



File Code: 2360

Date: December 2, 2013

Carol Shull, Interim Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye St. NW (2280)
Washington DC 20005

Re: Green Mountain Lookout (NRIS 88000117)

Dear Ms. Shull,

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is proposing to relocate the Green Mountain Lookout to a similar mountain top at Circle Peak, outside of congressionally designated Wilderness. The reason I am considering this proposal is to comply with the 2012 Summary Judgment by the U.S. District Court, as amended, to remove Green Mountain Lookout from the Glacier Peak Wilderness (*Wilderness Watch v. Y Robert Iwamoto and United States Forest Service*, U.S. District Court for Western Washington, Case No. C10-1797-JCC, 3/27/2012; as amended 9/20/2012).

This project is located in the Darrington Ranger District of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, in Snohomish County, Washington. The site of the current Green Mountain Lookout (the removal site) is in Section 3, T32N, R12E, W.M.; the relocation site on Circle Peak is in Section 36, T32N, R11E, W.M. (Figures 1-3).

Background

The Green Mountain Lookout was built in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps as part of a fire detection system in the North Cascade Mountains. The lookout served this role until 1984 when aerial fire detection became more prevalent. Green Mountain Lookout was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on February 22, 1988, as part of a multiple property nomination prepared by the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Through the years, natural elements have taken their toll on the lookout. Maintenance and rehabilitation efforts have been on-going for several decades, including a major effort in 1950. After a structural analysis was completed in 1994, Green Mountain Lookout was closed to the public due to safety concerns. The lookout underwent repairs in 1999-2000 to address deficiencies to the substructure and catwalk using funds received through the White House Millennium Council's "Saving America's Treasures" grant program. During the winter of 2001-2002, the substructure twisted as a result of the harsh snow and ice conditions; subsequently, it was discovered that the foundation repairs were not adequately designed or executed for the conditions (Figure 4). To avoid the potential complete loss of the lookout during the following winter, the Forest Service undertook a piece-by-piece disassembly of the lookout in August, 2002. Each piece was carefully identified and individually tagged so that the structure could be reassembled in the exact location and position, with all salvageable historical materials preserved. During the next several years while the Forest Service sought funding, volunteers worked to repair and re-glaze the multi-pane windows that comprise a large part of the structure.



The lookout was reassembled at its original location in 2009 secured to a new foundation; the catwalk structure is also new.

In 2010, a lawsuit was filed against the Forest Service alleging violations of the Wilderness Act and the National Environmental Policy Act with the removal and reassembly of the lookout. The Federal District Court issued a decision on Green Mountain Lookout March 27, 2012 in favor of the plaintiff, Wilderness Watch, directing the Forest Service to remove the lookout.

Proposed Undertaking

The Forest proposes to remove the lookout from Green Mountain in one piece. Prior to removal, a new foundation would be constructed on nearby Circle Peak. The existing 14 x 14-foot lookout structure and catwalk base structure would be unbolted from the foundation posts/piers. The lookout would be secured in a wooden frame and supported at the base by each of two robust cross-beams, reducing or eliminating the potential for side-compression during the lift and carry (the south cross-beam is visible in Figure 5). It will require a heavy-lift helicopter to lift and carry the lookout to Circle Peak, where, it would be placed on a pre-constructed foundation footing. Any remaining material at Green Mountain would be removed and the site naturalized, to the extent possible. The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest moved the Stampede Pass Lookout in manner very similar to this in 1974.

The new foundation would consist of leveled cross pieces (most likely, cement) bolted to the bedrock, on which the intact lookout/catwalk structure would be placed and bolted. The lookout would be secured by guy wires at each of four corners, as it was originally on Green Mountain (typical, seen in Figure 5). A copper-wire lightning protection system would be installed as it is currently on the Green Mountain Lookout. We are considering placing the original Green Mountain Osborne fire-finder inside the lookout; however, we would install a map of the Circle Peak "seen area" on the fire-finder, so that it would be relevant in its new location.

