

FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION

California-South Chapter



2017 Year-End Report

During 2016, the FFLA's organization chart was reconfigured, making me the Director, and placing the Angeles, San Bernardino, and San Diego-Riverside local chapters under the California-South umbrella. I also served as Chairman of the San Diego-Riverside local chapter, and the administrative duties of the 80-member local chapter consumed a commanding portion of my available time.

On January 6, 2018, I will retire from the SDRC chairmanship in order to devote more time for the California-South directorship.

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

The only project pursued and completed was Hi Mountain Lookout Fire Reporting Training and Logistics. This lookout is the property of the Los Padres National Forest and is in San Luis Obispo County. Hi Mountain (register # 522) had previously been refurbished by wildlife biologists as a California Condor tracking station. During 2017, I continued contact with the tower's managers and entered a partnership to train their staff in fire reporting. The approach used was: As long as staff were going to be in the tower, they could do double duty and accurately report smokes, thereby helping to preserve the habitat for their study animals.

I recruited a volunteer photographer and took him to the site where we taped video segments and still photos, using Hi Mountain volunteers who were on site. We also shot panorama photos for landmark identification panels. Returning home, I produced a 6-minute training video and posted it on YouTube for easy access by the wildlife volunteers. It can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjY_1PuoDds

The landmark identification panels were completed and delivered to the Hi Mountain staff at their annual fundraising event. At that event, I also introduced and showed the training video, and received gratifying appreciation for our (FFLA's) efforts. Unfortunately, the County of San Luis Obispo closed Hi Mountain's access road pending road grading, so the fire reporting training efforts will be reenacted next year when/if the road and the tower are reopened.

I donated the expenses incurred in the above project, so there is no FFLA fiscal activity to report.

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OBJECTIVES FOR 2018:

- Build a website (firelookouthost.org) to publicly highlight all towers in the California-South Chapter
- Conduct site visits to as many California-South towers as possible and update their conditions.
- Submit visit reports to the FFLA register
- Pursue restoration projects, beginning with Chalone Peak (register #396)

Respectfully submitted,

Scott McClintock, Director
California-South Chapter