

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 5

NORTHWEST MONTANA CHAPTER – FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION

2015 IN REVIEW



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

It has been an exciting and successful year for our Northwest Montana Chapter of the Lookout Association. Thanks to the enthusiasm and support of our volunteers, members, partners and donors, we completed 6 projects, with 1000 volunteer hours valued at \$22,513. Indispensable partners Backcountry Horsemen and Salmon Forks Outfitter supported our efforts with time valued at \$15,281, for a total combined value of \$37,794 work contributed to partner Agencies this summer.

The scope of our work continues to grow, as projects were completed in Glacier Park, and the Flathead and Kootenai National Forests this year. We also saw our membership and donor ranks increase. As the weather cools, we are turning our efforts to reporting on the summer's work and building a strategic plan for the next 5 years.

Thank you for your past support! I hope you will renew your membership for 2016, and consider a year-end contribution to support future lookout restoration.

Chuck Manning
Board Chair

New Board Members

This year we enlarged our Board of Directors to help take on the increasingly complex task of steering the NWMT-FFLA and keeping our projects, fundraising, researching and many support activities on task. We welcomed Lori Roberts, Elisheba Bagrow, Beth Hodder, and Cathy Calloway to the Board. Their added energy and talents are a great addition!



Elisheba



Lori



Beth



Cathy

Save the Dates!

