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Forest Service

Stanislaus
National Forest

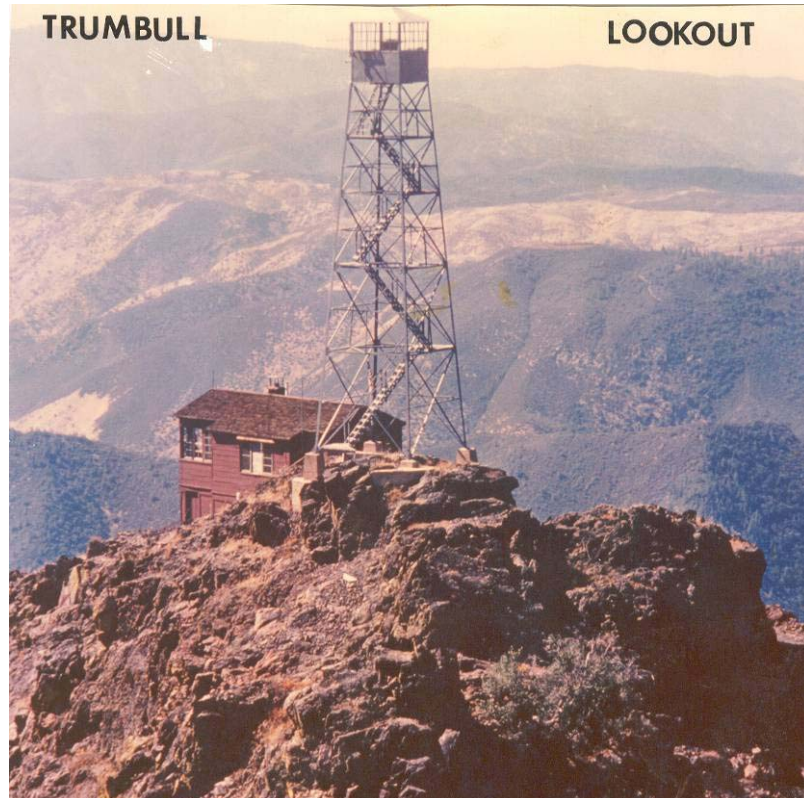


October 2008

Trumbull Peak Cabin Restoration (1665)

Environmental Assessment

Stanislaus National Forest
Groveland Ranger District
Mariposa County, CA



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Introduction

The Forest Service prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This EA discusses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives.

The Stanislaus National Forest proposes to restore the residence cabin at the historic Trumbull Peak Lookout site and provide a recreation opportunity to the public by making the facility available for rental.

Rental will involve placement of the residence cabin into a Forest cabin rental program. Under the authority of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2005, funds generated from the rental shall be retained by the Forest and used for the building's maintenance and operation. This action is needed because, without restoration and maintenance, the historic residence cabin will continue to deteriorate and may be lost completely to weather or vandalism.

The project area is located in Township 3S, Range 19E, Section 10, north of the Merced River, west of Yosemite National Park, and about 16 miles south from Highway 120 (see Figure 1). The project area is within the Stanislaus National Forest, on the Groveland Ranger District.

