NORTHWEST MONTANA CHAPTER - FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION
RECEIVES GRANT

Montana History Foundation Awards Grant for Kalispell Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Montana History Foundation has awarded the Northwest Montana Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association a $3400 grant to support a major restoration project this summer at Mud Lake Lookout, on Spotted Bear Ranger District in the Bob Marshall Wilderness on the Flathead National Forest.

The lookout, no longer used for fire detection, has been subject to harsh weather at high elevation for 85 years. An initial project at the lookout last summer identified issues with the lookout foundation settling at the corners, and one wall buckling. It is in need of repairs to assure that it retains its integrity for the coming decades.

Due to the lookout's remoteness, this project presents logistical challenges: the volunteer crew will have a 2 ½ day hike (23 miles) each way to the work site, and all materials and equipment will be packed in by an outfitter. The MHF grant will support the 10-day project to include: jacking up and rebuilding the rock pads supporting the sills, re-leveling the lookout, and rebuilding the west wall, all to make the structure square/plumb.

The work will be accomplished by hand, according to wilderness ethics and historical standards in partnership with District Personnel. When completed, the lookout will again be suitable for use for fire detection if needed, and may be incorporated into the existing Backcountry Historical District, listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

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