Benefit Brew Night

Feb 24, 2016

Tamarack Brewing
Company
Lakeside, MT

Brews for Benefits

March 31, 2016

Cabinet Mountain
Brewing Company
Libby, MT

Pints for Preservation

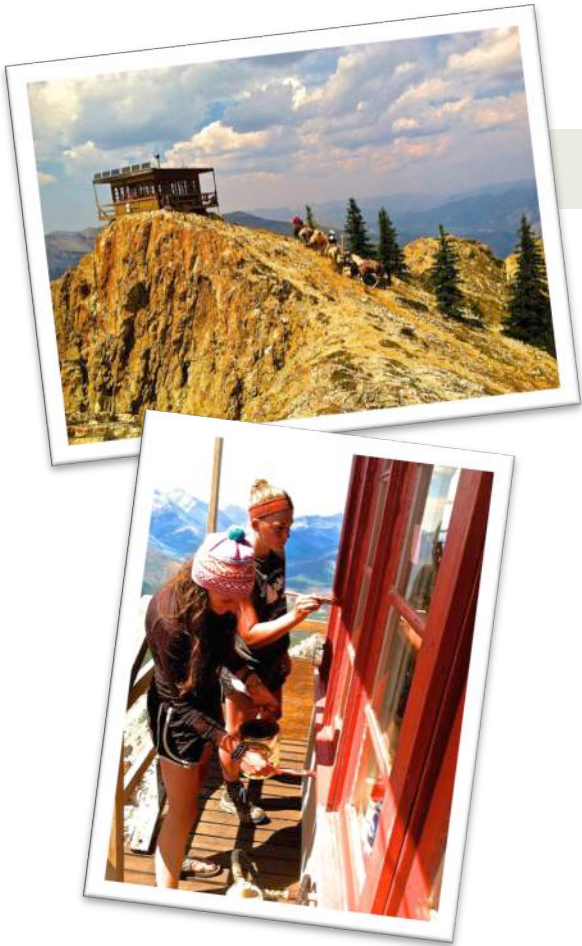
May 17, 2016

Kalispell Brewing
Company
Kalispell, MT

PROJECT UPDATES

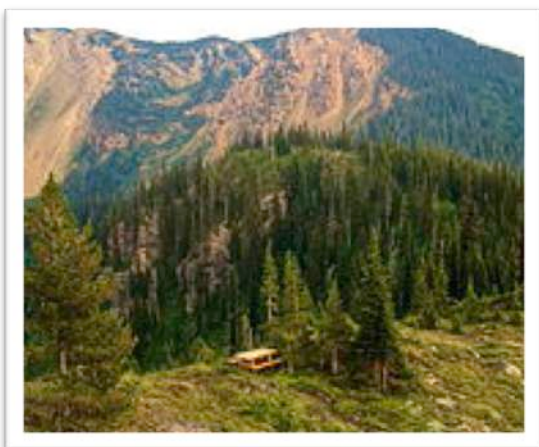
Jumbo Lookout

In early August, NWMT/FFLA Volunteers Zoe Zander, Nancy Cronin, and Mark Manning spent three days in the Bob Marshall Wilderness on Jumbo Lookout above the confluence of Youngs Creek, Danaher Creek and the South Fork of the Flathead River. Pack support was provided through Northwest Montana Backcountry Horsemen, including Andy Brelund, Chuck Allen, Robert Eversole, Tina Mae Weber & Tim Weber. Zoe, Nancy and Mark joined up with Spotted Bear Ranger District's Backcountry Facilities Manager, Andy Nelson to work on a number of maintenance and improvement projects including digging a new privy hole, constructing a new hitching rail, cutting firewood, rebuilding a stone wall, painting trim and shutters, and patching the roof. Thank you to all the volunteers who participated in this remote project and to Amy Pearson, who is currently staffing Jumbo Lookout, for her hospitality.



Baptiste LO Picnic Table

While it might seem like a simple task, it took plenty of careful planning and logistical support by our great partners Rick Mathies, Pam Stocks, & Dawn Brennan from the Backcountry Horsemen to get an unassembled picnic table 6 miles up the trail to the ridgetop perch of Baptiste Lookout at the edge of Bob Marshall Wilderness. Stained by Debo Powers, reassembled by NWMT-FFLA volunteers Rick & Marli Davis.



Mud Lake LO



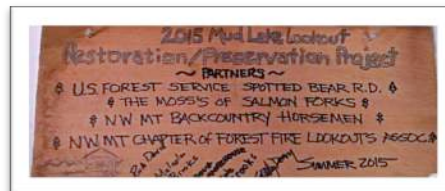
This restoration project was 23 miles into the heart of the Bob Marshall Wilderness on Mud Lake Lookout, built in 1932. It required a rock solid partnership between the USFS, Back Country Horseman, Salmon Forks Outfitters, and volunteers from the NWMT/FFLA.

We repaired the cabin, hung new shutters, scraped and painted the structure, installed a wood stove and generally dialed in the interior to make Mud Lake Lookout a more viable tool for forest fire management in the Bob. Back Country Horsemen volunteers Chip Beck and John Peine packed supplies

and materials into the Salmon Forks cabin.

Janis and Mark Moss along with Gordon Gibbs of Salmon Forks Outfitters "bumped up" the food and materials from the South Fork of the Flathead to the worksite. Congratulations to volunteers Malcom & Cole Brooks, Doug Morehouse, Zan Deery, and

Rick Davis for a job safely and well done!



A Volunteer's View



"Why Montana? Why volunteer? Why Northwest Montana Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association?

Why the Bob? Why take on such an arduous task of hiking nearly 25 miles in and out, in the Bob Marshall Wilderness mid-summer, one of our hottest, to do restoration of a lookout?....

I felt a need to take on something unique and challenging to mark my re-entry back into the challenges, the beauty, the ups and downs of life after dealing with loss...

Everyone I met on the trail, and anyone associated with this project was a true GEM to interact with. From the US Forest Service staff, to forestry volunteers along the way, to our packers from NW Montana Backcountry Horsemen, to the Moss guest camp at the base of the lookout, to those we encountered on the way out...All memories tagged and cherished for future days of celebration and purpose.

Rick said, as we stood next to the lookout together one day, "We have given this lookout another 30 years..." And I counted, and realized, "Geez, I might not even be alive in 30 years..." And I felt like I had given back...in such a big way.."

Zan Deery, Facebook Aug 2015

Sex Peak LO

In August, NWMT/FFLA volunteers, Cathy Calloway, Daniel Revell, Doug Berglund, Doug Lang, and Chuck Manning participated in our first renovation partnership on the Kootenai National Forest. This project was under the guidance of Jason Cooper and Les Razor from the Cabinet Ranger District. The total project included repairing two walls, cleaning the cab ceiling, removing old loose glazing, re-glazing, priming and painting 76 window panes, and removing the door and windows that open for ventilation to be repaired, re-glazed, painted and rehung.



Huckleberry LO

NWNT-FFLA volunteers Kathy Butterfield, Greg Evans, and Scott Murphy teamed up with Nick Leritz, Glacier National Park Maintenance, and spent several days this summer at Huckleberry Lookout. Accomplishments included painting the exterior of the lookout structure while repairs consisted of glazing and painting the many windows that surround cab in addition to securing the guy wires that hold the structure to the mountain top.



