NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

REGION: Rocky Mountain PARK/AREA NAME: Glacier National Park PARK NUMBER: 1430

STRUCTURE NAME: Mount Brown Fire Lookout STRUCTURE NUMBER: 576

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE: QUADRANGLE NAME: Mt. Cannon

Zone Easting Northing QUADRANGLE SCALE: 7.5-minute
UTM A: 12 291280 5389850

CLASSIFICATION:

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:	CATEGORY:	NUMBER OF RESOURCES: CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
___ Private	_x_ Building(s)	1	___	Buildings
___ Public-Local	___ District	___	___	Sites
___ Public-State	___ Site	___	___	Structures
_x_ Public-Federal	___ Structure	___	___	Objects
___ Mixed/private & public	___ Object	1	___	TOTAL

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:
The Mount Brown fire lookout is a two-story, frame structure with clapboard siding, measuring 196 square feet on each of its two floors. Cedar shingles (originally) painted shiplap interior. The second floor is surrounded with a frame catwalk. All materials were packed 7 miles in. The lookout is not currently being used, is in fair condition, and is an unaltered original site. HABS recorded this lookout as a standard, wood frame, 14x14-ft. house set on a 10-ft. tower with catwalk. The basic plan, originally designed by the United States Forest Service, was often modified and revised by both Forest and Park Service engineers. The lookout has good integrity of materials, design, and workmanship and is significant in the architectural history of Glacier Park.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION: DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1928
This fire lookout is one of several similar buildings constructed in Glacier National Park between the late 1920s and the early 1940s to protect park lands from the always critical threat of fire. A planned network of lookouts within the Park and on adjoining national forest lands allowed reciprocal surveillance of both areas. The series of lookouts in Glacier succeeded for many years in curtailing disastrous fires in the park. Today, air observation allows a more comprehensive coverage of the park and has replaced the manned lookout almost entirely. The lookout is significant because it illustrates an important aspect in the management and conservation of timber resources in Glacier National Park.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
The Mount Brown fire lookout is a significant resource both architecturally and historically. It meets the eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria a and c.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE:

FORM PREPARED BY: DATE: May 1984
NAME/TITLE:
ORGANIZATION: Historical Research Associates, P.O. Box 7086, Missoula, MT 59807-7086

12/31/84

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NPS FORM 10-800-a
(10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Mt. Brown Lookout (addendum), Flathead County, MT.

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 __ nationally __ statewide X locally. (__ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 12.5.95

National Park Service
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property 2 meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date: SEP 29 1995

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
_____ entered in the National Register _____ see continuation sheet		
_____ determined eligible for the National Register _____ see continuation sheet		
_____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____ see continuation sheet		
_____ removed from the National Register _____ see continuation sheet		
✓ other (explain) Additional Documentation Accepted	Bruce M. Sapsley	1/19/96

Building Interior

The Mount Brown Lookout is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Additional documentation is provided below for the purpose of describing and evaluating the interior for integrity and significance.

7. Narrative Description

Summary

Fire lookouts were generally constructed from standardized building packages, packed to the lookout site for assembly. Most were constructed following the mid-1920s increase in lookout-construction appropriations and prior to the 1930s advent of aerial fire detection and suppression. This use of standard plans and the short construction period resulted in a remarkable degree of uniformity in interior design, not only in park lookouts but also in contemporaneous lookouts built on the forests of the USFS Northern Region. Paneled or vertical-plank doors (like the windows, paired with full-length "storms") provided access. In a classic case of design following function, large multi-light awning windows dominated all four elevations; painted 2" to 4" tongue-and-groove planks covered the small expanse of exposed interior wall. Floors were generally finished with painted 3-inch to 6-inch softwood. Fixed furnishings included the critical and centrally located fire finders, a wood-burning stove, a small cot, a wood table and chair(s), and wall-mounted cupboards located above the window banks, near the ceilings. Ceilings were either open/exposed truss or, if dropped, finished with painted tongue-and-groove planks and containing a hinged door leading to the "attic" storage space. Food and equipment storage areas in the "basement" were unfinished and accessed by vertical-board or paneled wood doors.

Mt. Brown Lookout (#576), 1928

As befits its function, walls of windows dominate the interior of this small building. Three-inch floorboards, painted grey and paired with 4" baseboards, cover the floors. The same 3" planks (either shiplap or tongue-and-groove) cover the walls and ceiling; wider (5") boards are placed at the ceiling/wall juncture. Two-inch boards frame all windows. (The door, secured with a heavy storm "shutter," was not visible.)

Fixed furnishings include a free-standing cupboard units, a table, two wood chairs, a metal bedframe, two mattresses suspended from the ceiling in mesh sacks, a small refrigerator, numerous open shelving units (located high on the walls above the windows), and the centrally located aledaide or "fire finder," mounted on a wood stand.

The basement storage area, created by the elevated construction of the primary component, is unfinished, with dirt floors and exposed frame walls and ceiling. Open shelves and the floor space are littered with tools, a broken chair, a wooden keg (for water storage), old paint cans, propane tanks, and miscellaneous equipment.

8. Statement of Significance

The interior is unmodified and contributes to the building's significance.

Photographs

The building was shuttered and wrapped tightly with wire at the time of survey; the interior was viewed through a narrow crack obtained by opening a shutter to the edge of the wire tension. Light was insufficient for photographs.

NAME: Mt. Brown Lookout
LOCATION: Glacier National Park, MT
PHOTOGRAPHER: Glacier National Park
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1982
LOCATION OF NEGATIVE: Rocky Mountain Regional Office, National Park Service, Denver, CO
PHOTO NUMBER: 1