

Arctic Point Fire Lookout
Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness
A Property Listed on The National Register Of Historic Places

US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Payette National Forest, Heritage Program
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The Arctic Point Fire Lookout is the last Aeromotor Company, galvanized steel fire lookout, still standing in a wilderness area in the United States. The tower, built in 1936, has a commanding view of the remote backcountry landscape. It stands 7,518 feet above mean sea level on the crest of a plateau above Arctic Creek. Located in the Salmon River Mountains, the fire lookout station is two-and-one-half miles southwest of the Salmon River and ten miles northeast of Chamberlain Guard Station.



The site includes a tower, a log cabin residence, and a standard R-4, #70 plan Forest Service outhouse, all built between 1935 and 1939, by Forest Service personnel. All of the building materials were packed in by mules, except the logs for the cabin that were procured in the nearby pine forest. It was quite an undertaking making the many trips into the remote backcountry, hauling the steel parts for the tower, the glass for the cabin windows and the lumber for the outhouse and interior of the cabin.

Aeromotor of Chicago, popularly known for their windmills, manufactured the tower and the 7 x 7 foot galvanized steel cab installed atop the open steel platform. Lookouts historically refer to this type of tower as a "lightning rod," attesting to frequent strikes. Still Inscribed in the footings are the builders of the tower: John Flynn, John E. Manning, Bob Sellars and John Reader, and the words, "We poured this footing August 26, 1936".

The log cabin, used as a residence by the guard, was added to the lookout station in 1939. It is a Rocky Mountain cabin style constructed by Forest Service personnel using native pine logs. It is an unadorned single room log cabin with an extension of the façade gable for a covered porch. The interior of the cabin is finished with tongue and groove flooring.



Since it was built in the 1930s the Arctic Point Lookout complex has not experienced any significant alterations except the addition of a helipad that was built to accommodate access by air for emergencies. The Forest Service used the lookout seasonally for fire watch until 1997 when it began to be decommissioned. It still represents an exciting view for the hearty hiker willing to go the extra mile in search of a unique historical experience. To access Arctic Point Lookout from Chamberlain Guard Station take Forest Service trail No.026 that connects to trail No.239, which ends at the lookout.