

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Salmon Mountain Lookout

Other names/site number: 10-IH-1524

Name of related multiple property listing:

L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1), 1932-1967

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: _____

City or town: Darby, MT State: Idaho County: Idaho

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national x statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A ___ B X C ___ D

Regional Archaeologist	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
USDA Forest Service Northern Region (Region 1) State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
State Historic Preservation Officer Idaho State Historic Preservation Office	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: "Readicut" L-4 Lookout House

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE / Granite

Walls: WOOD / Weatherboard; GLASS

Roof: WOOD / Shingle

Other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Salmon Mountain Lookout is an excellent example of the 1936-pattern L-4 Lookout House. It is located in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness area, on the Idaho side of the West Fork District of the Bitterroot National Forest. The lookout is accessible on foot or horseback via Trail No. 709, which extends roughly 1.4 miles from the Forest Road 468.¹

The lookout itself is located on the highest point on Salmon Mountain, a triangular-shaped peak that overlooks the headwaters and tributary streams of the Selway River to the east and north and the Salmon River drainage basin to the south and west. Located at an elevation of 8,943 feet, the lookout structure sits above the timber line, atop a fractured bedrock outcrop. Open stands of lodgepole pine flank the slopes below the mountain top.

Besides the lookout, other historic-era improvements include a flagpole and a small box built to contain a rain gauge, both of which are counted as contributing resources. The outhouse associated with this site may date to the historical period, but has been modified by the application of modern materials to its exterior walls. Similarly, a small shed located beneath the lookout catwalk appears to represent a post-historic period addition to the site. Both the outhouse and the shed are counted as noncontributing resources.

¹ Also known as the Magruder Road, this vehicular roadway extends eastward to Elk City, Idaho. The road corridor was specifically excluded from wilderness designation.

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Narrative Description

Salmon Mountain Lookout (contributing building)

The lookout is a 1936-pattern L-4 lookout. The 14 ft. by 14 ft. wood frame house or cab has a pyramidal roof and sits atop a mortared stone foundation. A short set of wood stairs at the east end of the north wall leads to the catwalk. The catwalk safety railing consists of two horizontal rails with diagonal bracing along the south, west, and north sides. Unique to Salmon Mountain Lookout are a series of small, home-made wind gauges that are affixed to the top of the catwalk railing at its southwest, northwest, and northeast corners. They consist of a triangular piece of wood shingle affixed with a homemade spring to a nail driven into the top rail of the catwalk.

Simple drop wood siding covers the lower portion of the cab's exterior walls, and the roof is covered with sawn cedar shingles with metal ridge finishes; lightening protection remains in place. A stainless steel stove pipe extends above the south slope of the roof. The entry into the lookout cab is located at the north end of the east wall. The entry contains its original wood door with four lights over one panel, as well as a wood-frame screen door. Four, four-light windows are located in the wall south of the entry. The remaining three walls each contain five, four-light, wood windows. The central sash in each wall opens casement style for ventilation, while the remaining windows are fixed. A radio antenna is affixed to the catwalk railing at its northwest corner.

In the one-room interior, the fir floor is intact and in fair condition. The space is fitted with a stand for an Osborne fire-finder, a small wood-burning stove, a propane stove, a platform bed with drawers beneath for storage, and several tables, storage benches, and a wood box.

Outhouse (noncontributing building)

The non-historic outhouse is located about 260 feet north-northeast from the lookout. It is a wood frame building with a front-gable roof that measures about 3.75 ft. by 4 ft. It sits atop a timber framework that is placed over the privy hole. The building is also guyed to the ground on two sides. The exterior walls are covered with plywood and the roof is covered with sawn cedar shingles with a metal ridge finish. The east wall contains an entry with a plywood door.

Storage shed (noncontributing structure)

A small wood-frame shed is located beneath the catwalk at the north edge of the lookout's foundation. The front wall of this structure extends slightly beyond the edge of the catwalk. The walls and roof are covered with plywood and the front edge of the roof is held down with rocks. A plywood door is located in the east half of the north wall.

Flagpole (contributing structure)

A peeled log flagpole is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the lookout. It is fitted with metal climbing spikes. Another home-made wind gauge is fixed to the top of the flagpole.

Rain gauge container (contributing object)

A small wood-frame container-apparently to accommodate a rain gauge, is located about 75 feet east of the lookout. It is about 20 in. square and firmly emplaced within the talus.

