

**“CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF CONSERVATION AND  
PUBLIC SERVICE ON THE MEDICINE BOW”**

*“Early Rangers of the Medicine Bow”*

John H. Mullison and Louis E. Coughlin were two of the early rangers of the Medicine Bow.

Mullison was born in Pennsylvania in 1842. He was a Civil War Veteran and a post trader at the White River Agency at Meeker, CO. He was well liked by the Ute Indians and came to Wyoming in 1870 to work as a prospector, tie camp boss, ranch hand, and later as one of the rangers on the Medicine Bow National Forest.

Louis Coughlin was another early ranger of the Medicine Bows and was known as the “Dean of the Forest Rangers” in the Rocky Mountain Region, having worked for the Forest Service for over 45 years!

Coughlin was born on a cattle ranch in the Little Laramie Valley and entered the Forest Service in 1908. In 1909 he was the district ranger of the Battle Mountain RD of the Cheyenne NF. Later he served as the District Ranger at Fox Park RD and Centennial RD. He was later the office manager for the Medicine Bow NF in the Supervisor’s Office.

Coughlin was instrumental in establishing many improvements on the forest in his 45-year career:

- Somber Hill Fire Lookout
- Fox Park District
- Medicine Bow Peak Lookout
- Woods Creek Road
- Fox Park area trails
- Fire Prevention program
- Wildlife management
- Winter game surveys
- Game check stations
- Range management programs
- Reseeding and research projects at Pole Mountain

Coughlin was the unofficial historian of the Medicine Bow National Forest. In the 1950's he compiled historical data about the forest. He collected memos, letters, old reports, and corresponded with early personnel. He had hoped to complete a history of the Medicine Bow NF in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the forest, which would have been in 1952. Coughlin was never able to receive the financial or technical help needed for such a project, and it was never completed. He did, however, complete lengthy historical notes now available in the Medicine Bow Collection, but he never completed his extensive history. Today the Medicine Bow Collection serves to document early Medicine Bow NF history and is drawn upon heavily for historical and archeological reports and heritage overviews of the forest.

When he reached the age of 70, he was forced to retire from federal service. Coughlin died in 1962 in Laramie. Coughlin was one of one of our early forest rangers who loved our history and worked to preserve it.