

WIND RIVER ADMINISTRATIVE SITE, BUILDING  
No.1415  
Gifford Pinchot National Forest  
Chapman Road, near Lookout Mountain Road  
Carson Vicinity  
Skamania County  
Washington

HABS WA-232-D

HABS

WA-232-D

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY**

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
909 First Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### WIND RIVER ADMINISTRATIVE SITE BUILDING #1415 HABS No. WA-232-D

**Location:** Wind River Administrative Site, Skamania County, Washington. This building fronts Chapman Avenue, the main north-south street through the site. It is set behind the line of residences along Chapman Avenue, on a slight hill.

U.S.G.S. Stabler 7.5' Quadrangle, 1983 Provisional Edition. Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 10.582970.5072130

**Significance:** Building #1415 has been determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under the thematic nomination titled "USDA Forest Service Administrative Buildings in the States of Oregon and Washington Built by the Civilian Conservation Corps." This building embodies the rustic style of architecture associated with the Forest Service and the CCC in the Pacific Northwest. As stated in the Internal Management Guidelines, Supplement to Depression-Era Building PMA (1989): "The CCC provided the work force to build the necessary new facilities. Thus, the buildings are also directly associated with the Federal Government's response to the Great Depression. They are tangible evidence of the positive impact of President Roosevelt's first emergency relief program."

The Mess Hall was classified as having a secondary level of historic importance under the National Register thematic nomination, receiving a numerical rating of 111 out of a possible 200 points. The structure is a good example of the construction projects undertaken by the Civilian Conservation Corps and signifies aid to the local community provided by the emergency work relief program through employment of youth and experienced craftsmen, purchase of building materials and camp supplies, and personal experiences of enrollees. The property exemplifies the rustic architectural idiom developed by the Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest Region to impart Forest Service identity and to represent its purposes and ideals, and signifies the agency's particular interpretation of a singular expression of early twentieth century American architectural thought. Possessing the qualities of rustic design and execution, the structure is a good example of an architectural property invested with special aesthetic and associative values by the agency that created it.

**Description:** The Mess Hall was built with a U-shape plan, about 59' across and 52' deep. It faces east atop a slight hill and is surrounded by mature fir trees. A road leading off of Chapman Avenue curves around from the south to dead end in a small parking area in front of the building. The area is delineated by 8" round wood posts placed at regular intervals of about 3 feet along the north and east sides.

The building is symmetrical with a central gabled porch flanked by tripled windows on either side. Under both the porch and main gable roof, rafter tails are exposed beneath 1 foot eaves. There are three brackets under the porch roof and the gable here contains a small square louvered vent. The porch also possesses a wide frieze board and a vergeboard, the latter of which is repeated along the north and south walls of the building. The porch roof is supported by four square posts, 2 freestanding and the two nearest the building engaged. The low walls of the porch are of the same drop siding as the rest of the building. They are capped by a flat board and stop just before reaching the porch floor. The porch flooring is tongue and groove. The central door contains 9 small lights in the upper half and has an external screen door. The door frame is simply treated with no ornamentation.

A 10" board capped by a 1" weathered board act as a water table around the entire building. On the north wall are two eight-over-one double-hung sash windows with tree cutout shutters. The western window lacks its left shutter where a drainpipe has been installed. Along this wall and the south wall, five brackets support the roof under the gable end. A window or vent in the gable on the north façade has been covered with plywood. On the south façade a similar opening appears in the gable, but has a small hinged wood door covering it. On the north wall of the northern ell are two six-pane sliding wood windows. At the west end of this ell, a porch has been enclosed. Here, the parged concrete foundation rises to about 6-8 feet above ground and a wide frieze board is present. There are square louvered vents in the western ends of both ells.

The south arm of the mess hall is unfinished on the interior. A large garage door-like opening was cut into the south wall at some point, leaving the space fairly open. It is currently used for lumber and equipment storage. Open trusswork is visible, as is the stud wall construction. A door to the second floor attic space (inaccessible) is visible on the east wall, although it opens into the truss system. Another door on the first floor goes to an interior hallway. In the space between the two ells, on the west façade are two pairs of eight-over-one windows.

