

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

PH0668419 724

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 5 1978
DATE ENTERED	AUG 2 1978

DATA SHEET

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Shadow Mountain Lookout

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

SE of Grand Lake in

Rocky Mountain National Park

CITY, TOWN

Grand Lake

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

STATE

Colorado

☒ VICINITY OF

CODE

08

COUNTY

Grand

CODE

049

☒**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet Street, P.O. Box 25287

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Within the boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park,

STREET & NUMBER

created from public lands by Act of Congress of

CITY, TOWN

January 26, 1915.

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

List of Classified Structures Inventory

DATE

On-going

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

__EXCELLENT

☒GOOD

__FAIR

__DETERIORATED

__RUINS

__UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒UNALTERED

__ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ORIGINAL SITE

__MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Shadow Mountain Lookout (elevation 9923 feet) is a seventeen-foot square, three-story structure located near the summit of Shadow Mountain, and this location once enabled it to survey the lodgepole pine forests around Grand Lake.

The fire detection tower, which rests on a concrete foundation, has two lower stories of uncoursed rubblestone and an upper story of frame construction.

The first floor, which was used as a museum and visitor contact station, is entered at the east elevation through a board and batten door. At all the elevations of this floor there are window openings with casement sash. The interior has a flagstone floor and a redwood water storage tank.

The second floor is entered through a board and batten door at the north elevation, and has a small window opening at the southern exposure. The floor is supported by log floor joists, which are exposed on the lookout's exterior and run on a north-south axis. This floor was used as quarters.

The observation area, the third floor, is fenestrated at all elevations with a band of 1/1 fixed sash, which gives the observation room all-round visibility. The frame observation room is entered at the west elevation, and is surmounted by a wood shingled pyramid roof.

The observation room is encircled by a plank balcony that has log balusters and railing, and is supported by log trusses.

All the upper floors are reached by an exterior, quarter-turn stairway, with a landing, which begins at the north elevation. The stairway's handrail, balusters, and stringer are of log construction.

The lookout's balcony and stairway are beginning to show signs of deterioration.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☒ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1932-33

BUILDER/ARCHITECT National Park Service,
Landscape Architecture Division

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Shadow Mountain Lookout is the only remaining fire detection tower in Rocky Mountain National Park. The lookout, which is presently abandoned, is representative of the early fire protection methods and policies of the National Park Service, and is a significant example of the rustic design employed by the National Park Service during the first half of this century.

Early National Park Service policy dictated that all fires, whether natural or man caused, be immediately suppressed. That policy required the early detection of forest fires, and therefore a means of accomplishing that task - fire lookouts.

The construction of four such lookouts in Rocky Mountain National Park was begun in the early 1930's, and they were situated at strategic points: Shadow Mountain, near Longs Peak, Twin Sisters Peak, and the north fork of the Thompson River.

In 1930 the superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, Edmund B. Rogers, reported in his annual report the construction of a fire trail and telephone line up the side of Shadow Mountain, and that a fire watch had been manned there. The site was apparently successful, for a year later preparations were made for a permanent structure.

The plans for the lookout were done by the National Park Service's Landscape Architecture Division in San Francisco, but the original plans were rejected for various reasons. The new plans, which were completed in 1932, were done in accordance to recommendations made by the National Park Service's Chief Forester, John Coffman, whose responsibilities included fire protection.

Construction of the Shadow Mountain Lookout, like all fire detection towers, was a difficult task. Its location on Shadow Mountain meant that materials, such as cement, cut boards, hardware, shingles, and glass panes, had to be packed on mules to the site. However, materials which would be too costly or impossible to move, such as stone and long logs, were obtained from local sources.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Good, Albert H. Park and Recreation Structures. Vol. I. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. ~~Government~~ Printing Office, 1938.

U.S. "Annual Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park to the Director of the National Park Service." Reports for the years 1930-1933.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 430720 4453460
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Only the lookout is being nominated.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE D. Ferrel Atkins, Ranger Naturalist
James Muhn, Architectural Historian (Consultant)

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service

DATE

August 8, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

(303) 586-2371

Rocky Mountain National Park

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Estes Park

Colorado

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

William C. Townsend
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

7/6/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

William C. Townsend
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

8.1.78

Charles H. Brown
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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The structure was completed in 1933, and was judged an architectural success. Albert H. Good in his 1938 book, Park and Recreation Structures, felt that the Shadow Mountain Lookout was one of the best designed fire detection towers; being "illustrative of the happy results where a masonry structure can appear to grow out of a natural rock outcrop."

The lookout, which was first manned in 1933, was usually occupied by a married couple that would share turns keeping watch over the nearby forested lands, but they also had other duties to perform. The seasonal rangers had contact with the public, and so became involved with public relations. For ~~that~~ purpose the tower's ground floor was used as a museum, which probably had exhibits on fire protection and the park's wildlife, and a visitor contact station. With the introduction of radio to the park, the lookout's personnel had to repeat messages, when necessary, between rangers at lower elevations, where trees and mountain might cause interference; and they also established contact with bordering National Forests when conditions dictated.

The development of new fire policies; new methods of fire detection, such as the reporting done by public and private aircraft; and the use of modern repeater stations all contributed to the decline of fire lookouts; and after the 1968 summer season the Shadow Mountain Lookout was abandoned.

Today the Shadow Mountain Lookout is abandoned and boarded-up. The park staff at Rocky Mountain National Park has not developed any plans for adaptive use in the near future; although, they have recognized the lookout's historic and architectural significance.



SUBJECT: Shadow Mountain Lookout
LOCATION: Rocky Mountain National
Park

PHOTOGRAPHER: Unknown

DATE: ca 1955 **

NEGATIVE: Rocky Mountain National
Park

DESCRIPTION: East elevation

PHOTO NUMBER: 1 82

** This old photograph provides the best view of the structure, since today the lookout is boarded-up.



SUBJECT: Shadow Mountain Lookout
LOCATION: Rocky Mountain National
Park
PHOTOGRAPHER: Unknown
DATE: ca. 1955 **
NEGATIVE: Rocky Mountain National
Park
DESCRIPTION: Looking northeast
PHOTO NUMBER: 2 8 2

** This old photograph provides the best view of the structure, since today the lookout is boarded-up.