**NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE/SITE:** BACKUS/MARBLE_MOUNT RANGER STATION-RESIDENCE

**SITE ADDRESS/LOCATION:** 1 mile north of Highway 20, at end of Ranger Station Road, in Marblemount

**SITE ID. NO.:**

**SCALE:** 1:62500

**QUAD NAME:** Marblemount

**UTM ZONE:**

**EASTING:**

**NORTHING:**

**CROSS REFERENCE:** NOCA Bldg. #1009

**OWNER/ADMIN ADDRESS:** National Park Service

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:** c. 1932

**ADDITION(S):**

**CONTRIBUTING:**

**DANGER OF DEMOLITION?**

**CURRENT USE:** Seasonal residence

**ORIGINAL USE:** Residence

**DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, MAJOR ALTERATIONS, IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, ETC.**

Residence. Wood frame set on cement block foundation; rectangle (19' x 40'); 3 bays wide; 1 1/2-stories; wood shingle siding with decorative board and batten siding above at gable ends; wood-shaked gable roof with slightly extended eaves; off-center wood panel and glass door on east; off-center concrete chimney. Exterior features include 6/6 and 1/1 double-hung sash, 6-pane fixed and hinged sash, and single-pane fixed sash, all with simple molded surrounds gable-roofed entrance portico on east supported by plain squared posts and board and batten siding beneath gable; gable-roofed portico with entrance extending out on west; plain fascia boards; flared plywood skirting. Notable landscape features include wood frame outbuilding (storage) and concrete retaining wall behind house (west side).

This is one of the early buildings constructed by the Forest Service at the Backus Ranger Station. Built as a residence, it serves in the same capacity today, and retains its original appearance. A new shake roof was installed in 1977.

**PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY:**

**EXISTING SURVEYS:**

**CONDITION:**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Eligible under Nat. Reg. criterion C: significant as an excellent example of 1930s-era residential Forest Service architecture in the North Cascades. Drawing on traditional models the USFS constructed buildings by their architects which utilized natural or native materials, combined different exterior materials, and successfully harmonized with the environment. This residence represents a distinct type of architecture and possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
REFERENCES
**NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE/SITE**
BACKUS HANGER STATION/MARBLEMOUNT RANGER STATION

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**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION**
1909-1933

**ADDITION(S)**
1950s, 1960s

**OWNER/ADMIN ADDRESS**
National Park Service

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**DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, MAJOR ALTERATIONS, IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, ETC.**

In 1897 the Skagit Ranger District was established as a component of the Washington National Forest (later Mt. Baker National Forest). In the early 20th century the Backus Ranger Station was established. The main activities at Backus were timber and range management, protection from fire and trespass, conservation of wildlife and development of recreational resources. In 1909 Ranger Axel Larson built the first building, a four-room residence, soon occupied by Alfred B. Conrad. This building was replaced in 1926 with a new residence (possibly #1009). In 1929 an allotment of $500 was approved for an office (moved off compound in 1962 and relocated to west side of Ranger Station Road). Other improvements were made in the 1930s, some by the CCCs who were stationed at Bacon Creek. These included a barn/fire/tool warehouse, blacksmith shop and a two-room guard cabin. It is thought that Ranger Henry Soll built the old barn (moved off campground in the 1960s and located on private property in Marblemount) and the warehouse. After Larson and Conrad, Thomas (Tommy) Thompson became District Ranger in 1915 and remained at Backus until he retired in 1943. It is believed that he planted the grove of oak trees at the station which stood until 1984 when the NFS removed them. In 1946 Hubert O. Wilson succeeded Thompson, and Wilfred Moisio eventually succeeded Wilson. In 1968 this complex was transferred from the Forest Service to the National Park Service when North Cascades National Park was created. The complex has grown and some of the early buildings have changed in appearance.

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**PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY**
☐ YES, LIMITED  ☑ NO  ☐ YES, UNLIMITED  ☐ UNKNOWN

**LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT?**
☐ YES  ☐ NO

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**SIGNIFICANCE**
Photographs and Sketch Map of Location

Photograph: Backus Ranger Station, pre-1916 (photo by N. Hicks)

References:
U.S. Forest Service. Miscellaneous Papers, RG 95: FARC Box 76A-2058/68109; Box 66A-315/1677.

Inventoried by: Gretchen Luxenberg
Affiliation: NPS
Date: Summer 1984
Marblemount Residence #1009

#22

PNR # GL2-16A