
Blue Mountain

The Blue Mountain study area is located at the northwesternmost extent of the Box Springs Mountains, near the City of Grand Terrace in San Bernardino County.

Existing Conditions

General Site Conditions

The study area is located on the peak of Blue Mountain at approximately 2,400 feet above sea level. The soils present consist of a Cieneba-Rock outcrop complex, based on the USDA soil survey. Land use in the vicinity consists of open space in all directions, with the exception of an existing communication facility and associated dirt access road to the north of the study area. The study area shows evidence of a recent, high intensity burn event. In addition to the burn, the study area is subject to disturbance associated with off-road vehicle use and maintenance activities associated with the existing communication facilities. The study area is regularly used for vehicle parking.

Vegetation

The majority of the study area is bare ground that is void of vegetation as a result of the burn event and regular vehicle traffic. Vegetation in the adjacent areas, however, is resprouting. The dominant plant species in the surrounding areas include native species such as wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*) and California aster (*Lessingia filaginifolia*), and non-native species such as short-podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and star thistle (*Centaurea melitensis*). These species are common in bare areas after disturbance events. Despite the cover dominance of the above plant species, various other plant species, characteristic of coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities, are also resprouting in the vicinity. These species include brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), California buckwheat (*Eroginum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artimesia californica*), phacilea (*phacilia distans*), rancher's fiddleneck (*Amsinckia mezesii*), baby's blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha* sp.), wild canterburry bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis californica*), and Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*).

Wildlife

Wildlife activity was moderate during the survey. Wildlife species observed include granite spiny lizard (*Sceloporus orcutti*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), California kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula californica*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). Species expected to occur are those commonly found in disturbed, open habitats such as deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), and California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*).

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive Species

Federally and State Listed Species

No habitat for any State- or federally-listed threatened or endangered species occurs within the study area. Therefore, the development of the study area is not anticipated to impact any plant or animal species protected under the CESA or FESA.

CNPS Listed Species

The study area contains suitable habitat for chaparral sand-verbena (*Abronia villosa* var. *aurita*), a CNPS List 1B.1 species, Plummer's mariposa-lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), and Robinson's peppergrass (*Lepidium virginicum* var. *robinsonii*), both CNPS List 1B.2 species, and Parish's desert-thorn (*Lycium parishii*) a CNPS List 2.3 species. None of the species were observed within the study area. Regardless, plant species identified as sensitive only by CNPS are not protected by any State or federal laws or policies.

Other Sensitive Species

No suitable habitat for sensitive species not specifically protected under any other policy occurs on the study area.

Critical Habitat

The study area is located within Critical Habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), as designated by the USFWS. Because no suitable habitat occurs on the study area, no focused surveys are required but consultation with USFWS will still be necessary.

Nesting Birds

No suitable nesting habitat for any avian species was observed within the study area. No nesting birds will be impacted by the development of the study area.

California Desert Native Plant Act

No plant species protected under the CDNPA were observed within the study area and no impacts associated with the development of the study area are anticipated to occur.

Jurisdictional Waters

No drainage features, wetlands, vernal pools, or suitable habitat for sensitive fairy shrimp species occur on or in the vicinity of the study area. No waters or wetlands potentially under the jurisdiction of the State or the United States will be impacted by the development of the study area.

Wildlife Corridors and Movement

Given the limited size and minimal disturbance associated with the development of the study area, no impacts to any wildlife corridors or wildlife movement patterns are anticipated.

Applicable HCP or Land Use Management Plan

The study area located in San Bernardino County and is privately owned and managed. It is not located within any regional HCP or land use management plan.



Legend

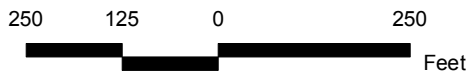
- Tower Locations
- 50' Study Area

Source: Riverside County NAIP, 2005.