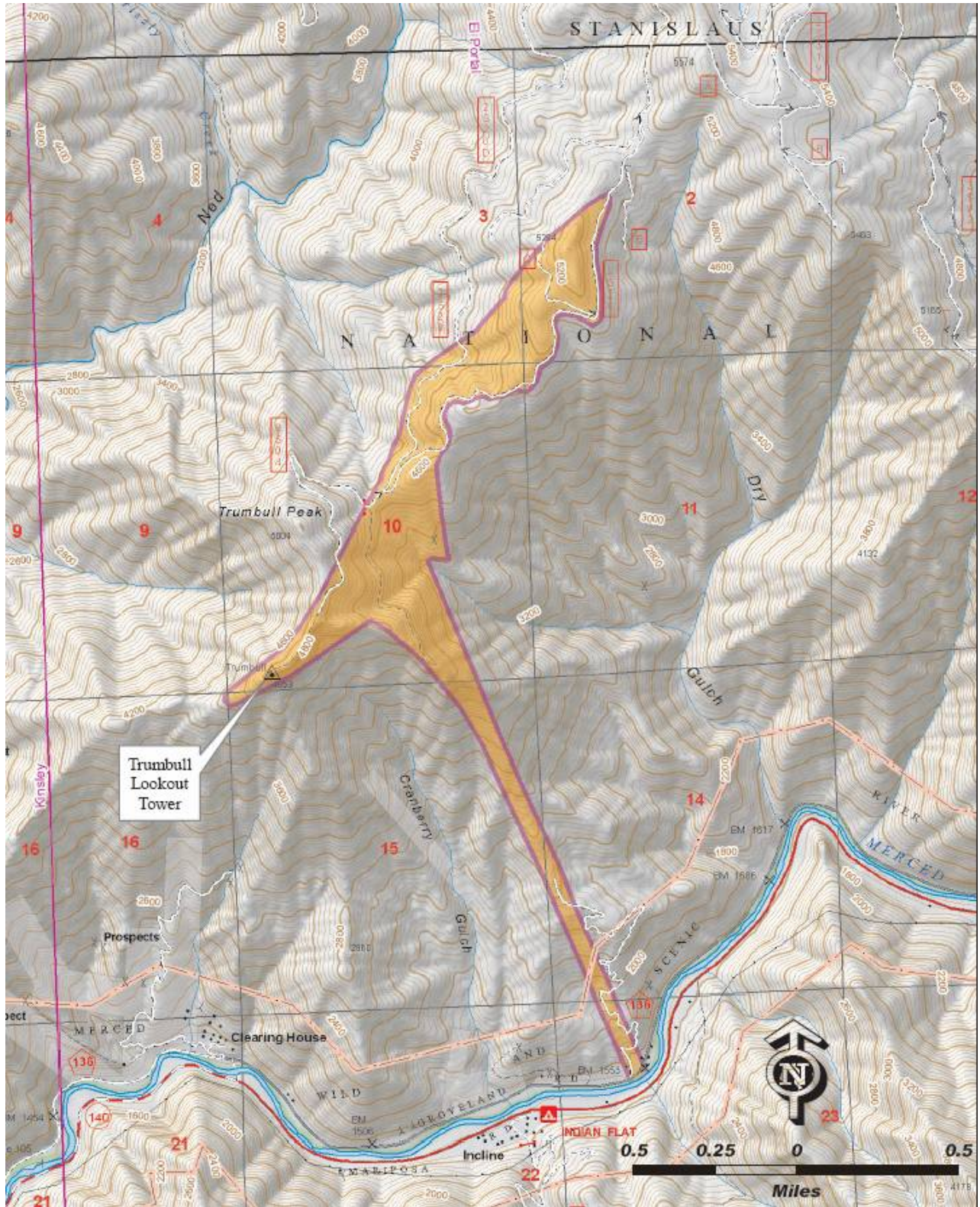
The proposed action may increase visitor use of the Trumbull Peak Special Interest Area, may require more active management of the site, and may affect individuals of the three Sensitive Plant species found on Trumbull Peak.

In addition to the proposed action, the Forest Service also evaluated the No Action Alternative, which is a continuation of current management of the Trumbull Peak Special Interest Area.

Based upon the effects of the alternatives, the responsible official will decide whether or not to pursue or modify the proposed renovation and eventual rental of the Trumbull Peak Lookout Residence through partnerships, grants, and other means. A decision to make the facility available for rent by forest visitors will entail a non-significant Forest Plan amendment which would change the area allocation from a Developed Non-Recreation to a Developed Recreation Site.

Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at the Groveland Ranger District Office in Groveland.

Figure 1. Trumbull Peak Historical and Botanical Special Interest Area; located at Township 3S, Range 19E, SW ¼ of Section 10 (El Portal Quadrangle)



Background

The Forest Service built the Trumbull Peak Fire Lookout site in 1934-1935 with Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) labor, to provide another link in the chain of line-of-sight fire lookouts across the Sierra Nevada. Such lookouts were used for early fire detection, and the Trumbull Peak lookout was especially designed to oversee the fire danger posed by the railroad logging operations on the south end of the Stanislaus National Forest.



Figure 2. Trumbull Peak Lookout Residence Cabin, under construction, 1935. (John Fiske Jr. Photograph Collection). From left to right: John J Fiske (Forest Ranger), Mrs. Ruby Fiske, & Mrs. Hazel M. Barnes. July 6, 1935.

