

# Wyoming Chapter Report 2011

This has been a fairly productive year for our Wyoming Chapter. Joe Luck, a member from Casper took the lead on reconditioning the Spruce Mountain Lookout. Joe is an enthusiastic member of the Wyoming chapter and I am especially appreciative of his commitment to FFLA. I am enclosing his report, below. Joe and I also met with personnel of the Hayden/Brush Creek District, Medicine Bow/Routt National Forest early this summer for a trip to Kennaday Peak Lookout to assess what repairs are needed there. The Forest Service is very supportive of our plans to renovate that lookout so that it can become a rental. We hope to work on that project in 2012.

## **Joe Luck's Report on Spruce Mountain Lookout Reconditioning Project**

About the Sight: Spruce Mountain Lookout is located outside of Albany, Wyoming in the Medicine Bow Mountain Range. The demand for the sight keeps its filled by renters all season. However, budget cuts, a short summer season, and higher priority projects ie; pine beetle infestations, was preventing all but the most necessary repairs from getting accomplished. This is where the Wyoming FFLA offered its assistance.

Work Begins: After approximately three years of discussion, planning and coordinating with the Medicine Bow - Routt NF and Thunder Basin NG personnel, the week of September 19 thru 22, 2011 was selected as a joint work week at Spruce Mountain Lookout. This would be a first for the Wyoming FFLA.

A detailed list was prepared of the work that needed to be done. The task were arranged according to location, ie; cab, catwalk, outhouse, etc. This allowed the work to be broken down into manageable chunks and saved time and eliminated confusion. The following is a list of what was accomplished:

### Cab:

#### Interior

- Removed ceiling mapboard and filled holes.
- Cleaned ceiling and all walls, primed and painted.
- Caulked around windows.
- Rehung entry door, adjusted lock and hinges, installed new weather sealing, primed and painted door.
- Aired out all mattresses.
- Repaired damage to fire finder stand, wooden bed frame, floor stand chest-of-drawers, wooden bench and chair.
- Sanded and varnished all wooden furniture.
- Sanded, primed and painted three metal chairs.
- Replaced all vent window screens and their support chains.
- Cleaned trash out from behind the kitchen cabinets and heater.
- Rebuilt and painted the radio box.

### Exterior

- Filled in holes and cracks on walls and window skirts and did touch-up painting when needed.
- Tighten clamps on wiring and cables.

### Catwalk

- Tighten safety fencing and hardware.
- Filled in holes and repaired damage to floorboards.

- Tighten hinges, springs and latches on safety gates and floor access door.
- Painted top of handrails.
- Removed loose or damaged nails and replaced with screws where needed.

#### Outhouse:

##### Interior

- Installed coat hooks and storage rack for mop, broom and dust pan on north walls.

##### Exterior

- Filled in holes and repaired damage to roof beams and side panel boards.
- Adjusted entry door, tighten hinges and springs, added interior and exterior handles and a latch for the interior.
- Painted entire exterior surfaces from roof down to ground level.
- Repaired rodent damage to rear of structure.
- Built short stone retainer wall on North and South sides of structure to improve soil retention and appearance.

##### Picnic Table and Grounds:

- Replaced damaged table top and bench boards.
- Policed grounds.
- Added new informational sign at intersection of tower access road and FS 500.

NOTE: Most of this work was done by the seasonal maintenance crew.

The Personnel: Kolleen Kralick and Mary Sandersen were our on sight FS representatives. Kolleen did the majority of organizing, planning and formatting the work details for the project. Mary provided for work support ie; the additional work force of the seasonal maintenance crew of Bob and Ted Reidesel ( a father and son team) and other resources. Both ladies worked side by side with the volunteers driving nails, painting or whatever. Four volunteers were on hand and were the muscle and drive for the project. They were: Bill and Linda Snyder from Greeley, CO; Lou Fox from Hastings, MN and me, Joe Luck from Casper, WY. Interestingly, we are all four retired federal employees.

Working from behind the scenes were Dana Bardsley (Forest Engineer) and Pat Lynch (FFLA director for Wyoming). Although they couldn't be with us, we could not have accomplished what we did without their inputs. Also, Sandi Bicek (FS radio technician) showed up on site one day to do some repairs on the radio system. She gave us some ideas on how to improve the radio box for better security and stability. We incorporated some of her ideas into the final rebuild of the box.

Final Comments: During the week we were working on the tower, we got visitors at least once a day. They ranged from hunters to vacationers to just the curious. On our last day of work, after closing the access gate and driving out, I passed two pickup trucks loaded with visitors on their way up to the tower. I turned around and followed them back to the locked gate. I introduced myself, explained what we had been doing at the tower and then gave them a guided tour of the tower grounds. I did this in part because I was proud of what we had accomplished. But, I also did it because I wanted to keep them out of the wet paint!

In the end, it felt good to have given back to something that has given me pleasure for so many years. Many thanks to all the volunteers and our friends from the Forest Service. May we continue to work together to maintain this and other valuable sights.

Respectfully submitted:

Pat Lynch  
Wyoming Director