the Cabinet Mountains, it sits at an elevation of 6167 feet, and provides an incredible view over a wide area in western Sanders County and eastern Idaho. This was the last active lookout on the Cabinet Ranger District and had been manned from 1906-2003.

***The First Fire Lookout in Montana***



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY WEBER

***Pauline Gordon on the first Star Peak lookout***

The stacked stone foundation served as the lookout platform until the early 1930’s, when the Forest Service erected a gable roof “L-4” cab lookout. Around 1957 the current lookout was constructed; a pyramidal roof “L-4” cab structure. Star Mountain Lookout complex includes the original 1910 stone building, a stone step path from the building leading to

the actual lookout, two helipads, or helicopter landing sites and of course, an outhouse. In 1991, a historical preservation project put a new roof on the building and repaired windows of the stone building. The two foot thick, dry laid native stone walls show remarkable craftsmanship and resilience; the masonry has endured the harsh elements and stood intact for nearly a century.

Historical documents indicate a telephone line was run to the lookout and that a “good, clear spring” about 3/8 mile below the peak, at an old mine, provided water for the fire lookout.

***First L-4 Lookout on Star Peak***



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY WEBER

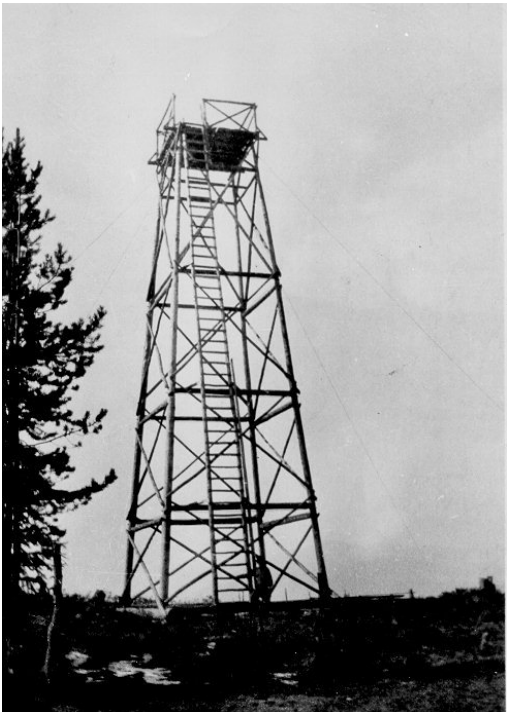
***In the 1930’s a gable roof L-4 lookout was built.***

**Keeler Mountain Lookout**

***Kristen Hauge***

Keeler Mountain Lookout overlooks the Bull River Valley and western Cabinet Range. The lookout cabin, which still remains on the site, was built in 1915 for \$7.36 in supplies.

***Early Keeler Mountain Lookout***



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

***50 ft tower with 10 ft platform***

Early lookouts were designed and built by local men according to their skills and preferences resulting in a broad range of lookout styles. In 1934, the men of the Keeler Civilian Conservation Corps camp constructed a road to the lookout and a new lookout, renown as a showcase for the camp. The newer style lookout was an L4-style lookout, meaning it was a kit which was shipped from Forest Service warehouses in Spokane or



Missoula, and could be easily packed by horse into a site and constructed. The L4 standardized the incorporation of living quarters into the lookout making the old cabins frequently found at lookouts no longer necessary.

In 1964, a new, slightly larger model lookout, the flattop, was built to replace the old CCC L4 on Keeler Mountain. At 51', Keeler Mountain Lookout is one of the taller lookouts on the Kootenai National Forest.

**Replacing the Keeler Mountain Lookout**



BOB LICHLIGHTER

*The 51' tower flattop lookout standing replaced the CCC-constructed hipped-roof L4 structure that is being pulled down in 1964. The 1915 cabin sits to the left.*

**Out on a Limb: McMillan Mountain Tree Lookouts**

*Mark J. White*

Tree lookouts, while not as well-known as the lookouts which were packed to mountain tops in kit form, can be found in the Kootenai National Forest. One of these lookouts can be found on the Libby Ranger District on McMillan Mountain, which is located approximately 6 miles south-southeast of Libby. It was one of three lookout trees built by Kyle Beebe and Grant Harley in the 1920's, the others being Lindy Peak and Flower Point.

Constructing a tree lookout involved finding a tree in the right location on a high point of a mountain. Branches were cut off and metal foot pegs were driven up a tree so one could climb it like a ladder. The top of the tree was cut off for an alidade and a platform was constructed. The McMillan Mountain lookout had two trees with 6 foot x 6 foot platform with railing at waist height. At first the lookouts that manned this tree stayed in a nearby tent, but in 1929 a frame structure 'cabin' was built.

**Tree Lookout on McMillan Ridge**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES, K.D. SWAN 1928

*Temporary lookout tower on McMillan Ridge.*

K.D. Swan, the U.S. Forest Service photographer took a photo of each of these lookouts on August 15, 1928. There is a tent visible to the right of the tree lookout. This

building was abandoned around the same time the two lookout trees were abandoned in 1941.

A telephone line and a trail were constructed to the lookout to provide communication access to and from the lookout. The July 17, 1930, edition of The Western News noted that Dave Foster was the lookout on McMillan Mountain where it was noted he had a "rather lofty perch". It was reported in the article that Ranger Byers made an early attempt at making tree lookouts safer for the personnel manning them. He had chicken wire netting stapled to the tree trunk, in a way that a man climbing to the top of tree was surrounded by a wire tunnel, so that if he missed a step and fell that he would be caught by the netting. Ranger Byers said in the article: "Seventy-two feet is long ways into the air and we hated to take the chance of a man becoming killed while climbing to the lookout platform." Jim Enders, a retired U.S. Forest Service employee, was interviewed in 1980, stating that he manned the tree lookout in 1935.

After the McMillan lookout was abandoned in 1944, one of the trees was cut down with a very dull axe and the other tree died and broke off.

**Robinson Mountain Lookout**

*Lynne Rosario*

Robinson Mountain Lookout sits atop the Purcell Mountain Range at an elevation of 7539 feet, about 17 miles northwest of Eureka, Montana, and two and one-half miles south of the Canadian boundary. The lookout is a D-1 cupola style ground cab. A gable-roofed cupola sits atop the gable-roofed, wood framed building on a foundation of dry-laid, flat, native stone. Cedar wood shakes cover the exterior walls and roofs of the lookout.

Robinson Mountain was first used as a lookout point in 1921 when a tent camp was manned during the summer months. The lookout building was constructed in 1929 and last used in the 1930's for the fact that the mountain was so high that it was often fogged in during the fire season of June through September.

**Robinson Lookout, 2004**



DAVID JAMES, REXFORD DISTRICT TRAIL CREW

**McGuire Mountain Lookout**

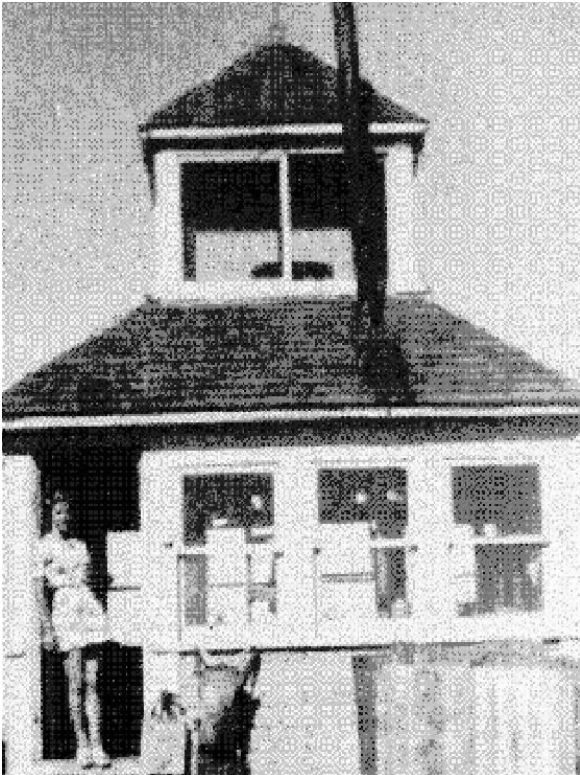
*Lynne Rosario*

On a summit in northwestern Montana, about 19 miles southwest of Eureka at an elevation of 6991 feet, perches McGuire Mountain Lookout. The lookout was built in 1923. It has a commanding view of Lake Koocanusa five air miles to the west and the surrounding mountains and ridges. Other historic remains include a root cellar, two outhouse holes, a Forest Service trail accessing the site, an early 1920's campsite, and an orange painted rock

alignment spelling out "MCGUIRE". The rock alignment is considered historical because the Forest Service began marking its location points this way in 1929 to aid aerial fire patrols.

In 1921, the Forest Service established a camp located next to the natural springs near the summit of McGuire Mountain, in a protected area about .2 mile southeast of the lookout. Just downhill of the springs is a campsite that was most likely used by the lookout assigned to McGuire Mountain in 1921 and 1922 prior to lookouts construction.

**McGuire Mtn Lookout, 1940s**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

In 1923, at the cost of \$805.87, the Forest Service built the current McGuire Mountain Lookout. Lightning protection was added in 1931. The building was estimated to have a 20-year life. It is an excellent example of the first standardized Forest Service design, the D-6. The D-6 design is a square, wood frame building designed to rest on the ground with pyramidal cupola with windows all around which serve as an observation tower. The main floor served as living quarters for the fireguard. The fireguard also needed to patrol around the breaks of the mountain to view the Flat Creek watershed to the north. The patrol, including viewing times at three points took fifty-five minutes round-trip.

The end of the era of intensive fire lookouts use came in the 1940's. As a result, the McGuire Mountain Lookout was abandoned in 1944. It stood vacant until 1983 when the Forest Service restored the building. In 1996, windows replaced the boards in the cupola and the lookout was painted its original green with white trim. Today it is part of the Forest Service cabin rental program, where the funding gained from the rental program is used towards maintaining the lookout. It is a popular summertime destination for Forest visitors.

