

Sierra National Forest Supervisor's Headquarters, Pole Barn
(North Fork Compound)
Sierra National Forest
57003 Road 225
North Fork
Madera County
California

HABS CA-2864

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
FIELD NOTES

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Pacific West Regional Office
909 1st Ave
Seattle, Washington 98104

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST SUPERVISOR'S HEADQUARTERS, POLE BARN

HABS No. CA-2864

Location: In the southeast section of the 1930s configuration of the US Forest Service Compound at 57003 Road 225 in North Fork, California 93643

Significance: The pole barn is a contributing element to the North Fork Compound Historic District that is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places for its 1930s, depression-era, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) construction.

Description: The pole barn (also identified as storage shed #2306) is a single story, three-sided, wood and tin structure with a symmetrical, rectangular floor plan and is open the length of one side. The open side (west side) was divided into eighteen separate storage bays, measuring 10' wide.

It is a post and beam, log-pole structure with the dominate construction materials being rough boards, small diameter logs, and corrugate metal. The timbers and cross braces in the pole barn are hand-hewn, and were taken from old railroad trestles of the defunct Sugar Pine Lumber Company Railroad, which the Forest Service was dismantling in the 1930s. The foundation consists of concrete piers on which the poles sit. The pole barn measures 25 feet 10 inches x 180 feet, with 4644 square feet of space divided into eighteen open-truss stalls, and an earth floor. It has a gabled roof covered in corrugated tin, and three sides of the building (north, east and south) are clad with corrugated metal sheets.

History: Beginning in the 1920s, Forest Service officials were discussing the need for adequate housing and office space for a growing workforce and for standardization of administrative facilities. But it wasn't until the 1930s that building really got underway. The 1930s saw a local wave of construction that reflected a national movement, with labor supplied by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC had several camps in and near North Fork, California from 1933 to 1941. With the use of money and labor provided by the Emergency Conservation Work funds and the National Recovery Act, the Forest Service accomplished extensive construction projects which resulted in a "new" North Fork Administrative site characterized by very different forms of architecture.

Materials were bulk ordered from mills in Oregon and California and local unemployed carpenters were hired to oversee the construction and interpret the plans. Sixteen residences, thirteen associated garages and/or storage buildings, eighteen service buildings, and one main office were newly constructed or substantially remodeled on the North Fork Compound. Hundreds of landscape features were built, including improved parking, drainage and septic systems, new roads and improved traffic circulation, rock retaining walls and culverts, exotic and native plantings - all made possible by the CCC labor force active between 1933 and 1941. At the close of the CCC program in 1941,

2,500 shrubs and 85,760 square feet of lawns were planted complete with sprinkler systems on the North Fork Compound (McNiel, Supernowicz, 1989, p.50).

The pole barn, one of the service buildings, was constructed by a combination of CCC and Forest Service labor in 1936. Norman Blanchard and Edward Maher of the architectural firm of Blanchard, Maher, Spencer and Hall, are credited as the architects. The architectural team designed standard plans for thirteen classes of buildings for the Forest Service to use on administrative sites. The pole barn was built originally for the purposes of storing lumber in the two northern stalls, and housing the Sierra National Forest's fleet of stake-side trucks and other vehicles in the other sixteen stalls. Later, when the larger vehicles could not be safely backed into the stalls, the pole barn was used as open-air storage space with the only modification being the addition of a wood elevated platform (loading dock) constructed in the southern most bay in the 1950s.

Sources: Historic Architecture and landscape Evaluation of North Fork Supervisor's Headquarters/North Fork Compound, Minarets Ranger Station, Sierra National Forest, Steve McNiel and Dana Supernowicz, US Forest Service Contract in conjunction with University of California, Davis, 1989.

John Hawksworth, Forest Service retiree, personal communication, 1996.

Leo Martin, Forest Service retiree, personal communication 1996 and 2005.

Document preparer: Constance Popelish, Archeologist, US Forest Service, March 20, 2008