Circle Peak is located 6.2 air miles southwest of Green Mountain (Figure 1). The elevation of Green Mountain is 6,500 feet; the elevation of Circle Peak is 5,980 feet. The setting, context, and views of the two locations are similar (Figures 4 - 7). According to Forest Service records and visual inspection, a lookout was constructed on Circle Peak in the 1930s and subsequently burned down by the Forest Service in the 1967. Based on visual inspection of the building platform, it also appears that the top of the peak was blasted to create a building platform prior to the construction of Circle Peak L.O. No documentation pertaining to the construction of the Circle Peak Lookout has been located. Blasting and leveling provided a building platform large enough for a structure. Although still quite small (about 20 x 24 feet, Figure 8), the platform is larger than the Green Mountain building site, where the structure cantilevers over the steep precipice increasing the challenge of protecting from the elements at its current location.

A visual inspection of the Circle Peak building platform resulted in the identification of (window glass, nails, bolts and other hardware, Figure 9) attributed to the burned-down Circle Peak Lookout. No other remains, historic or prehistoric, were observed at the Circle Peak site. Only one historic photograph has been found of this lookout (1947, Figure 10), and although the period of construction (1930s) suggests that it was likely built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, as was the existing Green Mountain Lookout, it did not have the revised hip-roof configuration, but rather a gable roof design.

Tribal Consultation and Public Scoping

The Forest initiated consultation with letters to the Sauk-Suiattle, Swinomish, Stillaguamish, Tulalip and Upper Skagit Indian Tribes on April 29, 2013, and published notice of our intended action in the Federal Register on May 3, 2013 (Volume 78, No. 85), beginning a 30 day comment period; a second notice extending the public scoping period for 30 days was published on June 3, 2013. The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe requested consultation with the Darrington District Ranger, which is on-going. The Forest has been aware, through consultation for past projects, of the Sauk-Suiattle Tribes interest in gathering cedar materials from the lower slopes of Circle Peak. Efforts to ensure the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe's interests are being addressed will continue throughout the project analysis.

Finding of Adverse Effect and Proposed Resolution

Relocating the Green Mountain Lookout to Circle Peak would adversely affect its integrity of location. To comply with the Summary Judgment, I do not see a feasible alternative to preserve the historic property, other than to relocate it outside of Wilderness. To mitigate the adverse effects, I am proposing the lookout be relocated intact to nearby Circle Peak, which possesses a similar character, setting, feeling and general environment. Circle Peak is a high-elevation peak in the Cascade Mountains, with a remote feel and far-reaching views of the Suiattle River valley and the surrounding mountains. Like Green Mountain, it is accessible only by hiking trail.

During World War II, Green Mountain was used as part of an Aircraft Warning System (AWS) to spot enemy planes. Although this association would be lost in the relocation, it is not integral to the qualities that make Green Mountain Lookout eligible for the National Register; there is no evidence that any enemy planes were ever reported by the lookout on Green Mountain. We could not locate documentation that Circle Peak Lookout was used as part of the AWS.

National Register Status

I am requesting consideration that the lookout may remain on the National Register during and after the move, if the project is implemented as described in this letter [36 CFR 60.14(b)(2)]. I have also forwarded documentation to the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer, and anticipate development of a memorandum of agreement pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b).

Thank you for your consideration of this petition. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jan Hollenbeck, Forest Archaeologist and Heritage Program Manager, at 425-783-6025 or jhollenbeck@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Eberlien
FOREST SUPERVISOR

