

### **Archibald Tower Overlook**

The Archibald Tower Overlook is located 4 miles southwest of Lakewood, off of Archibald Lake Road.

The Archibald Lake Fire Lookout Tower was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934. It was one of 19 towers that once served the Nicolet National Forest. It was a 100 foot steel tower with a 7'x 7' cab and an internal ladder. Like most of the towers across the forest, it was removed in 1973 since aircraft had largely taken over the job of fire detection.

The location has an exceptional view of the surrounding landscape. Recognizing this, in 2011, Forest Service staff from the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District cut a series of viewing corridors at the site. From this point, two remaining lookout towers can be seen in the distance. Mountain Fire Lookout Tower can be seen six miles to the southeast. Twelve miles to the east, Thunder Mountain Fire Lookout Tower can also be seen. This lookout is located just off the forest and is still used each spring by the Wisconsin DNR.



**Directions:** From the Lakewood Ranger Station, drive north through Lakewood on Hwy. 32 approximately 1 ½ miles. Turn left on Archibald Lake Road (FR 2121) and continue approximately 3 ½ miles. Turn left onto Archibald Tower Road (FR 2294) and continue 0.9 miles to the site.

## **Democratic Women’s Club of Wisconsin Plantation**

In the late 1800’s, the United States was a growing nation with an insatiable appetite for softwood lumber. During this period, billions of board feet of virgin pine were cut by axe and crosscut saw throughout the Great Lakes Region. Following this Pine Logging Era, the remaining virgin hardwood forests were liquidated. Unlike the lighter pines, hardwood could not be rafted to the mills on the rivers. Instead, networks of narrow gauge railroads were built to haul countless loads of logs to the sawmills. By the early 1920’s the forests of northern Wisconsin were cut over. Landscapes of scrub and brush were all that remained in many areas.

Left with lands devoid of timber and burdened with property taxes, the Timber Barons eagerly marketed the properties to homesteaders. Immigrant farmers, attracted by promises of bountiful harvests and a new life, flocked to the region and painstakingly cleared the land of stumps and rock. Their reward for the back-breaking labor: marginal crops and long distances to markets. When the Great Depression hit, prices plummeted and they were no longer able to pay taxes. Many of these tax-delinquent farmsteads (and properties formerly owned by timber interests) reverted to county ownership.

In 1933, the Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests were created from these “lands that nobody wanted” as they came to be known. In the same year, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Together, the U.S. Forest Service and the CCC began the work of reclaiming the forests of Northern Wisconsin. On the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District alone, the boys of the Civilian Conservation Corps planted tens of thousands of acres of conifer plantations.

The Democratic Women’s Club of Wisconsin Plantation, just north of Mountain at the junction of Highways 32 and 64, is just one of those plantations. However, this one has a particularly interesting history.

In September, 1933, the newly-formed Camp Mountain (R-19) planted the stands that surround you. Initially, they were planted with Norway spruce that originated in the Black Forest of Germany. The Democratic Women’s Club of Wisconsin provided cost-share funds for reforestation that year and, thus, this plantation was named “The Democratic Women’s Club of Wisconsin Plantation”. Planting records on file at the Lakewood Ranger Station indicate very poor planting conditions – and survival. And so, like in many other CCC plantations, this site was repeatedly planted with red pine until it was fully stocked.

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was reported to have visited Camp Mountain in the early 1930’s and it was said that she dedicated a plantation just north of the camp. This is believed to be the plantation that she dedicated.

The U.S. Forest Service has continued the CCC’s legacy. This stand has been thinned at least four times, most recently in December, 2012.

**Directions:** From the Lakewood Ranger Station, take Highway 32 south 6 ½ miles to the junction of Highways 32 and 64. Turn west on Highway 64 and pull over to the shoulder of the road, taking care to look out for passing traffic.



## **Mountain Fire Lookout Tower**

The Mountain Fire Lookout Tower is located just off of Old Highway 32, two miles north of the community of Mountain.

