

Rocky Mountain Research Station Directors

February, 2022

History:

The present-day Rocky Mountain Research Station evolved from a long history of U.S. Forest Service research facilities in the western United States. The Fort Valley Experimental Forest was the first forest research area established by the Forest Service in 1908 near Flagstaff, Arizona, followed by the Fremont Experiment Station near Colorado Springs and the Wagon Wheel Gap watershed experiment near Creede, Colorado in 1909. In 1915 the Santa Rita Range Reserve, begun in 1903, was transferred to the Forest Service in 1915. Research underway at these facilities was transferred to two forest and range experiment stations, the Southwestern Station, established in 1930, at Tucson, Arizona, and Rocky Mountain Station, established in 1935, at Fort Collins, Colorado. The Southwestern Station was absorbed into the Rocky Mountain Station in 1953, with central headquarters at Fort Collins, Colorado to serve a 10-State territory. The Northern Rocky Mountain Station was also absorbed into the Intermountain Station during that time. Further consolidation of the Intermountain and Rocky Mountain Stations occurred in 1997 to form today's Rocky Mountain Research Station covering all western states except the west coast and Alaska.

Organization:

The Station maintains 14 research laboratories throughout a 12-state territory encompassing the Great Basin, Southwest, Rocky Mountains, and parts of the Great Plains. It administers and conducts ecological research on 14 experimental forests, ranges and watersheds and oversees activities on several hundred research natural areas, a network of ecosystems set aside to conserve biological diversity.

Southwestern Forest and Range Experiment Station

G. A. Pearson	1931 - 1934
Arthur T. Upson	1936 - 1939
Vacant WWII	1940 - 1944
Raymond Price	1945 - 1950

Merged into Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station 1953

Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station¹ 1926-1953

Robert H. Weidman	1928 - 1931
Lyle F. Watts	1934 - 1935
Stephen N. Wyckoff	1936 - 1938
Melvin I. Bradner	1938 - 1946
Harry T. Gisborne acting	1946
Charles L. Tebbe	1948 - 1953

Merged into Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station 1953

Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station

C. L. Forsling	1928 - 1934
Reed W. Bailey	1936 - 1939
Vacant WWII	1940 - 1945
Reed W. Bailey	1945 - 1962
Joseph F. Penchanec	1963 - 1971
Robert W. Harris	1972 - 1973
Roger R. Bay	1975 - 1983
Laurence E. Lassen	1984 - 1991
Vacant	1992 - 1994
Denver P. Burns	1995 - 1997

Combined into Rocky Mountain Research Station 1997

Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station

Richard E. McArdle	1936 - 1938
Charles A. Connaughton	1939
Vacant WWII	1940 - 1944
William G. McGinnies	1945 - 1950
Raymond Price	1957 - 1971
Karl F. Wenger	1972 - 1975
David E. Herrick	1976 - 1980
Charles M. Loveless	1981 - 1989
Hank Montrey	1990 - 1991
Denver P. Burns	1992 - 1997

Combined into Rocky Mountain Research Station 1997

Rocky Mountain Research Station

Denver P. Burns	1992 - 2000
Marcia Patton-Mallory	2001 - 2004
Dave Cleaves	2005 - 2007
G. Sam Foster	2008 - 2014
John Phipps	2015 - 2019
Monica Lear	2020 - Present

References

Price, Raymond. 1976. History of Forest Service Research in the Central and Southern Rocky Mountain Regions, 1908-1975. USDA For. Serv. Gen. Tech. Rep. RM-27, 100 p. Rocky Mt. For. and Range Exp. Stn., Fort Collins, Colo. 80521.

Hamre, R. H. 2005. Changing Times at the Rocky Mountain Forest & Range Experiment Station—Station History from 1976 to 1997. USDA For. Serv. Gen. Tech. Rep. RMRS-GTR-146, 66 p. Rocky Mt. Res. Stn., Fort Collins, CO 80521.

Ambrose, Steve. 2021. RMRS/INT Time Line (a list of significant Events in Rocky Mountain and Intermountain Stations History). Unpublished. On file at Forest History Museum, Missoula, MT.

¹Information from Debra Dietzman's 2022 spreadsheet for compilation of the Northern Rocky Mountain Experiment Station

Compiled by: Wayne D. Shepperd (RMRS retired)