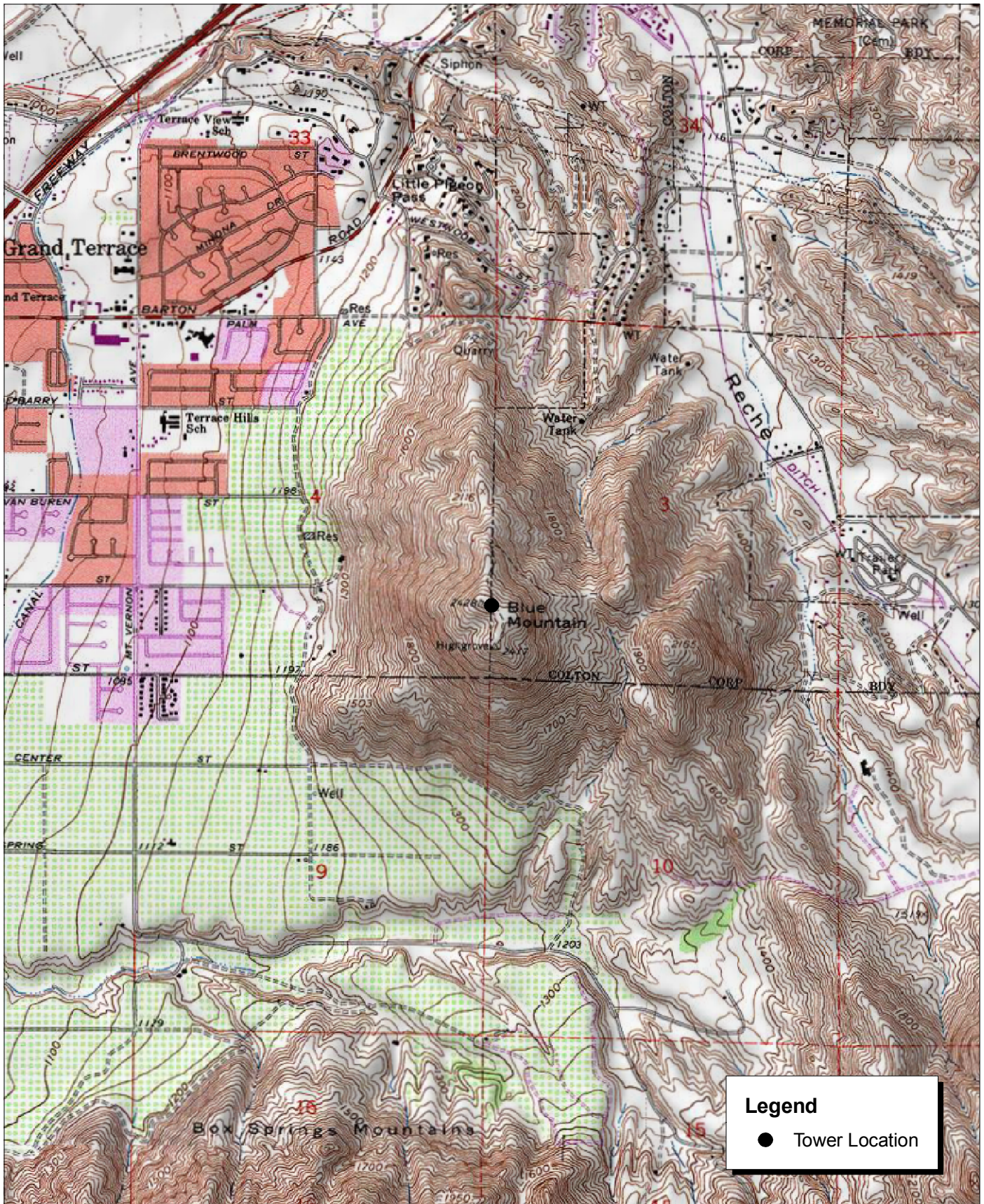
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Blue Mountain Communication Site Local Vicinity Aerial Map

