
Santiago Peak

The Santiago Peak study area is located on the Riverside County portion of Santiago Peak in the Santa Ana Mountains.

Existing Conditions

General Site Conditions

The study area is located at an existing communication facility with steep slopes to the north and south, and a ridgeline to the east and west. The elevation of the study area is approximately 5,605 feet above sea level. Soils present consist of Exchequer-rock outcrop complex, based on the USDA soil survey. Land uses in the vicinity consist of undeveloped open space to the east and south, the existing communications facility to the north, and a dirt access road to the west. The study area is subject to disturbance associated with existing communication facility maintenance and vegetation clearing for fuel modification zone purposes.

Vegetation

The majority of the vegetation on the study area was recently cut at the base for fuel modification purposes. The vegetation in the remainder of the study area consists of a ceanothus chaparral plant community to the southwest, a manzanita chaparral plant community to the southeast, and an oak woodland plant community to the north. The dominant plant species observed include whitethorn ceanothus (*Ceanothus cordulatus*), manzanita (*Acrostaphylos* sp.), and interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*). Plant species also observed include California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), chaparral yucca (*Yucca whipplei*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and creeping snowberry (*Symphoricarpos mollis*).

Wildlife

Wildlife activity was low during the survey. Wildlife species observed include red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), and common raven (*Corvus corax*). Species expected to occur are those common in chaparral and oak woodland habitats, such as western rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*) and grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*).

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive 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 State or federal ESAs.

The study area has suitable habitat for Hall's monardella (*Monardella macrantha* ssp. *hallii*), Payson's jewel-flower (*Caulanthus simulans*), and San Diego (coast) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*), all USFS Region 5 Sensitive List species; and northern red-diamond rattlesnake

(*Crotalus ruber ruber*) and orange-throated whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra*), USFS Region 5 Watch List species.

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 in the study area contains suitable nesting habitat for shrub nesting avian species, such as western scrub jay.

California Desert Native Plant Act

Chaparral yucca was observed in the study area and this species is protected under Section 80073 of the CDNPA. According to Section 80073 of the CDNPA, no chaparral yucca (including both dead and live) may be harvested except under a permit issued by the County Agricultural Commissioner or the sheriff. The commissioner may establish limits on the quantity of chaparral yucca which may be taken under any permit and on the number of permits for the taking of chaparral yucca which may be issued.

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 jurisdiction under the Cleveland National Forest Management Plan (CNFMP). Approval by the USFS must be obtained prior to construction.

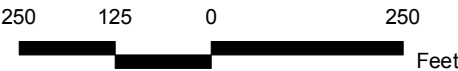


Source: Riverside County NAIP, 2005.



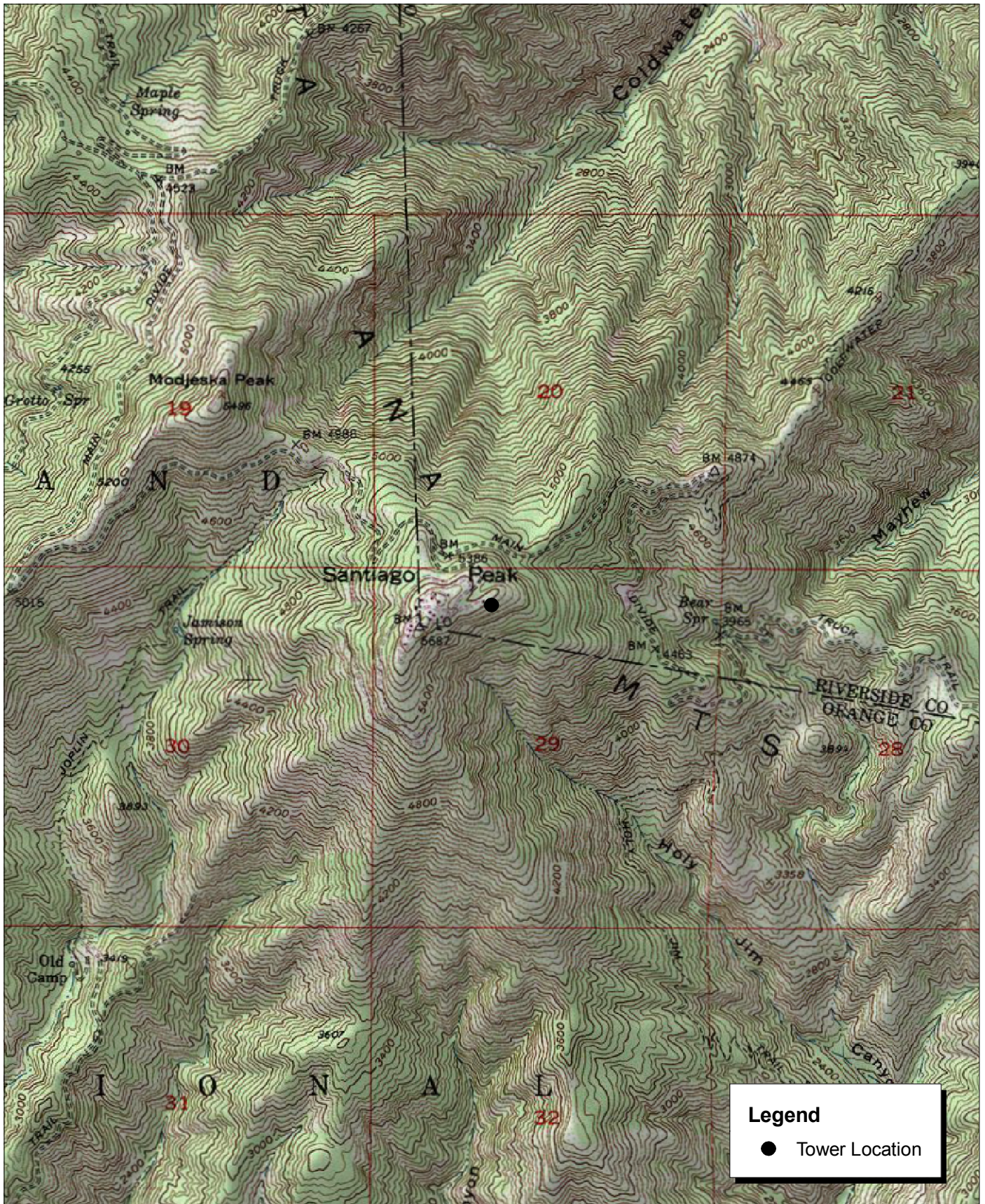
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Santiago Peak Communication Site Local Vicinity Aerial Map