The Trumbull Peak Lookout was staffed seasonally into the early 1970s, and after that time was used intermittently for large fires. For approximately the last thirty years, the Lookout and residence have been unused and subjected to the effects of weather and vandalism. The only use it has received since the 1970's is by the few Forest visitors who hike up to the site on their own or accompanied by Forest Service personnel, in order to enjoy the historic, scenic, and botanic qualities of the area.

The Trumbull Peak Lookout site consists of a trail, two structures (a 45-foot metal fire lookout tower and a wood framed residence cabin), and an associated historic trash scatter. The residence cabin was built perched on a rocky outcrop on the edge of the peak, with a 270 degree view in the lookout room so that the fire lookout could watch for fires from the residence as well as the tower. The structures are only accessible by a two-hundred yard long foot trail, which begins at the terminus of Road 3S04.

The residence cabin has lost all of its doors and windows, as well as a good portion of its exterior siding due to the lack of maintenance and the effects of the weather. It is in extensive need of rehabilitation. The steel lookout tower has also lost most of its windows and the lower flight of steps has been partially removed. It is still in a relatively good condition. The access trail has portions that have eroded down slope and is in need of tread and retaining wall repair. The access road is unimproved, and a high-clearance vehicle is recommended.

Through the years the Forest Service has been actively trying to deter and repair adverse impacts caused by vandals to both the residence cabin and lookout tower, but due to its

isolate location, it is an on-going problem. Vandals have scratched and painted graffiti on the cabin walls, removed siding from the building, littered around the site, and used the lookout tower as target practice.

The Trumbull Peak Lookout site was determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in a 1987 study and publication, "Fire Lookouts of California, Historic Significance Evaluation, USDA Forest Service Region 5" (Thornton, 1987). The site's historical value is based on a number of factors, including the association with the CCC program, the rarity of the tower type, the rugged terrain, and scenic overlooks. The State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the National Register of Historic Places eligibility determination in January of 1990 (letter reference #USFS891005B). As of 2004, the Trumbull Peak Lookout is also listed on the National Historic Lookout Register (#US285, CA19), a private initiative sponsored by the American Resources Group, a conservation service organization.



Figure 3. View into Yosemite Valley from Trumbull Peak

The Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) established Trumbull Peak as a Historic and Botanic Special Interest Area (SIA), to recognize and protect the unique features of the 150 acre site. The SIA contains valuable remains of historic railroad logging activity from 1923-1942, including two railroad camps and the north-side incline, the CCC-era fire lookout site, and three Sensitive Plant species (*Allium yosemitense*, *Eriophyllum congdonii*, *Lewisia congdonii*).

The old railroad grades, converted to roads, provide opportunity for hiking and biking, while fishing opportunities can be found in Ned's Gulch and the Merced River. The lookout residence has 360° views of the Merced River canyon, the Sierra National Forest, and almost all the way to the central valley. On a clear day, one can see Yosemite Valley, El Capitan and Half Dome.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the action is to restore historic Trumbull Peak Cabin, create a unique developed recreational opportunity on the Forest by renting the restored cabin to visitors, and use the revenues for the continued care and maintenance of the site. The Stanislaus National Forest is interested in participating in the National Forest cabin rental program; currently the Forest does not have any cabin rentals. Because of its spectacular views and unique history, the Trumbull Peak site offers an outstanding recreation and rental opportunity on the Forest. This proposal would enhance the visitor experience and improve safety on Trumbull Peak, while allowing the Forest Service to creatively manage one of its historic resources for the long term.

This action supports the SIA management emphasis in the Stanislaus National Forest Plan Direction, and supports the Forest's goals of protecting cultural resources and providing a variety of recreational opportunities (Forest Plan Direction, page 5-6). The SIA emphasis is "to protect and manage unique geological, scenic, historical, archaeological, botanical and memorial features, to make educational opportunities available and preserve the integrity of the special interest feature for which the areas were established" (Forest Plan Direction, page 117). This proposal includes a non-significant Forest Plan amendment changing the management area allocation from Developed Non-Recreation to Developed Recreation.

Because neither the lookout nor the residence has been used in approximately thirty years, the buildings have suffered from the weather and vandalism. The residence is in need of restoration and maintenance to protect the resource from further damage and improve the safety of the area. The lookout tower (currently closed) is also in need of minor restoration work. However, because the tower structure is not being adversely impacted by the weather or non-use, it shall not be restored as part of the Trumbull Peak Cabin Restoration Project and shall remain closed, unless a future tower restoration project ensures steps are taken to provide greater safety for anyone wishing to climb the tower.