**Virginia Hill Lookout Trees**

*Cindy Hemry*

“(Charlie) Powell (Rexford District Ranger) hired me and a team of my father’s horses one day to skid lumber up the west side of Virginia Hill. We chained one end of the lumber on a stone boat and drug the other end. Now, this lumber was destined to build a platform for a tree lookout and frame for a tent camp. This distance was approximately one mile the way the crow flew, but I made several switchbacks getting up the hill so I traveled maybe one mile and a half. I was sure glad to see the big



ponderosa pine, my destination. The tree had been carefully picked out as the only one suitable and in the right location. But low and behold, two days later I was hired to move the lumber again. Someone had marked and topped the wrong tree. After skidding the lumber another quarter mile east up the hill, we came to the second giant P-pine. This tree became known as the tree lookout on Virginia Hill. The tree was topped at about 14 inches in diameter and a 6x6 foot platform built. It had diagonal braces back to the trunk. A sturdy guard rail was constructed around the thing and the top was framed for a canvas roof. A trap door was cut in the floor so a man coming up the tree could push it open with his head. Lightening rods of ½ inch copper wire were installed on all four corners and run into the ground at the foot of the trees. These rods were very needful as they drew the nearby lighting during a storm and made it safer up there during a hot storm. I have witnessed blue flames two feet high entering these rods in a storm.”

The lookout fireman who manned this place was furnished a saddle horse for packing water and going to fires. The purpose of this lookout was to observe the Cook’s Run basin to the west. None of the lookouts on the district could see into this area. In most of the 30’s the summers were dry and lightening storms plentiful. Two more tree towers were built that year on the Rexford District, one was located on Lydia Peak toward the south end of Sutton Ridge, and Beartrap (Mtn.) located farther north on a ridge over looking most of the lower Sutton Creek drainage.”

Modern Photo of Lookout



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

Mud Lake Lookout

Nancy Anderson

The mountain top located north and above Mud Lake began as a lookout point in 1912. Known as Mud Lake Lookout, improvements began in 1914 with the building of a map stand, trail and an emergency phone. In 1916, approval was granted for building a cabin. A lookout tower was built in 1931. Some time between 1937 and 1939, the mountain peak was abandoned and the lookout equipment, including cabin, were moved to Black Butte.

Black Butte Lookout is the only lookout in use on the Rexford Ranger District today.

Mud Lake Lookout, 1915



FRANCIS PETTIT COLLECTION

Cabinet Mountain Wilderness

Cindy Hemry

A NATIONAL PARK TO THE SOUTH OF LIBBY was the headline in the Libby Herald on January 31, 1913. One week later the headline read KALISPELL TAKES A HAND; RESOLUTION ENDORSING MOVEMENT TO CREATE NATIONAL PARK. Both articles endorsed creating a national park in the Cabinet Mountains to bring added revenues from the tourists to an area still suffering from losses accumulated from the 1887 and 1910 wildfires.

In 1929, under Also Leopold’s influence, the Secretary of Agriculture issued Regulation L-20, authorizing the designation of areas where primitive conditions of environment would be maintained. These primitive areas were to be kept roadless and free of development. Regulation L-20 prohibited livestock grazing but there were no restrictions on mining exploration and development which was protected under the Mining Law of 1872. Within a decade, 72 primitive areas were established.

On February 20, 1932, the Missoula Rod and Gun Club proposed a primitive area in the Cabinet Mountains to Kootenai Forest Supervisor C.S. Webb. The area selected was 88,715 acres in size “lying along the hydrographic divides between the Clark Fork of the Columbia and Kootenai Rivers and the watershed of Lake and Libby Creeks” (1935 Cabinet and Kootenai National Forest Item for the Press). Ideas from the community were proposed on how the new primitive area could promote tourism. In the Libby Herald one heading read, “DUDE RANCH AT GRANITE LAKE”. William Herbert and Ira Tester proposed to build a dude ranch and trails as well as a guide service to tourists. The dude ranch was never built.

On April 4, 1935, the Cabinet Mountains Primitive Area was approved, covering an area of 88,765 acres.

Cabinet Wilderness



K.D. SWAN USFS ARCHIVES

Sloping ledges near Blackwell Glacier, 1928. Photo # 228546

In 1958, it was decided that Granite Lake, Baree Mountain, Swamp Creek, and Rock Lake were of high scenic value and should be included in the primitive area. This increased the acreage to 94,272. Only one-quarter mile on each side of the area was needed to eliminate the road, buildings, and mining claims. Helicopters would be allowed to be used for fire control. Motorcycle use would be banned. On September 3, 1964, the primitive area became part of the National Wilderness Preservation System under the 1964 Wilderness Act and renamed the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness.

Far Away from Paved Streets: The Civilian Conservation Corps

Rachael Reckin & Rebecca S. Timmons

In 1932, when Franklin D. Roosevelt received the nomination for the Democratic presidential ticket, he made this statement: “I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people.” Just two days after taking office on March 5, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt began working on plans to put young men to work on conservation projects around the United States. They were kids from city streets and hardscrabble farms, undernourished and short on hope, thanks to the Depression of the 1930's. The Civilian Conservation Corps put them to work healing soil, stream, and forest, and in the process, created a conservation force to be unmatched throughout U.S. history. In the beginning, The Corps was authorized to enroll 250,000 men to be housed in 1,468 camps at a cost of \$500 million. The nine-year program enlisted 3,465,766 men in over 4,000 camps. They worked on land and forest projects in every state plus the territories of Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands before World War II brought an end to this popular program.

The camps in Montana were all managed by Fort Missoula except for a few in Lincoln County, which were under Fort George Wright in Spokane, Washington. Each enrollee was paid \$30 per month of which \$25 was sent home to their grateful families. Food, shelter, clothing, some medical care and educational training was provided in addition to the one dollar a day wage. With little experience with axes, saws and forest fires, the men set about to learn about their jobs. Local experienced men were hired to supervise the work in all camps. The accomplishments of the CCC boys show the skills of both the teachers and the students.

Remnants of Days Gone By



KNF ARCHIVES

Crew Superimposed onto a Kootenai Forest CCC Camp

An enrollee from Ohio named Edgar Diller remembered his excitement at hearing of the money he could make: “Back where I came from, I worked for two weeks on a hog farm for five dollars a week. Then I went home and signed up for the CCCs...The pay was thirty dollars a month for the regular men, as assistant leader thirty-six dollars, a leader forty-five dollars. That was pretty darn good then.”



The Corps brought 15,178 youths from New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and many other states into Montana and employed another 25,690 Montanans as well. The average enlistee was nineteen-years-old and had no more than an eighth-grade education. Around 3,600 of these boys were stationed in Lincoln County, and nearly 1,000 of the Lincoln County enrollees were African Americans fresh from the Bronx and the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920’s. Imagine the shock of the boys, both black and white, when they stepped off the train in Libby. “We had no idea where we were going and they set us down in the middle of two mountains,” CCC alumni Charles Krause remembered. Camp cook and Ohio farm boy Harold Shrewsberry described his first impression, “I got up the next morning [after arriving in the middle of the night], went out and looked at the river and it was beautiful. But something was wrong – it was flowing the wrong way.” The way the river was flowing was the least of the city boys’ worries, though, some of whom said that they had never set foot on actual earth before, only concrete.

African American CCC



KNF ARCHIVES

Crew from the Pipe Creek CCC Camp

“They were real comical,” recalled local enrollee Warren Brown of the New York boys. “You would tell ‘em to holler timber if they were going to cut down a tree and they were hollering timber for any darn thing. They’d saw all the way around a tree and holler timber, you didn’t know where it was going to fall.” But silliness was definitely taking second place to work according to the Sept. 27, 1934 issue of Libby’s The Western News, which states, “Refutation of the claim of a Missoula, Montana paper that negro CCC camps are inclined to laugh and sing but seldom to work is provided in the work record compiled by Company 1286, Camp F-44, Pipe Creek, Libby, Montana.” The paper then goes on to a list of work the camp had already completed, saying, “In addition to fire duties, the men have constructed 18 miles of road, cleared 24 miles of trail, maintained 23 miles of telephone line and constructed 10.7 miles of line. Three lookout towers and cabins have already been built, 14.4 miles of truck trail constructed, 35.5 miles of truck trail maintained and a forty acre airport built in its entirety.” Whatever camp that Missoula paper was talking about, it certainly wasn’t populated with the kind of boys that Captain Howard L. Nash had working for him in Libby’s Company 1286.

Author John Edwards once wrote, “The best, most beautiful, and most perfect way that we have of expressing a sweet concord of mind to each other is by music.” This certainly proved true for relations between the African American CCC camps and local people. With most of the CCC men coming from rough, big-city backgrounds, they were a bit touchier than the folks of Libby were used to. “You never knew what some of those guys were going to do up there,” said Warren Brown. “All of the army fellows carried .45-caliber pistols. They were ready to call out the riot squad from Fort Wright, Washington to stop one uproar in the mess hall...” For the most part, though, memories of camp were harmless enough –

especially once the “troublemakers” were ferreted out and shipped off home. For centuries, when transported out of their element, people have done everything in their power to keep the basics of the culture that they knew a part of their lives. Irish immigrants to America brought their jigs and reels and soda bread. Germans came with sauerkraut and the polka. Scandinavians brought lutefisk and bunads and traditional dances. Food, clothing, music, all become integral pieces of a daily routine that can make even the direst unknown familiar. In a CCC camp, though, army-prepared meals and uniforms limited the culture that enrollees could bring with them. Music, however, was theirs, and those black boys of Harlem had come fully prepared to give the straight-laced people of Libby a little lesson in jazz.

“Considerable popularity has come to the colored vocal quartet of the camp during the past few weeks,” states The Western News in its September 27, 1934 edition. “The four boys, from New York and New Jersey, first started singing spirituals together in the camp kitchen. Their popularity spread until they finally performed before Governor Ross of Idaho who shook hands with them all...several Chambers of Commerce in Montana having arranged for performances by the four men and efforts have been made to have them appear in Spokane for possible radio broadcasts and personal appearances.” Led by baritone Emmett Kato, this quartet of boys from camp F-44 became a bridge between the camp and the community, a bridge that would prove to be well forged. “We had a black quartet [in camp] that was really good,” remembered Warren Brown. “Sang spirituals – and they sang in churches in town.”

They weren’t the only ones making music up on Pipe Creek, though. A CCC enlistee from another camp recalled bringing a different set of musicians to a special gig. “On 4<sup>th</sup> of July in ’34,” he said, “I drove up to the Pipe Creek camp and picked up four of the band members from the CCC camp. I took them in my Model T to the Linger Longer, a dance hall on Savage Lake. It was quite a trip. Those Model T’s had to back up the hills in those days to work. Those black boys did not like to ride backwards up the hills in my car and insisted on walking up the hills instead. They sure knew how to play some great jazz music.” CCC boy Jerry Howard used to attend those dances. “Saturday nights we’d load up in an army truck and head for Linger Longer Beach,” he reminisced. “They had a dance floor that extended over the lake...the CCC fellas from the other camps came also. Families came from Troy and Libby.”

