



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific
Northwest
Region



Jumpoff Lookout

5745 Foot Elevation, (T13N, R14E, Sec. 01)

Access: Forest Service Road #1302 / Trail #1126

Facilities: Lookout Station constructed in 1961

Do you like to visit high overlooks and scenic mountain tops? Have you wondered how to find those unique views which are accessed by road? The Forest Service is also interested in these unique viewing areas which are called "Fire Lookout Points." Most of these views were identified in the 1920s and 30s when early forest firefighters set about identifying the best views to watch for fires. Later trails were constructed to these peaks, and fire lookout stations and roads followed.

To locate Jumpoff Lookout (the last remaining lookout on the Naches Ranger District), take Forest Road #1302 from Windy Point off of U.S. Hwy. 12. High clearance vehicles are required for this 13 mile drive. Estimated trip time from U.S. Hwy. 12 is four to six hours. Proceed up the ridge to the south and west passing through some private land. This road can be rough; the lower sections of the road are narrow and upper sections are rocky. Wide motorhomes are not recommended for this route. Early season blow down and snow banks can block this road as late as July 1st. Avoid roads into Cowiche Canyon with all but high centered four wheel vehicles. From Jumpoff Point there are outstanding views of Rimrock Lake, Tieton Basin, and to the east and north are Mt. Adams, Mt. Rainier and on a clear day, Mt. Stewart. Old clearcuts on Pinegrass Ridge are visible from here.

Jumpoff Lookout is located on Jumpoff Point two miles south of the White Pass Work Center. Jumpoff Ridge is a spur ridge which runs east off of Divide Ridge near Louey Way Gap. Jumpoff Point is a ragged basalt point with sheer sides to the east and west. The 13 mile ridgetop Jumpoff road was a wagon road as early as 1888 when John Russell homesteaded what is now the bottom of Rimrock Lake. This route was also used in the 1890's by the Tieton Cattleman's Association for running cattle from the town of Tieton.

Because of its view into the Tieton Basin and the Rimrock/Clear Lake area it has always been of value to local fire management efforts. In earlier days it was used as a training station because of the roaded access. Guards who learned the system on Jumpoff would graduate to a more remote or higher station as positions opened up. While there is occasional speculation about how Jumpoff got its name, few standing at the site would raise the question. As aerial fire detection became more common, lookouts were gradually phased out and have slowly become a part of the myth and legend of the Forest Service.

This site has been the location of at least three different stations, with the present one constructed in 1961. One of the previous lookouts was a rock tower. The view room was apparently built over a living quarter. A spring is located 100 yards southeast of the present station and the old phone line went directly north down the knife ridge to Jumpoff meadow.

Jumpoff is the last remaining station on the Naches Ranger District for a number of reasons. The station was constructed in 1961 using the newer 14 x 14 foot Regional design. This site offered excellent views into the Tieton Basin and reasonable coverage for Oak Creek and Bear Canyon. Probably as important as the fire coverage was the relatively central radio relay location, as Jumpoff monitored the Tieton Ranger District's radio during summer months. With roaded access, good views of Divide Ridge lightning storms, and relatively snow free for its elevation, it served the Forest Service well into the "air patrol" era.

The 14 x 14 foot lookout station remains at this site. A kit garage was removed in the 1970's and the outhouse was replaced in the late 1970's with one of modern design. No garbage dump has been located, but a large accumulation of debris is evident on the rocks below the site to the east. Portions of the old phone line are still evident above Jumpoff Meadow.

Native American people were known to have traveled extensively along ridges enroute to and from hunting and gathering grounds. The ridge system of Divide and Jumpoff would be no exception.

A plaque was placed near the lookout in 1987 to commemorate Kevin Miller who staffed Jumpoff Lookout for six years.

When visiting this site **PLEASE TREAT IT WITH CARE AND RESPECT! Thank You!**

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