When entering the main building, one encounters these paired windows across the main dining room. This large room is paneled with V-notch drop siding on its walls and ceiling, the same as on the exterior. A fairly ornate moulding runs around the top of the walls and a wide baseboard around the bottom. The floor is covered with linoleum. At the south end of the room, a wall was added to create two smaller rooms. At the east end, the wall intersects and divides the triple window configuration, leaving only two windows operational. The third window and another one on the south façade have been covered with plywood on the interior. The actual windows remain intact, but are not functional. Both rooms created by the wall have the same moulding, baseboard, and linoleum as the main room. The east room has shelves along its walls and with the windows covered, was probably used for food storage. The door to this room is a modern hollow core door, whereas the door leading into the second room along the south side is a five panel historic door.

A door on the west wall leads into the hallway of the southern ell. On the north side of this hall is a door to the exterior, which exits into the courtyard formed by the two ells. A door to the south goes into a bathroom with a toilet, sink, and shower, again with V-notch drop siding and ceiling paneling. A door at the west end of the hall leads to the open air storage area at the western end of the ell. At the northern end of the main dining room a large opening, where there used to be double doors, passes to the west into the kitchen. A door to the immediate left enters into the courtyard. There are paired 6-pane sliding windows on the north and south walls. This large room is floored with 8x8 green ceramic tile with plywood covering its original V-notch sided ceiling and walls. All fixtures have been removed, but it is evident where the counters, sink, and oven once were. The hood remains along the east wall, indicating the former location of the stove. A door to the west opens into a small storage room with another 6-pane sliding window. A 10" thick door to the left opens into walk-in freezer. Continuing west, another door leads to what used to be the porch. There is a slight step down into this area, which had shelves added to the walls. The floor is of reinforced concrete with a central drain. A door exits this room to the south into the courtyard.

The Mess Hall is currently used for furniture storage. All light fixtures have been removed. Changes to the Mess Hall include enclosing a rear porch, the covering of the original kitchen walls and ceiling with plywood, and the addition of a partition wall to create two smaller rooms off the main dining room. A large garage door like opening has been cut into the south wall of the south wing.

**Historic Context:**

The Mess Hall was built in 1933/34 set back on a slight hill above Chapman Avenue. It was the first building constructed by the CCC Camp Hemlock. Designed by Lester Moncrief, the Assistant Supervisor of the Columbia National Forest, it replaced an earlier mess hall located in the lower nursery fields that had been razed in early 1933. The building was built in a U-shape with the main dining area along the east side and offices, storage rooms and the kitchen in the two wings. The mess hall could accommodate 96 people and was supplied with modern culinary equipment and with furniture built by the nearby Rock Creek CCC furniture shop. The east façade window treatment bears mention because of its use of the Forest Service pine tree emblem. This pattern is cut out on each of the shutters. The windows at either side of the door are in sets of three, with one shutter on the side nearer the door and two shutters on the side away from the door. The building historically served all three agencies present at the Administrative Site, including the Wind River Nursery, Pacific Northwest Experiment Station, and the Wind River Ranger District.

**Sources:**

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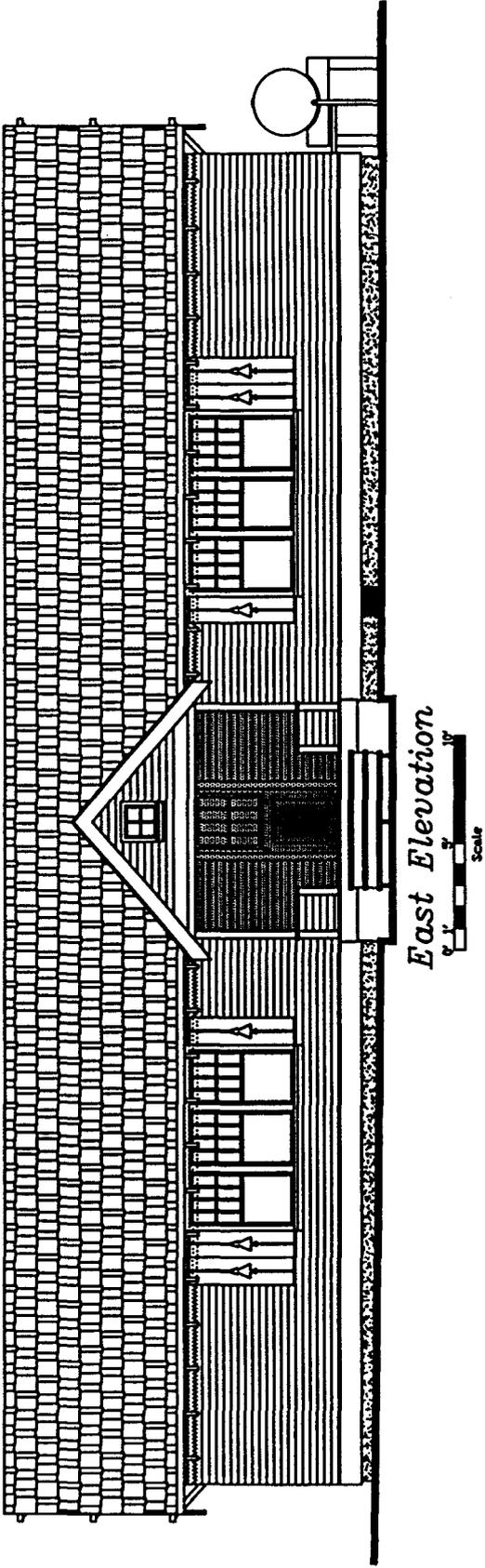
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USDA Forest Service. *1989 Amended Programmatic Agreement for Management of Depression-Era Administrative Structures on National Forest Lands in Oregon and Washington.*

