Mt. Hopkins Fire Action Plan 2017

Mt. Hopkins
Fire Response Plan
Nogales Ranger District
Coronado National Forest
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Approved by: _____ Date_____
JAMES D. COPELAND
Nogales District Ranger

Mt Hopkins Fire Action Plan
2017

It is imperative that dispatchers at TIFC (Tucson Interagency Fire Center), and SWCC (Southwest Coordinating Center), and other responding agencies realize that the potential for loss of life and/or property from a significant wildfire on Mt. Hopkins could be very high due to long response times, narrow roads, indefensible structures, no safety zones, and the possibility of ingress/egress being cut off by an advancing fire. The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance during the initial response stages of a fire.

Objectives

- Provide initial response and evacuation guidelines for the Mt. Hopkins Observatory site if a wildfire should occur.
- Minimize loss of life and property.
- Determine the need for an Incident Management Team.
- Make hazards known

Fire Reporting:

If you are using a phone in an observatory or other facility on top of Mt. Hopkins you must dial "9" first

911 (Goes through Pima County Dispatch)
9-911 from Observatory phone

Coronado National Forest Fire Dispatch… (520) 202-2710 or 1-800-549-0661
From Observatory phone 9-202-2710 or 9-1-800-549-0661

Nogales Ranger District Office… (520) 281-2296 or 9-1-520-281-2296 from Obs. phone
Hours Mon – Fri …8:00am – 4:30pm (520) 761-6000 or 9-1-520-761-6000 from Obs. phone

Tubac Fire Department…… (520) 398-2255 or 9-1-520-398-2255 from Obs. phone

Elephant Head Fire Department…… (520) or 9-1-520-343-8218 from Obs. phone

Contacts

Forest Service Contacts

District Ranger- James Copeland.....(520) 334-0034 cellular

District Fire Management Officer
Shane Lyman..... (520) 444-9010 cellular

Assistant Fire Management Officer
Darrel Howell ..... (520) 559-0746 cellular

Madera Canyon Area Manager
Don Marion..... (520) 403-4548 cellular
(520) 398-2525 residence

Smithsonian contacts
Administrative Office ..... (520) 879-4400
Pascal Fortin..... (520) 879-4419, 520-288-2311 (c)
Telescope numbers at night..... (520) 879-4570 MMT
(520) 879-4516 /60-inch Telescope
(520)-879-4517 / 48" Telescope
(520)-879-4435 /Veritas

Evacuation Group (contact if the need for evacuation arises)

Forest Service Law Enforcement Dispatch – 1-800-637-9152
Forest Service Law Enforcement (Captain, Cheri Bowen) – (520) 388-8430
Forest Service Law Enforcement (Nogales RD Patrick Blue) (505) 452-7501
Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department – (520) 761-7869
Arizona Department of Public Safety – (520) 746-4500
Pima County Emergency Services – (520) 798-3919
Santa Cruz County Emergency Services – (520) 287-6321, (520) 375-8000
Smithsonian Contacts – see above
Red Cross (For evacuee family notification) – Need to be ordered by EMS

Dormitory Fire Alarms

- **Important**: <u>No</u> daytime staff is available on Mt. Hopkins on weekends and holidays. Scientists sleep in the dorms from sunrise to approximately 1600. To alert dorm sleepers, contact the FLWO (Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory) personnel who will use the remote dialer to trigger the fire alarms in the Ridge and Summit dorms.

Pascal Fortin 520-879-4419, 520-288-2311 (c)
Tom Gerl 520-879-4411, 520-665-8455 (c)

Trigger Points

- If a fire starts and cuts off ingress/egress to Mt. Hopkins, make contact immediately with Smithsonian to direct personnel in the Mt. Hopkins vicinity to evacuate immediately if possible.

- If a fire starts anywhere mid-slope on Mt Hopkins, all personnel on the mountain should evacuate immediately.

- If the road to Mt. Hopkins is even remotely threatened **DO NOT** send ground resources up the road. The road is very long, narrow, flanked by heavy concentrations of fuel and steep slopes. There are no safety zones along the route, or on the mountain.

Initial Response:

INITIAL RESOURCE ORDERS:

***Note:** There is a gate at kilometer 13 on the mountain road. The combination is: **#1701;** if the combination does not work, the gate can be pushed open manually. The combination 1352 will open other locks and doors around the facility.

