# Zigzag Ranger Station

Zigzag Ranger Station is the headquarters for the Zigzag District of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Built mostly on the south side of Highway 26 (formerly known as the Mount Hood Loop Road), the station is a compound of about twenty-five structures, the oldest of which was built in 1914 as a residence and office for the ranger.

On Deputy Forest Ranger R.S. Shelley's recommendation, acting Forest Supervisor R.B. Wilson selected the site in 1907 and named it Zigzag. The name was given to nearby Zigzag Canyon and Zigzag River in 1845 by Joel Palmer. The earliest buildings included an outhouse, cowshed, pig shed, chicken coop, and smokehouse, which enabled the station to be self-sufficient.

In 1929, Francis "Scotty" Williamson, a forest recreation assistant, recommended destroying some of the older structures and building new warehouse and storage buildings, bunkhouses, an office and barn, and a service court. A new barn was built, and the site for a new office was prepared in 1932. The next year, Camp Zigzag was established across the road for Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees. Building at the ranger station proceeded rapidly, using plans by recently hired Forest Service architects and the labor of CCC workers. The architects were next assigned the job of drawing the plans for Timberline Lodge, which was built in 1936-1937.

William "Tim" Turner, probably the first of the local Forest Service architects, was the lead Forest Service architect on the Timberline project. The architectural style of buildings at the ranger station is similar to Timberline Lodge and typical of architecture of CCC-built structures, which were characterized by rustic design, the use of local materials (wood and stone), and the incorporation of handmade details.

The grounds of Zigzag Ranger Station contain the Wy'East Rhododendron Gardens, which were started in 1953 by the Wy'East Garden Club. The gardens were intended to establish rhododendron varieties for use in a mountain environment; non-native plants eventually became part of the garden, as well.

Zigzag Ranger Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 8, 1986, for its significance in the history of the Forest Service, its role in the recreation history of Oregon, and its association with the Barlow Road, a toll road established in 1846 and used by Oregon Trail immigrants.

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