**Project Information:** This structure is being documented as a historic resource due to a land conveyance from the U.S.D.A. Forest Service to Skamania County, Washington. The structure is included within the boundary of the conveyance, and will be transferred to the county. The documentation was prepared by Alex McMurry of the University of Oregon's Historic Preservation Program and Kathryn Toepel of Heritage Research Associates in May of 1999.

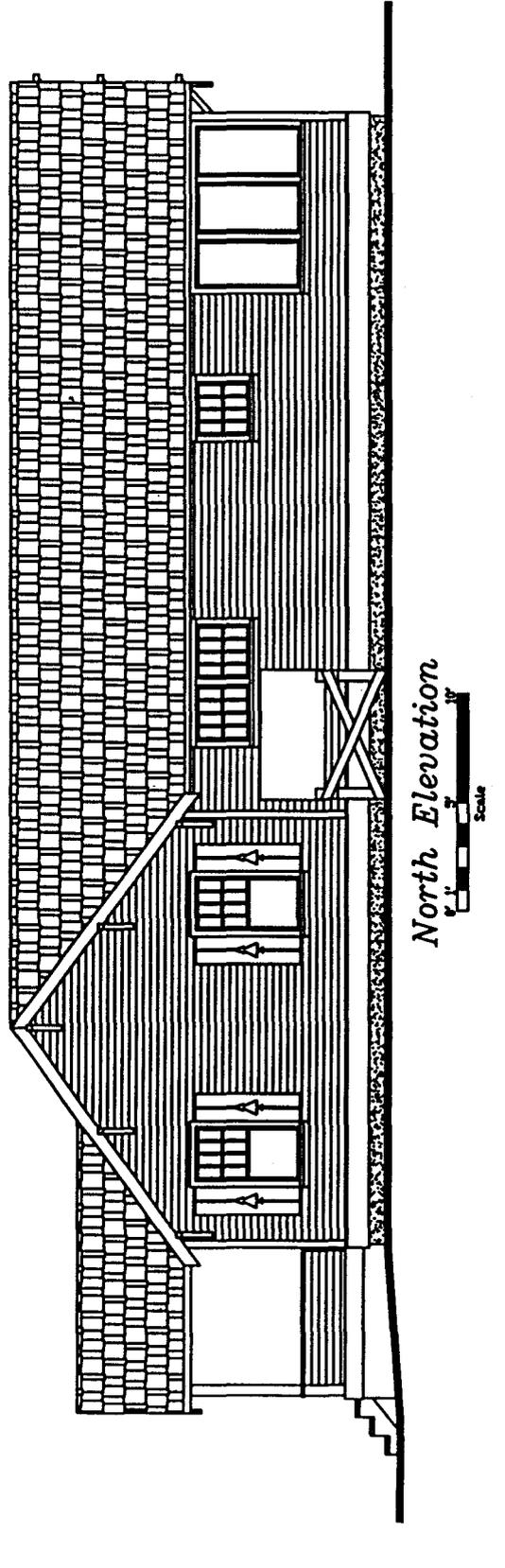
**Mess Hall  
Constructed 1934**

Building elevation adapted from USDA Forest Service drawing dated 1978 and Forest Service photographs dated 1986.