And so it was that a community whose membership had been skeptical at best of those rough and tumble boys had now welcomed their talents and a bit of the Harlem Renaissance into their white Montana world.

The CCC Camps in Lincoln County

**Where:** Troy F-17 Company 1347  
**When:** April 17, 1933 – October 1933  
**Who:** 11 officers & 13 men  
Libby, Troy, Eureka & Rexford  
**What:** Cabinet-Star Creek Road  
Callahan Road  
Tri State Logging Road  
Landing airfield at Troy  
Trails, telephone lines, campgrounds

**Where:** Pete Creek Camp F-18 Co. 1264  
**When:** June 20, 1933 – October 15, 1933  
**Who:** 1 officer & 26 men  
New York  
**What:** Pete Creek Road  
Spread Creek Road

Landing airfield at Upper Ford  
Fire fighting, telephone lines,  
campgrounds, lookout towers

**Where:** Pete Creek Camp F-43 Co. 1264  
**When:** May 1, 1934 – October 1934  
**Who:** 3 officers & 11 men  
New York, New Jersey & Montana  
**What:** Road construction & maintenance,  
telephone lines, fire fighting, lookout  
towers

**Where:** Rexford Camp F-19  
**When:** June 13 1993 - ?  
**Who:** 12 officers & 18 men  
New York & Montana  
**What:** Boulder Creek Road  
Yaak-Rexford Road  
Big Creek Road  
Sutton Ridge Road  
Federal Highway to Warland

**Where:** Pipe Creek Camp F-20 Co. 1286  
**When:** June 20, 1933 – September 15, 1933  
**Who:** 4 officers & 25 men  
New York, New Jersey & Montana  
**What:** Libby Landing Airfield  
Campgrounds

**Where:** Pipe Creek Camp F-44 Co. 1286  
**When:** May 1, 1934 – October 1934  
**Who:** 3 officers & 27 men  
New York, New Jersey & Montana  
**What:** Pipe Creek Road  
East Fork Purcell Road  
Loon Creek Road  
Keeler Creek Lookout  
Telephone lines, steel bridges, fences,  
trails, campgrounds, lookouts, cabins.

Turner Ranger Station and CCC  
Camp F-44

Mark J. White

Nothing remains of the old Turner Ranger Station except some foundation remnants, flat areas where tents were once located, and a ruined outhouse from the time when the site was a primitive campground. Yet, there are some Forest Service records and old newspaper articles that indicate that this ranger station site has an unusual history.

Turner Mountain and the Turner Ranger Station were named after Frank Turner, an early trapper who trapped in the Pipe Creek drainage from the late 1890’s until the early 1920’s. The ranger station was established sometime after 1912 and prior to 1914. The station was located near Pipe Creek and a little north of a trail junction with the Pipe Creek trail and a trail that went west went via Loon Lake, Quartz Creek and connected to Seventeen Mile Creek and then the Yaak. The records for Turner Ranger Station are very sparse for its early years. The 1914 Kootenai National Forest Map shows there is a ‘secondary lookout’ located on the top of Turner Mountain.

The ‘Turner Guard Station’, as it is labeled on the 1922 Kootenai National Forest Map, is shown as an unoccupied cabin. In 1924, the U.S. Forest service built a trail to the top of Turner Mountain and a lookout was constructed. The 1924 Kootenai National Forest Map indicates that a tool cache for 15 men was located at Turner Guard Station as well as a fireman and a packer during the fire season.



Kootenai National Forest financial records indicate that in 1930 a cabin was built in association with the lookout on Turner Mountain. In 1932, the Pipe Creek road was extended north up Pipe Creek and a connection made to the Turner Ranger Station.

In March of 1933, word was received by Forest Supervisor Webb that four civilian conservation corps camps were planned to be placed in the Kootenai National Forest, one of which would be placed on Pipe Creek. These camps were administrated by the U.S. Army from Fort George Wright in Spokane. There would eventually be three African-American manned CCC Camps in the Kootenai National Forest, including Camp F-43 on Pete Creek, Camp 49 on Keeler Creek, and Camp F-20 in 1933 and the next year renumbered Camp F-44 on Pipe Creek.

The June 22, 1933 edition of Libby’s Western News, noted that on June 19, a train arrived in Libby with 25 men, young African Americans from New York City, and the some soldiers from the U.S. Army to run the camp; Captain Robert E. DeMerritt, Staff Sargeant Selwyn W. Owings, Corporal J. E. Carlin, Corporal Harold Lee, and Private Denzil J. Haskins. There were to be 25 local experienced men hired from the area to supervise the enrollees at the camp. The camp was to be located at the site of the Turner Ranger Station. The following Sunday 175 more African American CCC men of Company 1286 were to arrive in Libby to be transported to the Camp F-20.

The camp was completed by July of 1933 with a large mess hall and floors for the army tents. The camp was described by The Western News as being in a ‘beautiful location.’ The young African-American enrollees had little or no previous exposure to any forest environment, much less to the isolated forests of northwest Montana. Their feet were used to pavement and concrete not the forest floor. One of the first tasks assigned to the young enrollees of the Camp F-20 was to extend the Pipe Creek Road to the north to connect with the road on the south fork of the Yaak as well as blister rust control work. The young men from Pipe Creek sometimes enjoyed recreation activities away from the camp such as Libby’s Fourth of July celebration of 1933.

Some notable recreational activities associated included participating in baseball and boxing. The Libby Cubs suffered by the skills of the ‘Giants’ in their first games. The ‘Colored Giants’ defeated the Libby Cubs 17 to 14 on the Libby baseball diamond on July 9, 1933. The Libby Cubs tried to reorganize their team after this game but were again defeated, 10 to 18, on July 16. A young man named Manboy was noted for his ability to hit a ball hard for a homerun. Libby suffered a number of defeats from the ‘Colored Giants’. Libby finally had its victory against the ‘Colored Giants’, score 31 to 12, on June 10, 1934.

On July 14, 1933, William Coppedge of New York City, and a enrollee at Pipe Creek Camp F-20, drowned in the Yaak River. This was the first death of a member of the Kootenai CCC camps The Methodist church in Libby invited the members of the Pipe Creek camp to attend Sunday services. A singing quartet formed at Camp F-20 and sang at the Kootenai Theater on Saturday July 15, 1933.

In August of 1933, 15 CCC workers from the Pipe Creek Camp began work on the first Libby Airport under the supervision of Bill Farris. By September they had cleared a runway of 2800 x 400 feet of trees and stumps. The airfield was completed by the Pipe Creek enrollees in 1934. In the summer of 1934 there were a total of 198 men at the Pipe Creek CCC Camp including the officers,

local experience men and 175 African American enrollees.

In spite of the good record of the African American Camps there was a meeting of the Libby Lions Club on April 23, 1934 where there were objections raised about having African-American crews located in this vicinity two years in succession. It was the consensus of those speaking at the meeting that there would be, based on experience, less trouble to be had from the ‘negro’ camps’ than the white ones. Captain Nash, commander of the Pipe Creek CCC camp, gave a presentation in August 1934 at the meeting of the Libby Lion’s Club about the purpose of the work being done by the men of that camp was to lead to the improved status of the men.

During the summer and fall of 1933, the form Camp F-20 became Camp 44, but still was in the same location. The work of the men of Company 1286 of Camp F-44 was remarkable. The crews completed 20 miles of road during the summer of 1934, including the connection of the Pipe Creek Road up to the South Fork of the Yaak River as well as the completion of a road up to Loon Lake, connecting to the Yaak via Seventeen-Mile Creek. The construction of the East Fork of Pipe Creek Road connected that road to the Rexford Ranger District.

The Pipe Creek CCC crews also constructed 24 miles of trail, constructed 10.7 miles of telephone line, and maintained another 23 miles of line. Other achievements of the Pipe Creek CCC Camp enrollees and supervisors included the construction of three lookout towers, including Big Creek Baldy, the construction of 14.4 miles of truck trail, maintenance of 35.5 miles of truck trail, and the completion of the 40-acre Libby Airport. One hundred men of the camp helped fight the Canadian Boundary fire and built over 18,000 feet of fire trench. Some of the enrollees in the camp learned how to operate heavy machinery used in road construction. A general inspection was conducted by F. Jefferson and Forest Supervisor J. Dwinelle on July 12, 1934. Jefferson described the camp as being “a well run camp-men are kept well strung out and busy.’

The Pipe Creek Camp also boasted a vocal quartet made up of young men from New York and New Jersey. They were very talented and boasted the baritone voice of Emmet Kato. The quartet had performed at the ‘Linger Longer’ dance hall on Savage Lake and also sang for Governor Ross of Idaho. They were requested to perform by several Chambers of Commerce in Montana, until Emmett Kato left the CCC and went home temporarily breaking up the group.

In 1935, there was no further use for the CCC camp at Pipe Creek and the mess hall, wash house, latrine building, tent frames and floors were transferred to the U.S. Forest Service and later disposed of.

The Turner Administrative Station was used intermittently up into the 1950’s by blister rust crews but was abandoned by the early 1960’s. The remaining structures of the station were then torn down. The site was used for a number of years as a Forest Service campground but later was abandoned. Little is left of the station and the stories of the this place except for scattered records and an ever diminishing number of local residents who remember when there was CCC Camp on Pipe Creek.

The wind now blows on a forested flat above Pipe Creek where the young men from New York camped during two summers while worked on improving the forest and themselves.

**Upper Ford Ranger District**

*Kristen Hauge*

***Upper Ford Ranger Station, 1926***



K. D. SWAN FOR USFS

***A single room cabin with dirt floor***

During the early days of the Kootenai National Forest, trails were rough, roads were few, and the Forest Ranger’s office was often located at his home, or in a remote cabin. In order to cover the expanse of the Forest by horse or foot, smaller district areas were formed. Through time, as roads improved and cars became more common, areas were combined together to be under fewer district jurisdictions.

Upper Ford was originally a part of the Sylvanite Ranger District, but was withdrawn for an office site in 1909. Located at one of two forks on the Yaak River, it was on the main road used by Yaak settlers and Forest Service alike. In 1926, it became the headquarters for the Upper Ford Ranger District – the northwestern portion of the forest – split off from the Sylvanite Ranger District. Rangers from across the forest came together and helped cut and peel the logs needed to build the ranger’s cabin. It still stands today.

Over the years that followed, the district built numerous lookout buildings including Northwest Peak in 1929. Northwest Peak lookout was one of the first of a new prototype L-4 model lookout that could be built from a kit. This replaced the earlier lookout styles that were often dictated by the skills and preferences of the men building them. Other lookouts included Mt Henry, Grubstake, Lost Horse, Shagnasty (Obermeyer), Garver, Canuck, Robinson and Flat Iron.

