### Sourdough Mountain Lookout

**Name(s) of Structure/Site:** Sourdough Mountain Lookout  
**Date of Construction:** 1933

**Address/Location:** On Sourdough Mountain, elevation 5997 feet, 5 miles from trailhead at Diablo  
**District:** Skagit  
**County:** Whatcom  
**State:** Washington  
**Owner/Admin Address:** National Park Service

**Description and Background History:**

Cabin. Wood frame set on rock foundation; square (14'3"x14'3"); 5 bays wide; 1-story; shiplap siding; wood-shingled hip roof; off-center door on east with wood panel and glass door. Exterior features include 2/2 hinged sash on each facade; plywood hinged shutters with diagonal bracing.

The U.S. Forest Service erected fire lookouts as part of their fire protection system for the forests. Most of the lookouts were built between 1920-1935. W.W.II brought a perceived threat from across the Pacific and this led to the manning of some lookouts as part of the military's Aircraft Warning System. After the war, aerial surveillance and other technological advances rendered the old lookouts obsolete. Many were torn down in the 1960s. The first lookout on this mountain was erected in 1917 by Glee Davis (early upper Skagit Valley resident). He hand-split shakes and siding at his homestead at Cedar Bar and packed the materials up the mountain with horses. His father-in-law was the first lookout (Campbell). The structure was about 10' x 10' with a 6' x 6' cupola. The present lookout was erected by the CCC's in 1933, replacing Davis' building. This lookout is no longer used on a regular basis. A new roof was installed in 1980.

**Significance:** Eligible under Nat. Reg. Criterion A: for its association with USFS stewardship of National Forests, and under Criterion C: as an example of a distinct type of construction and architectural expression. Of the 43 lookouts erected by the USFS in the Mt. Baker National Forest since 1915, only three are extant within NOCA. This is a good example of the type of structure designed by the USFS in the 1930s for their fire protection system, and Sourdough Lookout is the site of the first such structure to be built in the North Cascades. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Spring, Ira and B. Fish. Lookouts-Firewatchers of the Cascades and Olympics, 1981.
Thompson, Erwin. History Basic Data, 1970.

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Date: Summer 1984
Sourdough Lookout

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