

**Wyoming
Colorado/Utah Chapter
Annual Report
2019**

Membership:

36- CO/UT

10-WY

Financial Balance:

CO/UT \$1,766.04

WY \$436.03

Colorado/Utah/Wyoming Chapter

* Tower updates provided by Rick & Linda Freimuth – Bench Mark LO*

Primary Goals for 2020

1. Increase chapter membership.
2. Plan day trips to towers for fun or work to engage more with this chapter
3. Find a dedicated WY director or partner with a WY resident for better chapter engagement.

Colorado - Utah Fire Lookout Survey

by Rick Freimuth – March 18, 2019

This report is the compilation of surveys sent to the managing personnel/agencies in February and March followed up, in some cases, with phone calls. It is incomplete due to follow-up emails and phone calls being unanswered by the recipients. I felt it was time to complete the report and not keep badgering the agencies. Any comments within quotation marks were made by the person answering the survey.

Benchmark Lookout -

Tower in good to excellent condition. Cab interior and exterior in good to excellent condition. Maintenance ongoing by me, the current lookout, as well as district personnel. During the 2018 season I replaced and painted the catwalk railing and bracing and replaced most of the east

catwalk deck. I scraped, caulked and painted all of the window frames and window trim. I restored and painted two original signs. The cab was vandalized before the 2018 fire season which prompted the district to install a locked gate .3 mile below tower. Chainlink fencing and a gate were also installed at the bottom of the stairs to help prevent further vandalism. Solar batteries are being replaced with sealed gel batteries for 2019 season. There is no "friends of" organization. Information provided by Rick Freimuth.

Chapin Mesa Lookout -

Also called Cedar Tree LO by Mesa Verde NP staff. This unusual tower is in good shape but "could use some maintenance and tightening of support cables". Condition of cab steel is "good but needs paint". "The platform needs to be repaired". Chapin Mesa LO is "staffed as needed on short term basis". "It is only used to help locate smoke reports that Park Point LO can't see". There is no "friends of" organization. This information was provided by Keith Krause, the FMO at Mesa Verde NP.

Deadman Lookout -

Condition of the tower, roof and cab are good. It is staffed by volunteers. No "friends of" organization. Information provided by Chet Dieringer, the North Zone AFMO of the Canyon Lakes RD.

Devil's Head Lookout -

Condition of cab exterior is fair and it needs new shutters. Condition of interior is fair/good. The stair treads on the multi-level stairs climbing the rocks are in poor shape (about 70 years old) and need to be replaced. Jay Karle, the AFMO for the South Platte RD, said that the Colorado FFLA Chapter could be of help in the stair project. Jay also said that Devil's Head LO sees about 40,000 visitors a season. There is a possibility that when Billy Ellis retires that the position may **not** be filled and cameras may be used instead. Jay doesn't really agree with that move and the decision would be made on a Forest or Regional level. I wonder if FFLA input could help sway that decision. It seems with so many visitors that losing the goodwill and public contact at Devil's Head LO would be to the detriment of the Forest Service. There is a Friends of Devil's Head organization.

Eight Mile Mesa Lookout -

Condition of tower is excellent and needs no work. The condition of the cab is good and needs "some work but very minor". Condition of interior "needs work, but very minor, just cleaning". Not staffed. "Eight Mile Mesa is easy to access, has a secure fence, the structure is in good shape. It is currently being leased by an internet provider. It is occasionally used by Fire Staff on the Pagosa RD". Information provided by Jay Goodson the FMO on the Pagosa RD.

Fairview Peak Lookout -

Condition of the LO is good - excellent after extensive stone work done over the last few years. Justin Lawrence the Zone Archeologist of the Gunnison NF said that they rebuilt the roof and added a replica cupola of the original last year. Windows were replaced last year. The interior will probably be finished this summer as well as final painting of the exterior. Justin will gladly accept FFLA's help in this summer's work and he can be reached at 970-642-4420. There is no "friends of" organization. Justin said that the door on the lookout has a latch but isn't locked so hikers can take shelter if needed. So far the only vandalism has been leftover trash and carved names in the interior.

Hahns Peak Lookout -

No response to emails or return phone calls from the staff at Hahns Peak-Bears Ears RD.

Jersey Jim Lookout -

Condition of tower is good and the cab exterior and roof are in excellent condition. Condition of cab interior is excellent. Jersey Jim LO has been decommissioned by the USFS and is used under a special use permit by the Jersey Jim Foundation as a rental from May 31 - Oct 15 every year. The Foundation always accepts donations and volunteers for maintenance. Jim Nowlin of the Jersey Jim Foundation provided this information.