Lookout Assessments

Condition assessments were completed on Mount Brown, and Apgar Lookouts in Glacier National Park, and Meadow Peak on the Kootenai National Forest. These assessments will be used to determine maintenance schedules in the future.

Thank you to Mark Hufstetler, Molly Tingley, Terry Richmond, Rick Davis, Chuck Manning, Scott Murphy and Sue Paulson for participating in these trips.



Some Unexpected Delays

A planned project at Little Napa Lookout in the Swan State Forest was delayed until next summer to allow for more detailed engineering on some aspects of the needed work. This has been completed, and the project is set to proceed in 2016.

Volunteers know that some projects were delayed due to weather, or to the vagaries of last summer's busy fire season. We will be consulting with our partners this winter to determine how to best accommodate this in future years.



New Partnerships

In March, Glacier National Park and the Northwest Montana Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association signed a cooperative agreement to work together to promote restoration and preservation of the Park's lookouts. These structures are exposed to extreme weather conditions, and the Park's grizzly bears often try to gain access.

In May, we completed a Challenge Cost Share Agreement to work with the Kootenai National Forest for the common goal of maintaining and preserving fire lookouts for the next five years. We anticipate several upcoming projects partnering with Ranger Districts on the Kootenai in the next few years.

We are happy to also announce the completion of a Volunteer Service Agreement with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. We look forward to working with the fire professionals in this branch of State government on lookout projects.



Fundraising Success

Varied fundraising efforts over the last year brought in more than \$4500. A real highlight was the reminiscences by Jeanne Kellar Beaty, author of the 1953 book *Lookout Wife* at the Belton Chalet. Jeanne traveled from Canada to recount some of her adventures atop a lookout on the Salmon National Forest in 1949 and 1950.

Brewery Benefits were a fun way to raise a glass, meet new friends and talk about lookout visits past and future. Thanks to Kalispell Brewery and Cabinet Mountain Brewing Company for hosting these events. NWMT-FFLA also participated in Give Local Flathead, an on-line giving event in May, raising \$770 in 24 hours.



NWMT-FFLA Receives Our First Grant

On Thursday, September 3, 2015, Toyota Motor Sales, USA and the National Environmental Education Foundation, also known as NEEF, announced a \$4,950 grant award to the NWMT-FFLA.

"NEEF and Toyota Motor Sales, USA award grants across the country to local groups who are getting their communities involved with our public lands, which helps ensure the wellbeing of the earth and its people," said Carol Watson, Senior Vice President for Programs for NEEF. "When each of us plays a role in supporting our environment, all of our actions add up to big impact

"The funding of our Strong Foundations grant will be used to improve our operations by upgrading technology, expanding our outreach and engaging in strategic planning so we are better able to protect our lands for future generations," said Cathy Calloway, a spokesperson for NWMT-FFLA.

As of December, we have purchased a laptop, QuickBooks and membership/donation management software to streamline the administration side of our operations, and are in the process of developing a 5-year strategic plan to guide our future efforts to maximize our impact. We are so grateful to NEEF for this grant to help us take our organization to the next level!



<http://www.nwmt-ffla.org>

Email us at: nwmtc.ffa@gmail.com



Coming Attractions

Here is some of what we are working on:

- Strategic Plan for the next 5 years
- Project list for 2016
- Firming up details for upcoming events
- Building a list of on-going volunteer opportunities for the off-season

Stay Tuned!

We hope you want to be involved in 2016! We are looking for volunteers to help with many and varied activities! Please take the time to fill out the enclosed membership and interest form today or go online at <http://www.nwmt-ffla.org>

Thanks!

Snowman Goes Viral



By September 6, we were SO ready for a change to our fire season. We never imagined the change would be so quick and dramatic!

NWMT/FFLA board members and Forest Service volunteers Nancy & Chuck Manning, who were staffing Baptiste LO on the Flathead NF, let us share their celebration on Facebook, and it was a big hit. It was the most visited post for us yet, with 111,563 views, 1073 shares, and 510 comments within a week or so. Check out the other fun stuff we have posted.

Happy Holidays!

NWMT-FFLA

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