Under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) it is the Forest Service's responsibility to ensure that site's determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is protected from vandalism, theft, and destruction. According to the NHPA and the Forest Service Manual, it is preferable for federally owned buildings to not only be used, but also be used by the agency that owns them. Continued use of the building would deter vandals and promote maintenance.

Currently the Forest Service offers the public rental and use programs for historic buildings, residences, cabins, and fire lookouts at sites across the nation. Over one hundred such rentals exist in the northwest states alone; a number of lookouts and cabins are available for rent in California. To date, no cabins or lookouts are available for rent on the Stanislaus National Forest. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2005 authorizes the Forest Service to rent historical cabins and retain the recreation fee revenues for building maintenance and operation. The cabin rental program has proven extremely popular; most available rentals are reserved months in advance and generate sufficient funds to maintain the historic properties. Trumbull Peak is expected to generate the same interest from the public.

Proposed Action

The action proposed by the Forest Service to meet the purpose and need is to restore the lookout residence and include the facility in a Forest cabin rental program, authorized by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2005. This program will allow the public to rent the Trumbull cabin for overnight stays for a fee.

The Trumbull cabin will be restored in order to meet standards for adequate and safe shelter, but will be done in a way that maintains its historic character and the visual setting. The trail from the road to the site would receive minor improvements that would increase the safety of hikers. The fire lookout tower, currently closed, will remain on site but closed as a safety precaution. Further steps may be taken to deter visitors from attempting to climb the tower and from looting or adversely affecting the adjacent historic trash scatter. Additionally, a restroom will be installed on site, the foot-trail will be improved, and interpretive signage may be added to help visitors appreciate the unique historic and botanic values of the area. For a complete description of the proposed action, see the section detailing Alternative 1, Proposed Action at page 7.

Forest Plan Amendment

The proposed action includes the following Forest Plan Amendment to replace the Trumbull Peak Historical and Botanical Special Interest Area (SIA) description (Forest Plan Direction, page 117) and to replace the SIA map (Forest Plan Direction, page 122) with the map shown as Figure 1.

Located on the Groveland Ranger District in T.2S., R.19E., Sections 3, 9, 10, 15, 16 and 22. The area includes the upper slopes of Trumbull Peak, the Trumbull Peak Lookout, a railroad spur and two logging inclines. The entire area covers 150 acres, of which 120 acres are unsuitable for timber management. The historical features date back to the 1920s. The abandoned inclines total about 1-3/4 miles in length. A railroad spur to the longest incline, overlooking the Merced River Canyon, is about 4,000 feet long. The abandoned Trumbull Peak Lookout tower is located on a ridge south of Trumbull Peak at the end of a 1/4 mile trail. The adjacent Trumbull Peak Lookout tender's cabin is a developed recreation site, available for public use and rental. The area includes populations of three sensitive plants: *Allium yosemitense*, *Eriophyllum congdonii*, and *Lewisia congdonii*.

Decision Framework

Given the purpose and need and the potential effects of the proposal, the Responsible Official (Forest Supervisor) reviews the proposed action and the alternatives while choosing whether to:

1. Select the proposed action and implement the action as written, including amending the Forest Plan;
2. Modify the proposed action and/or implement a modified version of the project, including amending the Forest Plan (if necessary), or;
3. Select the no action alternative and defer the project and Forest Plan amendment to a later date.

Public Involvement

Beginning in 2003, the Forest Service listed this proposal in the Stanislaus National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA). In addition to mailing the SOPA to numerous individuals, organizations and agencies, the SOPA is listed on the Stanislaus National Forest website, www.fs.fed.us/r5/stanislaus/projects/sopa . On May 4, 2006 a scoping notice was sent to approximately thirty individuals and organizations, and posted on the Stanislaus National Forest website. Several comments were received in response to the scoping notice, expressing support for restoring the cabin and concerns about renting the cabin to the public.

Issues

The Forest Service separated the issues into two groups: significant and non-significant issues. Issues are disagreements with the proposed action based on anticipated undesirable effects cause directly or indirectly by implementing the proposed action. Non-significant issues are identified as those: 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations require this delineation in Sec. 1501.7, "...identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review (Sec. 1506.3)..." Remaining issues are considered significant issues and may lead to new alternatives or mitigation measures that address them.

