



# Forest Fire Lookout Association

## Northern Idaho/Montana Chapter

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

**2016**

### **NORTH IDAHO/MONTANA CHAPTER ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

161 Current Paid Members (42 Plus)

Includes: 8 Membership Renewal Past Due

Net gain of members: 4 (13 New, 9 Dropped, 1 Transfer in, 1 Transfer out)

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

Chapter finances increased slightly, with an ending balance of \$5959.08. This is an increase of just under \$600 from the start of the year. It also includes funds earmarked for specific lookout projects.

#### **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 Chapter (NWMT-FFLA) has continued to be very active. The group currently provides volunteer staffing and maintenance for Baptiste, Cooney and Firefighter lookouts on the Flathead NF and participated in maintenance and assessments on several other Flathead NF, Kootenai NF, Glacier NP and Montana DNRC lookouts.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

Chapter activities were relatively minimal in 2016.

Plans had been made for continuing work on the Spyglass Lookout ground house (Coeur d'Alene NF, ID), but never materialized due to other priorities of the primary partner, Lutherhaven. It was determined that the Forest Service had no interest in reconstructing the cab that had been lowered from the tower, either onsite or elsewhere. The forest plans to contract to have it removed from the site next summer, but FFLA has been given permission to salvage parts/pieces from it. Some salvage work began in early November, but overall, the walls and many other components of the cab were in much worse condition than expected with very little salvageable.

A fourth year Passport-in-Time restoration project was held at Big Hole Peak Lookout (Lolo NF, MT). The project had been expected to be completed, but was interrupted by a fast-moving fire, causing evacuation of the site and wrapping of the lookout. Plans are to finish the project next summer. FFLA member Libby Langston again made a short video of this year's project.

With a relatively mild fire season (compared to the previous year) only a few other lookouts were wrapped as precautions against fires..

One historic lookout was lost to a structure fire in September; the 1930s Little Snowy Top Lookout was totally consumed by a fire assumed to have started in connection with use of the wood stove by hikers staying overnight on a cold, wet September night.

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

Gary Weber

FFLA-North Idaho/Montana Chapter Director