

Foster's Cabin

Trinity Alps Wilderness - Weaverville Ranger Station -
Shasta-Trinity National Forest



Welcome to Foster's Cabin

In an ongoing effort, dating back to the summer of 1989, the USDA Forest Service and concerned volunteers have worked steadily to repair and maintain this small log cabin. Most of the materials needed to do the work have been provided by the Forest Service and packed in to the site either on horseback or on the backs of the volunteers. The harsh winter climate and years of abuse by uncaring visitors left their mark on the old structure and by the spring of 1989 the only thing to call it home on a steady basis was a family of packrats. The roof was falling apart. Windows had been broken out. The old wood cookstove literally fell apart because of the many years of service. Because the stove didn't work, people built fires on old sheets of tin roofing laid directly on the floor and burnt huge holes clear through to the floor joists. During the renovation, the old and dilapidated roof was stripped and replaced. The burned-out floor was torn up and new flooring (with original boards) was re-laid. The door was dismantled, rebuilt, and re-hung. The porch was dismantled because of a rotten foundation log and broken boards, and a new foundation log fitted and new decking (again with original boards) laid down. New windows were framed and installed. A new wood stove was packed in (on the backs of volunteers), along with new stovepipe, roof jack and cap, and also installed. The woodstove has since been removed because of abuse by visitors. The cabin walls were caulked to prevent mice and packrats from entering (an almost futile effort).

The volunteers who donated long hours and funds to this project did so for various reasons; some for a long standing emotional attachment to the place, others out of appreciation for the cabin's historic and architectural values. We sincerely hope that through our cooperative efforts Foster's Cabin will survive another 40 years to intrigue and delight the wilderness user.

Historical Background

Historical and physical evidence indicates that there have been as many as three structures in Parker Meadows, two of them constructed by, or in cooperation with, the Foster Family. The earliest cabin, located farther down the meadow, was probably built in the mid to late 1800s and used by packers hauling supplies to the gold fields on Coffee Creek. It was probably on such a trip that William Foster came to realize the value of these lush green meadows as summer range for his growing cattle herds. During this period there were thousands of miners working rich lodes and living in and around these mountains that we now call the Trinity Alps Wilderness. The Fosters summered herds of cattle here in Parker Meadows, in Mumford Meadows a mile farther up the creek and in meadows that stretch up along Landers Creek.

The remains of the 1st Foster's Cabin lie just down the hill from the present structure. The trail skirts the old roof structure. We don't know for sure, but it is likely that it was built in the late 1800s. The present cabin was built in 1946 (one year after the barn which sits on the west side of the trail) as a cooperative effort between the State of California for use by their snow survey teams and the Fosters who continued to run cattle in these meadows well into the 1960s. The cabin was abandoned by the State and the Fosters in the late '60s and, except for a few packrats and backpackers anxious to get out of mountain storms, has remained relatively unused. Ownership of the cabin transferred to the Forest Service with the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1984.

A Final Thought

The initial restoration work on the cabin took three summers and was long and hard. Yearly maintenance usually takes place in the late fall after most visitors have left and requires long hours of individual group effort. We hope that, as you pass through, you will keep this in mind. Visitors are welcome to use the cabin, but please make a sincere effort to help us preserve this place for future generations to use and appreciate. Keep it clean and always close and latch the door when leaving. It is important that we respect and preserve our historic and wilderness heritage. Treat this cabin as if it were your own because, in a real sense, it is.

All Are Welcome

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