

Two Historic Forest Service Structures Receive Needed Restoration Work

Two historic Forest Service buildings now used as rental cabins received some much-needed maintenance work this summer. The structures—Fairview Lookout and Musick Guard Station—are both located in the remote Bohemia Mining District, in the Cottage Grove Ranger District of Oregon’s Umpqua National Forest. The repairs to both buildings were funded in part by Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, which aims to support regional economies by hiring local workers for improvement projects on public lands.



A Kunert employee works on the roof of Fairview Lookout against a backdrop of distant hills and mountains.

Fairview Lookout

Fairview Lookout is an active fire watchtower during the peak fire season, usually August to September. But during the early summer and fall it doubles as a rental cabin, offering visitors a unique overnight experience in a 14 x 14 foot room perched atop its 53-foot timber tower, built in 1972. Its name is an understatement; at an elevation of 5,933 feet, the panoramic view from the lookout is stunning, and on a clear day visitors can see mountains up to 90 miles away. But the rugged location also takes a toll on the tower, which is battered by icy storms during the long winter.

“The tower was definitely in need of repair,” said Kayli Barber, a facilities engineer for the Umpqua who coordinated the work contract. “We’re grateful the project received the necessary funding from Title II.” Perhaps the most noticeable change is the new paint, which is a light blue-gray chosen to match both the sky and the structure’s historical color. The lookout also received a new roof, upgraded propane appliances, renovated solar panels, and relocated safety valve for the propane gas line. The security hatch used to access the tower was replaced as well, along with the pulley system that opens it.

Kunert Electric, a contracting company out of nearby Roseburg, Oregon, repaired the lookout in a month. Employee Jon Birk worked on the tower’s new roof and rebuilt the hatch’s pulley system; he’s done a lot of contracting work for government agencies and really enjoys jobs on public lands. “The scenery is so nice, it’s almost like being on vacation,” he said.



Painting at Fairview Lookout. The insert shows how worn the old paint had become.



Larry Dobson with employees.

Musick Guard Station

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Musick Guard Station was constructed in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was named after the nearby Musick Mine, which was one of the area’s most bountiful gold mining claims in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. Originally serving as a barracks for wildland firefighting crews, it is now used as a recreational rental cabin.

The rustic cabin received a new wood stove, chimney, and flue system, and a new roof from Roseburg subcontracting company Dobson Roofing. Owner Larry Dobson had to scale its sharply pitched gable to cut new wood shingles to size. “It’s a historic building,” he explained, “so the repairs have to be done ‘in like kind’ in relation to its original form and materials.” With its renovations complete, the cabin is once again ready to welcome guests, while still appearing true to its traditional construction.



Roof reshingling at Musick Guard Station.



Musick’s new wood stove

Project Stats: Recreation Rental Repairs

Title II funding:	\$34,650
Employs:	approx. 10 people from Kunert Electric Dobson Roofing
Project:	Infrastructure Mntnce.
Year awarded:	2009



Secure Rural Schools
And Community
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Kelly S. Miller
Information Assistant
Umpqua National Forest
2900 NW Stewart Parkway
Roseburg, OR 97471
541-957-3200
2012

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