



News Release Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

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Forest Service commemorates historic Fifield fire lookout tower; invites public to join celebration

Park Falls and Rhinelander, Wis. – September 12, 2006 - On Saturday September 30th, the Forest Service and Fifield Community Action Plan Committee will host a commemoration of the historic Fifield Fire Lookout Tower. The public is invited to join the celebration which is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Participants will gather at the Wintergreen Trail parking area, located near the tower on the north side of State Highway 70, five miles east of the State Highway 13 intersection.



The Fifield Tower was constructed in 1932, a time when wildfires raged across the “cutover” landscape of northern Wisconsin. It served as an observation point, staffed by lookouts, that was part of a broader fire detection and suppression system. There were once 38 of these within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, though today only nine remain standing. The Forest Service is committed to the preservation of this tower, and it is one of two that are being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

As a means of recording historical events that relate to the tower, the Forest Service recently completed an oral history project. This project was funded in part through a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council. The oral history features the stories of two early fire lookouts, a brother and sister, both of whom will be present at the event. A pamphlet that includes their remembrances will be distributed to those who attend celebration. Also, in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, College of Natural Resources, interpretive panels have been developed and placed on-site that tell the story of the Fifield Tower.

The celebration will include a brief informational presentation, a chance to meet and visit with the early fire lookouts, and a short hike to the tower site for those who are interested. Refreshments will be served.

For further information about the Fifield Tower and the celebration, contact Mark Bruhy at (715) 362-1361, or mbruhy@fs.fed.us