

A HISTORY OF FIREFIGHTING ON THE OLD IDAHO NATIONAL FOREST: 1908-2006



Jim Akenson

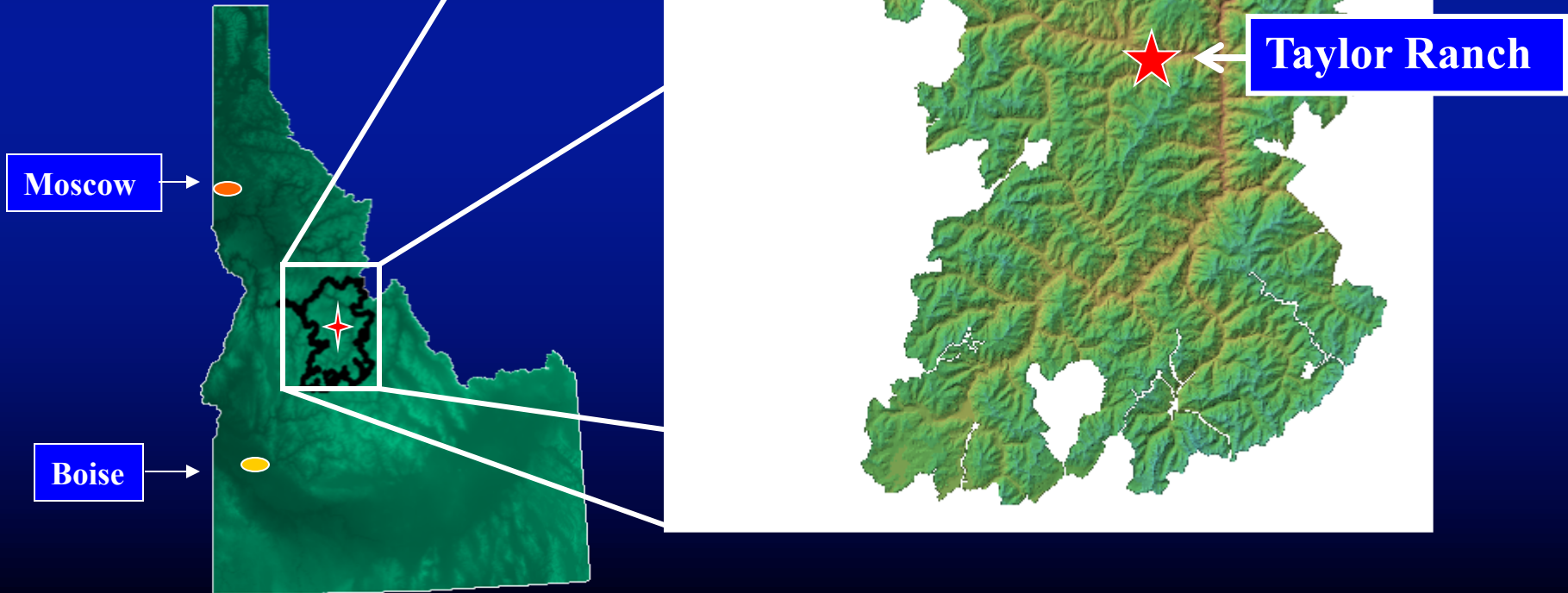
Collaborators

University of Idaho - Taylor Ranch FS

Payette National Forest - Heritage Program

and McCall Smokejumpers

Frank Church Wilderness, 2.3 million acres



Five Phases of Firefighting

- 1) The first Rangers (1908 – 1919)
- 2) Lookouts and Smoke Chasers (1920's)
- 3) Packstrings, lookouts, and telephones (1930's)
- 4) Aerial Support & Attack (1941 – 1980's)
- 5) Wildland Fire Use & Technological Aid (1988 - Present Day)

Dan Caswell 1902

Early Miner & Trail Builder



Travel on Big Creek, 1902



Fire History: Stand Replacement



Wanted: Forest Rangers

Must be able bodied and provide own horses (2) and tack. Salary \$60 per month. Applicants must be between 21 and 40 years of age. Applications are being accepted at the Idaho National Forest Headquarters, McCall, Idaho until January 31st, 1910.

The USFS and Local Residents



1910 & 1919

Idaho's Most Severe Fire Years

- Triggered a more organized approach to fire utilizing rangers, fire guards, and simple lookout structures.
- Brought about district fire plans in 1920: including trail maintenance, telephone maintenance, tool caches, securing horse and mule pack-strings for transportation, manpower ...beyond a ranger, a fire-guard and a lookout.