cc: Peter Forbes, District Ranger

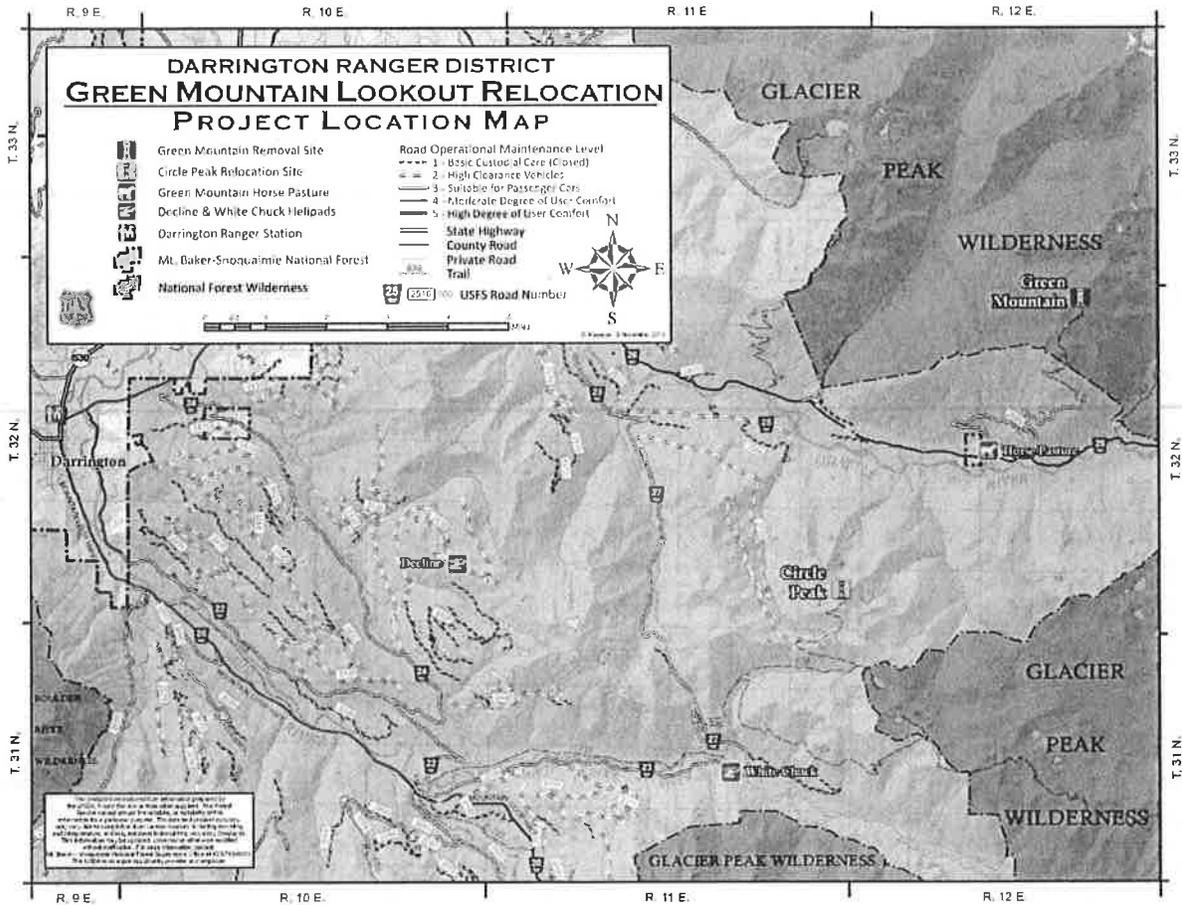


Figure 1. Project Location Map – east of Darrington, Washington, approximately 70 miles northeast of Seattle.