The Forest Service received several responses on its proposal during public scoping, which raised non-significant issues. Among the issues received were concerns about safety from lightning strikes, general visitor safety, day-use visitor access to site, cost-effectiveness of project, and concerns about how the project may impact the sensitive plants. These concerns are addressed in the proposed action.

Alternatives

This section describes and compares the alternatives considered for the Trumbull Peak Cabin Restoration. It includes a description of each alternative considered and pictures that help illustrate the project site and proposal. This section also presents the alternatives in comparative form, so as to highlight the differences between each alternative and provide a clear basis for reasoned choice among options by the Responsible Official and the public.

Alternative 1 (Proposed Action)

The Forest Service proposes to restore the historic cabin for inclusion in a Forest cabin rental program. This program allows the public to rent the Trumbull cabin for overnight stays, for a set fee. The public would make reservations for the cabin through the national recreation reservation system, a booking tool that can be accessed online or by phone. Most of the fees collected for the rental would be returned to the Forest for continued maintenance of the Trumbull Peak site. The proposed action also includes a minor non-significant Forest Plan amendment changing the management area allocation from Developed Non-Recreation to Developed Recreation (see Appendix A). Upon approval of the proposed action, the Forest

would make application for Capital Improvement Process funding and seek grant funding and partnerships to implement the restoration effort.

The Trumbull Peak Cabin would be restored to meet standards for adequate and safe shelter, including those associated with lightning strike and climate protection, but restoration would be done in a way that maintains its historic character and visual setting. As a safety precaution, visitors would be made aware of the danger of hot and fast-moving fires in area and their limited escape routes. They will also be made aware of appropriate actions to take in case of a lightning storm. In the event of an emergency that requires helicopter evacuation, the visitor shall be made responsible for the cost of rescue.

The original outhouse has long since been removed. Therefore, a restroom would be installed on site. Because Trumbull Peak is a rocky outcropping, a standard vault toilet is impractical. Instead, a solar composting toilet is proposed. Human waste is recycled through an aerobic process by microorganisms into environmentally safe compost, which will be as necessary, probably several times annually. Similar outhouses are used throughout the United States in remote areas and where soil conditions are not suitable for conventional septic systems.

Additionally, the trail would be improved and interpretive signage may be added to help visitors respect and appreciate the unique historic and botanic values of the area. Warning signage may also be added at dangerous spots to remind visitors what precautions to take. The signs will be a physical reminder of what will be outlined in an information package given to renters that will outline the history of the site, expected behavior, and emergency procedures.

Opportunities for public access will remain unchanged. The fire lookout tower, currently closed, will remain closed as a safety precaution. Further steps may be taken to deter visitors from climbing the tower. Lastly, some road and parking lot improvements would be done in order to provide a safer visitor access. There are no plans to upgrade the road access. The road will be maintained to a standard of high clearance 4WD vehicles.

Specific management actions and practices are described below:

Structure Restoration

- Restore cabin's structural features, including the roof, siding, walls, floors, doors, windows, cabinets, and other items as necessary.
- Furnish the cabin with cots, chairs, and tables.
- Require visitors to bring in their own water and pack out all refuse.
- Prevent public access to the fire lookout tower for safety reasons. Specific actions may include the removal of stairs, installation of barriers, signing, locking or welding the door closed, and educating visitors.
- Install a restroom facility adjacent to the residence site.

Site Improvements

- Rehabilitate the access trail, from the end of Road 3S04 to the lookout residence. Portions of the trail need tread and retaining wall repair or replacement.
- Develop and install interpretive signs at certain points along the trail or near the cabin, to increase visitors' understanding and appreciation of the unique history and botanical features of this site.
- Construct an outdoor picnic table and fire ring or pit on the site.
- Consider renovations which would provide access for persons with disabilities wherever possible; when consistent with the retention of the historic character of the site and protection of the sensitive plant species.
- Improve the parking area at the trailhead, including delineation of the area using rock or signs.
- Improve road access by cutting back roadside brush.



