

FHBRO Number 97-85

Jasper National Park, Alberta

Topaz Warden Patrol Cabin

North Boundary Trail

The Topaz Warden Patrol Cabin was constructed in 1931. The design follows the Standard Plan of 1918 by the National Parks Branch. The original use continues. Alterations have included roof replacement with metal roofing. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Case File No. 97-85.

Reasons for Designation

The Topaz Warden Patrol Cabin on the North Boundary Trail was designated Recognized because of its environmental significance as well as its architectural design and historical associations.

The Warden Patrol Cabin is sited along the trail in a meadow surrounded by coniferous forest, with a mountain wall as a backdrop. It contributes to the character of its natural setting through its form and materials. The cabin is a destination point for travelers along the North Boundary Trail.

The cabin's functional plan, craftsmanship and materials respect the long-standing prescription for a rustic architectural imagery within National Parks. Historically, the Warden Patrol Cabin is associated with the park program of constructing a series of outposts for use by boundary patrols of the Warden Service, to control poaching and visitor activities. It is also linked to historic travel routes and to the intersection of important trails through the park.

Character Defining Elements

The Topaz Warden Patrol Cabin's heritage value resides in its form, early materials, construction techniques and setting.

The cabin exhibits simple massing, with its modest single storey, its rectangular plan and its gabled roof. The log-framed open porch, with trussed purlin supports and posts at the gable end, contributes to the rustic character. The three windows and the door are made of simple wood components, with their positioning determined by function. The wood plank shutters at the windows are functional features. The building's simplicity of form and massing should be respected in future developments.

The cabin is of good quality construction. Its walls are made of peeled 8" -10" logs, horizontally laid and saddle notched at the corners. The peeled logs and simple door and window trim create a simple, rustic character which should be preserved by repairing in kind, with emphasis on maximum retention of original material. The logs' brown stain finish reflects a functional approach to maintenance, which should not be altered without first assessing impact on patina and performance. The lean-to is a

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functional addition, with the open frame respecting the appearance of the log structure.

The roof, probably wood shingles originally, is now covered with metal roofing. Wood shingles would have contributed to the rustic character of the building. When replacement is again required, the choice of material should be predicated on consideration of character and precedent. The stone foundation incorporates log support for the front deck which contributes to the rustic character of the building.

The original windows appear to have been multi-paned wood sash windows, where the fine-scale detail would have contributed to the rustic character. The replacement window omits muntin divisions and has large glazed areas which introduce a modern character. In future renovations, replacement windows should be compatible with the rustic character of the building.

The interior, with its exposed log walls, roof plank sheathing and log framing, has been painted a white colour which introduces a "finished" quality to the interior. The flooring, currently painted plywood, may originally have been wood planking with a natural finish. Future developments in interior finishes should be compatible with the intended rustic character.

The relationship between the cabin, the surrounding forest, the clearing and the mountain backdrop is an important feature of the setting. The surrounding ground plane is most appropriately maintained as simple grassed meadow.

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

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