

McCarthy Point Lookout

Almanor Ranger District

Lassen National Forest



McCarthy Point Lookout was constructed in 1936 by the Civilian Conservation Corps and was used as an observation point for detecting fires from 1937 to the mid 1960s. With the advent of World War II, lookout personnel were trained to spot aircraft in addition to watching for fires. This war time occupation was part of the Aircraft Warning Service (AWS), which organized aircraft spotters all along the West coast. This was a regular lookout function until the end of the war.

McCarthy Point differs from most lookout towers because it is a "cab" perched atop a natural rock outcropping instead of a man made tower. On active lookouts one person is employed from late June to late September. Searching for fires is an all day and sometimes an all night, seven day a week job. Because of the improved technology available in fire prevention and detection McCarthy Point is no longer needed as an active lookout.

Due to the remote location, several years of sporadic use and vandalism, McCarthy became run down. In 1994 the Forest Service hosted a passport In Time (PIT) project to refurbish McCarthy Point. For three years the Forest Service and the PIT volunteers worked diligently to return it (as closely as possible) to its original condition. The Forest Service is always looking for historical information on places like McCarthy Point. If you know of anyone who has information or old photographs please contact the Almanor Ranger District.

McCarthy Point is approximately 3,600 feet above sea level and is located in a very remote area of the Lassen National Forest. It sits on the southern edge of the Mill Creek Rim facing north and overlooking the scenic Mill Creek Canyon and into the Ishi Wilderness. The lookout can be accessed from the east via Highway 32 or from the north via highway 36. See the map on the back for more detailed route information. Both routes are marked with orange diamonds nailed to trees. The access road and the lookout itself are kept locked at all times.

The Ishi Wilderness is nearby and provides many miles of hiking trails and fishing streams. The wilderness is named for the last surviving member of the Yahi Yana Indian tribe. Please contact the Almanor Ranger District if you would like more information or detailed maps on this area. Keep in mind that the foothills can be very inhospitable during the hottest summer months. The closest access to the wilderness is at Black Rock Campground.

Since McCarthy Point is inactive, we are offering the lookout on a rental basis for personal recreation use. The cost is \$60.00 a night for Fridays and Saturdays and \$40.00 a night Sunday through Thursday with a minimum requirement of two nights and a \$200.00 security deposit that will be returned after a favorable inspection of the lookout. The nightly fee is deposited