Prefabricated by the Aermotor Company in 1932, the Mountain Fire Lookout Tower was initially erected by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission (WCC) at another location in the Nicolet National Forest. In 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps disassembled the tower and constructed it on its current site.

The tower is a 100' steel, stairway type fire lookout with a 7x7' cab that was used for fire detection. During daylight hours from May through September, trained fire spotters kept constant watch over the surrounding area from the cab at the top of the tower, and reported "smokes" by telephone to a central station that directed the fire suppression effort.



The Mountain Fire Lookout Tower is one of two remaining towers out of the nineteen that once served the Nicolet National Forest. Fire lookout towers remained the prime method of fire detection on the Nicolet National Forest into the 1960s. The last fire called in from the Mountain Tower occurred on 25 April 1970.

Visitors are welcome to climb the tower and enjoy a spectacular 360° view. Interpretive signs provide additional information on the site.

The tower is on the National Historic Lookout Register.

**Directions:** From Mountain, take Old Highway 32 (FR 2106) north 2 ½ miles to the entrance sign on the right hand side of the road. A short gravel road leads to the parking area.

## Green Lake Picnic Shelter

The Green Lake Picnic Ground Shelter is located on the southwest shore of Green Lake, just off Highway 32, two miles south of the community of Mountain.

The Green Lake Shelter was one of the early products of a new federal policy implemented in 1935 to increase the recreational usage within the national forests. In response to the financial, social, and environmental crises of the Depression Era, the Roosevelt Administration implemented several national work programs, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), to gainfully engage and train the unemployed, financially assist their families, and add useful public works to communities. The Green Lake Shelter is a fine representative example of the projects constructed by these programs



CCC Company 1695, based out of Camp Mountain (F-19), constructed the Green Lake Picnic Ground Facilities in the summer of 1937. The company constructed the picnic ground shelter utilizing local materials including cedar and pine, cleared the beach along the lake in front of the shelter, and added sand to the beach. Located at Camp Mountain during the construction of the shelter, CCC LEM carpenter Clarence Way, an experienced blacksmith, carpenter, and mason, crafted the original benches and the masonry fireplace and chimney and perhaps the wrought iron letters and hinges with their attached decorative trees.



The Green Lake Shelter was listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places in 1996.

**Directions:** From Mountain, take Old Highway 32 south 2 miles to the entrance sign on the left hand (east) side of the road. A short road leads to the parking area.

## **Wolf River CCC Camp**

The Civilian Conservation Corps, better known as the CCC, made a monumental contribution to the conservation of America's natural resources from 1933 to 1942. Established as an economic relief program as part of Roosevelt's "New Deal", it was successful in employing and educating millions of young men while improving our nation's lands. "Roosevelt's Tree Army" consisted of thousands of military-style base camps, thirty of which were located on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.



The Wolf River CCC Camp was established in 1935 and was in operation until the CCC was disbanded in 1942. The Army ran the camp and kept strict discipline. The Forest Service was responsible for assigning work duties and supervising the men. The men were paid \$30 per month, plus food, clothing, and shelter. All but \$5 was sent directly to their families. The men of Company 3642 completed thousands of acres of reforestation, fought wildfires, and worked on disease and rodent control and the creation of fish and game preserves.

This photo shows Camp Wolf River, F-46, as it looked in 1937. The remnants of the camp are readily visible. There is a short interpretive trail that winds throughout the camp. It includes stops and informational signs at several of the building foundations, describing the CCC and daily life at Camp Wolf River.

**Directions:** From the Lakewood Ranger Station, take Highway 32 south 6 ½ miles to the junction of Highways 32 and 64. Turn west on Highway 64 and proceed 5 miles to County Highway T. Turn south on Highway T and proceed 5 ½ miles to the junction of County Highways T and W. Turn right (west) on County W and proceed 1 ½ miles to Boulder Lake Campground Road. Turn right (north) on FR 2116 (Campground Dr.) and proceed ¾ miles to FR 2948. Turn right on FR 2948 and continue to the parking area, about ¼ mile away.