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Integrity

Salmon Mountain Lookout retains all seven aspects of historical integrity. The lookout is in its original location, in a remote area only accessible by trail. Its remoteness in turn contributes to its exceptional integrity of setting, feeling and association. The lookout building retains integrity of materials, workmanship and design, and stands as an exceptional example of the once-common 1936-pattern L-4 Lookouts once included in the Bitterroot National Forest's fire detection system.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Politics / Government

Conservation

Engineering

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1949- 1967

Significant Dates

1949 (year built)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Clyde Fickes (designer)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Salmon Mountain Lookout is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C, at the local and state level of significance. Under Criterion A, it is significantly associated with the US Forest Service's early fire detection program, which relied on a series of fixed lookout points from which to locate forest fires. Under Criterion C, Salmon Mountain Lookout is an excellent example of a 1936-pattern L-4 Lookout House.

Salmon Mountain Lookout meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the *L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1), 1932-1967 Multiple Property Document* under the contexts *The Role of the L-4 Lookout House in the Development of the US Forest Service Region 1's Fire Detection System* and *Fire Lookout Development on the Bitterroot National Forest*, and the *L-4 Lookout* property type. The period of significance identified for L-4 lookouts in the Bitterroot National Forest begins in 1937 and ends in 1967, within the defined period of significance in the MPD cover form. Although Salmon Mountain Lookout has been used as a fire detection point since at least 1920, the current L-4 lookout was built in 1949. It served as a primary lookout point for the West Fork District through 1967, the end of the period of significance for the Bitterroot National Forests L-4 Lookouts.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Bitterroot National Forest established Salmon Mountain Lookout as a lookout point sometime prior to 1920. In September of that year, Forest Examiner Elers Koch conducted a review of the Salmon Mountain and Moose Creek ranger districts. Koch described Salmon Mountain as “an excellent lookout and an ideal place for location of an observatory.”² At the time of his visit, improvements consisted of a map board and map mounted on a “substantial stone terrace,” which had required “the expenditure of ... a lot of work” (Figure 1). He noted that the lookout camp, occupied by a smoke chaser and a lookout man, was located adjacent to the nearest water—a spring about a quarter of a mile south of the lookout point.



Figure 1. 1922 photo of the Salmon Mountain lookout improvements.

Two years after Koch’s field review, Howard Flint conducted another inspection of the Salmon Mountain District. Like Koch, he noted that the mountain top was an excellent lookout point stating: “Salmon Mountain is probably one of the most commanding lookout points in District One and plans for its development should be carried out.” He noted that logs had already been cut for the lookout building and that “... special effort should be made to secure first class construction when the building is erected.”³

The forest finally erected a log cupola atop Salmon Mountain in 1928 (Figure 2). Judging from the photographs of the building, it was well built with the ground floor used for storage and the

² Forest Examiner Elers Koch “Supervision-Inspection East Selway,” September 18, 1920. Folder Bitterroot NF 1933-1938 2 of 3, Box 2 Bitterroot-Cabined 1931-1938, Record Group 95, USFS Regional Office, Missoula MT., Inspection Reports 1906-1944 (hereinafter RG 95 Inspection Reports 1906-1944), National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle (hereinafter NARA Seattle).

³ Howard Flint, 1922 report of examination of the Salmon Mountain District. Folder Bitterroot NF 1933-1938 2 of 3, Box 2 Bitterroot-Cabined 1931-1938, RG 95 Inspection Reports 1906-1944, NARA Seattle.

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cupola for observation purposes. The construction of the original Salmon Mountain Lookout occurred just before Clyde Fickes designed the original gable-roofed style of L-4, and three years before the region approved the pyramidal roof version. While the L-4 lookout was designed specifically to replace cupola style lookout buildings, limited funding for Forest Service buildings likely precluded the replacement of a relatively new, serviceable lookout for the sake of increased efficiency—especially when so many of the forest’s lookout points had only rudimentary improvements.

The log cupola lookout stood atop Salmon Mountain for the next two decades. In 1949 however, just before the regional office instituted the lookout replacement program, the original Salmon Mountain lookout was removed and replaced with a 1936-pattern L-4 lookout. It appears that the new lookout was constructed on the same “substantial stone terrace” described by Koch in 1920. Two men built the new lookout: carpenter Champ Hannon and rock mason Stan Greenup. The total cost of construction came to \$3,981.60.⁴



Figure 2. 1928 log cupola lookout on Salmon Mountain.