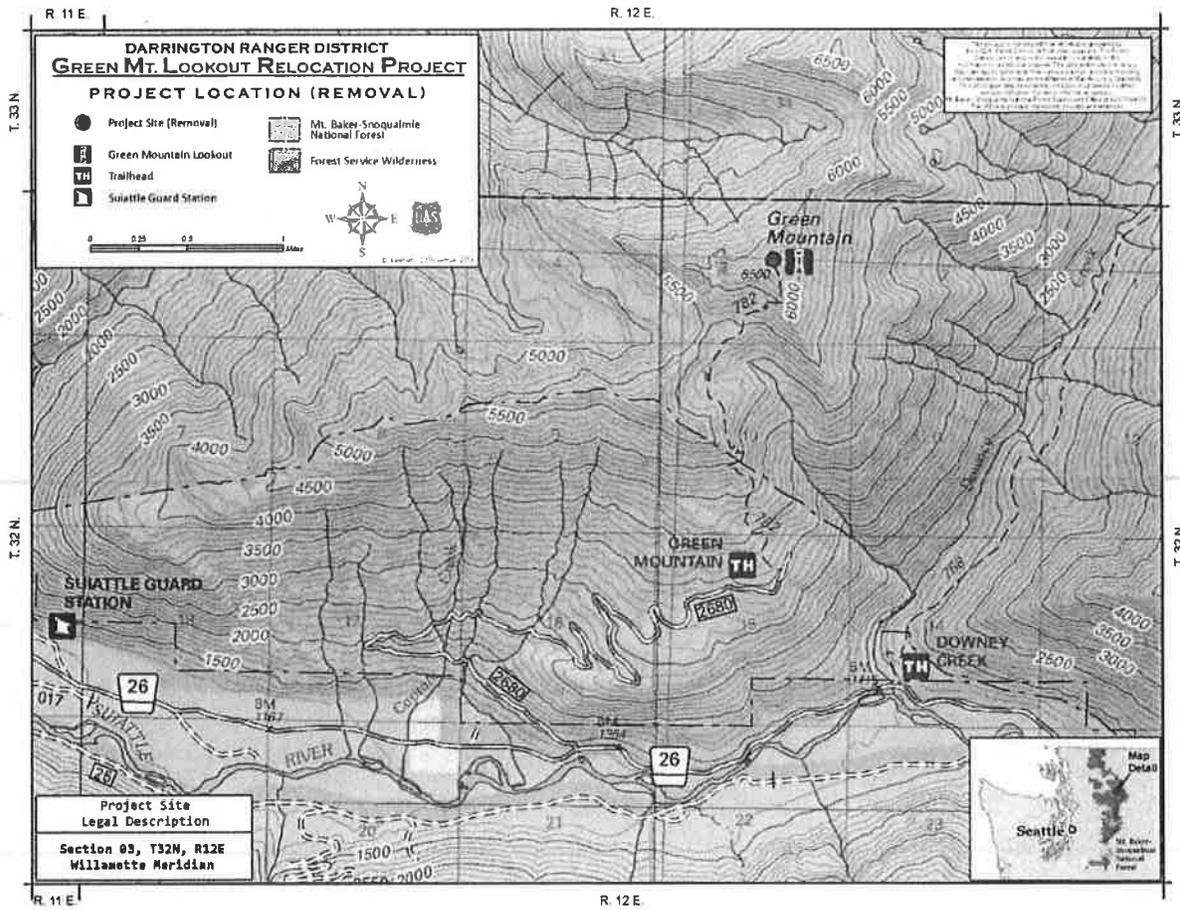


Figure 2. Green Mountain Lookout (removal) site location: T32N, R12E, Section 3. USGS 7.5' Downey Mountain Quad.

