

## Black Rock Fire Lookout



### Description of the Historic Place

This circa 1928 one-storey twelve by twelve foot square plan fire lookout has a medium pitch pyramid roof and wood shingle siding. It is located on the summit of Black Rock Mountain, which is on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains in the Ghost River area.

### Heritage Value

The Black Rock Fire Lookout is significant for its association with the activity of forest fire detection, for its design, and for its association with the theme of the development of the forest industry and forest fire protection in the M.D. of Bighorn.

The Black Rock Fire Lookout is significant for its association with the activity of forest fire detection. The Black Rock Fire Lookout was in use from the time of its construction circa 1928 until it was permanently closed in 1950. Fires were reported by radio, and fire locations were identified by triangulation from two or more lookouts.

The Black Rock Fire Lookout is significant for its fire lookout design. The lookout has a twelve foot square footprint and is open on all sides to permit a panoramic view of forest lands in all directions, including the Ghost River and Waiparous Creek Valleys. This type of fire lookout is known as a cupola. This type of lookout was intended for observation only; the fire observer would not have lived at a lookout cupola. In 1996 the shingles on the roof and the sides were replaced. The fire lookout structure may have had window casings and sashes that have since been removed.

The Black Rock Fire Lookout is significant for its association with the theme of the development of the forest industry and forest fire protection in the M.D. of Bighorn. The Black Rock Fire Lookout was constructed circa 1928, and was the second-highest of the first generation of lookouts at 2463 metres above sea level. Its elevation was a hindrance, however, as the lookout often experienced cloudy or stormy weather that

obscured the view. When a section of the trail leading to the lookout collapsed in 1950, rather than repairing it, the Black Rock Fire Lookout was closed at the end of the season and replaced with the nearby Mockingbird Fire Lookout.

### Character Defining Elements

The character defining elements as expressed in the form, massing, and materials of the circa 1928 one-storey fire lookout include:

- The twelve by twelve foot square plan
- The medium pitch pyramid roof with wood shingles
- The random width wood shingle exterior cladding
- The original window openings on all sides (window casings removed)
- The original door opening
- Set on concrete blocks
- The exposed rafters
- The trim boards
- The diagonal sheathing under wood shingles
- The location on summit of Black Rock Mountain
- The turnbuckle tie down cables
- The viewsapes looking in all directions from the fire lookout
- The access trail system to the Black Rock Fire Lookout