In 1952, just three years after building the new Salmon Mountain Lookout, the Bitterroot National Forest transitioned to a fully integrated air-ground fire detection program, which facilitated the reduction in the number of fixed detection points. While other lookout points

⁴ “Individual Structure Information Form” for Salmon Mountain Lookout. Form completed in anticipation of passage of the Central Idaho Wilderness Act. Appended to Cultural Site Record for Salmon Mountain Lookout (10-IH-1524) completed in 1984 by Tim Light. Bitterroot National Forest Heritage Files, Supervisor’s Office, Hamilton, Montana; “Primary Lookout Towers and Houses Constructed 1940 to 1956, Bitterroot National Forest,” 2/3/57. Folder F-Improvements-General, Box 20, Series: BIT05 Forest Supervisors Alpha Files ca 1900-1963 (hereinafter BIT05), RG 95 Records of the Forest Service Bitterroot National Forest NARA Seattle.

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dropped from the forest's detection program, Salmon Mountain continued to be valued for its ability to see the remote areas of the upper Selway and Salmon drainages.

During the 1950s lookout replacement program, the Bitterroot National Forest conducted field reviews of all of its primary lookouts: Salmon Mountain Lookout was visited on September 26, 1955. Other lookouts were recommended for salvage, repair, or replacement. However, the structural assessment form for Salmon Mountain Lookout, built just five years earlier, contained no specific recommendations, indicating that it was in good condition and likely to require no work for at least fifteen years.⁵

Over the next three decades, the number of manned lookouts on the Bitterroot National Forest continued to decline, especially after the 1982 adoption of the new Automatic Lightning Detection System (ALDS). However, Salmon Mountain continued to serve as a primary lookout, manned during the regular fire season. In 1967, it was one of sixteen manned lookouts.⁶ By 1992, the forest reduced this number to only ten across the entire forest. Half of these covered the huge West Fork District, the boundary of which had been expanded to include the old Salmon Mountain District and Moose Creek District. Besides Salmon Mountain, the five lookouts on the West Fork included: Spot Mountain, Bare Cone, Hell's Half Acre, and Lookout Mountain.⁷

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Bitterroot National Forest considered abandoning Salmon Point Lookout. Instead, a group of people with previous experience as forest service lookouts formed the Salmon Mountain Lookout Volunteer Association. Working in cooperation with the forest, which provides logistical support for the volunteers, members of the association have manned the lookout for the past twenty-five years.

⁵"Inspection outline for Timber Towers" Salmon Mountain Lookout. Folder: E- Improvements – Bitterroot 1957 Lookout Replacement, Box 6, RG 95 Records of the Forest Service Bitterroot National Forest, Forest Supervisor's Files Alpha Files E –Improvements (Hereinafter Bitterroot Forest Supervisor's Alpha Files), NARA Seattle.

⁶ "List of Lookouts in R 1 1967." Folder 5100 Lookouts Historical 2 of 2, Box 45, 95 Records of the Forest Service Region 1, Missoula, Montana Historical Collection 1903-1990 (hereinafter RG 95 Historical Collection), NARA Seattle.

⁷ "Seventy-Two Lookouts to be Operated This Summer Down from 800 Used in 1938." Folder Historical: Lookouts, Box 46, RG 95 Historical Collection, NARA Seattle. Note that the Nez Perce National Forest also listed Salmon Mountain among its eleven manned lookout points.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Kresek, Ray
1984 *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*. Fairfield Washington: Ye Galleon Press.

RG 95 Records of the US Forest Service, National Archives and Records Administration,
Seattle, Washington.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: National Archives & Records Administration, Seattle, WA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 10-IH-1524

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property about 1.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 45.616928 Longitude: -114.836773

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 11 Easting: 668655 Northing: 5053763

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of this property is an arbitrary line drawn to encompass the top of the rocky knob containing the lookout and associated resources.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encloses the primary improvement at this location, namely the lookout house and tower and associated features.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Janene Caywood