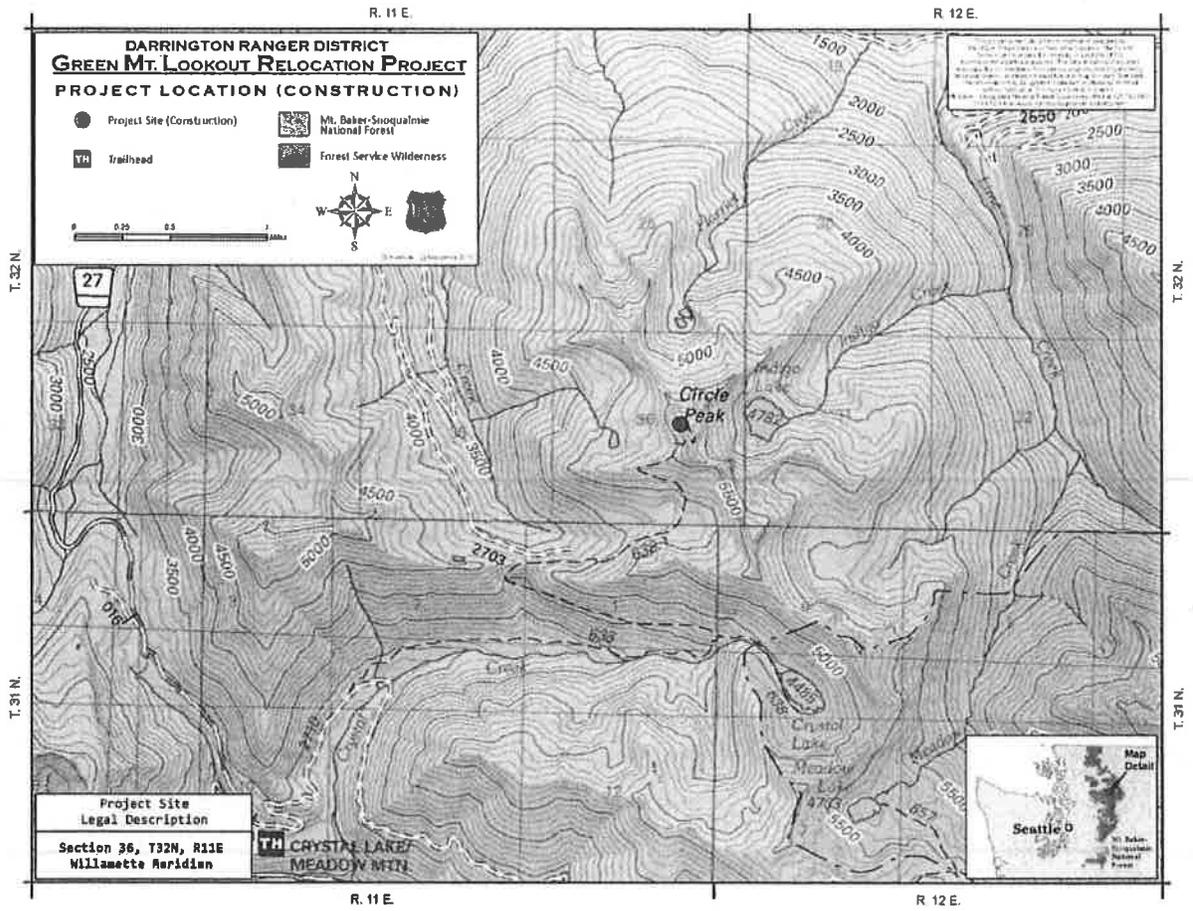


Figure 3. Circle Peak (construction) site location: T32N, R11E, Section 36. USGS 7.5' Pugh Mountain Quad.



Figure 4. Green Mountain Lookout aerial view of south elevation and foundation damage, view to northeast, July 2, 2002. (HiLine Helicopters photograph).



Figure 5. Green Mountain Lookout south elevation, in its current condition, after substructure and catwalk were replaced (stairway not completed), also freshly painted, July 2010 . (Gary Paull, Forest Service photograph).



Figure 6. Aerial view of Circle Peak, view northeast across the Suiattle River toward Green Mountain. Circle Peak in center of photo, Green Mountain, upper left. 9/10/2013 (Gary Paull, Forest Service photograph).



Figure 7. Aerial view of Circle Peak view to north. Mt. Baker in the background. 9/10/2013 (Gary Paull, Forest Service photograph).



Figure 8. Green Mountain Lookout , 1971 Forest Service photograph. View to north. Mt. Baker in the far-ground, left of lookout.



Figure 9. Circle Peak lookout site view to southwest 9/12/2013 (Curtis Spalding, Forest Service photograph).



Figure 10. Hardware, nails, bolts, melted glass: remains of Circle Peak Lookout, on Circle Peak project construction site 9/12/2013 (Adrienne Hall, Forest Service photograph).



Figure 11. Circle Peak Lookout. Photograph from Forest Service historical files, Darrington Ranger Station, identified as "Circle Lookout, 1947. "