***Upper Ford Ranger District***



USFS

***Seen Unseen Area Map, revised 1930***

Especially during the CCC era, the ranger station expanded with a full complement of buildings. In 1933, the office was relocated in a newly built combination style office/warehouse building that still stands today. The barn, still present, was also built by the CCC,

In 1942 during the war, the Upper Ford District was recombined with the Yaak District to conserve manpower. Upper Ford once again became a remote work center. The buildings and site were used until the 1960s, when the site was abandoned due to sewer concerns



and many of the buildings were subsequently removed.

Upper Ford Ranger’s Cabin



USFS

The Ranger’s cabin built in 1926 at Upper Ford, 1993

Today, the cabin is being restored for use as a cabin rental. The cabin rental program generates funds that help to maintain many of the historic buildings and lookouts of the Forest Service.

The Upper Ford

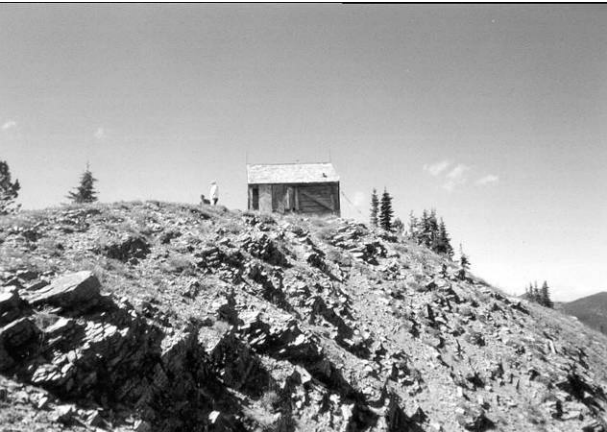


USFS

A Room with a View: Mount Wam Lookout

Nancy Anderson

Mount Wam Lookout



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

Lookout atop Wam Mountain

On a lonely mountaintop in northwestern Montana sits historic Mount Wam Lookout. Wam Mountain is 7,203 feet above sea level in the Ten Lakes Wilderness Study Area near the Canadian border. The lookout sits atop a rocky point in the Whitefish Range that lies above the surrounding wilderness and offers spectacular views of the American and Canadian Rockies. The town of Eureka, Montana, lies about twelve air miles southwest, and the Canadian border lies about three miles north. The lookout is accessed by following Forest Service Trail #339 for about five miles from the trail’s junction with Forest Road #7022.

For more than twenty years, the Forest Service used Mount Wam as a prime observation point to spot smoke resulting from lightning strikes and careless campers. The

historic lookout represents the standard Region One design for an “L-4” lookout building with a gable roof. It is one of the few remaining L-4 gable-style lookouts. The L-4 Lookout was designed about 1929 by Forest Service employee Clyde Fickes of the Missoula office after Regional Forester Evan Kelley decided that the cupola design was inefficient because the lookout had to climb up and down a ladder to make his observations. The L-4 was one of the first plans where both the living and observation spaces were on the same floor. Prior to that, observations were made from a cupola above the living space or from a separate, nearby tower.

The 14-by-14-foot L-4 frame cab cost only \$500.00 (F.O.B. Spokane or Portland), was bundled in kits for hauling by mule trains and would even fit nicely atop four tall poles cut right on site. Kootenai National Forest packer Bert Wilkie brought the original pre-cut lumber and windows into the mountain site on mules and horses. A carpenter hired for the job for the summer built the lookout in 1931.

Mount Wam did not have a permanent lookout building until 1931. Prior to that, the site served as an “unimproved” lookout point. The fireguard typically camped in the nearest sheltered place below the lookout point and then hiked uphill to a ridge or peak to look for smokes. Simple tree platforms or observation towers built in areas with commanding views were the earliest fire lookouts.

In the mid 1920’s, Fortine Ranger District employee Joe Stoken strung a phone line to the top of Wam peak. A fireguard may have stayed in a tent on or near the peak. The phone line allowed the observer to report the location of smoke immediately to the dispatcher at Ant Flat Ranger Station. The Forest Service used #9 galvanized wire for the phone lines because it was dependable and required relatively little maintenance. The phone line was single-wire line mounted on trees in insulators that broke free when a tree fell across the line and its route often followed existing trails to aid in maintenance. The phone line to Mount Wam in the 1930’s followed the Clarence Creek trail to the lookout, branching off from the Stahl Peak Lookout phone line<sup>1</sup>.

The Mount Wam Lookout, with sweeping views of the surrounding countryside, was responsible for detecting forest fires within his or her viewshed. Other Kootenai and Flathead National Forest lookouts visible from Mount Wam in the 1930’s (some are no longer standing) included Stahl Peak, Mount Locke, Mount Thompson-Seton, Tuchuck Mountain, Nasukoin Mountain, and Poorman Mountain <sup>1</sup>.

The lookout used a firefinder who had a standard line-of-sight view wire and peephole to determine the locations of smokes indicating possible fires. He tried to take location readings on each lightning strike during an electrical storm so he could monitor them for smoke. He also served as a smokechaser, which meant he made the initial attack on nearby fires if the dispatcher asked him to do so<sup>1</sup>.

Some smokechasers, acting as ridgerunners, moved along the ridges looking for smoke from high points and trees as they traveled. They were an alternative to having men stationed at permanent camps or buildings. Dave Curtis, for example, was a smokechaser on the Fortine Ranger District in 1936. Sometimes he stayed at Wam or other established lookouts, but often pitched a tent. If he saw smoke, he would call it in and then go find it and work to suppress the fire<sup>2</sup>.

The Wigwam Fire of 1934 was one of the large fires in the vicinity of Mount Wam during the years it was manned. It started in Canada

at the mouth of Desolation Creek and slowly burned its way south. Three lookouts - Stahl (Paul Kenby), Mount Wam (Edgar Nelson), and Poorman (John Vukonich) all monitored the fire’s progress. The Forest Service sent 140 black CCC men and then 100 local men to fight the fire. Seven pack strings kept the fire camp at Weasel Cabin supplied. Lightning strikes started new fires on Poorman Mountain as crews were mopping up the Wigwam fire (3 &4).

Wam Lookout, 1937



LYNN WORKMAN FOR USFS

Tom Campbell, University of Montana student and seasonal Forest Service employee, standing in front of Mount Wam Lookout, 1937. He worked with Workman on trails that summer during rainy periods.

Lynn Workman was the Mount Wam Lookout from 1937-1940, starting when he was nineteen. He earned \$80-85 per month. During the depression, the Forest Service usually hired only one person per family in order to maximize the wage benefits. Like many others in the 1930’s, Workman lived on credit and then paid his debts off at the end of the summer when he came down off the lookout. According to Kathy McKay, a number of local Forest Service seasonal workers, including Workman, trapped during the Depression to earn extra money. They spent the winters high in the mountains on both sides of the Whitefish Divide hunting marten pelts, which paid well at the time<sup>1</sup>.

On Mount Wam, the lookout’s season generally lasted from late-June until the end of August or early-September, depending on the fire season. Workman said that his longest season on a lookout was seventy days but he could work for as long as five months if he started early piling brush, maintaining trails and phone lines, etc.

The Mount Wam lookouts obtained their water from a spring ¼ mile away down a steep ridge. They took the fifteen-minute walk to the spring daily and carried the water in a five-gallon water bag on their back. They also had to cut their own wood for cooking and heat and pack it uphill<sup>1</sup>.

Their food was packed in thirty-day increments, with two boxes of canned food per thirty days. According to Kootenai National Forest lookout John Vukonich, this represented “your whole summer’s grub”; fortunately, he said, the lookouts had the time to cook it. Each box of food weighed just over 150 pounds and included canned fruit, pork and beans, and vegetables. The boxes served as cupboards and storage after they were delivered<sup>1</sup>.

In the late 1930’s, the nearly thirty lookouts that were dispatched out of Ant Flat Ranger Station could talk to each other on the phone. For entertainment, they enjoyed talking and “swapping stories and lies” and listening to



the singing fire guards also known as “songbirds”<sup>1</sup>.

The 1940’s brought the end of the era of intensive use of fire lookouts. Mount Wam Lookout was abandoned as a manned station by 1951, but was sometimes used during periods of high fire danger after that time. Clarence Creek road, constructed by 1954, shortened the hike to Mount Wam by about four miles<sup>1</sup>.

**Wam Lookout, Pre-restoration**



USFS KNF ARCHIVES

*Showing its age, 1998*

Mount Wam Lookout battled for almost seventy years to stay atop the mountain through snow, ice, wind, rain, lightning storms, extreme temperatures and exposure. As the years passed, Wam’s condition deteriorated. In 1999, volunteer participants, under the Forest Service Passport In Time, or PIT Program, and Forest Service historic preservation specialists restored the lookout building. PIT offers individuals and families the opportunity to work with professional archeologists and historic preservationists on historic sites on forests across the country. There is no registration fee. These volunteers help preserve the nation’s past and greatly contribute to heritage resource management.

**Wam Lookout Restoration Project, 1999**



USFS KNF

*Passport In Time Volunteers*

The crew performed the badly needed repairs and completed a considerable amount of work to make the lookout habitable. The restoration work included installing the wood stove, repairing and replacing the wood floor, windows and shutters, painting the building, replacing the wood shingle roof, and general maintenance work. As part of the project, a wood-frame one-hole outhouse was constructed on the ridge south of the lookout on the location of the original outhouse.

**Mount Wam Lookout**



KEN HABER FOR USFS

*Refurbished Mount Wam Lookout, 2000*

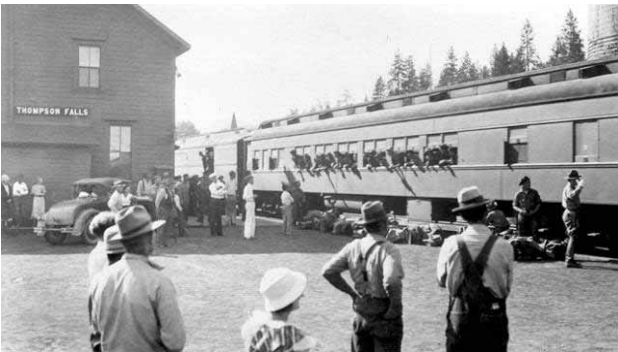
All of the work was done with like materials and workmanship. A local mule train packed in most of the materials and supplies. Now the refurbished lookout, already a popular destination for visitors, is part of the Forest Service Cabin Rental Program, which uses funds collected to help pay for these buildings’ maintenance.