organization: _CRCS

street & number: 1002 South 6th St. West

city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59801

e-mail: crcs@montana.com

telephone: 406 728-9190

date: November 2, 2017

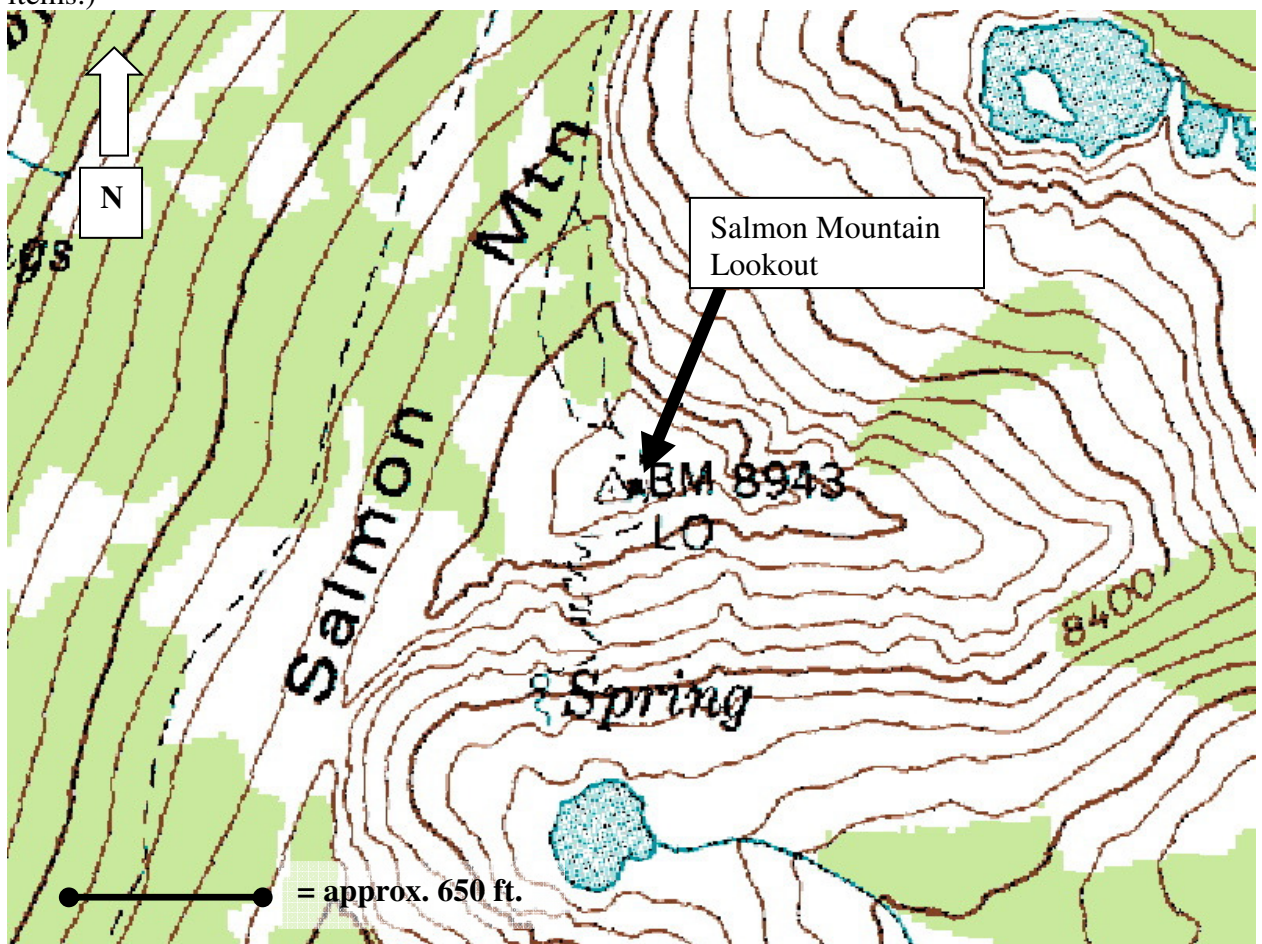
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)



Portion of USGS Salmon Mountain 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle showing location of Salmon Mountain Lookout.

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2014 Google Earth image of the Salmon Mountain Lookout site.

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600 x 1200 pixels (minimum), 3000 x 2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

All Photographs

Name of Property: Salmon Mountain Lookout

City or Vicinity: Darby vicinity

County: Idaho State: Idaho

Photographer: Janene Caywood

Date Photographed: July 17, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of ____.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0001. Lookout and storage shed, looking southwest to the east (front) and north walls of the lookout.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0002. Lookout and storage shed, looking south to the north and west walls of the lookout.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0003. Lookout, looking east-northeast to the south wall of the lookout.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0004. Detail of the mortared stone foundation of lookout.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0005. Interior detail of lookout: Stand for Osborne fire-finder.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0006. Interior detail of lookout: wood heating stove, table, and propane cook stove.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0007. Interior detail of lookout: platform bed with storage drawers.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0008. Looking northwest to the south and east (front) walls of the outhouse.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0009. Looking southeast to the north and west (rear) walls of the outhouse.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0010. Looking east-northeast to the flagpole adjacent to the northwest corner of the lookout.

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ID_IdahoCounty_Salmon Mountain Lookout_0011. Looking east to the small wooden box containing a rain gauge.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.