
Ranger Peak

The Ranger Peak study area is located on a ridge adjacent to Ranger Peak in the northwestern portion of the San Jacinto Mountains. The study area is located in the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF), approximately 5 miles southeast of the City of Banning.

Existing Conditions

General Site Conditions

The study area is located on a flat, recently cleared, undeveloped lot. The elevation of the study area is approximately 5,043 feet above sea level. Soils present consist of the Wind River-Oak Glen families association, based on the USDA soil survey. Land use in the vicinity consists of a dirt access road to the east, undeveloped USFS land to the north and west, and an existing communications facility approximately 500 feet to the south. The study area is subject to disturbance associated with off-road vehicle use.

Vegetation

The vegetation on the study area predominantly consists of sparse, disturbance-tolerant, ruderal plant species. The plant species observed include lambs quarter (*Chenopodium album*), short-podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), wire lettuce (*Stephanomeria exigua*), California aster (*Lessingia filaginifolia*), and blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*). The vegetation in the vicinity of the study area constitutes a mixed chaparral-mixed conifer transition area plant community. The majority of this vegetation consists of large shrubs; however, scattered oak and pine trees also occur throughout. The plant species observed include cliff goldenbush (*Ericameria cuneata*), scarlet keckiella (*keckiella ternata*), chaparral whitethorn (*Ceanothus leucodermis*), western wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*), skunkbush (*Rhus trilobata*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* sp.), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), oak (*Quercus* sp.), and California coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*).

Wildlife

Wildlife activity was low during the survey. Wildlife species observed include granite spiny lizard (*Sceloporus orcutti*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), and side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*). Species expected to occur are those common in mixed chaparral habitats such as western rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), and Douglas squirrel (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*).

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.

USFS Sensitive and Watch List Species

The study area contains suitable habitat for Payson's jewel-flower (*Caulanthus simulans*) and San Diego (coast) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*), both USFS Region 5 Sensitive List species; and northern red-diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber ruber*), a USFS Region 5 Watch List species. None of the species were observed within the study area. Regardless, species identified as sensitive by the USFS are not directly protected by any State or federal laws or policies.

CSC

The study area contains suitable habitat for Dulzura pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*), a CSC. The species was not observed within the study area. Regardless, CSC 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 not located within any USFWS-designated Critical Habitat.

Nesting Birds

No nests or nesting activities were observed during the survey; however, the vegetation adjacent to the study area contains suitable nesting habitat for shrub nesting avian species, such as California towhee.

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 is located on federal land managed by the USFS. The study area is subject to the San Bernardino National Forest Management Plan (SBNFMP). Approval by the USFS must be obtained prior to construction.

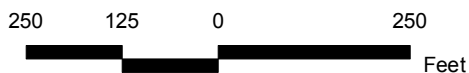


Source: Riverside County NAIP, 2005.



