



Forest Fire Lookout Association Northern Idaho/Montana Chapter

2590 W Versailles Dr, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

2013

NORTHERN IDAHO/MONTANA CHAPTER ANNUAL REPORT

MEMBERSHIP:

138 Current Paid Members (42 Plus)

Includes: 4 Membership Renewal Past Due

Net gain of members: 9 (16 New, 7 Dropped, 1 Transfer)

58 Complimentary Memberships (agency personnel, etc.) varies by issue

Chapter finances decreased, with an ending balance of \$2675.95. This is a decrease of about \$625 from the start of the year; \$500 of that went to the restoration of Granite Butte Lookout.

LEADERSHIP:

Leif Haugen continues to be active as deputy director for the Flathead-Glacier area and Samsara Chapman for Central Montana.

SUB-CHAPTER:

Working closely with Leif Haugen, the Northwest Montana Chapter (NWMT-FFLA) was formed. The group currently provides volunteer staffing and maintenance for Baptiste and Firefighter lookouts on the Flathead NF. NWMT-FFLA has officers, a website, and logos and is working on bylaws and an MOU with the FNF.

ACTIVITIES:

The chapter has partnered on several lookout projects:

Work continued on the Spyglass Lookout Project (Coeur d'Alene NF, ID). Lutherhaven Ministries again provided volunteer support, but FFLA volunteers participated throughout the summer.

Phase Two of the Granite Butte Lookout Restoration (Helena NF, MT) led by the Montana Wilderness Association neared completion. The season finale was the installation of furniture, custom-made by none other than Leif Haugen, and funded primarily by FFLA grants. Granite Butte should be ready for rental in 2015.

A Passport-in-Time restoration project was held at Big Hole Peak Lookout (Lolo NF, MT). A short video of the project (available for on-line viewing) was made by FFLA member Libby Langston.

Leif Haugen staffed and continued with restoration work on Thoma Lookout (Flathead NF, MT), and also worked on restoration of the Holland Ridge and Coal Ridge cabins.

Deputy Director Sam Chapman is working on events for the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, including her own Patrol Lookout turning 50 years old in 2014.

Restoration, maintenance and staffing continued on many fronts, with considerable involvement by FFLA members, whether in volunteer roles, or as agency employees.

Three lookouts have (or are in the process of) been lost:

McConnell Lookout's three structures (log cabin, "observatory", outhouse), Clearwater NF, were lost to wildfire; several others were saved, some in large part because of successful wrapping jobs.

Huckleberry Lookout, St. Joe NF, was sold through a GSA auction; it is to be removed next early summer. The 1970s 20-foot R-6 was a USFS lookout on State land, recently subject to extensive vandalism

The 10-foot L-4 at Warland Peak, Kootenai NF, was found to have collapsed, presumably last winter.

Twenty years ago, many wondered what was keeping it standing.

Unused lookouts continue to be seen as easy targets by some National Forests looking to reduce their numbers of facilities.

The chapter will host the 2014 Western Regional Conference in Darby, MT June 27-29.

Gary Weber
FFLA-North Idaho/Montana Chapter Director