Project Partner: Pike National Forest

History: Devil’s Head Fire Lookout celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2012 and is one of the best-known and only remaining Forest Service fire lookouts in continuous operation in Colorado. Each year, over 15,000 visitors hike up a 1.5 mile trail that rises 1,000 feet in elevation. At the top of the Devil’s Head trail is the ranger’s cabin, built in 1951 and still used today. Next to the cabin is the base of a granite face with 143 stairs leading up to the lookout. Bill Ellis has served as a fire lookout for over 30 seasons. Bill and his wife, Margaret, have raised 6 of their 9 children in this modest two room cabin. In the 1970s, Margaret and the children would make the 1.5 mile hike twice a day down the mountain to reach the Sedalia school bus. There is still no running water at this cabin, and supplies must be packed in.

In 2013 and 2014, HistoriCorps completed the first phases of rehabilitation work at the Devil’s Head Fire Lookout in partnership with Passport In Time, Forest Fire Lookout Association, State Historical Fund, and the Pike and San Isabel National Forest. This historical treasure was falling into disrepair and threatened with closure. Thankfully, the HistoriCorps team rehabilitated the lookout to remain open to the public.

Scope of Work: The goal of the project was to continue our efforts from 2013-14 and repair the ranger cabin’s deteriorating roof. Youth from the Mile High Youth Corps learned to:

- Remove roof shingles and underlayment down to the roof deck
- Install cedar wood shingles
- Remove and replace metal flashing

HistoriCorps is a service learning partner of the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture committed to the preservation and stewardship of significant resources on public lands.