**Vermilion CCC Camp**

*Terry Hightower*

It’s June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1933, and a train leaving from New York adds five Pullman cars. The Pullman cars are for Company 297; they are leaving their headquarters in Fort Niagara and on their way to Trout Creek, Montana. Captain Herbert B. Laux is in command and is accompanied by his First Sergeant, a Supply Sergeant, a Mess Sergeant and a cook. They were all part of Company E., 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Niagara, New York. Along with them are 150 enrollees, members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Their train arrives in Thompson Falls, Montana, four days later. The five Pullman cars are uncoupled from the train and put on the sidetrack. The remainder of their journey will be made by motor route. Their destination is the Vermilion River and they will be known as the Vermilion CCC. The train continues on to Trout Creek where another CCC camp is stationed.

**CCC Crews Arriving in Thompson Falls**



SANDERS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Vermilion CCC was also known as the Allen Hark camp and officially known as F-24, Company 297 (“F” indicates sponsored by the Forest Service, 297<sup>th</sup> camp in Montana). The company was established on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1933.

Upon arrival, it appears Company 297 camped below Vermilion Falls for three weeks; about 3 miles shy of their actual project area. The fire of 1910 had ravaged much of the area but now the area was a heavy growth of regenerated brush and trees. They improved the existing Vermilion River road, built new road and by the end of July, were building a camp at the confluence of the Vermilion River and Willow Creek. From this camp, they built bridges, roads, worked on lookout towers, replaced culverts, and reconstructed or repaired roads and trails.

Life in these camps must have been in stark contrast to the home life these boys left behind. Many were from back East and had never seen the Wild West. The Army was in charge of logistics and discipline matters. The U. S. Forest Service supervised the work projects and was also in charge of education. They provided a superintendent, 4-5 foremen, plus 30-35 local, experienced men to work, supervise and train the crews. The camps were in essence, a city within themselves. The boys of the Vermilion camp earned praise for their work and the way they took to their forestry work. They did plenty of manual labor, but were also exposed to the operation of “modern” road building equipment. After they chopped and cleared the brush, a bulldozer or “cat” pulled the “blade”, an 11,000 pound road scraper to prepare the road surface. The Mess Sergeant, Arthur Evans,

provided plenty of good “chow” for these young men and in true military fashion, it was mandatory to wear a black tie to dinner, no tie, no food.

The Vermilion CCC camp had a very short existence. Winter brought an end to the camp and by late October, 1933, the camp had been abandoned. Some men transferred to warmer climate camps, some headed back home and some just moved on.

The Vermilion CCC camp was one of five on the Cabinet National Forest. They achieved an impressive list of accomplishments. Some of their accomplishments were: the construction of 76 miles of road, maintaining 40 miles of existing road, building 22 new bridges, the maintenance of 26 bridges, built 60 miles of telephone line and cut an estimated 1500 telephone poles. As is said, “They were boys when they arrived, Men when they departed”.

No evidence is said to exist of the Vermilion CCC camp. However, local folks say the old green outhouses near the confluence of the Vermilion River and Willow Creek are from that era.

**Ranger E.A. Woods**

*By Mark J. White*

Eustace Adrian Woods was born to English parents on March 28, 1876 in Santander, Spain. In1893, he went to Canada where he worked as a shepherd. In 1896, he moved into Montana where he tried various jobs including sheep herding and ranching. In 1905, he shot and killed an elk in what he thought was Canada, but found out it was Montana, which resulted in a poaching fine.

While he was paying his fine, he noted a line of men joining a new outfit called the Forest Service. He applied and took the civil service examination with about 20 others, including Edward Stahl, in Kalispell, Montana. He passed the test and applied for American citizenship about the same time. After also passing the Forest Ranger Examination, he became a forest guard in the Forest Service under the Department of Agriculture.

On December 5, 1911, Woods married Ida Loeffler. During his Forest Service career they had seven children. This was a life unlike so many of the single men who served as rangers.

His multi-stationed career began in the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Dupuyer, Montana. During his career he was stationed at Hannan Gulch, Piegan, Lubeck, Blackleaf, Elk Creek, and Sun River stations. In 1917, E.A. Woods and his family were transferred to the Helena National Forest, where he was in charge of two districts.

In 1921, the Woods family was once again on the move and transferred to the Kootenai National Forest. He was in charge of the Cabinet District out of Troy until the fall of 1922. The family then moved to Swamp Creek where Woods was stationed until 1927. At this time, the family moved to the Troy Station where Woods was also in charge of the Sylvanite Ranger District. There he remained until his retirement in January of 1937.

In reflection of his Forest Service career, it can be said that he made many accomplishments. During his years in Troy, there were six lookouts built, many trails constructed, and telephone lines built. During the depression there were a large number of fires fought on the forest. Forest Supervisor Charles S. Webb set up a wonderful retirement party for E.A.



Woods and his wife on January 24, 1937. The tradition of retirement parties for retiring Forest Service employees continues to this day. During his retirement party, it was noted that he had fought in the fires of 1910.

Between 1914 and 1916, he came up with the fire plan for the Lewis and Clark Forest, which was one of the earliest, if not *the* earliest, fire plan in Region One. During his 30 years of service, Woods served under 12 Forest Supervisors in three national forests. The retirement party for E.A. Woods and his wife Ida remained among one of their very best memories. Eustice Woods was remembered as not only a good Forest Service Ranger, but was also a very good and caring father.

***The Old and New Sylvanite Ranger 1936***



COLLECTION OF PAULA HOUSE  
***Old Ranger Eustice A. Woods, center and waving, Gordon Cornell the new Sylvanite Ranger in foreground with glasses.***

**Old Ranger Days**  
***Ida L. Woods***

Thirty years as part of the Service,  
Thirty years for the U.S.A.  
Back in nineteen six, I started  
On the old Lewis and Clark, by the way.

Changes there have been and many  
Since with the Service began my career.  
The series of “then” and “now” by the artist  
Picture the years, as they were, very clear.

The Service has made its place in the sun  
carved for itself the fame it has won;  
‘Twas good to have been a ranger  
and help with the work that was done.

Back in the “then” of the Service  
Each fed himself and his own pack string.  
We lived the life in the old days  
Out in the wilds, the ranger a king.

We wandered in primitive forests,  
We climbed to the Main Divide,  
We camped where night overtook us  
And the wind and the weather defied.

Our equipment was crude and scanty  
Bough beds with a “soogan” or two,  
An old Dutch oven and a camp fire,  
Cooked beans, or whatever have you.

Headquarters for those of the old days  
Meant a tent or maybe a shack.  
The set-up now looks grand indeed  
To old-time rangers, looking back.

There were no government pack strings,  
No roads, no trails, no towers, at all.  
Fires? Oh, yes, ask any old ranger  
What happened in 1910, before fall.

That was the year we made history,  
And the lessons we learned-and how-  
Became the humble beginnings  
Of the “systems” worked under “Now”.

We used “crows nests” for the lookouts”,  
Built trails when “allotments” could.  
We forded the streams, oft in danger,

Stamped “Free Use” on the rangers’ wood.

Duty called us to many strange places  
Away from our fellow men.  
Back in the hills and the jungles  
Or down on the windy domain.

Trips that we’d made with our ponies  
Gave way to traveling by car.  
“Now high above the smoke and the fire,  
Planes carry you quickly and far.

Hardships? Of course, in the old days. But I  
like to recall all the thrills.  
For never was life so adventurous  
As a ranger’s out in the hills.

“Now” that I’m old and retired,  
And the days of my service recall,  
I cherish the memories they bring me,  
The “Then” of the years, most of all.

**Ida L. Woods 1937**  
*Written for her husband, Ranger E.A. Woods,*  
Forest Ranger: 1906-1936

**E.A. Woods after Retirement**



PAUL HOUSE COLLECTION

**Wolverine Cabin**  
***Nancy Anderson***

Wolverine Cabin sits nestled high in the Wolverine Basin of the Ten Lakes area, between the middle and lower Wolverine Lakes approximately seven air miles northeast of Eureka, Montana. The cabin is part of Wolverine Station. The station is accessed by following Forest Service Trail #84 and consists of a cabin, an outhouse and a hitching post (1). The cabin has been a haven for many a weary wanderer of the high country.

In the summer of 1944, Frank “Boots” Coombs, Walt Carpenter, Charlie Sutherland,

and the four West brothers; Orval, Roy, Lloyd and Dale built Wolverine Cabin. The cabin was constructed as a stopover for the U.S. Customs Border Horse Patrol, who traveled by horse from Roosville to the North Fork of the Flathead River on their inspection trips between Waterton Park and Roosville Border stations. The special use permit for the cabin was made to Boots Coombs who was in charge of the four-man Customs Patrol at Roosville at that time (2).

***Beginning Construction***



LLOYD WEST FOR USFS  
***Charlie Sutherland, Roy and Orval West lay mud sills for the cabin***

Cabin logs were cut from areas adjacent to the building site and were skidded in by horse teams from as far as a half-mile. Other materials needed, such as lumber for the floor, shakes, nails, windows, etc., were acquired from down in the Tobacco Valley and packed in by horse over the Derosier Creek Trail. Boots and Walter Carpenter did the packing and general engineering for the project. Boots, Walt and Charlie Sutherland were all working for the Customs Patrol who financed materials for the cabin. Their labor was donated, with the understanding that the builders could use the cabin for as long as they lived. At one time a sign on the cabin read “Property of the U.S. Treasury Department, U. S. Border Patrol”.

***Under Construction***



LLOYD WEST FOR USFS  
***Orval, Lloyd and Roy West, Walt Carpenter, Boots Coombs, and Charlie Sutherland at work.***

Construction of the cabin took the better part of a month, according to Lloyd West. He continued working on the cabin for another week or so, constructing the cupboards and painting the floor while Boots and Walt packed in the double-bed springs, as well as some singles. “There are lots of things easier to pack on a horse than a double-bed spring!” Lloyd remarked (3).

***Hauling Bedsprings***



LLOYD WEST FOR USFS  
***Last but not least a pair of bedsprings were hauled to the cabin. A set was hauled on each side of the horse and, Lloyd recalled, they had a heck of a time transporting the springs to the cabin.***



The cabin was furnished with two stoves, a sink, mouse-tight cupboards for supplies, bedsprings, dishes, utensils, a table, crosscut saws, axes, gas lanterns, first-aid kits and food. This was a government cabin and it was locked for several years but anyone could use the cabin by getting a key from Boots. After the customs patrol was disbanded, Lloyd West had the key. No one was refused the use of the cabin unless it was fully occupied at the time. It was the custom for people using the cabin to leave a supply of wood, clean up, replace the shutters and leave any non-perishable food from their packs. There was always coffee, salt, flour, rice, beans and canned goods in the cupboards. For years the cabin remained in very good condition despite literally hundreds of people using it.

