

# FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION California-South Chapter



## 2024 Year-End Report

### CURRENT CHAPTER OFFICERS:

Scott McClintock, Director

### LOCAL FFLA CHAPTERS:

1. San Diego-Riverside
2. Monterey

### AFFILIATES:

1. Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association (Angeles NF)
2. Southern California Mountains Foundation (San Bernardino NF)
3. Hi Mountain Condor Lookout (Los Padres NF)

### PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. **CONE PEAK LO (1288)** – This structure is currently full of repeater gear and is not useable as a lookout. The Los Padres National Forest radio technicians had plans to remove the equipment, and avail the structure to the FFLA for restoration and operation. However, the access road to the lookout trailhead suffered major washout damage in December, 2021. Repairs to the road have begun, but will be extensive. I will be monitoring that status for the time that the lookout is accessible.  
Project Status: SUSPENDED.



2. **FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN LO (881)** – In 2020, I conducted a site visit at this lookout, deemed it highly viable as a restoration & operation project, and submitted a proposal, which was ignored. This Ranger District was continually assigned to temporary “Acting” District Rangers who would not make permanent decisions. However, in 2024, Benjamin Gray was assigned there and appears to be somewhat



permanent. Ranger Gray is interested in staffing the tower, and we have an on-site meeting scheduled for 1/21/25, to evaluate thinning of surrounding trees and re-construction of the cab interior.

Project Status: PENDING

3. **LYONS PEAK LO (754)** – This tower on the Cleveland National Forest is surrounded by private land and access to it is severely limited by litigation. Continuing to monitor the access status, and if it improves, will press for restoration and activation.

Project Status: SUSPENDED

4. **CHALONE PEAK LO (396)** – Pinnacles National Park has decided to demolish this tower, due to lack of funds for the \$300,000 to \$1 million required to restore it; and ongoing access limitations.

Corresponded on 12/12/24 regarding the pending demolition. Funding not secured, and demo may be as late as 2031. Project Status: SUSPENDED



5. **BALD MOUNTAIN LO (279)** – Permission secured from Sierra Nevada Director Jeff Baggett to correspond with the Inyo NF about this structure. Launched a “Visiting Volunteers” pilot project using 16 veteran volunteer lookouts to staff 42 shifts, draft a Procedures Manual and produce training/orientation videos. Winter meetings are scheduled to plan 2025 operations and training local volunteers.

Project Status: ONGOING



## 6. MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES:

- A. January 13: Electronically attend FFLA Board of Directors meeting.
- B. April 21: Attend & present at Monterey Chapter Reconnect meeting.
- C. April 28: Attend & present at SD-Riverside Chapter Reconnect meeting.
- D. May 24: Travel to & evaluate Bald Mountain LO on the Inyo NF.
- E. June 20: Begin correspondence with Chris Fabbro re Bald Mtn partnership.
- F. August 11-13: Worked first 3 “Visiting volunteer” shifts at Bald Mountain LO.
- G. August 14: Evaluate Leviathan Lookout. Submit report to Jeff Baggett.

- H. Oct. 27-28: Work last 2 shifts at Bald Mtn; close facility for the winter.
- I. Oct. 29: Project evaluation meeting with Inyo NF staff re Bald Mtn. LO.
- J. December 7: Electronically attend FFLA Board of Directors meeting.

**OBJECTIVES FOR 2025:**

- Conduct site visits to as many California-South towers as possible and update their conditions.
- Submit visit reports to the NHLR.
- Build an FFLA local 'Inyo' Chapter to operate Bald Mountain LO.
- Complete agreement with the Santa Lucia Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest to restore and operate Figueroa Mountain Lookout; with the aim to eventually build an FFLA local 'Santa Lucia' Chapter. Possibly utilize the "Visiting Volunteers" model during start-up.

**2024 CHAPTER TOWER STATISTICS:**

Standing lookouts:	26
Lookouts in active detection service:	13
Rental lookouts:	0
Lookouts needing significant repairs:	9
Lookouts converted to alternate uses:	6

Respectfully submitted,

*Scott McClintock*

Scott McClintock, Director  
California-South Chapter