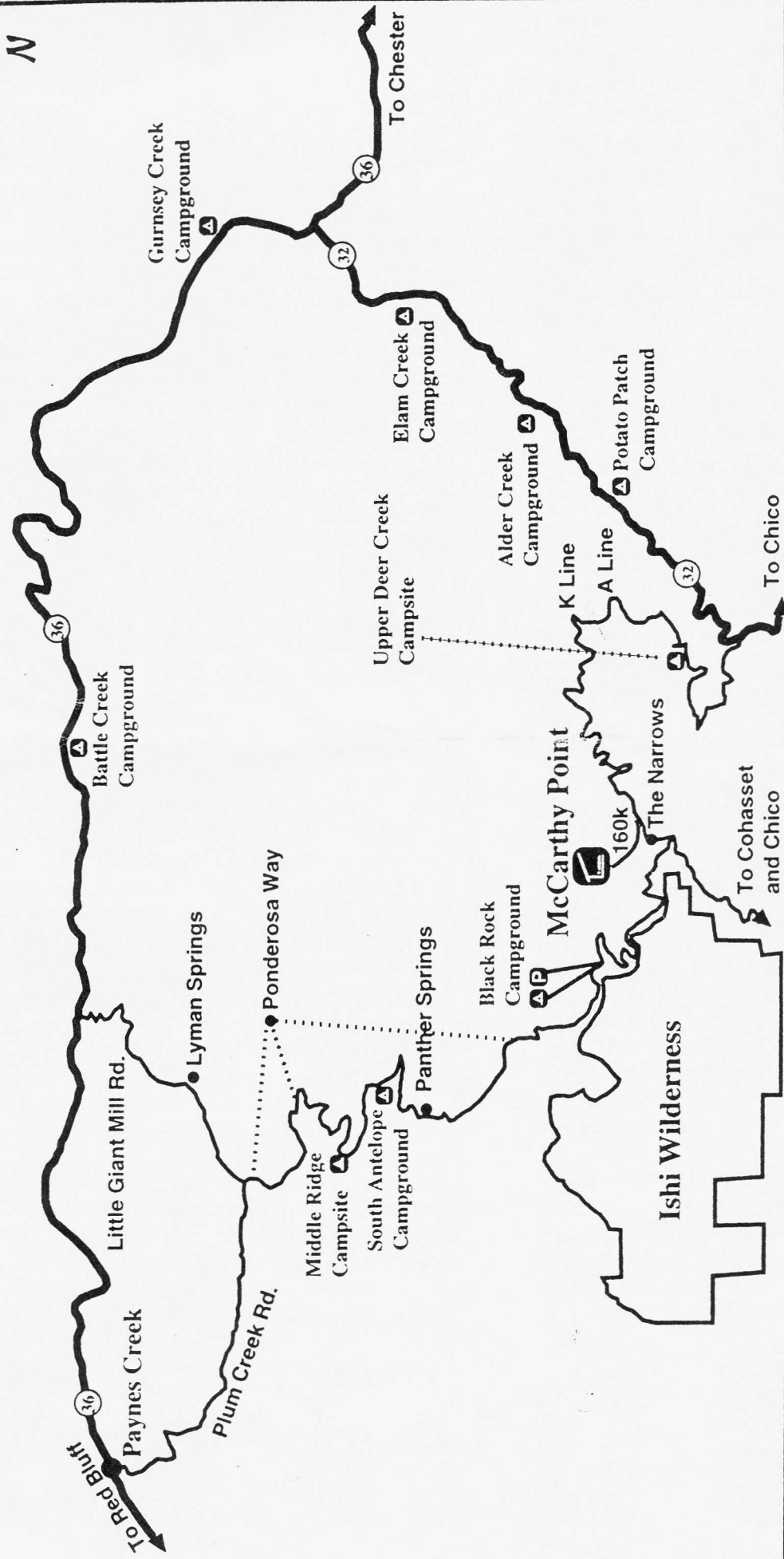
in a cooperative account and is used to maintain the lookout. Reservations for use of the lookout may be made by persons 18 years or older by calling the Almanor Ranger District at 530-258-2141 no sooner than six months in advance of the requested dates.

The lookout is a two room cabin with a kitchen and bedroom. The "bedroom" is surrounded on three sides by windows, has overhead propane lights, two sleeping platforms (about the size of twin beds) and six old style army cots. The kitchen has overhead propane lights, a propane cook stove, a wood stove, double sinks with running water (hot water is not available), a large picnic style table with benches and a portable gas barbecue. The outdoor deck area has benches on two sides and is an ideal area for a family barbecue. Parking is provided at the top of a small hill near the garage. A paved trail approximately 1,000 feet long leads you from the parking area downhill to the lookout. While the trail is intended to be handicapped accessible, you should be aware that it has a long slope and one tight switchback turn. This could be difficult if you have a non-motorized wheelchair. The restroom is located at the parking area not at the lookout.

Safety

- Road conditions can be hazardous after summer storms. If it has been raining it would be wise to call the Ranger Station and get current road conditions. If it is necessary to cancel your reservation due to hazardous road conditions we will be happy to reschedule your stay for another time.
- We recommend that you bring a cell phone with you in case of an emergency.
- Be sure to follow all instructions and safety precautions for the use of propane lights, stove and barbecue posted in the lookout.
- **Campfires are not allowed at any time.**
- There are bears in the area, make sure that all food and garbage are packaged properly and kept inside the lookout. When your stay is over remember to take all trash with you.
- When hiking remember to inspect your body, clothing and pets for ticks as they may carry Lyme's disease.
- Do not feed, handle or disturb the nests of any squirrels, chipmunks or mice as they may carry the Hantavirus or the Plague.
- Always purify drinking water when out in the woods to avoid Giardia.

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Things to take with you

1. Pots, pans, dishes etc.
2. Dish soap, paper towels, garbage bags etc.
3. Matches
4. Sleeping bags etc.
5. Cell Phone
6. Toilet paper
7. Flashlights
8. Map and compass
9. Sunscreen
10. Camera
11. Your copy of the Special Use Permit

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