



Forest Fire Lookout Association

North Idaho/Montana Chapter

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

2023

NORTH IDAHO/MONTANA CHAPTER ANNUAL REPORT

MEMBERSHIP:

168 Current Paid Members (42 Plus)

Includes: 10 Membership Renewal Past Due

Net gain of members: 3 (12 New/transferred, 3 Dropped)

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

Chapter finances remained steady, with a healthy ending balance of \$11,838.89. About 70% of the chapter funds are earmarked donations.

LEADERSHIP:

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

SUB-CHAPTER:

The Northwest Montana Lookout Association (NWMTLA) continues to be very active supporting lookout restoration and maintenance on the Flathead and Kootenai National Forests, Glacier National Park, and the Montana DNRC. The group has their own 501c3 status, but remains associated with the FFLA.

ACTIVITIES:

The chapter hosted the Western Regional Conference in St. Regis, Montana July 7-9, with a very good turnout of over 70 members.

A presentation on local lookouts for the Priest Lake (ID) Museum was well received by about 40 people, supported by a handful of FFLA members from the area. One outcome was the receiving of several historic lookout photos, including those of one lookout for which none had previously surfaced.

The chapter continued coordinating with the principals behind the Idaho Fire Lookouts website, www.idahofirelookouts.com, who also held a fundraising effort selling Christmas tree lookout ornaments that resulted in an \$800 donation, earmarked for the restoration of Lookout Mountain Lookout at Priest Lake.

A change in agency personnel helped to re-establish communications regarding potential restoration efforts for Snow Peak and Mallard Peak lookouts on the Idaho Panhandle NFs. Other potential projects are on hold in large part due to changes in agency personnel or unfilled positions.

The chapter continues to monitor proposed actions for the removal of Hogback Lookout on the Helena NF and Yager Butte Lookout on the Custer NF. There still has never been a response from the agency to comments submitted regarding Hogback. Similarly, there was no response from an inquiry to a district on the Lolo NF regarding future plans for two lookouts that were restored with chapter assistance.

Leif Haugen continued to provide assistance with assessments and maintenance for other forests as part of his USFS job; his expertise has been recognized and put to good use.

The chapter provided assistance to two forests in their search for lookout applicants, directly resulting in FFLA member Mac Tippins being hired to staff Middle Sister Lookout.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES:

FFLA member Zach Whipple-Kilmer continues to develop local interest in Priscilla Peak Lookout, one of the few remaining L-2 cupola lookouts; changes in agency personnel have slowed any potential activity.

The chapter continues to be ready to support other projects, as agencies move forward with decisions.

Gary Weber

FFLA-North Idaho/Montana Chapter Director