Figures 4 and 5. The Post Creek Lookout Station, Shasta-Trinity National Forest. This 1934 CCC-constructed cabin is the same kit as the Trumbull Peak cabin. The Forest Service has restored this facility. The Post Creek Lookout Station is now a recreation rental available to the public. Under Alternative 1, the Stanislaus National Forest would restore the Trumbull Peak cabin and rent it to the public in a similar manner. Note that while these cabins were built from the same kit, the Trumbull Peak Cabin was adapted to its steep site through the addition of a storage area below the lookout room.

In order to eliminate, reduce, minimize, or alleviate possible adverse effects to the Historic Resources and Sensitive Plants, the management requirements described below shall be implemented during structure restoration, site improvement, and/or rental activities:

Heritage Resources

- All work will conform to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. The Forest will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer, pursuant to 36 CFR 800 (abiding by the *Programmatic Agreement Among the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, California State Historic Preservation Officer, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Historic Properties Managed by the National Forests of the Sierra Nevada, California* [Sierra PA], signed October 1996).

- Flag and avoid the historic trash scatter for protection during project implementation.
- Educate renters on the significance of the adjacent trash scatter and the applicable laws that protect the historic resources.
- Although the trash scatter does not retain objects of significant monetary value, it does have historic value. Monitoring of the trash scatter's condition should take place once the cabin is rented to ensure it does not suffer adverse impact from renters. If it is found that the trash scatter is being adversely affected, such as through looting or artifact movement, protective measures should be put in place, such as the installation of a barrier (ex. barbed-wire fence or chicken-wire dome) and signage.

Sensitive Plants

- Sensitive Plant occurrences should be avoided to the maximum extent possible. Avoidance will include:
 - Avoid walking through Sensitive Plant areas off the trail.
 - Flag all Sensitive Plant areas prior to beginning any ground-disturbing work.
 - Do not stage or store building materials in Sensitive Plant areas.
 - To the maximum extent possible, complete trail maintenance operations during the dormant or non-growing stage of the Sensitive Plant species at the site.
 - Do not dispose rock or soil removed from the trail in Sensitive Plant areas.
- Several spots along the trail boast Sensitive Plant species (*A. yosemitense*, *E. congdonii*, and *L. congdonii*).
 - The District Botanist will be consulted if trail maintenance must be done in sensitive plant areas.
 - If possible, the bulbs (*A. yosemitense*) or stems (*L. congdonii*) shall be salvaged during their dormant periods and relocated to suitable habitat nearby.
- To reduce the likelihood of introducing new infestations of noxious weeds or invasive, non-native plant species into Sensitive plant habitat in the project area:
 - All equipment, building materials, and clothing (especially footwear) should be free of soil, mud (wet or dry), seeds, vegetative matter, or other debris that could contain weed seeds.
- To ensure that protective measures are sufficient:
 - Monitoring should take place during project activities and directly after project activities are completed in the vicinity of Sensitive Plants.

Forest Plan Amendment

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unsuitable for timber management. The historical features date back to the 1920s. The abandoned inclines total about 1-3/4 miles in length. A railroad spur to the longest incline, overlooking the Merced River Canyon, is about 4,000 feet long. The abandoned Trumbull Peak Lookout tower is located on a ridge south of Trumbull Peak at the end of a 1/4 mile trail. The adjacent Trumbull Peak Lookout tender's cabin is a developed recreation site, available for public use and rental. The area includes populations of three sensitive plants: *Allium yosemitense*, *Eriophyllum congdonii*, and *Lewisia congdonii*.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Under the No Action alternative, current management plans would continue to guide management of the project area. No regular maintenance activities are occurring on either the lookout or residence, and no restoration or rehabilitation activities would be implemented to accomplish project goals. It is unlikely that road work would be done on the route to Trumbull Peak, unless required for other Forest projects.



Figures 6 and 7. Current condition of Trumbull Peak Residence Cabin and Lookout Tower. The facilities would remain in the same condition under Alternative 2.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study

Federal agencies are required by NEPA to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments suggested several alternatives for achieving the purpose and need.

When the project proposal was originally developed, the Forest considered using universal design as part of the project design, in order to provide persons with disabilities access to the site. After further examination and consideration of the proposal, the Forest determined the Trumbull Peak Lookout site would not be made fully universally accessible. The determination was based upon the adverse effects this alternative would have on the three sensitive plant species and the impact such accommodation would have on the historic character of the site.