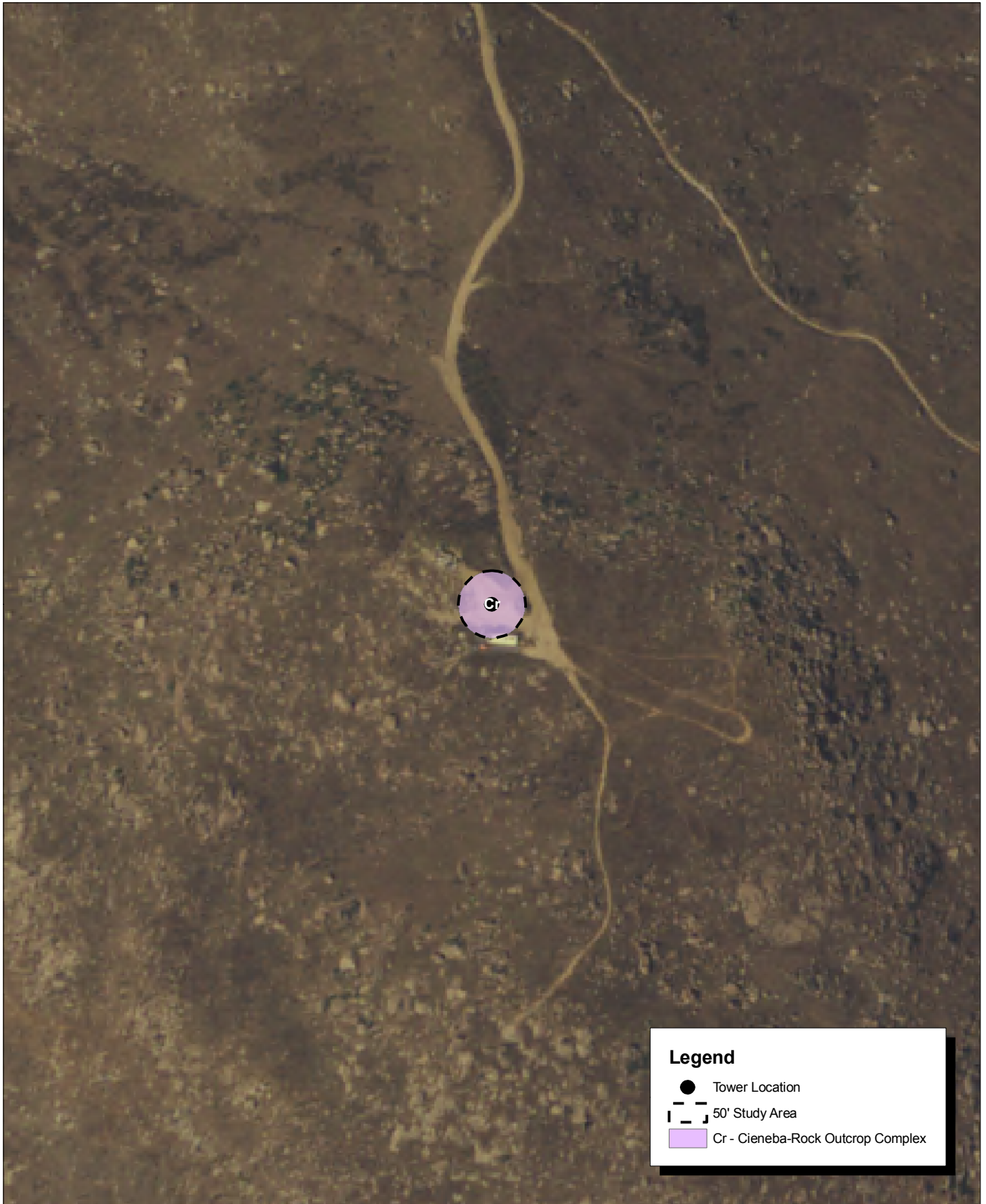
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Source: USGS San Bernardino South 7.5' Topographic Map.



Blue Mountain Communication Site Local Vicinity Topographic Map

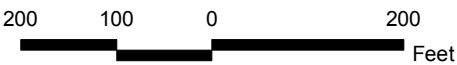


Source: USDA Soils Data (NRCS).



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Blue Mountain Communication Site USDA Soils Map

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Photograph 1: Overview of Blue Mountain candidate location, facing west.



Photograph 2: View toward Blue Mountain candidate location, facing north.



Photograph 3: View toward Blue Mountain candidate location, facing east.



Photograph 4: View toward Blue Mountain candidate location, facing south.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Blue Mountain Candidate Photographs 1 to 4
PSEC Project



Photograph 5: View from Blue Mtn. candidate location, facing northeast.



Photograph 6: View from Blue Mtn. candidate location, facing southeast.



Photograph 7: View from Blue Mtn. candidate location, facing west.



Photograph 8: View from Blue Mtn. candidate location, facing southwest.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.