Hikers had access to the cabin via the Burma Road, built in 1945 by Leland Tripp and Jack Stevens. The money for the road was raised by donations from people throughout the Tobacco Valley. In later years there was access from the Wolverine Creek Road while most of the horse users traveled Indian Creek Trail and Trail #88 up from Sinclair Creek. The Border Patrol had stopped patrolling the line by horse and no longer claimed the Wolverine Cabin. Boots paid the special use fees until he died, when the property reverted back to the control of the Forest Service. The Forest Service has used the cabin as a remote workstation

In 1964, the Forest Service designated Ten Lakes a Scenic Area and stopped outfitter use in the area. The outfitter, who had been using and maintaining the cabin, could no longer use the scenic area so he quit maintaining the cabin. The door was no longer locked and no one seemed to care what happened to the place. With time and lack of some responsible party to do maintenance, the cabin started deteriorating. For a period of time, the Forest Service had a policy of burning old structures or allowing them to deteriorate naturally. Members of the local communities did not want that for Wolverine Cabin and were given permission to maintain it. They have performed some maintenance and reconstruction on the cabin throughout the years, although not all of this work maintained the cabin's historic character.

In 1994, a donated stove was hauled to the cabin by the Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club and installed. In 1995, the trail crew hung new shutters and put up a food-hanging pole. In 1995 and 1996 the snowmobile club also replaced the roof with cedar shakes. In September 1996, the Forest Service Nine Mile Pack string carried five mules worth of garbage out. The snowmobile club, Tobacco Valley Resource Group and Forest Service employees replaced the floor in 1997.

Wolverine Cabin



USFS

A peaceful evening, 1994.

Presently, Wolverine Cabin is available for use by the general public and is used by all types of backcountry recreationists year-round. The cabin is located in an area of deep winter snow with accumulation of twelve to fourteen feet and is currently in poor condition. The sill logs and cabin logs have weathered and decayed because of the deep

snows and are in various states of deterioration. The log chinking needs to be repaired and/or replaced.

Wolverine Cabin is eligible to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and as such is afforded certain protection under the National Historic Preservation Act. In August 2005 the Forest Service planned on reconstructing Wolverine Cabin under the direction of employees skilled in the preservation of historic structures.

The WWII Italian Detainees

by Mark J. White

The old Warland Ranger Station, across the river from the old sawmill town of Warland, had an interesting chapter concerning Italian detainees during World War II. The U.S. Forest Service in Region 1 was facing major labor shortages during the war and much forest work could not be completed. The Kootenai National Forest was no exception. Supervisor Karl Klehm said that it was hard to get men even to get work that was necessary done. The Kootenai National Forest had hired boys to do summer brush piling work but they were enticed to do other jobs.

A plan was then considered to bring in Italian detainees from the federal camp at Fort Missoula, Montana. The men were non military men who had been on Italian ships that were in American harbors when the war broke out. There had been a use of some of these men in the Kaniksu National Forest in Idaho for piling brush, blister rust control and other forest work. This worked very well for the Kaniksu so it was decided to bring a group of Italian detainees to the Kootenai National Forest in the summer of 1943 to fill in for the labor shortages for piling brush and other forest work. The detainees would be brought in and located at Warland Ranger Station.

The first contingent of 37 Italians arrived on the Kootenai National Forest on June 17, 1943. They were to be housed in the former CCC spike camp at Warland, which had previously housed CCC enrollees who helped build the Warland Bridge across the Kootenai River. Carl Gilbertson was placed in charge of the work being done by the Italian detainees. The June 24, 1943 edition of the Western News quoted Gilbertson about the Italian detainees. Gilbertson said: "The men are a fine bunch of fellows and that everything was working out very well."

The Italian leader of the detainees was Gabriel Locatelli. Locatelli had been in harbor in Costa Rica and received orders to proceed home by way of Japan but instead was detained and eventually landed in Fort Missoula, Montana. Captain Locatelli had sailed in and out of American harbors for 15 years before his detention.

The Italians worked on improving their camp by landscaping and painting the buildings along with their regular job of brush piling in the forest. They were noted for their musical abilities on the guitar and other instruments as well. The men were anxious to return to their home and families once the war ended. On Sundays a Forest Service truck would take the detainees to church services at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Libby, Montana.

After the war ended, the interneers went home. The site of the Warland Ranger Station and Italian internee camp are now under the waters of Lake Koocanusa and the story of the Italian detainees largely forgotten.

All Girl Brush Piling Crew

Nancy Anderson

In 1944, the U.S. Forest Service at Ant Flat Ranger Station requested girls to work in the summer piling brush left from logging operations. This cleaned the forest floor and helped prevent forest fires and their rapid spread. Normally, this was a job for boys, but the boys had gone to war. World War II was in full swing and the war touched Lincoln County residents' lives daily. Each evening at 6:00 p.m. people turned on their radio and listened to war news. Most of the community's young men were gone, scattered around the world, and fighting battles in places many people had never heard of before. The senior class boys were allowed to leave school in January to go to war, yet still received their diplomas in May. The community bonded together because we all had loved ones overseas and everyone wanted to do all they could to help.

According to Ruth Curtis Pomeroy, "My girlfriends and I were excited... a real job...with pay! Jobs for girls in the Fortine-Trego area were as scarce as hen's teeth. Eagerly we applied. About eight of us were handed sharp axes and sent to the woods with our boss, Mr. Osler, and told to lop off the limbs from the logging debris and pile it to be burned in the late fall by Forest Service employees. Mr. Osler had a file and whetstone to keep our axes sharp and we kept him busy... Our enthusiasm made up for our lack of expertise and as the summer wore on our skills increased. Our boss was a patient and gentle man. I don't remember a cross word from him and we girls loved him. ...I wonder if he was apprehensive, wondering what he was getting into... Would they produce for him...could he motivate them? Remember this was an era when girls were not commonplace in the work arena. They stayed home and learned to cook from their mothers and then became wives and mothers themselves, keeping the home while the men earned the living. Truly, we were pioneers in the dawning of a new age".

All Girl Brush Piling Crew at Ant Flat



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

Ruth Curtis Pomeroy and the all girl brushing crew.

Each morning the crew would gather at 7:30 a.m. at Bert Wilke's house in Fortine. They would climb into the back of his blue pickup and Bert would drive them to Ant Flat Ranger Station. Gathering their axes, the girls boarded a Forest Service pickup and went to the woods. The jobs were all within ten miles of the station.

The crew also did inside work in inclement weather. They were assigned to scrub the "gray" walls and ceiling in the cook shack. After tackling them with hot water, soap, and Bon Ami, they discovered they were actually snow white. The gray was tough dirt. It was an accumulation of smoke and grease. It seemed like a very big room and took seven girls two days to finish. Once they started it had to be finished since the room was two-



toned, white where it had been cleaned and dismal gray everywhere else. Ruth wrote that for years afterward she always appreciated the whiteness of those walls.

Mr. Fox was the District Ranger and John Ammesieger was his assistant. Howard Kins was dispatcher, Orville Mustard packer and Isabelle Mustard secretary. Ruth said that the work crew evaluation said that, “The girls do as much work as boys would do.” She also said, “ We put our hearts and souls into the work and did a great job (we weren’t gigglers) whereas boys could have done more but their enthusiasm wasn’t as great and didn’t produce up to their potential. We felt good about our evaluation and that we had helped our country in a time of need.” Ruth believes, “They only had girls crew for two years and it is a time of my life I look back on as a very pleasant memory now some fifty years later.”

**The Changing Landscape**

*Rebecca Timmons*

***Ecosystem Changes***

The Forest Service has gone from managing individual species and resources as if they were separate entities to an understanding of the connectivity of all resources in an ecosystem. One of these concepts is illustrated through the identification of linkage zones. Today managing the ecosystem is the best way to assure sustainability of our forest for future generations

As issues of multiple-use have changed, many different kinds of people have learned to share this precious resource. This vast ecosystem so vital to our development in northwest Montana is also our greatest treasure for our future.

Linkage zones have been identified as broad areas of seasonal wildlife habitat where animals can find the food, shelter and security they need to successfully move between larger ecosystem habitats. This analysis became necessary as human activities, such as highway construction and home building, displaced traditional wildlife activity. Federal, state, county, corporate and private land owners are now working together to maintain and enhance the opportunities for movement of wildlife.

Ecosystem management is the process of land use decision-making and land management practice that takes into account the best available understanding of the ecosystem’s full suite of organisms and natural processes. It is management based on maintaining ecological integrity and ecological sustainability. An ecosystem is said to have high integrity if its full complement of native species is present in normal distributions and abundances. As stated in the 1987 Brundtland Report, ecosystem sustainability is: "Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

This series of photos demonstrates that ecosystems do and can change over time in response to disturbances such as fire, logging, disease, and wind damage. Recovery can take place adjusting to the extent and duration of disturbance. The photos are taken from the exact same photo point over 45 years.

***1926 Landscape***



USFS ARCHIVES

***Logging on J. Neils Lumber Company land near Sheldon Mountain in 1926. K.D. Swan photo***

***1944 Landscape***



USFS ARCHIVES

***Changes on J. Neils Lumber Company land near Sheldon Mountain in 1944. K.D. Swan photo***

***1950 Landscape***



USFS ARCHIVES

***Changes on J. Neils Lumber Company land near Sheldon Mountain in 1950. K.D. Swan photo.***

***1970 Landscape***



USFS ARCHIVES

***Changes on J. Neils Lumber Company land near Sheldon Mountain in 1970. K.D. Swan photo.***

**For Names-Sake: Placenames on the Kootenai National Forest**

*Compiled by Lauren Gautreaux & Nancy Anderson*

**Rexford District Place-Names**

**Allen Gulch** - Reuben A. Allen, homesteader in 1904 and former ranger for the Department of Interior.

**Cadette Creek** – Narcissus Cadotte, Civil War Veteran, settler and prospector

**Ellsworth Mountain** – Bill and Katherine Ellsworth, early day homesteaders.

**Giebler Creek** – Oscar Gibler, homesteader, 1901.

**Holdup Gulch** – Holup on the Great Northern in 1907. George Frankhauser and C.R. McDonald held up the train and robbed the mail cars of \$40,000 in cash. They were later apprehended at Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

**Inch Mountain** – Louis P. Inch, a G.L.O. engineer.

**Indian Creek** – An area on lower Indian Creek was known to the early settlers as Indian Flats, The creek that flowed through it was later known as Indian Creek.

