

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REFERENCE SERIES

BERTHA HILL LOOKOUT

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When Mount Ranier National Park was created in 1898, large tracts of exchange lands became available to Pacific Northwest lumber companies. North Idaho white pine forests offered a special attraction at that time, and rival company agents raced to locate and acquire a large tract of valuable Clearwater timber land in 1900. Those who succeeded faced a new problem of how to protect their new valuable resources from fire. A cooperative effort brought representatives of lumber company and other private land owners to join state land administrators in establishing a new agency--Clearwater Timber Protective Association--to provide that service. An innovative forest fire detection system followed in 1905 with an experimental fire lookout at Bertha Hill, north of Headquarters. With a clear view of thousands of acres of white pine timber, that location proved to be very useful. Many other lookouts followed in that area and in other forests as well. Bertha Hill with its commanding view can be reached by a forest road that leads through an area of historic interest.

(This information has not been edited.)

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