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
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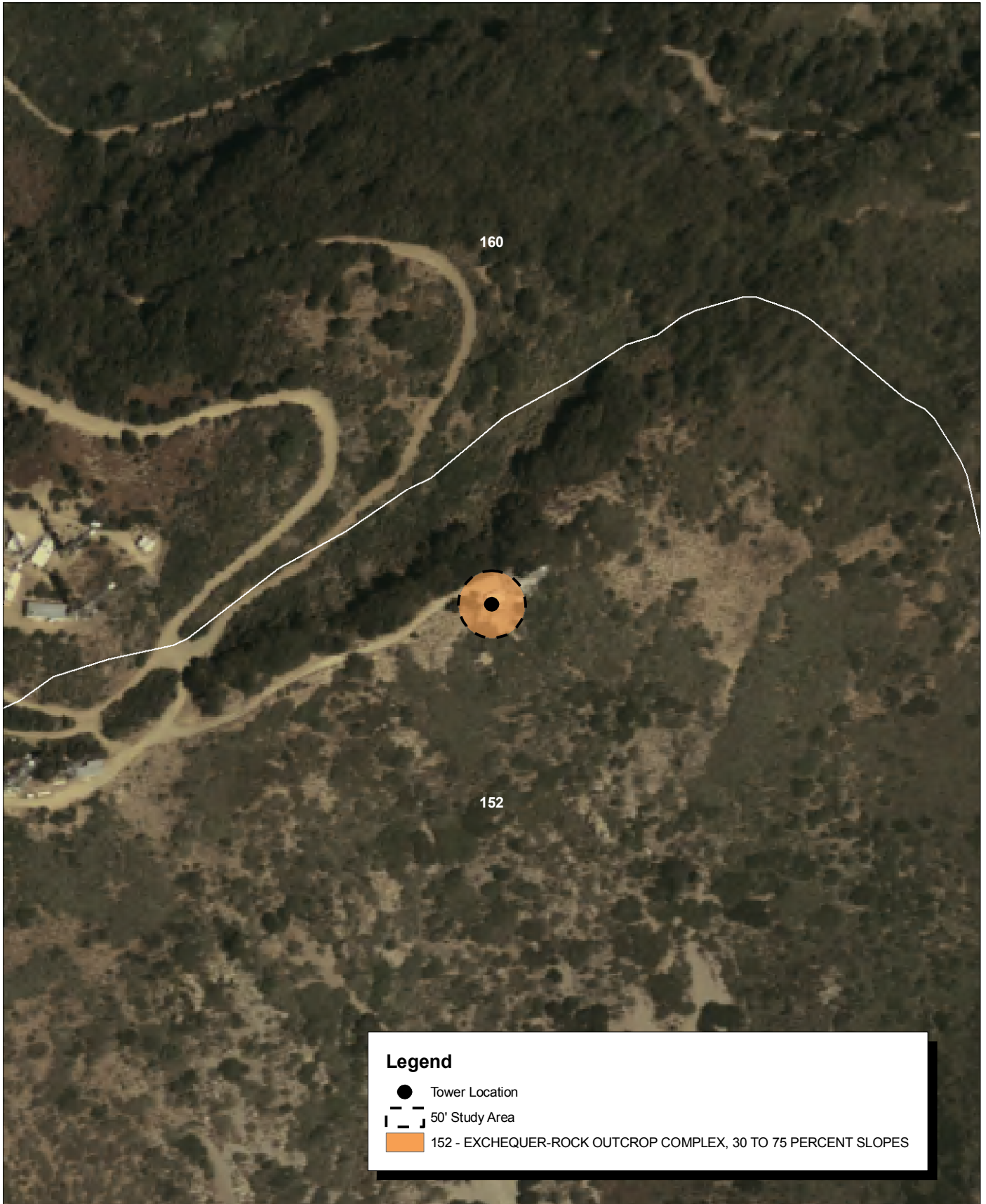
Legend

- Tower Location

Source: USGS Santiago Peak 7.5' Topographic Map.



Santiago Peak Communication Site Local Vicinity Topographic Map



Legend

- Tower Location
- 50' Study Area
- 152 - EXCHEQUER-ROCK OUTCROP COMPLEX, 30 TO 75 PERCENT SLOPES

Source: USDA Soils Data (NRCS).



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Santiago Peak Communication Site USDA Soils Map

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Photograph 1: View toward Santiago Peak candidate location, facing north.



Photograph 2: View toward Santiago Peak candidate location, facing south.



Photograph 3: Overview toward Santiago Peak candidate location, facing west.



Photograph 4: View toward Santiago Peak candidate location, facing east.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.





Photograph 5: View from Santiago Peak candidate location, facing northwest.



Photograph 6: View from Santiago Peak candidate location, facing southwest.



Photograph 7: View from Santiago Peak candidate location, facing west.



Photograph 8: View from Santiago Peak candidate location, facing north.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Santiago Peak Candidate Photographs 5 to 8 PSEC Project