



FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION CALIFORNIA SIERRA-NEVADA CHAPTER



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

The California Sierra Nevada Chapter addresses Forest Fire Lookouts from the area of Kernville, CA to the South continuing North thru Sequoia/Inyo/Sierra/Stanslaus/Eldorado/Toiyabe and Tahoe National Forests to Interstate 80, West to Route 99 and East thru the State of Nevada. Included here are CDF (California Department of Forestry, i.e. Cal Fire Lookout Towers in the Sierra Foothills.)

SIERRA/NEVADA FORESTS—

I have identified at least 100 plus historically registered lookouts in California and that amount continues to increase. Thirty (30) plus towers with historical designation are located with the forests listed in the first paragraph. I have also identified multiple CDF foothill Forest Fire Lookout locations within my designated territory. Some are inactive served either by CDF, the Forest Service, or used on an emergency basis only, while others were damaged in recent fires this year especially in the Stanislaus, due to the Rim Fire.

RESEARCH—

Research is an essential part of my continued development of this territory, regardless of historical designation. In my annual report, I will be reporting on certain forests and how we may be moving forward.

MEMBERSHIP—

The membership list continues to be diverse as to location of members, totaling around 45-50 who have paid dues within the California Sierra Nevada Chapter from the West Coast of California to Colorado.

FOUNDATIONS—

There are three subchapters that I am presently familiar with that include the independent foundation called the Buck Rock Foundation which essentially mans the lookouts within the Sequoia National Forest/Park. Their Chairman is Kathy Allison. I have developed a close working relationship with her, and she keeps me fully informed of issues within her area, as well as advising of issues within the forests I may not have heard of. Another subchapter manning Miami Lookout is being run by Jeff May. Loren Ross runs a Sequoia Subchapter surrounding Baker Point.

FINANCIAL—

Gary Weber has maintained Chapter Funds for the California Sierra Nevada Chapter over the past year. Recently though, I have been able to open a business account for the California Sierra Nevada Chapter thru Wells Fargo. Gary has funded the account, per my request, which presently has approximately \$1506.00 in the account. Gary retained the rest of the funds which amount to approximately \$700.00. Please note it is difficult to open a business account at a national bank due to new federal banking rules that took place 1-1-16. Should anyone desire information on what exactly is needed, I can provide that information. Please feel free to contact me for specifics.

INFORMATION ON FOREST/CDF CONTACTS—

During June 2016, on the way to the Western Conference in John Day, I made some cold calls and appointment calls with Forest Service and CDF personnel to identify myself and provide a contact for them. I have had some success and will address that in my future plans. Below is a status concerning the forest/CDF in my area.

INYO/SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST—

In June 16, I visited the INYO National Forest Offices in Mammoth Lakes, CA and was advised that they have one active tower in the forest, which would not be suitable for a FFLA relationship. Kathy Allison also advised me that in April 2016, Jeff May and the Miami Volunteer Lookout Association received the Citizen Stewardships and Partners Award from the Sierra National Forest for volunteering in 2015. Staffed lookouts in the Sierra, volunteer and active FS personnel, include Fence Meadow, Miami, Signal, Mt. Tom, Shuteye.

SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST/PARK—

Recently I received (12-21-16) a long email from Kathy Allison as to some bad and good news concerning Loren Ross. Loren is the Sequoia subchapter chair for the Sierra Chapter. Loren lost his home and everything in it during the fast-moving Erskine fire in June. His family changed their lives and moved to Port Orchard, WA, moving into their new home in October. He told Allison that he is still planning on working on Sequoia Lookout projects. He has a strong working relationship with the Forest Service that manages Baker Point, Breckenridge and Bald Mountain. District Ranger is very interested in partnering with the FFLA to rehab Baker Point, but want to put the tower into the Recreation Rental Program. He has helped improve the trail and removal of some communication equipment (old) from the tower. Per Loren, the tower is beat up but repairable. This might be one to consider a grant of \$500 to get them going. Bald Mountain, Breckenridge, Mule Peak, Jordan, Buck Rock and Delilah were staffed with volunteers for 2016. Also, in Yosemite, Crane Flat was staffed with Park Service folks during lightning bursts and was open to the public.

STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST—

I have had multiple conversations with Kathy Strain, Resource Manager for the Stanislaus concerning the lookouts within the forest. My conversations have not been very fruitful in getting towers listed within the NHLR. Therefore, I have taken upon myself and per Keith's request to search for enough information to submit the following towers for listing within the NHLR, (American Camp, Blue Mtn., Duckwall, Mt. Elizabeth, North Mtn., Smith Peak, and Woods Ridge). I am presently researching those towers.

ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST—

During 2016, I have had several telephone conversations with Jordan Serin, Archaeologist, and met with him personally at Forest Headquarters in June 2016, for approximately 1.5 hours. We have a very good working relationship going as to the possibility, at some point in the future, of the manning of Robbs Peak and Bunker Hill Lookouts with fire lookout volunteers and as interpretive centers. I have discussed with Keith the idea of presenting a \$500 grant to the Eldorado National Forest for each of the tower's restoration completion. (Please note attached recent email from Jordan Serin of the Eldorado). Keith has given the okay to request grants which I am in the process of preparing for submission.

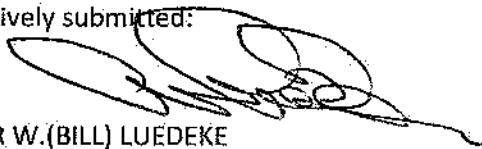
TAHOE/TOYIABE NATIONAL FOREST AND CND—

I attempted a cold call in June with forest headquarters of the Tahoe, but was unable to talk to anyone. I did though, get a call from Rebecca Curry, with Historicorp, looking for volunteers for restoring Grouse Ridge, but we had no active subchapter in the area. I will continue my efforts to work with Tahoe National Forest.

PLANS FOR 2017—

1. It is my intention in early spring to again make a trip up to the Sierras and CDF locations in an effort to make everyone familiar with what the FFLA stands for and how it may help them.
2. Continue research on towers in my area of responsibility.
3. Reach and visit Buck Rock Foundation and subchapters Loren Ross/Bakers Point and Jeff May with the Miami Group.).
4. Submit grant requests and NHLR information on towers for consideration.
5. Contact the Eldorado National Forest to see if a power-point presentation can be made to their district ranger.

Respectively submitted:



ARTHUR W. (BILL) LUEDEKE

DIRECTOR, CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CHAPTER (FFLA)

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RE: Eldorado National Forest

CC: [redacted]

Serin, Jordan -FS

Thu 12/1/2016 9:54 AM

Inbox

To: Mary Luedeke <msl47@hotmail.com>;

1 attachment (1 MB)

HangtownPainting_Bid.pdf ;

Hi Bill,

Glad to hear from you. We weren't able to accomplish any restoration work on either Robbs Peak or Bunker Hill look outs this Fall, but we got estimates from painters on the costs of doing the work and we had our field trip to Bunker Hill with some engineers. The engineers suggested that the most important work to get done on Bunker Hill is to get it repainted.

- ➔ The cost for prepping (scrapping the old paint) and priming Robbs Peak LO will be \$3200. Our local FS staff would be able to do the painting work. I anticipate that we will get this work done in the Summer 2017. Then, we'll assess our next steps for improving the interior of the look out so we can open it up for a volunteer look out and for public visitors/interpretation.
- ➔ The cost for prepping, priming, and painting Bunker Hill LO is quite a bit more expensive, \$10,600. I believe this would include some additional caulking and other efforts to address water leakage where the chimney attaches to the side of the building.

Attached is the estimate for you to see. I will try to apply for some grant money for the work on Bunker Hill LO, and if I can find some funding, then I might contact Historicorps to see about using their services for this work. But, given some other priorities on the Forest and limited heritage staff, this project may not get done until Summer 2018.

If you are back in our area and have time for another meeting, I'd like to introduce you to some of our Fire Management staff and possibly a District Ranger so they can learn more about FFLA.

Thanks for keeping in touch, and Happy Holidays to you!

Jordan



Jordan Serin
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