

**For Immediate Release
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Restoration Work at the Historic Zortman Guard Station

Malta, MT---For well over a century the Zortman guard station (in Zortman, Montana) contributed to this area's rich history. Now, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is taking steps to ensure the historic structure will remain for another 100 years.

The BLM acquired the Zortman guard station (and its nearby garage) from the Jefferson National Forest in the 1960s. The guard station was originally built in 1905, making the structure over 100 years old and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the only known standing historic structure currently managed by the BLM's HiLine District Office.

The guard station and garage most recently housed the BLM's Lewistown-Zortman fire crews, but they have not been fully utilized since the BLM constructed new fire facilities (office/warehouse/bunkhouse/water system) in Zortman, in the late 1990s.

Without use and maintenance, the buildings were naturally deteriorating. In response, and as part of the BLM's responsibility to maintain National Register eligible properties, HiLine District archaeologists Alicia Beat and Jody Miller prepared a restoration plan to preserve the guard station and garage.

Since 2008, the HiLine cultural resource management program has been actively working to restore the Zortman guard station. The primary concern was to reduce the lead hazard on the exterior of the buildings. The next two concerns were to replace the roofs and improve water drainage away from the foundations.

Through an intra-agency agreement, the U.S. Forest Service R1 Historic Preservation Team has been working 1-2 weeks each summer replacing the roofs and siding on the cabin and garage as well as addressing drainage issues around each structure. Using this intra-agency agreement with the R1 Preservation Team allows the BLM to stretch its cultural resource budget to the maximum extent possible. The R1 team will be back in 2010, to finish siding the guard station and the garage.

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When this project is completed, the exterior of the Zortman guard station and garage will be fully restored, which will hopefully allow these structures to contribute to the area's future for another 100 years.



The Zortman Guard Station; before renovations



The R1 Team installing the new roof



The Zortman Guard Station; after renovations