The Trumbull Peak Lookout site is connected to the parking area by a trail which is located on the side of a steep lava ridge. Walking along the trail, visitors can only but amaze themselves at how difficult it must have been to transport building materials across such rugged and steep terrain.

This 1303 foot long trail varies in width from 12 to 6 inches. Although the parking area and cabin site are nearly the same elevation, the trail has several steep pitches (greater than 10%), as it undulates up and down.

To make the trail wheelchair accessible, a 32 inch minimum width is needed. In addition, the grade would need to be reduced. According to the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guide (FSORAG), slopes up to 1:10 (10%) are permitted, but resting intervals are required every 100 feet (30meters). Compliance with these regulations would cause substantial harm to the sensitive species growing on the cliff and would adversely affect the access trail’s rugged character.

Comparison of Alternatives

This section compares the alternatives, in terms of how each alternative responds to the purpose and need of the project, and the estimated implementation costs and revenues.

Table 1. Comparison: How the Alternatives Respond to the Purpose and Need.

Purpose and Need Objective	Alternative 1 (Proposed Action)	Alternative 2 (No Action)
Restore and maintain the historic residence cabin	The cabin would be restored under this alternative, and the Forest will work to maintain it over the long term through cooperative partnerships and volunteer work.	The cabin would not be restored under this alternative, and no maintenance work is anticipated.
Create a developed recreation opportunity	The public would be able to rent the cabin for overnight stays on Trumbull Peak under this alternative. Trail repairs would make the hike safer. A toilet facility would be added on site. Although the cabin will be rented, the site will continue to be open to the public as a day-use type of site.	The recreation opportunity at Trumbull would not change. No trail maintenance or cabin restoration would be done. The site would remain a nondeveloped, day-use type of site, without a toilet facility.
Establish a cabin rental program on the Stanislaus National Forest	This alternative would establish a cabin rental program on the Forest. Generated revenues will be used to maintain the site and operate the program.	This alternative would not establish a cabin rental program on the Forest at Trumbull Peak.
Amend the Forest Plan	Included.	Not included.

Implementation Costs and Revenues

The Forest Service estimates that implementing the proposed action will cost between \$38,000 and \$48,000. Once restored and available for rent, the cabin would begin generating revenue. The Forest Service estimates that the cabin will rent for \$45.00-\$70.00 per night. Based upon the assumption that the cabin would be reserved three nights a week between mid-May and October, the cabin would generate between \$3105 and \$4485 annually.

Implementing the No Action alternative would not create any new expense for the Forest. No revenue would be generated from the No Action alternative.

Environmental Consequences

This section summarizes the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Alternatives on the several resources, allowing for a comparison between Alternatives. Several assessments and evaluations were prepared for the proposed action. The District Botanist prepared a Biological Evaluation for Sensitive Plants and a Noxious Weed Assessment. The District Wildlife Biologist prepared a Biological Evaluation/Assessment and a Management Indicator Species (MIS) Report. These reports are located in the project file. In addition, the District Archaeologist prepared a Cultural Resource Site Rehabilitation and Site Condition Assessment Report, which is located in the heritage project files.

Direct Effects

Alternative 1

- Heritage:** The Trumbull Peak residence cabin will be restored to a safe and usable condition. This work will be done in a manner that maintains the cabin's historical integrity and its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Because the work will be done under supervision of the Forest's Heritage staff, and in accordance to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* and the *Sierra Programmatic Agreement*, the project will have beneficial effects on the resource. The establishment of a rental fee that will utilize the revenue for the building's maintenance and operation will ensure that the building does not deteriorate after restoration work is completed.
- Botany:** The proposed action may affect individuals of the three Sensitive Plant species at Trumbull Peak, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for any of these species. The implementation of the proposed action imparts a low risk of noxious weed introduction to the Trumbull Peak site.
- Recreation:** The proposed action creates a new developed recreation opportunity in a remote setting on the Forest. The action is expected to increase recreation at the Trumbull Peak site, benefiting the Forest's recreation program. The proposed action will provide a unique opportunity for small group recreation and may create a stream of revenue sufficient for its maintenance, thus yielding positive socioeconomic effects. Because of the increased demand for the site, it is likely to require more active management to maintain access to the site and the cabin's restored condition. The site would not be fully accessible to persons with some disabilities.
- Wildlife:** No adverse effect to threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife species and no measurable effects on MIS are anticipated.

