

# Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail – Statement of Significance

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## Description of Historic Place

Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail is a 5.3 kilometre mountain trail winding up Saddle Mountain to a historic fire lookout. The trail is located approximately 12 kilometres southwest of the Village of Nakusp, near the community of Arrow Park. The site includes the Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail and Saddle Mountain Fire Lookout Recreation Site.

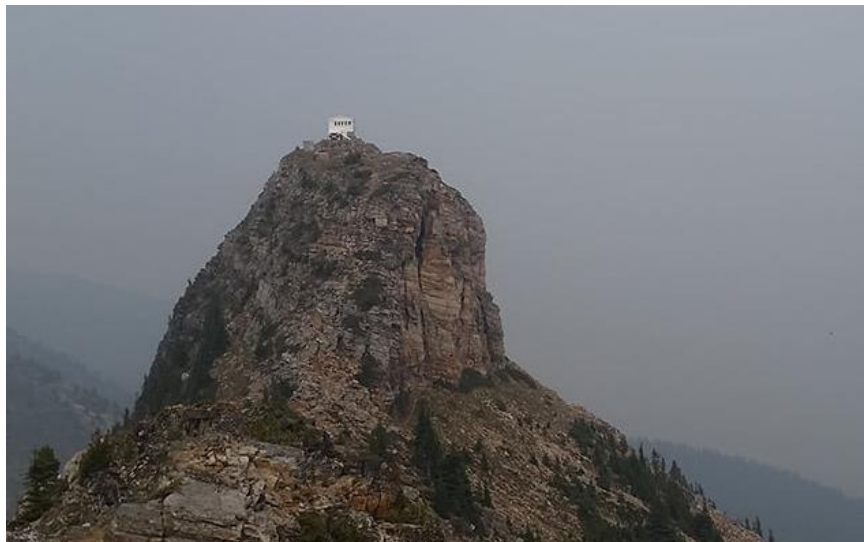
## Heritage Values of Historic Place

The Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail is important as a significant local recreation site with aesthetic, historic and scientific values.

The trail ascends Saddle Mountain through an interior rainforest into the subalpine to a rocky knob above the treeline. The views are spectacular in all directions. The Monashee Mountains stretch out on the west side of Arrow Lake and the Selkirks on the east. Mosquito Lake is nestled in the hills to the northwest, while Whatshan Lake peaks from its valley to the southwest.

The historic place is an excellent example of the importance of outdoor life and culture from the early days to the present. The first documented recreational hike was in 1924 by a group of young hikers. Over 100 years later the trail is still popular by tourists and local alike.

This historic place also has an important connection to the British Columbia Forest



Service in the fire lookout present at the apex of Saddle Mountain. Situated on a rocky knob and designed to maximize the fire lookout's 360-degree views of the surrounding landscape, this building is important because it demonstrates how wildfire control was facilitated prior to the introduction of today's modern technologies. It has the distinction of the location of the first female lookout in Canada, a young girl named Bay Brown. Saddle Mountain Lookout illustrates the evolution of design and

materials of fire lookouts at this time period from a tent to a log cabin to a prefabricated building. The existing Saddle Mountain Lookout building is a good representation of the fire lookouts of the 1940s-60s. A rustic telephone line was laid along the trail enabling messages to be sent to the Nakusp Ranger Station at West Demars, then on to Nakusp and Nelson where fire fighting strategy was implemented.

The trail has been maintained by the community over the years including: the boys of the Youth Forest Training Program in 1940; in 2009 a program for displaced or unemployed loggers hired four men to improve the trail; and restoration in 2015 by the Ministry of Forests, Recreation Sites and Trails. The trail is currently maintained by the Nakusp and Area Community Trail Society.

## Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of the Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail include:

- Its location on Saddle Mountain, with commanding 360 degree views from the fire lookout.
- Unimpeded views of Arrow Lake and the surrounding mountainous landscape all the way to the horizon.
- The route of the trail to access the fire lookout.
- Accessibility by car on the fire service road.
- Presence of the Fire Lookout (1963) on the highest point of land including past lookout people's names etched in rock at the base of the structure.
- Presence of a home cabin (1947) constructed below the lookout cabin for the staff.
- Peak and geographical identification and historical signage.

## Resources

- Arrow Lakes News
- [Nakusp & Area Community Trails Society website](#)
- Nakusp Archives
- [BC Parks website](#)