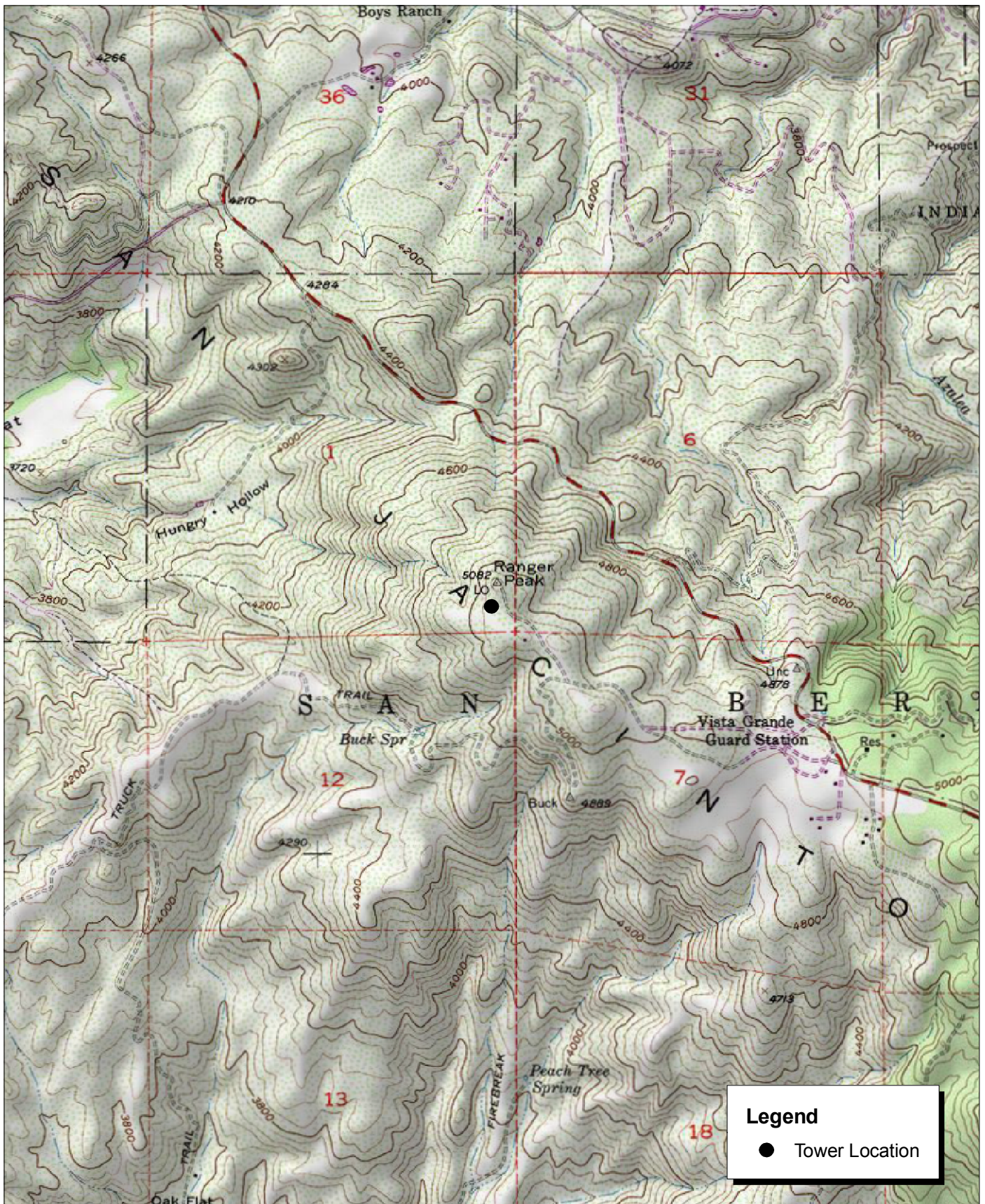
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Ranger Peak Communication Site Local Vicinity Aerial Map

