

ON THE LOOKOUT

From the **National Chairman**
Keith A. Argow
Vienna, Virginia
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New Horizons for 2013 Laying the next steps in our path for the future

2013 promises to be a very good year for FFLA. We are beginning several new projects.

1) Nationwide map of lookouts and former lookout sites: this project needs the help of interested and willing members working on their computer:

- We have an opportunity to develop a nationwide map on the ESRI database that will show every lookout listed on the National Historic Lookout Register or the National Lookout Register (those standing but not yet 50 years old).
www.nhhr.org

- We can also list all former lookout sites: www.fflos.com

- As you drag your mouse anywhere over the US you will find symbols for both standing lookout and the location of former lookouts.

- Click on either symbol and a balloon will show the picture as well as a brief description. In order to do this, we need the latitude and longitude of each lookout or site. Unfortunately, our database does not show this. What we need is for members to volunteer to identify those coordinates and send them in on a list with the name of the lookout. We will do the rest to get the project on line.

2) FFLA is entering into Project 2016: a national project with the U.S. Forest Service and HistoriCorps to restore

5) Insurance: we still have no nationwide liability insurance, but it is not because we are not trying. Underwriters are wary of insuring anyone that works on fire towers, not to mention working on roofs. For those of you who have sent in suggestions.....thank you. We follow up on every one. One day, soon I hope, we will succeed.

As you will see in this issue, the Western Region Summer Meeting held near Kettle Falls, WA was a great success. Rod and Vicki Fosback did an awesome job: good meeting facility, great lookout tours, and outstanding weather! The western directors surprised me with a beautiful plaque and engraved pen and pencil set. I assure you all that I am deeply appreciative! New Mexico Director Mark Gutzman already has great plans for our gathering at Cloudcroft next September. This is the home of Smokey Bear, and lookouts are still important. He already has a web site up: <http://prdp2fs.ess.usda.gov/detail/lincoln/learning/history-culture/?cid=stelprdb5393260>. Take a look and plan to attend now.

Among our leadership news: Big Horn Chapter Chair Buddy Washington will become the new Wyoming Director, replacing Pat Lynch who will now become the Medicine Bow Chapter Chair. In southern California, Curt Waite becomes the Acting Chair of the San Diego-Riverside Chapter.

After completing a major restoration, they opened Boucher Hill Lookout in Palomar Mountain State Park on Labor Day and have already hosted several hundred visitors! Finally, this year we will adopt a new format for our annual meeting of the Board of Directors. It will be a telephone conference. Four of the officers will meet at the -

lookouts. We already know of 50 that need care now, but these will have to be ranked and put into a priority. FFLA's role is primarily manpower and project identification. Directors have already sent in nominations and more are expected.

3) FFLA Website: Webmaster Bill Cobb is developing an entirely new site on a new and faster platform. Preliminary results are impressive. It will also enable us to post more information in a timely manner. Launch is expected by February 1, 2013.

4) Review and expansion of the Snowbird Fire Observer program with the Florida Division of Forestry. The need is to transition into a corps of local resident observers similar to the very successful programs in Southern California on the San Bernardino, Angeles, and Cleveland National Forests.

Florida Forest Service, Withlacoochee Forestry Center Headquarters at 15019 Broad Street,

north of Brooksville with a speakerphone on Saturday, January 19. Details will be on our website. We anticipate that this will make for much improved participation by our directors!

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