Idaho National Forest Fire Plan, June, 1 1924

Keep the following in mind at all times:

- DURING FIRE SEASON, NO LEAVE CAN BE TAKEN.
- SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS DO NOT EXIST.
- START FOR A FIRE NOW AND WHEN IT IS REPORTED.
- ALWAYS CARRY YOUR EMERGENCY KIT AND RATIONS.
- KEEP YOUR TELEPHONE LINES UP.
- NO SMOKING!

Early Forest Service, Reorganizing



Aviation's Arrival in The Idaho Primitive Area: 1929



Early Rangers: “Hands On”



Ranger Dan Levan, Chamberlain G.S. - 1936



Packing Lookout Building Material

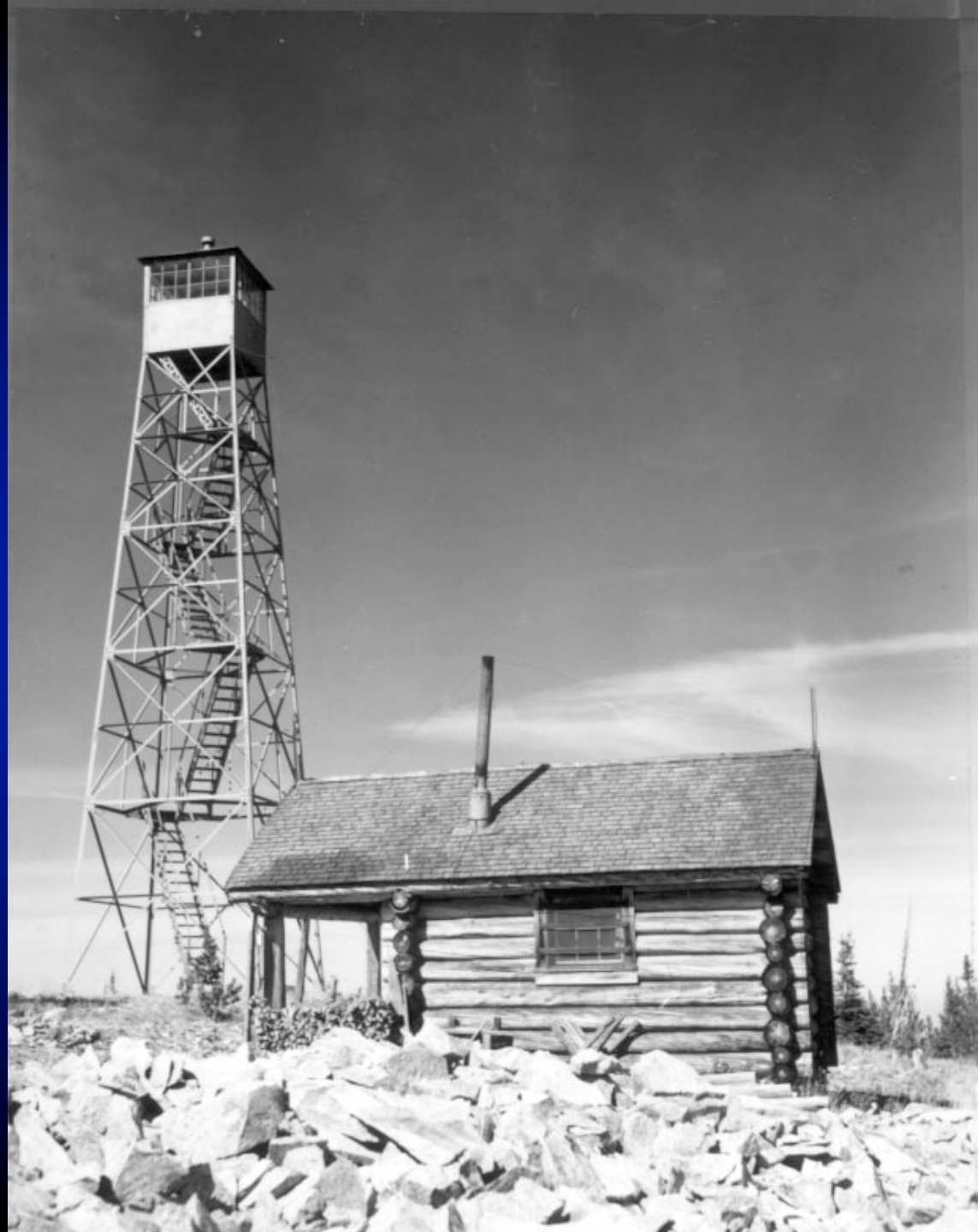




CCC's 1933



Tower &
Cabin:
luxury living
in the 1930's





1940's
communication
improvements

First Fire Jump from McCall, 1943



John Fergusen & Lester Gahler, August 14, 1943. Captain John Creek Fire. First fire jump out of McCall.

WWII Technology



Eagle Parachute

1944

First, came supply drops...



