



Forest Fire Lookout Association

Western Division

2006 Annual Report

Membership:

537 - This represents a little over 2/3 of the total FFLA membership.

Board of Directors change:

Vickie Lamoureux became the new Northern California director. We gratefully thank her predecessor, Marie Hall, for her many years of fine service.

Conference:

The 14th annual FFLA Western Conference was held during mid-September at Big Bear Lake, California. Between 80 and 100 people attended. Thanks to the FFLA Southern California chapter and the San Bernardino National Forest Association for doing such a fine job of hosting our major yearly event. Start planning now to come to the next one which will be held at Seeley Lake, Montana from June 29 to July 1, 2007.

Lookouts Lost and Lookouts Brought Back to Life:

There were successful ongoing and completed lookout restoration projects at many locations all over the west. But vandalism and neglect also continue to take their annual toll. In Southwestern Oregon alone, two lookouts were very seriously damaged, if not completely destroyed, by vandals. Two other Oregon lookouts, both wooden towers, were removed for "safety" reasons.

Lookouts and wildfires:

Very likely a record number of lookouts were seriously threatened by wildfire during 2006. Many active lookouts had to be evacuated. Most of these lookouts, as well as a substantial number of inactive lookouts, were wrapped with protective material to help keep them as safe as possible.

To the best of our knowledge at this time, only one lookout was lost to wildfire in 2006. That was Topa Topa Lookout, an inactive lookout on the Los Padres National Forest of Southern California.

As unfortunate as it was to lose Topa Topa, 2006 could have been much, much worse, and no doubt would have been if not for the valiant efforts of all those dedicated folks who wrapped so many of our wooden lookout structures that were in harm's way.

Dave Bula,
Western Deputy Chairman, FFLA