



March 6, 2018

To: Potential Fire Lookout Volunteer
From: Ric Opalka, ANFFLA President

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer fire lookout. You are receiving this because you have requested information on how to become a Fire Lookout Volunteer on the Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

What You Can Expect as a Volunteer

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer for the Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association (ANFFLA). We know that you will enjoy this opportunity to serve the community and local fire agencies in helping to prevent devastating wildfires such as we have experienced in recent years. In addition, you will host visitors to the lookout. The mission of the ANFFLA is:

Fire Lookout volunteers are dedicated to preserving the historic fire lookouts and protecting natural environment through fire detection and environmental education. Volunteers are dedicated to providing an enjoyable experience for members of the public. They strive to increase the public's awareness of its role in conservation of the natural and historic environment of the Forest.

There are three paths through which you can assist with this important public service,

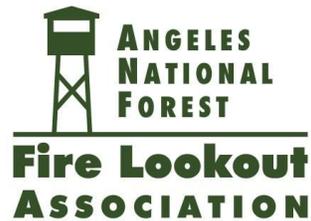
1. Training to become a qualified volunteer fire lookout.
 2. Interpret the natural and cultural history of the fire lookouts, and the surrounding area.
 3. Assisting in the physical restoration of the lookout structure and grounds.
- ...or a combination of the above.

Becoming a fire lookout is an interesting, enjoyable, and rewarding undertaking. However, it is not a position to be taken lightly. This quote from our Training Objectives underlines the importance of our role in protecting the Forest.

“Our primary objective . . . is to provide timely and accurate information to fire-fighting resources in the areas of fire detection, weather conditions, and communications and greeting visitors warmly, and providing general forest information.

Our lookout volunteers must be professional, reliable, attentive and most importantly, trustworthy as they may have a larger perspective of the fire environment, how incoming weather impacts it and the safety of personnel in the field.” Anyone age 18 or over can become a lookout.

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The Lookouts

Fire Lookout Volunteers presently staffs two fire lookouts on the Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. Vetter Mountain Lookout is accessed by Forest Service dirt road that is passable by a car. Slide Mountain Lookout is at an elevation of 4,631 and is about a 2.5 mile hike to reach the lookout. All of our lookouts have visitors and answer a lot of questions. All of our Fire Lookout Volunteers will be volunteering for ANFFLA and the U.S. Forest Service and therefore you must be professional. All of the lookouts have a porta-potty and no running water. You choose what lookout or Chilao Visitor center you would like to volunteer at. We do not choose for you.

Training

First you need to be sure that you can commit to 9 hours a month. If you can do this then you will need to take our four mandatory training classes that must be completed to be a Fire Lookout Volunteer: Orientation (2 hours), Interpretation/ National History (3 hours) and Operations (7 hours). We have two dates to choose from (see below). After the classroom training, you will also be required to complete 9 hours of "In-Tower" training in the lookout of your choice with an In-Tower trainer before being certified to work alone. After certification, volunteers are expected to work, at a minimum, an average of one shift per month during fire season (usually 7 shifts). A shift consists of 8 and 1/2 hours in-service in the lookout which can be done in one day or two 4 1/2 hour shifts in one month.

Expenses

Uniforms are required – your shirt can be a short sleeve or long sleeve polo shirt with our logo and your pants must be a blue, green or khaki. Volunteers are responsible to purchase their own uniform(s) at the end of our training session.

An initial package which includes, name tag, uniform shirt, and Training Manual is provided at a cost of \$40.00 due on Operations Training day.

This may all sound daunting, but becoming a Fire Lookout Volunteer is not as difficult as it may appear. Our volunteers come from all walks of life: medical doctors, housewives, engineers, clergy, and retirees – you name it. Being a Fire Lookout Volunteer is an enjoyable (and at times exciting) experience, and the satisfaction of being an important part of ANFFLA fire detection team is well worth the expense and effort of training.

We hope that you will join us.

Sincerely,
Ric Opalka
President, Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association

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In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service