

FHBRO Number 96-99

Jasper National Park, Alberta

Rocky Forks Warden Cabin

South Boundary Trail

The Rocky Forks Warden Cabin was constructed in 1929. Its designer is unknown. The cabin maintains its original function as a Patrol Cabin for the Rocky Forks District Headquarters. Exterior alterations include a new concrete foundation and porch piers (nd), a radio tower at the rear (nd), window replacement (after 1988) and the installation of metal roofing and wood fascias, and the removal of porch railings and spindles in 1993. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Docket 96-99.

Reasons for Designation

The Rocky Forks Warden Cabin on the South Boundary Trail was designated Recognized because of its architectural importance as well as its environmental significance and its historical associations.

The Warden Cabin is a one storey log structure with a gabled roof. It was designed as a single-room structure with a covered porch. The building is simply detailed and carefully executed. The structure's functional plan, craftsmanship and materials respect the long-standing prescription for the rustic architectural imagery often adopted by national parks.

The Warden Cabin is nestled within a stately stand of mature conifers, facing a large meadow southeast of the Medicine Tent and Rocky Rivers intersection. The relationship between the Warden Cabin, Tack Shed and corral remains largely unchanged. The building contributes to its setting through its materials and form. Its visually-prominent location at the junction of four major trails is a destination for travelers along the South Boundary Trail.

The Warden Cabin was built as part of a park program to construct a series of outposts, to be used by Warden Service boundary patrols, for monitoring poaching and visitor activities. The structure is located close to outfitters camps outside the park. It is also connected to historic travel routes and to the intersection of important trails through the park. The trails' prominent location has contributed to the continued use of the back-country station.

Character Defining Elements

Many values can be attributed to the Rocky Forks Warden Cabin. All aspects of the structure's form, materials, construction techniques, fenestration, layout and site relationships contribute to its particular character.

This modest, rectangular, one-storey structure with gabled roof and chimney embodies the simple massing characteristic of the rustic design. The cabin's construction is of a

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high quality. The structure's walls are constructed with peeled spruce logs, horizontally laid and saddle notched at the corners. The logs are evenly extended at the corner joints, except at the entrance gable where they are extended and supported by log posts to create a large, sheltered porch area. This feature, in addition to the generous roof overhangs, contributes to the building's rustic appearance.

The fascia boards over the exposed log rafter tails, the simple half-log door and window trim, and the peeled logs contribute to the simple, rustic character which should be preserved by repairing in kind and by ensuring maximum retention of original material.

The composition of the roof brackets, the queen posts, the collar tie, and the centrally positioned door, symmetrically flanked by two small windows, adds emphasis to the entrance and should not be altered. The cross-braced porch railings, which were a distinctive feature of the rustic design, should be reinstated. The addition of fascias hides the exposed log ends, which were a feature of the eaves. They should be removed whenever operationally appropriate.

The horizontal wood sash and rectangular windows are centered on the facades. The windows contribute to the interior light quality. One unit has larger glazing with one-over-one mullions, which simplifies and modernizes the windows' expression. This contrasts with the three-over-two mullion patterns of the other windows. The intricate three-over-two pattern is an important characteristic of the building, and any future replacements should follow a design similar to the original units. All windows have side-hinged vertical plank shutters which add to the rustic quality of the design. The wood screen door and vertical wood plank entrance door also present rustic features.

The current colour scheme of brown logs, white chinking, white painted windows and door and green painted fascias and shutters is a simple scheme reflecting the rustic aesthetic. However, the materials and colours of the prominently featured roof do not correspond to the building's original design. The blue, prefinished metal roofing is a dramatic change in material and colour to the original rolled asphalt roofing. The use of colour instead of a plain metal finish undermines the functional approach behind the rustic aesthetic. Replacement roofing should be based on historical precedent for materials and colours.

The open volume of the white-painted interior, with its simple single-room plan, reflects its function. Exposed log walls and pole rafters, log through-purlins and plank roof sheathing are in keeping with the rustic character of the building. The cookstove and other such furnishings should be investigated to determine their true relationship with the use of the building. Appropriate conservation methods should be employed as

FHBRO Number 96-99

Jasper National Park, Alberta

Rocky Forks Warden Cabin

South Boundary Trail

needed.

The relationship between the Warden's Cabin and its outbuildings, particularly to the day corral, is a fundamental aspect of the site and should be protected. The radio antenna, located at the building's rear, is obtrusive and detracts from the simplicity of the building's form. Relocating the antenna away from the cabin should be considered. The surrounding ground plane cover should not be overly-manicured or allowed to grow to scrub height.

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For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.