Supplies & (in!) Trees



...Then came people



Air Force Surplus



TBM 55

Ford Tri-Motor and Jumpers



Basic Training for Jumpers



Get Ready!!!!



Early
Training
Tower,
McCall

A “leap of faith”



Huff Fire, Utah 2001



Helicopters: 1959



Today's Top Technology Applied



DC-3 and Baron

Rush Point L.O., Decommissioned in the late 1980's



Smokejumpers: Still Important Today



Wildland Fire Use: A Policy Since 1988

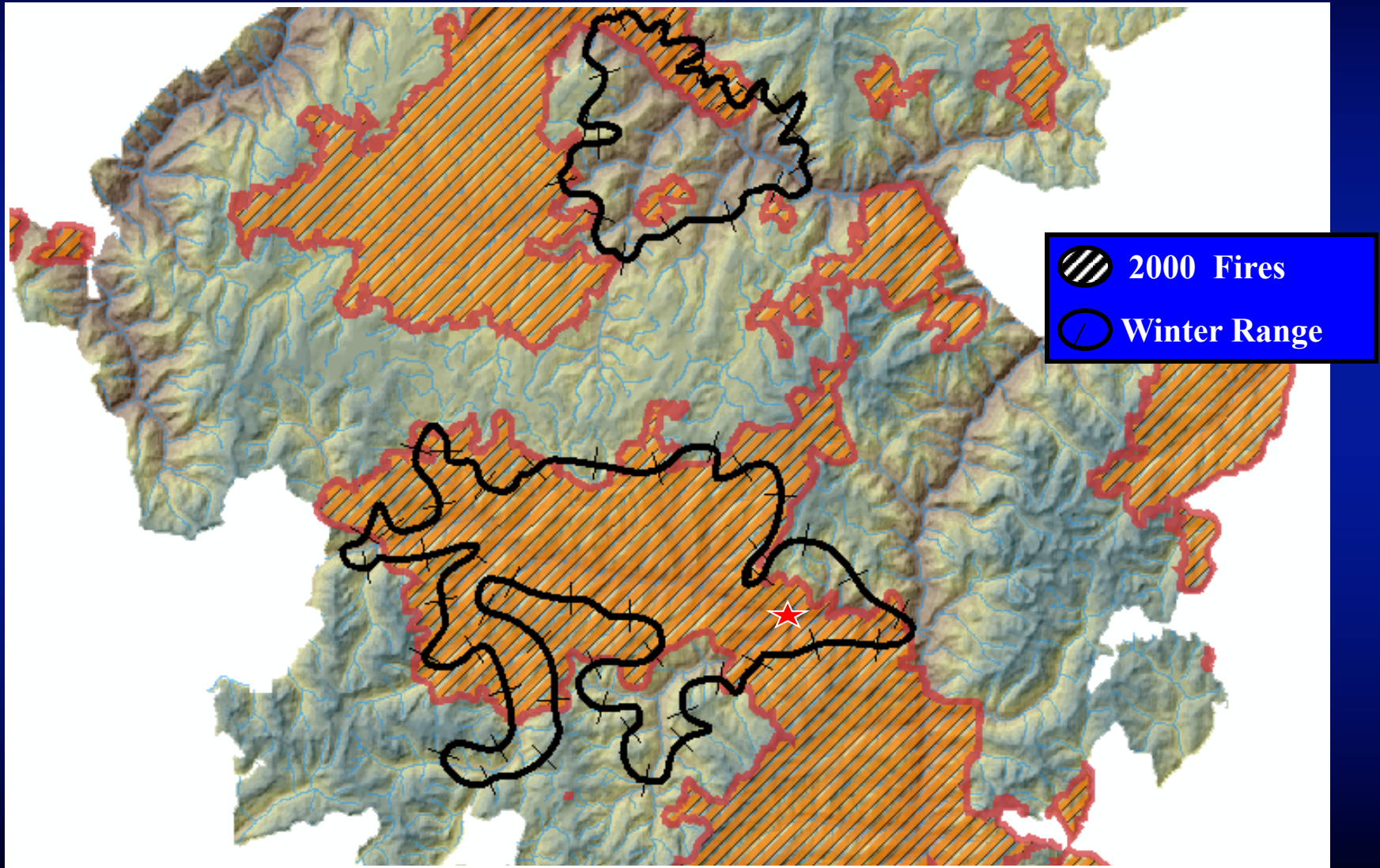


Diamond Point Fire 2000

175,000 Acres



Fires and Winter Ranges





Current Condition = Large Scale Fire

- Fuels built up from a long period of effective suppression
- At what scale and time frequency are Wildland Fire Use (WFU's) fires beneficial?

Eventually, wildland fires will become less intense and less destructive



THANK YOU!