**Lawrence Mountain** – C.N. Lawrence, an early day Ranger, succeeding Hess on the Warland District, before 1910.

**Lookout Creek** – The entire stream is visible from several surrounding lookouts.

**Murray Creek** – Will and Edwin Murray bought land rights in 1894 and established a sawmill and ranch.

**Parsnip Creek and Mountain** – A trapper by this name. He was last heard of in 1895. Believed to have met his death in a bear trap.

**Phillips Creek** – Michael Phillips, trader for the Hudson Bay Company and first Indian agent assigned to the Tobacco Plains band of Kootenai Indians in 1886.

**Phills Lake** – Phill pugilissi, Italian coal miner who homesteaded near the lake in 1910.

**Pinkham Creek and Mountain** – From a man named Pinkham who settled on the land at and immediately surrounding the old Rexford townsite. He left prior to 1900.

**Pink Mountain** - J.K. Dwinelle, Forest Service, 1914, commonly known as “Pink”.

**Rexford** – Possible – George Stannard and William Ambrose chose the name in commemoration of a place called King’s Crossing, which is on the borders of countries Waterford and Wexford in their native Ireland.

**Roberts Creek** – Col. A.W. Roberts prospected on Big Creek – reported to have transported his mining equipment from Warland by wheelbarrow.

**Scalp Mountain** – Ranger Dierman had a fire there that got away, hence Scalp Mountain.

**Slick Gulch** – Frank Slick, homesteader, 1914.

**Sophie Creek and Lake** – Sophie Morigeau had a cabin and a stock ranch, from 1880 to 1916.

**Sullivan Creek** – John C. Sullivan homesteaded on the creek in 1903.

**Sutton Creek** – James Sutton homesteaded on the creek about 1915.

**Tenmile Creek** – Ten miles from Warland

**Tweed Creek** – Named for a prospector who had a cabin and a mining claim there.

**Ural Creek and Mountain** – Named by the Fritchs and Husicks for the Ural Mountains in North Russia, because they are similar to them.

**Warex Mountain** – In 1932, Rangers Billings and Powell met on this mountain while scouting for prospective detection points. They decided to name the point Warex.



**Fortine District Place-Names**

**Ant Flat** - Named for the numerous ant hills that covered the meadow.

**Barnaby Lake & Mtn.** - Arthur Barnaby who had a cabin near the lake and was killed in 1904 while trapping in the area of the mountain.

**Blessed Creek** - By Thaddeus B. White, a homesteader on Sunday Creek.

**Clarence Creek** - For Clarence Rich, son of George Rich, who homesteaded between Eureka and Indian Creek.

**Cripple Creek** - By Henry Hackshaw, a trapper and carpenter, who wounded a deer that got away from him here.

**Dahlberg Siding** – For the man who homesteaded the present Flanagan Ranch. Mr. Dahlberg ran a mill on Meadow Creek at the present site of McKenzie Ranch. He also contracted construction of a portion of the original railroad line.

**De Rosier Creek** - For Peter De Rosier, homesteader and trapper of 1886.

**Edna Creek** - By early day surveyor, Frank L. Sizer, who surveyed several townships in the Tobacco Valley in the 1890's. While his survey crew was camped near this creek he received word he was a grandfather of a girl named Edna.

**Fortine & Fortine Crk.** - For Phillipe and/or Octave Fortin, homesteaders prior to 1893. Someone added the “e” to Fortin. The town was established when the railroad was built.

**Grave Creek** – Some say it was named for an Indian burying ground and others say it was named for a grave on the creek where an unidentified man drowned and was buried on the shore.

**Grey Creek** - For Oscar Grey, a trapper who lived at head of Fortine Creek and headquartered on the old Zeller homestead.

**Hamilton Creek** - For Ed Hamilton who homesteaded the Hamilton Meadows on Ivor Creek in 1907.

**Ivor Creek** - For Ivor Ingebretson, homesteader, 1905.

**Krag Mountain** - By G.L.O. surveyors. Setting of Ernest Thompson Seton’s story “Krag, the Kootenai Ram.”

**Krinklehorn Peak** - By G.L.O. surveyors for a feature in Seton’s famous story.

**Marston** – For the Marston brothers who ran the store on Graves Creek.

**Martin Lake** - For early day trapper, at one time a partner of Art Stahl.

**Mt. Marston** - For Cy Marston, early day homesteader.

**Mineral Mountain** - By an early day prospector who found mineral on this mountain.

**Patrick Ridge** – For an Indian who had a cabin on Dickey Lake at the present site of North Dickey Lake.

**Paul Creek & Mountain** - By Thaddeus R. White, who homesteaded on Sunday Creek.

**Marl Lake** - An artist named Anderson homesteaded on the shores of the lake. He wanted to use the marl that made up the

bottom of the lake for some commercial purpose.

**Mt. Petery** - For Mike Petery, rancher, trapper, prospector and merchant. He had a trapper’s cabin on Deep Creek below Mt. Petery. He homesteaded on the more recent Jystad place and ran a store on that site.

**Murphy Lake and Creek** – For a Mr. Murphy who wanted to homestead on the shores of the lake but for some purpose did not.

**Rich Creek** - For George Rich, early settler of the Tobacco Plains.

**Roberts Mountain** - For C.B. Roberts who had a sawmill on Meadow Creek in 1915. He logged most of the area north of Roberts Lookout with logging railroads.

**St. Clair Peak & Creek** - After Colin St. Clair, one of the earliest settlers in the Tobacco Plains area, in the early 1880’s. Placer mined on Libby Creek in 1870-71.

**Skillet Creek & Mountain** - For a skillet left nailed to a tree at a hunting camp. This camp was known as skillet camp and later the peak above it was called Skillet Mountain.

**Sons of Rest** – Frank Baney, Merlin Scott, Boots Combs, Larry Riley, Jim Broderick and Peral Zook, early residents of the area, built a cabin up in the mountains for hunting and fishing. They named the cabin, Sons of Rest. They built it under a snowslide.

**Stahl Creek & Peak**- After Arthur Stahl, a trapper and prospector in the early days. His brother, Ed Stahl, was an early day ranger.

**Stewart Creek** - For Jim Stewart, homesteader and lumberjack, 1902.

**Sunday Creek, Lakes & Mt.** - Bby original survey party in 1892. The two side streams were named Advent and Blessed Creek.

**Tetrault Lake** - For Joe Tetrault who built a cabin near the lake in 1889.

**Therriault Lakes, Creek and Pass** - For the Therriault brothers, early day French-Canadian homesteaders, who homesteaded the Therriault Meadows at Tobacco Siding. The brothers trapped and prospected the Therriault Pass and Wigwam country.

**Tobacco River & Plains** - Probably named for a native tobacco used by the Indians for smoking.

**Trego** - Said to have derived its name form a Bohemian timber faller cutting timber on the Great Northern right-of-way. When he cut a tree he couldn’t say “timber”- -so he yelled, “tree-go”.

**Three Rivers District Place-Names**

**Alvord Lake** – Frank E. Alvord, homesteader in 1905.

**Benefield Creek** – Elmer Benefield, early day trapper and homesteader – 1920.

**Benning Creek** – Frank Benning, Ranger at Sylvanite in 1908.

**Boyd Creek** – Early Day prospector on East Fork of Yaak-1911 to 1917. Name of Yaak Cemetery changed to Boyd Cemetery in his honor in 1954.

**Browning Creek** – Bert Browning, early homesteader – 1914.

**Callahan Creek** – Prospector and miner about 1896.

**Caribou Creek** – There used to be Caribou in the area.

**China Creek and Mountain** – May have been named for Chinese who did placer mining.

**Clark Mountain** – Alfred E. Clark, early homesteader in the Yaak. He came from England and had worked on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad through British Columbia.

**Cool Creek** – Shortly after the Civil War a group of prospectors, let by Mr. Markley, were returning from the Wild Horse Mining area in British Columbia by way of the Yaak River. Camping on a branch of the Yaak, they discovered a deposit of coal. The finder had been a miner in Pennsylvania and claimed it to be of a very good grade. After the Great Northern Railroad came through, they tried to relocate the deposit, but were unable to find it. On early maps it was listed as Coal Creek, and it probably became Cool Creek through an error in transcribing on a new map.

**Crum Creek** – Hiram G. (Hi) Crum, early homesteader on 17 Mile Creek, also a prospector and miner.

**Dooley Mountain** – Lafayette Dooley, early day prospector and homesteader.

**Dutch Creek** – Herbst Brothers, homesteaders in 1916.

**Fix Creek** – Edison Fix, homesteader on the S. Fork of Yaak, 1914. Worked for the Forest Service for many seasons.

**Lake Florence** – Sam Billings, Ranger at Sylvanite, named it for his fiancée, later his wife.

**Fowler Creek** – Gorge Fowler, settler on the S. Fork of Yaak, 1912.

**Gordon Mountain** – Named for a prospector.

**Grizzley Point** – Many grizzly bears in this area.

**Grubstake Mountain** – Joe Pierce, intermittent fires provided grubstake.

**Grush Gulch** – Gene Grush, homesteader on 17 Mile Creek. Worked for FS for about 40 years.

**Gus Creek** – Gus Witte, homesteader in 1912.

**Halverson Creek** – Andrew Halverson, homesteader and trapper, 1910.  
**Hartman Creek** – Charlie Hartman, homesteader on the S. Fork Yaak, 1913.

**Henry Mountain** – Henry Robinson

**Hensley Creek and Hill** – Judge Jim Hensley, homesteader in 1913.

**Hoskin Lakes** – Billy Hoskins, homesteader in 1914.

**Hubbard Creek** – Jim Hubbard, early day trapper.

**Hudson Creek** – Charlie Hudson, homesteader and trapper – 1917.

**Keeler Creek** – An early trapper – 1896.

**Keystone Mountain** – The principle discovery of mineral in 1895 was made here and it was assumed this would be the keystone of the local mining industry.

**Kookoo Creek** – Named by the Northern Pacific surveyors, lost while surveying.



**Lang Creek** – Fritz Lang, a miner at Sylvanite applied for a homestead for his son George Lang, for whom the creek was named. George Lang was lookout on Mt. Henry for 25 years.