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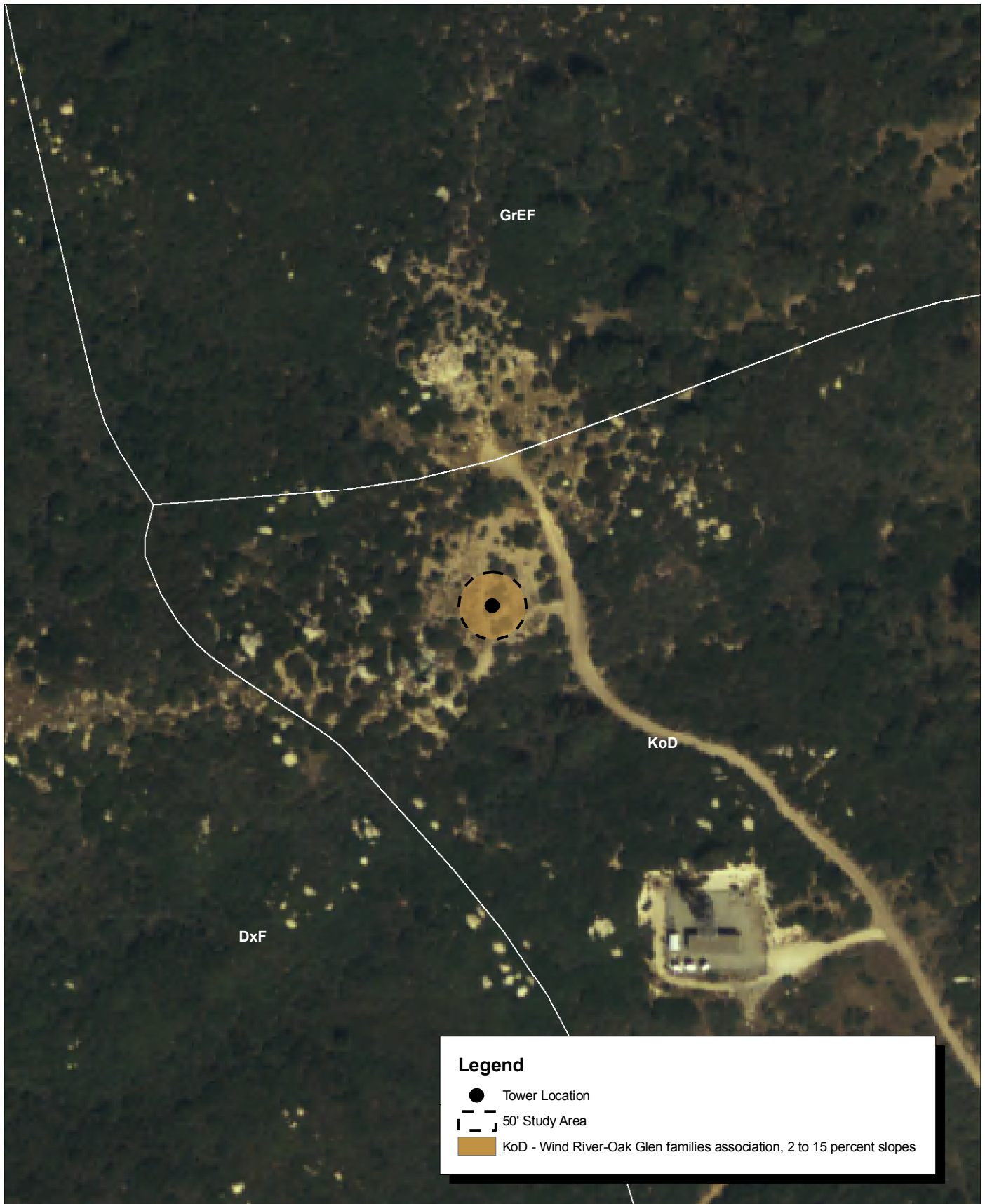
Source: USGS Lake Fulmor 7.5' Topographic Map.



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Ranger Peak Communication Site Local Vicinity Topographic Map

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Source: USDA Soils Data (NRCS).



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Ranger Peak Communication Site USDA Soils Map

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Photograph 1: View toward Ranger Peak candidate location, facing east.



Photograph 2: Overview of Ranger Peak candidate location, facing east.



Photograph 3: View toward Ranger Peak candidate location, facing west.



Photograph 4: View toward Ranger Peak candidate location, facing south.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Ranger Peak Candidate Photographs 1 to 4 PSEC Project



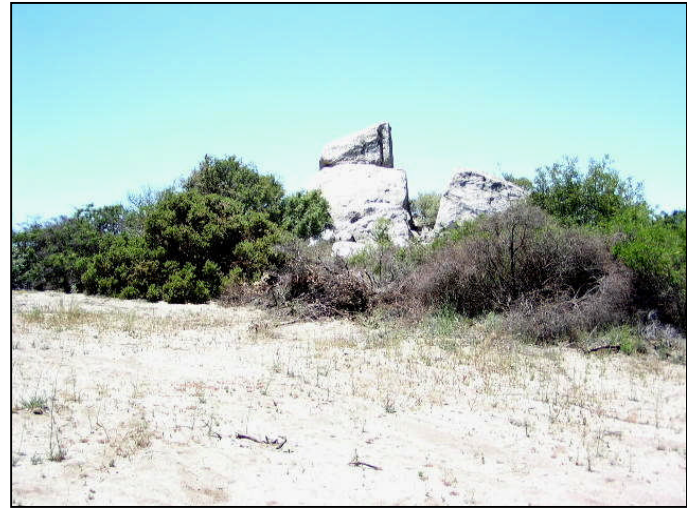
Photograph 5: View from Ranger Peak candidate location, facing northeast.



Photograph 6: View from Ranger Peak candidate location, facing northwest.



Photograph 7: View from Ranger Peak candidate location, facing southeast.



Photograph 8: View from Ranger Peak candidate location, facing southwest.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Ranger Peak Candidate Photographs 5 to 8 PSEC Project