Leon Peak Lookout -

Is considered abandoned and historic by the Forest. Basically an archeological site. Information provided by Catherine Freels the North Zone Archeologist for the GMUG NF. She also said in response to FFLA assistance, "Maybe, if the Forest Service or the FFLA is interested in any

mapping, documentation or stabilization". There is no "friends of" organization.

Park Point Lookout -

Condition of Cab is good but "could use some painting and repair to walkway around the LO". The interior "floors could use a refinishing and rewiring of electronics". Park Point is staffed by NPS seasonals and volunteers. Kelly Coughlin the main LO of Park Point for the 2018 season said "this is not a typical lookout or situation. It is a working lookout, the view shed is enormous and encompasses multiple states and jurisdictions. Numerous tour buses stop here and it is ADA accessible. We welcome visitors but direct contact can be limited when busy out of necessity for focus. The sheer volume of visitors makes working difficult when there are storms and fires. My sentiments are echoed by journal entries of previous staff. It is a mixed blessing to be so accessible". There is no "friends of" organization. Information was provided by primary Park Point lookout, Kelly Coughlin, and Keith Krause the Mesa Verde NP FMO.

Parkview Lookout -

The condition of the cab exterior is poor-fair and "has not had maintenance done on it for a long time. Very rough exterior. At over 12,000' it gets battered by wind, sun, rain, snow and everything else". The condition of the interior is poor-fair. "We used to house one of our Forest radio repeaters inside. Did have glass windows with wooden covers/shutters. Glass is getting more and more broken out each year." There is no "friends of" organization. Information was provided by John Myers a wilderness trails tech on the Walden RD.

Round Top Mountain Lookout -

No response to survey requests but Daniel Hazen the lookout at Zenobia Peak LO thinks there are no changes in condition.

Sandoval Mesa Lookout -

No response to survey requests after several attempts. Contact person is Richard Gustafson the FMO on the Southern Ute Reservation.

Shadow Mountain Lookout -

Cab exterior in poor condition. Stone tower in poor condition. Looking for funding to replace catwalk decking and joists. "Roof is good, decking and support beams are rotted and falling off." There is a mix of paid staff and volunteers staffing the lookout only during high severity. There is no "friends of" organization. Jeri Piller the District Ranger for the Colorado River Ranger District at Rocky Mountain NP said that "they're **looking for funding** to fix the decking on the catwalk and support beams". Jeri also said "Shadow Mountain LO is currently closed to public and employees due to dangerous conditions and until the support beams and catwalk are repaired". Jerri Piller's office phone number is 970-586-1526

Soda Point Lookout -

Joe Morris the FMO at the UTE Mountain Agency hasn't responded to the survey yet due to internet problems at his office.

Squaw Mountain Lookout -

Rented and booked close to 365 days a year. Success story, turned a costly liability into a profitable, sustainable asset for the district. Rental income is use for maintaining and improvements as well as paying staff expenses. No plans to change or alter this model moving forward. Information was provided by Nichole Milandri - Clear Creek Ranger District

Whites Mesa Lookout -

This unusual lookout's tower is in good condition but "the wooden platforms are functional but could use replacement". The condition of the cab exterior and roof are in good condition. The cab interior is in fair condition "been stripped of equipment and needs painting". There is no "friends of" organization. Not staffed. Information was provided by Keith Krause the Mesa Verde NP FMO.

Zenobia Peak Lookout -

Condition of the tower, cab exterior and interior is good-excellent. Danial Hazen the lookout for the past 14 seasons provided this information. He intends to staff Zenobia for at least two more seasons. He's confident that the Dinosaur NP management supports bot

the Zenobia and Round Top Lookouts and will in the future. There is no "friends of" organization.

Ute Mountain Lookout, Utah -

Tower and cab interior and exterior are in good condition. Staffed by a volunteer for the last three seasons. Mac Zimmerman of the Ashley NF who manages Ute Mountain LO said "The more days out of the week that it is open the better. We would like to staff it with more folks but it is remote and the managers don't want people staying in it. If people were interested and able to be self sufficient/self-funded we can get them signed up as volunteers. There just isn't the budget or the need for a full time employee." "We would also like to hold more events there. Some ideas were Dutch oven cookouts, musicians, storytelling, fire scenarios or some type of light show". There is an affiliated organization for Ute Mountain LO.

I know that the FFLA is already familiar with some of this information. I hope this report is a help to the FFLA and the information it contains is able to be transferred to the FFLA database and the NHLR.

- Rick Freimuth

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