

Western Meeting Summary

September 21-23, 2012 - Boyds, WA

NORTHEAST WASHINGTON; THE LAND OF RESTORED, RELOCATED AND REMOVED LOOKOUTS

The 2012 FFLA Western Regional Conference, hosted by Rod and Vicki Fosback, drew over 50 people to Northeast Washington, the land of restored, relocated, and removed lookouts.

A handful of early arrivals took the opportunity to hike the three-mile trail to the historic Columbia Mountain lookout cabin on the Kettle Crest early in the day on Thursday, September 20th. As others arrived later in the day, people met for a visit to the relocated First Thought Lookout at the Orient City Park and to get re-acquainted with old friends, or in some cases, to get acquainted with new ones! Most of the group adjourned to Boyds Country Inn for dinner, after which those staying in Kettle Falls had to leave early to beat an untimely overnight bridge closure, while others camping nearby continued their socializing.

Several more showed up Friday morning as the conference got underway at the historic KP Cabin. As auction items were spread out and registrations completed, everyone enjoyed coffee and snacks until things got underway, beginning with the showing of the award-winning film, "The Lookout", featuring FFLA member Leif Haugen. The customary round of introductions included "most memorable lookout experiences" and was followed by Forrest Clark providing an update on the Green Mountain Lookout situation and efforts to save the lookout after the court decision ordering its removal. He also provided a sample letter that could be sent to US Senators and Representatives requesting support for the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act that has been introduced into the House. After a lunch break, the afternoon tour led to Franson Peak and its unused, but intact, 10-foot tower. The group then moved on to Cornell Butte, where the only CL-100 steel lookout tower built in Washington still stands, although heavily vandalized. On the way back to the KP Cabin, several made a quick stop at the Growden CCC Camp site and its interpretive displays. After the potluck barbecue, socializing continued while the twelve FFLA directors and officers present finished out the day with a short board meeting.

Saturday's session began with an address by Chairman Keith Argow, followed by a discussion led by Ray Kresek on the future of the Fire Lookout Museum. After additional discussion and more bidding at the silent auction tables, everyone headed to Colville for a tour of the

relocated Graves Mountain Lookout at the Keller Heritage Center and then moved down the street to the NE Washington Fairgrounds, home of the relocated Stranger Mountain Lookout. Following lunch at the fairgrounds, Timber Mountain Lookout was the afternoon destination, where the group was met by District FMO Candi Eighme and discussions took place on options for the partially-restored 41-foot R-6 flat top. Back at the KP Cabin, the group enjoyed the catered roast beef dinner before the evening activities. Chairman Keith Agow was presented with a plaque recognizing all his efforts for lookouts and the FFLA before powerpoint presentations were given on Washinton Lookouts by Tammy McLeod, Lincoln NF (New Mexico) Lookouts by Mark Gutzman, and Remote Idaho Lookout Trips by Luke Channer. All the while, spirited silent auction bidding continued with an end result of over \$750 being taken in.

The Sunday lookout tour left from a gathering point in Colville and headed to the Pend Oreille Valley and Salmo Mountain Lookout, where Candi had brought along District Ranger Gayne Sears and retired AFMO (and local lookout supporter) Chris DiRienz. Serious discussions took place on what would be needed to ready the partially-restored 10-foot R-6 flat top for the rental program. The afternoon stop was Sullivan Mountain, where Candi, Gayne, and Chris again met the group. The abandoned 20-foot tower appears to be in good condition, but its second flight of stairs was removed over 30 years ago, limiting access to the R-6 flat cab without other means. Discussions again ensued on what it might take to restore and save the lookout, since it is such an area landmark. As the group dwindled in numbers, the final lookout stop on the return to Colville was Rod and Vicki's relocated Monumental Lookout, where every last bit of daylight (and then some!) was used. After finding the one Colville restaurant still open for dinner at 8:30 on a Sunday night, the group finished off the day and another very enjoyable Western Conference was in the books. Of note, was that New Mexico Director Mark Gutzman was present; he will be hosting the 2013 Westrn Conference next September.

As people scattered after the conference, a small contingent ventured to the Spokane Indian Reservation on Monday and visited the Spokane Mountain, where local officials are expressing interest in restoring the D-6 cupola that has seen better days.

Conference Photos



After dark in Monumental



Columbia Mountain LO



Enjoying the day at Salmo



First shot in the park



For his many years of service



Franson Peak LO



Inside Graves Mountain LO



Lunch at Stranger



Group at Timber Mountain LO



Keith getting the job done on Salmo



Stopped cold on Sullivan



View from Cornell Butte LO