Upon Report of Fire (Order when there is a confirmed fire):
Tubac Fire Department
Elephant Head Fire Department
Forest Engine 622 (Nogales)
Forest Crew 52 (Nogales)
FMO and/or AFMO (Nogales)
District Ranger (Nogales)
Air Attack (Tucson)
Helicopter (Tucson)
Law Enforcement (traffic control, road blocks)

Upon confirmation of a significant fire (consider ordering)
Type 3 Incident Commander
Logistics
Safety Officer
Public Information Officer
Misc. Overhead
Type 2 Incident Management Team (takes time to mobilize, ICT3/District Ranger, and Forest Supervisor will determine need)
Helicopters (depending on location, use the most effective size aircraft)
Air Tankers (depending on location, use the most effective size aircraft)
Air Attack

COMMUNICATION:
Responding units will communicate through their own dispatch until able to establish contact with the Incident Commander on "VFIRE21" Frequency 154.280 or SEZ Fire Net.
Frequencies used are as follows:
Tactical Channel -154.280 "VFIRE21" or assigned tactical frequency
Command Channel will be the SEZ Fire Net Simplex- Rx 172.275 Tx 172.275 Repeater-Rx 172.275 Tx 168.150 Tx Tone 114.8.
Air to Ground (41) 167.4750 (56)168.66250 (32)166.9625

INITIAL RESPONSE INCIDENT COMMAND STRUCTURE:
Incident Commander (I/C): This will be the first qualified IC on the scene. IC roles may change to an ICT3 upon the determination that the fire will exceed the ability of the initial attack resources. The ICT3 will then make the determination of what kind of overhead structure that is needed. If the fire exceeds the capabilities of the ICT3, a Type 1 or Type 2 Incident Management Team will be ordered through the SEZ with the concurrence of the District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, and Forest FMO. Staging area for responding resources will be at the Smithsonian base camp (Lat. N 31° 40' 29.6 / Long. 110° 57' 04.0).

Line Officer contact: Due to the sensitive nature of the observatory site, the District Ranger will closely monitor all suppression actions and be prepared to assist with/update risk and complexity analysis as conditions change. District Ranger will inform and advise Forest FMO and Forest Supervisor as conditions change.

INITIAL STRATEGY:
Due to the complexity, terrain and slopes on the observatory site, air resources will be the primary and initial resource. The consideration of all standard fire orders, eighteen watch outs, and LCES (Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones) are extremely important. Suppression action should take place after all personnel are adequately briefed in these areas and defined safety considerations are in place. Initial attack will be aggressive with a heavy use of resources with the hope that the fire can be kept small.

Water storage tanks -- Water storage tanks are located at the residence site (just above the gate), the heliport, and the Aspen Grove. There are gasoline-powered water pumps at these tanks. These pumps can be used to fill engines or fill dip tanks for helicopters. The boxes covering the pumps are padlocked. Use the building lock combination (1352) to unlock padlocks.

HAZARDS:

- Poor and lengthy ingress/egress
- Few turn-arounds
- Steep slopes
- Heavy fuels concentrations
- Narrow roads
- No Safety zones
- 6000 gal. diesel tank and generator day tank at Ridge
- Fuel truck (50 gal. diesel) occasionally near Ridge Maintenance building
- Fuel, solvents, and high pressure gas cylinders in telescope buildings and Summit and Ridge Maintenance buildings
- Propane tanks on gas grilles at Ridge Dorm and Common Building. Large tank at Qwest microwave repeater site.

EVACUATION STRATEGY:

It is suggested that if the road to Mt. Hopkins is even remotely threatened **DO NOT** send ground resources up the road. The road is very long, narrow, flanked by heavy fuel concentrations and steep slopes. There are **no safety zones** along the route, nor are there any safety zones anywhere on the mountain. If a fire starts anywhere below the observatory site, all personnel on the mountain should evacuate immediately. If people are unable to evacuate, a last resort option may be to use the Multi Mirror Telescope (MMT) building as refuge. Understand that the MMT is **not** a safety zone. It is unknown how safe the MMT will be in the event of an oncoming wildfire. If aerial evacuation is needed people may be flown from a Heli-port that is located on "The Ridge" (Lat. N 31° 41'05. 8 / W Long. 110° 52'41. 3) or at the IOTA site below the MMT at (N31° 41.5 W110° 55.1).
Aerial evacuation will only be considered if helicopters are available and conditions allow them to land. It is important for the IC/Law Enforcement and staff from Smithsonian to have a coordinated effort in evacuation. This is because Smithsonian personnel have separate frequencies to communicate evacuation efforts with staff on Mt. Hopkins.

