



Sublette County, Wyoming

# Historic Preservation Board

Honor the Past, Enrich the Future

## Deadline Ridge Fire Lookout Clean It, Fix It, Paint It

A Proposal by the Sublette County Historic Preservation Board

**Background** – The Deadline Ridge Fire Lookout (48-SU-1738) is located at approximately 10,100 feet elevation on Deadline Ridge in the Bridger-Teton National Forest on the Big Piney Ranger District (UTM 540820 Easting, 4698320 Northing). It was built in 1941, probably as a CCC project, but little is known of its history. It has been determined to be not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of modern modification and having been moved from its original location. The stick built structure is 11 feet by 11 feet of a typical plan for the time. Unlike other Sublette County lookouts, this one is easily accessible by vehicle, and is in good condition. It commands a great view in three directions.

**Objective** – Repair, restore and maintain structure to its historic state and provide basic interpretation for visiting public.

**Restoration** (Clean it, Fix it, Paint it) – The lookout building is still in good shape with no major restoration anticipated. The following modest repairs requiring only volunteer labor and some materials are recommended:

- Roof - Remove solar panel that is no longer used. Remove radio antenna from northwest corner only with approval if no longer needed by BTNF. Inspect and patch/replace some wood shingles. Power wash and repaint all shingles.
- Siding – Power wash and repaint wood siding.
- Windows – Most window panes are intact, but a small number (estimate 5-10) are missing or broken and will need to be replaced. Should be easy to find replacement glass for the small flat squares.
- Foundation – Foundation is sound, but some rocks should be pulled away to inspect. Repair as needed and restack rocks around perimeter that protect underside/foundation of building.
- Door – There is a door, but condition is unknown. Need to inspect, repair, paint and/or replace.
- Guy Wire – Two guy wires are installed on the west corners, presumably to steady the building in high winds. These appear to have some slack. Should be inspected and strengthened or tightened as needed.
- Lighting protection – Unknown if there is lightning protection on the building, but should be inspected and repaired as needed.
- Inside – The inside mainly needs to be cleaned, power washed, and painted. Some wood benches and shelves may need repair/replaced. Based on historical research may be able to replicate interior (bed? stove?), otherwise put in simple table and chairs for visitors.



Sublette County, Wyoming

# Historic Preservation Board

Honor the Past, Enrich the Future

- **Paint** – The building appears to have red and green paint either as a combination of one before the other, but vast majority of paint is gone. The surfaces can probably be power washed and then repainted. Historical research as well as better inspection should help determine appropriate colors. Use color and type of paint as determined by BTNF.
- **Other** – Closer inspection may reveal other restoration needs.

**Interpretation** – Relative easy access and high point with incredible view of landscape in three directions make this fire lookout a great place for some public historical interpretation. Further research will help determine the best physical implementation (i.e. signs, placement, subjects, vandal proof, etc.), but the following subjects are considered appropriate for further research and interpretation at this location:

- General forest fire management and fire lookout history
- Specific history of Deadline Ridge Fire Lookout as much as can be determined – construction, use, staffing, duties, equipment, life style, access, communication, etc.
- Landscape – Pictures or maps at north, west and south windows indicating geographic features and distances that can be seen from the lookout.
- Map & aerial photos – if practical, display variety of topo maps and aerial photos of the area starting with period of use (1940's) up until today to point out geographic features and how landscape has change over time. Maybe a map table in the center of the room.
- Logging history of the area – Clear cuts and past logging activity can be clearly seen from the lookout.
- Fontenelle Fire – The 2012 fire came within yards of the lookout and effects can still clearly be seen on the landscape from the lookout.

**Public Awareness** – Because the site is remote and unstaffed, too much visitation can be harmful, but awareness of locals and interested public is desired. So promotion of the site should be low key and primarily word of mouth along these lines:

- **Brochure with directions** – A simple tri-fold brochure can be developed with brief summary of the site and directions. Without a map, the site is difficult to find. The brochure can be distributed at local Forest Service offices and museums.
- **Companion display at Green River Valley Museum** – Displays at the site must be simple and maintainable, but might be possible to build a historic mockup of the inside of the lookout at GRVM and have more extensive interpretation including an alidade.
- **Visitors Logging** – Have a physical guest book at the lookout that visitors can sign and comment. Encourage selfies, pictures and posting from location on social media using hashtag (i.e. #DeadlineLookout) to encourage sharing of location.