**Lick Mountain** – Named by survey party for many deer licks in the area.

**Lime Creek** – Lime formation in this creek.

**Lucky Point** – Named by J.K. (Pink) Dwinille in 1929, Assistant Supervisor of the Kootenai National Forest. Was lucky in keeping a bad fire in control here.

**Marmot Mountain** – Inhabited by Whistling Marmots.

**Max Creek** –Jim McGary, homesteader, 1930.

**McConnell Mountain** – Albert C. McConnell, homesteader, 1905.

**Milner Lake** – William Milner, homesteader, 1905.

**Murphy Mountain** – In honor of a man named Murphy who died in a hunting accident in the early 1900’s at the lower part of this ridge.

**Northwest Peak** – Prominent and highest peak in the northwest corner of Montana.

**Mt. Obermayer** – Previously called Shagnasty Peak, changed to Opbermayer in honor of Anton Obermayer, lookout, who was killed in a fire there in 1931.

**Raymond Creek** – Bill Raymond, miner and settler, 1904.

**Red Top Mountain** – Red Top Grass grew on the mountain top and when it was a bloom the mountain looked red from a distance.

**Robinson Creek** – Henry Robinson, trapper, 1909.

**Rock Candy Mountain** – Named by Sam Billings in 1929, because the formation at the top reminded him of a chunk of rock candy.

**Roderick Butte** – Named after Al and Mattie Roderick, first settlers on the South Fork of the Yaak, in 1901.

**Ross Creek** – Ross Brothers, miners, 1930.

**Saddle Creek and Mountain** – Top of the mountain is in the shape of a saddle.

**Savage Lake** – William Savage, homesteader, 1896.

**Screw Creek and Peak** – Named in 1914, significance unknown.

**Seventeen Mile Creek** – Believed to be 17 miles long.

**Shepherd Mountain** – In the early 30’s this area was used as a cheep range.

**Silver Butte Creek and Mountain** – Mountain top at the head of this creek was found to have large quantities of silver bearing ore.

**Sipes Creek** – Roy Sipes, who lived at the mouth of Barnum Creek.

**Slim Creek** – Named for Romeo Garrison, homesteader, 1914.

**Smoot Creek** – Walt Smoot homesteader on the Yaak in 1911.

**Solo Jo Creek** – Named for a miner who worked his claim in the summer to stake his living in town in the winter.

**Stanley Peak** – Tom Stanley, settler on Bull Lake, 1905.

**Studebaker Draw** – Studebaker auto abandoned at the mouth of Laramie Creek, 1930.

**Tepee Creek and Mountain** – In the early days the Indians erected their tepees at what is now known as Tepee Springs.

**Upham Creek** – Jesse U. Upham, 1912.

**Upper Ford** – By early trappers to distinguish between two fords in the Yaak River.

**Vinal Creek and Lake** – For L.E. (Les) Vinal, homesteader on Pine Creek. Worked for the Forest Service and was Supervisor of the Kootenai National Forest, 1920-22.

**Waper Creek** – Leo Waper, settler, 1920.

**Yaak** – By the Indians. Originally spelled Yahk for their word meaning “arrow”.

**Zimmerman Hill** – Carl Zimmerman, homesteader, 1914.

**Libby District Place-Names**

**Allen Peak** – A trapper and prospector who had a cabin on the divide at the head of Simms Creek.

**Ant Hill** – Named by a smokechaser who tried to sleep on this mound.

**Backus Creek** – Johnny Backus lived here.

**Banfield Mountain** – Thomas Banfield, lookout at this point for several years.

**Baree Creek, Mountain and Lake** – Origin unknown; formerly called Standard but was changed because of a duplication of names.

**Barren Peak** – Due to the scarcity of timber on the mountain.

**Barron Creek** – A trapper who had a cabin on the upper part. 1894 – 95.

**Bear Creek** – By Jack Fisher in 1860.

**Betts Lake** – Frank Betts owned a ranch adjoining the lake.

**Blackwell Glacier** – George Blackwell, Sr., prospector in 1887.

**Bramlet Creek** – Prospector, first name unknown, who later worked at the Branigan mine in the early 90’s.

**Bristow Creek** – Wm. Bristow, settler and trapper lived in a cabin at the mouth of the creek in 1895.

**Cable Creek and Mountain** – By Effie Hackett, owner of the Silver Cable mine (1892) for no other reason than that he liked the name “Cable”.

**Calx Mountain** – C.E. Powell for a deposit found here resembling calx.

**Carney Creek** – Jack Carney, prospector prior to 1890.

**Cherry Creek** – Man by the name of Sherry, a member of Jack Fisher’s party of 1860 Name of creek changed to “Cherry”, probably due to an error by an early mapmaker.

**Coniff Creek** – Pete Coniff had a small ranch near the mouth of the stream.

**Crazyman Creek** – Oliver Woodcoe (Hoodoo Joe) prospected on the creek and named it.

**Detgen Creek** – Claus Detjen’s ranch.

**Doak Creek** – William Doak homesteaded on this creek in 1899. He was a purser on the Kootenai steamboats.

**Dudley Slough** – Early day homesteader Nathan Dudley, one of the first school trustees at the Trego School.

**Dunn Creek** – Homesteader, 1898.

**Elliot Creek** – John Elliot, homesteader.

**Fisher River** – Jack Fisher, prospector, 1860-61.

**Fivemile Creek** – Five miles from Warland.

**Fleetwood Patrol** – Tom Fleetwood, homesteader in 1912.

**Fritz Mountain** – Billy Fritz had several mining claims on this mountain.

**Getner Creek** – Louis Getner, homesteader.

**Gieger Lake** – John Gieger lived and did some prospecting around the lake.

**Wm. Grambauer Mountain** – Wm. Grambauer, prospector around 1900.

**Granite Creek** – Deposits of granite found there.

**Gus Brink Mountain** – August Brink homestead on Granite Creek in 1902 and prospected on this mountain.

**Hoodoo Creek and Mountain** – Oliver Woodcoe, a Dutchman called Hoodoo Joe. He was a miner and when he worked for a mine things seemed to always go wrong, hence the name “Hoodoo Joe”.

**Hornet Ridge** – By a packer whose pack strings were jack-knifed by “yellow jackets”. “Old Hornet Ridge”, two miles east had a treel lookout.

**Horse Mountain** – B.V. Howard named it because a pack horse lost by Ramsey was found nearby.

**Howard Lake** – A.V. and B.V. Howard, prospectors in 1885.

**Kenelty Mountain** – Kenelty family.

**Lafoe Lake** – An early trapper.

**Leigh Lake and Creek** – John Leigh, prospector, 1885.

**Lightening Peak** – During electrical storms in the vicinity, an unusual number of strikes came down on this hill.

**Lowry Gulch** – Fred Lowry homesteaded in this area 1900 to ’05.

**McDonald Mountain** – Charles McDonald, prospector, 1892-93.

**McGinnis Meadows** – Tom McGinnis, homesteaded in 1905.

**McKillop Creek** – Don McKillop lived in the cabin that is now called Sleepy Hollow. He homesteaded a stone and timber claim in 1906.

**Miller Lakes** – Dave Miller lived at the mouth of Bay Horse Creek in 1900.

**Owl Peak** – Mr. Mohler, an old timer, lived at the foot of this mountain. He made a large totem pole with a large owl on the top that he called Hootalinquie. He gave the name Owl Peak.



**Parmenter Creek** – Brag Parmenter, who trapped and homesteaded there in 1893.

**Ramsey Creek** – Ralph Ramsey, a miner in 1890.

**Reinhart Gulch** – Mr. Reinhart lived at the foot of the gulch.

**Riverview Mountain** – Overlooks the lower Fisher and part of the Kootenai River. Nambled by Bert Bealsey in 1935.

**Schreiber Lake** – Henry Schreiber and family were the first owners of the place that includes a large portion of the lake. (1896)

**Sheep Mountain and Creek** – Mountain sheep in the vicinity.

**Sheldon Mountain** – Charles Sheldon had a mining claim there. He was one of the founders of the townsite of Libby. He taught the Libby school from 1896 – 1898. Later he taught at Tobacco Plains.

**Silver Bow Creek** – This creek swings around in sort of a bow to the back side of Silver Butte Mountain.

**Smearl Creek** – One of Jack Fisher’s party in 1860.

**Smoky Butte** – Due to the haze which is usually present in the vicinity, this hill has a smoky appearance.

**Snell Creek** – A family by this name once lived on the creek.

**Stenerson Mountain** – Hale Stenerson, prospector and homesteader in 1906.

**Sterling Creek** – Sterling P. Baker, homesteader and trapper who homesteaded on Swamp Creek in 1903.

**Teeters Peak** – Formerly Miller Peak. Changed by J.K. Dwinelle about 1934, for Jake Teeters, prospector, who spent several summers prospecting for gold on and around this mountain.

**Trapper Creek** – From an old trapper’s cabin about two miles up the creek.

**Tub Gulch** – So named because a butter tub found in the spring by the earliest settlers.

**Turner Mountain** – Frank Turner trapped with Arney Davidson in Pipe Creek from 1890 to 1925.

**Valcour Creek** – Nels Valcour, Great Northern cool when the railroad was built in 1902.

**Williams Gulch** – Billy Williams, a prospector in Lincoln County from 1900 – 1938.

**Wyoma Creek** – Theodosia Sultas, (Dunn Creek Nell), christened Wild Woman Creek, map correction changed name to Wyoma Creek.

**Cabinet District Place-Names**

**Anderson Gulch** – For a Mr. Anderson of Thompson Falls.

**Chicago Peak and Milwaulkee Peek** – Named after the Chicago, Milwalkee and St. Paul Railroad.

**Dad Peak** – Dad Carmichal, lived on Bull River at mouth of Star Gulch.

**Elephant Peak** – From the shape of the mountain.

**Happy Gulch** – Happy Roe. Lived a the mouth of Roe Gulch.

**Hayes Ridge and Bald Eagle Peak** – Named for a Mr. Hayes of Libby. Peak was originally named Hayes also, but the names were turned down by officials, because Hayes had murdered some Chinese for gold. Bald Eagle Peak was a Superior National Forest name.

**Lost Buck Pass** – Now Carney Pass. A herder was killed by lightening, and a crew went up to gather “bucks” and lost sheep.

**Ojibway Peak** – Indians in Michigan where I.V. Anderson was raised.

**Upper Lake** – Highest lake on Makay Trail, above Wanless.

**Viny Ridge** – Named by a naming crew for a friend killed in WWI.

**Wabaningo Creek** – Indian chief, Ojibway Tribe.

**Wanless** – Named after a lake and lodge on the Schroeder trail on Lake Superior National Forest.



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