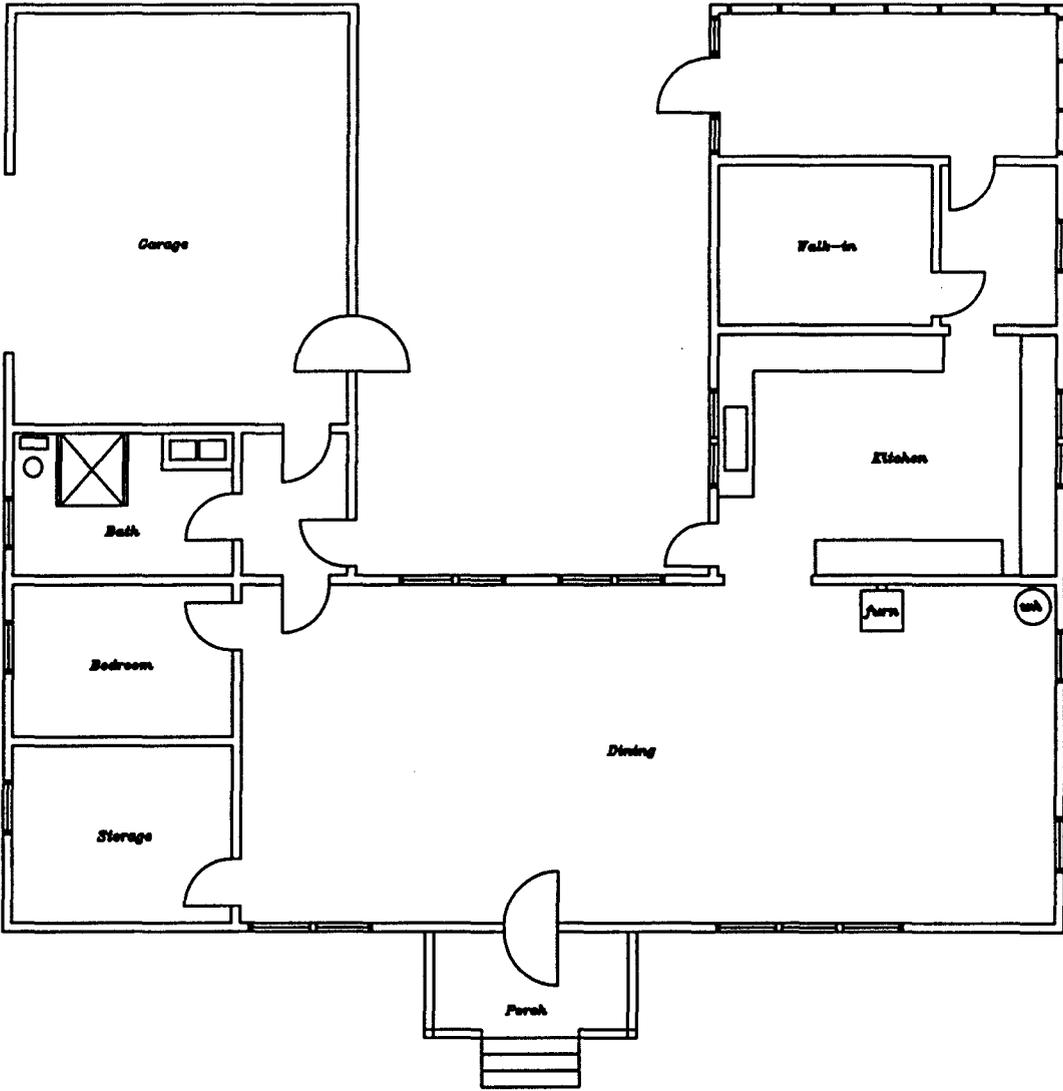
**Mess Hall  
Constructed 1934**

Building elevation adapted from USDA Forest Service drawing dated 1978 and Forest Service photographs dated 1986.



**Mess Hall**  
**Constructed 1934**

Building floor plan adapted from USDA Forest Service drawing dated 1978 and Forest Service photographs dated 1986.



*1st Floor Plan*  
Scale