Sublette County, Wyoming

# Historic Preservation Board

Honor the Past, Enrich the Future

**Operation** – The surrounding site should remain undeveloped requiring only occasional monitoring and maintenance which should be practical for volunteers. The following issues are anticipated:

- **Monitoring** – Volunteers can be organized to occasionally visit and monitor the site. A point of contact should be established to document monitoring and to relay any site issues.
- **Access** – During the summer (i.e. no snow), the site is very accessible. There are well maintained gas roads up to the last 1 mile. The last mile is undeveloped, but without snow or mud conditions, the two track is practical by most vehicles. Maintenance of the access road is not anticipated, but high clearance vehicles will be recommended.
- **Parking** – The ridge top adjacent to the lookout is rocky and relatively flat with parking for about 10 vehicles. No development is needed.
- **Shutters** – The windows are currently covered by plywood panels nailed to the building. This seems to be a practical approach. The boards can be removed during the summer and replaced in the fall. Shutters could be built, but the windows should remain uncovered during the summer, so probably not necessary. The windows do swing open into the lookout, but they should be nailed shut so visitors do not open and break.
- **Safety** – The main visitor safety concerns are wind and lightning. Visitors should be warned with signs at the site and in the brochure.
- **Maintenance** – Vandalism is possible with an unmonitored site and some basic yearly maintenance is expected.
- **Garbage** – There will be no garbage collection, so signs should encourage pack it in, pack it out.
- **Cultural Resource Inventory** – While an inventory of the immediate area has probably been done in the past, a new survey should be done before public is invited to the site. This is especially true where the 2012 fire has cleared ground cover. For example, can a privy location be found?

## Potential Partners

- **Bridger-Teton National Forest** – Administration, supervision and approval of all activities. Help with monitoring, historical research, and public awareness.
- **Sublette County Historic Preservation Board** – Organize volunteers for restoration, monitoring, maintenance, interpretation, fund raising and cultural survey.
- **Green River Valley Museum** – Invite GRVM to help distribute information about the site, possible historical research, a companion display, and/or public presentations.
- **Fire Tower Lookout Association** – Invitation to help with historical research, recommendations on restoration, and awareness to their membership.
- **Smoke Jumpers Association** - Invitation to help with historical research, recommendations on restoration, and awareness to their membership.
- **Exxon** – Exxon has active gas development and facilities in the immediate area. They may be interested in helping monitor the site.



Sublette County, Wyoming

# Historic Preservation Board

Honor the Past, Enrich the Future

**Schedule** – The primary goal of 2015 will be basic restoration to repair and stabilize the lookout. Or better known as clean it, fix it, paint it. Secondary goal will be development of interpretation. All work and restoration will only be done with approval of BTNF.

- 2015 (January – June) – Historical research and development of an interpretation plan.
- 2015 (June) – At earliest convenience, schedule a site visit and inspection with cultural and other interested BTNF personnel.
- 2015 (Late June) – **Clean It!** As soon as access permits, schedule a day/weekend for volunteers to visit the site to clean, inspect and develop a detailed restoration to-do list to be approved by BTNF.
- 2015 (July – August) – **Fix It!** As volunteers have available time, work on restoration list items.
- 2015 (July - August) – Develop and install some basic interpretation.
- 2015 (Late August) – **Paint It!** Schedule a day/weekend for volunteers to paint lookout.
- 2015 (Early September) – Invitation to the public once painted and basic interpretation installed. Possibly an open house day.
- 2015/2016 (Winter/Summer) – Completion of follow-on interpretation and any more extensive restoration.

**Budget** – Only a modest cost for supplies is expected for this project, especially the 2015 phase. SCHPB may have some funds available for restoration, and will solicit private donations for any additional needs.

- Restoration Supplies (2015) - \$1,000 - The restoration is not expected to require much funding. The work will be completed with volunteers and borrowed equipment. Some supplies will have to be purchased.
- Interpretation Supplies (2015) - \$1,000 – Historical research and interpretation development will be done by volunteers, but some money may be needed to purchase durable signs for the first phase (basic) interpretation and print brochure.
- Interpretation Supplies (2016) - TBD - The second phase and more elaborate interpretation, especially if a companion display is done at GRVM, may require more money for signs and development, but this will be optional based on funds that can be raised.





Sublette County, Wyoming

# Historic Preservation Board

Honor the Past, Enrich the Future

The **Sublette County Historic Preservation Board** represents Sublette County, Wyoming as a Certified Local Government as defined by the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act and certified by the State Historic Preservation Office. The Sublette County Commission appoints members to the SCHPB and provides funds under their general budget. All members are volunteer and SCHPB has no paid staff. While SCHPB has received NPS grants for certain projects, all funding for the Deadline Ridge Fire Lookout project will be through Sublette County budget and/or private donations.

2015 Membership ([www.sublettewyo.com/index.aspx?nid=200](http://www.sublettewyo.com/index.aspx?nid=200)):

Clint Gilchrist – President  
Paul Scherbel – Vice President  
Dawn Ballou – Secretary  
Dave Vlcek  
Bob Beiermann  
Jonita Sommers  
Kim Andrews  
Carmel Kail

Contact:

Clint Gilchrist, President  
Sublette County Historic Preservation Board  
PO Box 662  
Pinedale, WY 82941  
307-367-6763  
[clint@sublette.com](mailto:clint@sublette.com)