Alternative 2

- Heritage:** The No Action alternative would have an adverse impact to the heritage resource. Without steps to restore and maintain the site, the historic cabin is anticipated to deteriorate, and may eventually collapse. Without a plan for use of the site, vandalism is anticipated to continue.
- Botany:** No effect to botanical resources is anticipated.
- Recreation:** No effect to recreation resources is anticipated.
- Wildlife:** No adverse effect to threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife species and no measurable effects on MIS are anticipated.

Indirect Effects

Alternative 1

- Heritage:** The frequent occupancy and the implementation of the proposed action management requirements are expected to decrease the level of vandalism occurring at the site. The success of the Trumbull Peak proposal may allow the Forest to pursue similar actions for other historical structures, benefiting the Forest's heritage resources.
- Botany:** Minimal to no indirect effect to botanical resources is anticipated. Construction activities should not modify the water or soil relationships on the peak to any noticeable extent. It is not expected that the increase in traffic to the Lookout site would be so large as to produce a noticeable detriment to the plants in or immediately next to the trail.
- Recreation:** Additional tourism and recreation business may be generated in the area, as visitors to Yosemite National Park discover Trumbull Peak and other attractions in the gateway area (on the Forest and in the surrounding communities). Such effects could benefit local economies.
- Wildlife:** No indirect adverse effect to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species and no measurable effects on MIS are anticipated.

Alternative 2

- Heritage:** No indirect effect to heritage resources is anticipated.
- Botany:** No indirect effect to botanical resources is anticipated.
- Recreation:** No indirect effect to recreation resources is anticipated.
- Wildlife:** No indirect adverse effect to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species and no measurable effects on MIS are anticipated.

Cumulative Effects

The construction of the facilities in the 1930s, management over time and natural events (such as fire) has resulted in the current conditions. These conditions are discussed in the Background section on pages 2-3.

Due to the site-specific nature of the proposal, the scope of the affected area is localized within the SIA boundary. Aside from the proposed action, there are no other present or reasonably foreseeable actions that may affect the Trumbull Peak site. In the absence of other actions, the cumulative effects are the sum of the direct and indirect effects of the proposed action on this site. As such, the proposed action is expected to improve the condition of the Trumbull Peak cabin by decreasing the level of vandalism occurring at the site and by using the rental revenue to maintain the site. The proposed action is also expected to improve recreation opportunities on the Groveland Ranger District, potentially drawing more visitors to the Forest and surrounding communities. Success with this effort may lead to growth of cabin rentals on the Forest, and increased visitation is expected to positively impact the local economy. Additionally, the proposed action may adversely affect individuals of three Sensitive Plant species, but not lead to a trend toward Federal listing or threaten the viability of the species. Protective measures in the proposed action have been designed to alleviate or reduce any adverse effects to the Sensitive Plants.

Consultation and Coordination

The Forest Service consulted the following individuals, Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes and non-Forest Service persons during the development of this environmental assessment.

ID TEAM MEMBERS

Jennie Haas, District Botanist

Roy Bridgman, District Wildlife Biologist

Brenda D. Ehmann, Public Service Program Area Leader

Linda Johnstone, District Fuels Officer

Paul Metcalf, District Fire Prevention Officer

Kathy Strain, Forest Archaeologist

Steve Marsh, District Archaeologist

Jonathan Ruhan, District Archaeology Technician

Pam Conners, Forest Historian

Brian Kermeen, Recreation Specialist

Spencer Bleadorn, Recreation Specialist

Meagan Conry, Planning and Environmental Analyst

Priscilla Riefkohl-Guzmán, District Archaeologist and Planning and Environmental Analyst

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES

Lyle Turpin, Mariposa County Supervisor

Mark Thornton, Tuolumne County Supervisor

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

American Indian Council of Mariposa County

Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians

ORGANIZATIONS

Cedar Lodge

Yosemite National Park

National Historic Lookout Register

Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center

Buck Rock Foundation (CA/NV Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association)

Forest Fire Lookout Association

Northern Mariposa History Center

Mariposa County Visitors Bureau

Groveland Museum

Southern Tuolumne County Historical Society

California Conservation Corps.

California Native Plant Society

Central Sierra Audubon Society

Boy Scouts of America

Girl Scouts of America, Muir Trail Council