Travel up Mt. Hopkins, and Smithsonian Internal Radio System

Check in with Smithsonian base camp to get updates on vehicles going up and coming down the mountain to avoid collisions.

To make certain of communication and traffic going up and down the Mt. Hopkins road, borrow a handheld radio from the Smithsonian base camp before proceeding up the Mountain.

Functions and responsibilities of law enforcement:

- Supervise and regulate necessary evacuations.
- Establish and maintain roadblocks at points strategic to the fire, i.e., limit access to authorized personnel and equipment, direct and escort when needed.
- Continue normal police functions.
- Coordinate with other agencies.
- Provide necessary information and recommendations to Incident Command staff.

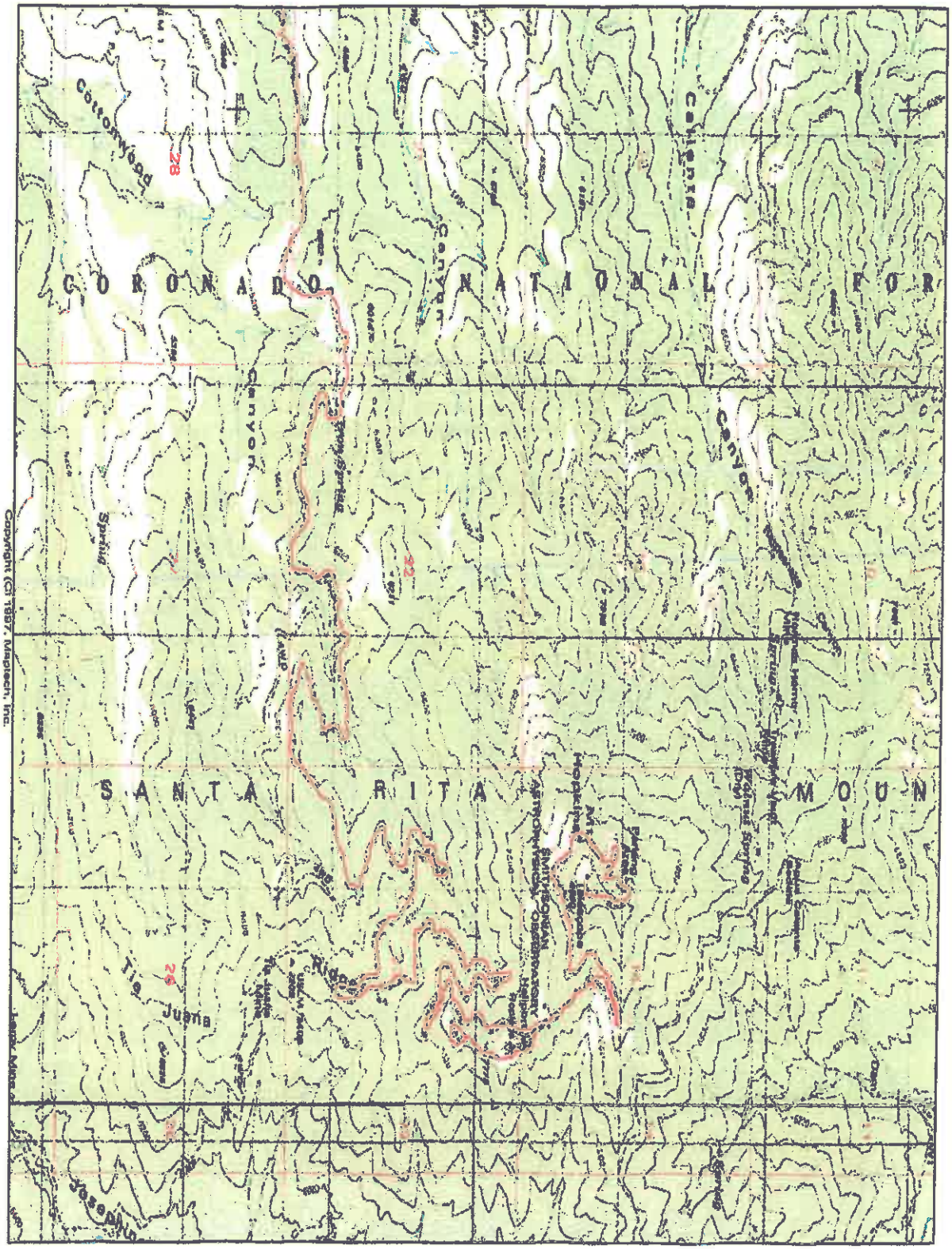
Tasks and Responsibilities

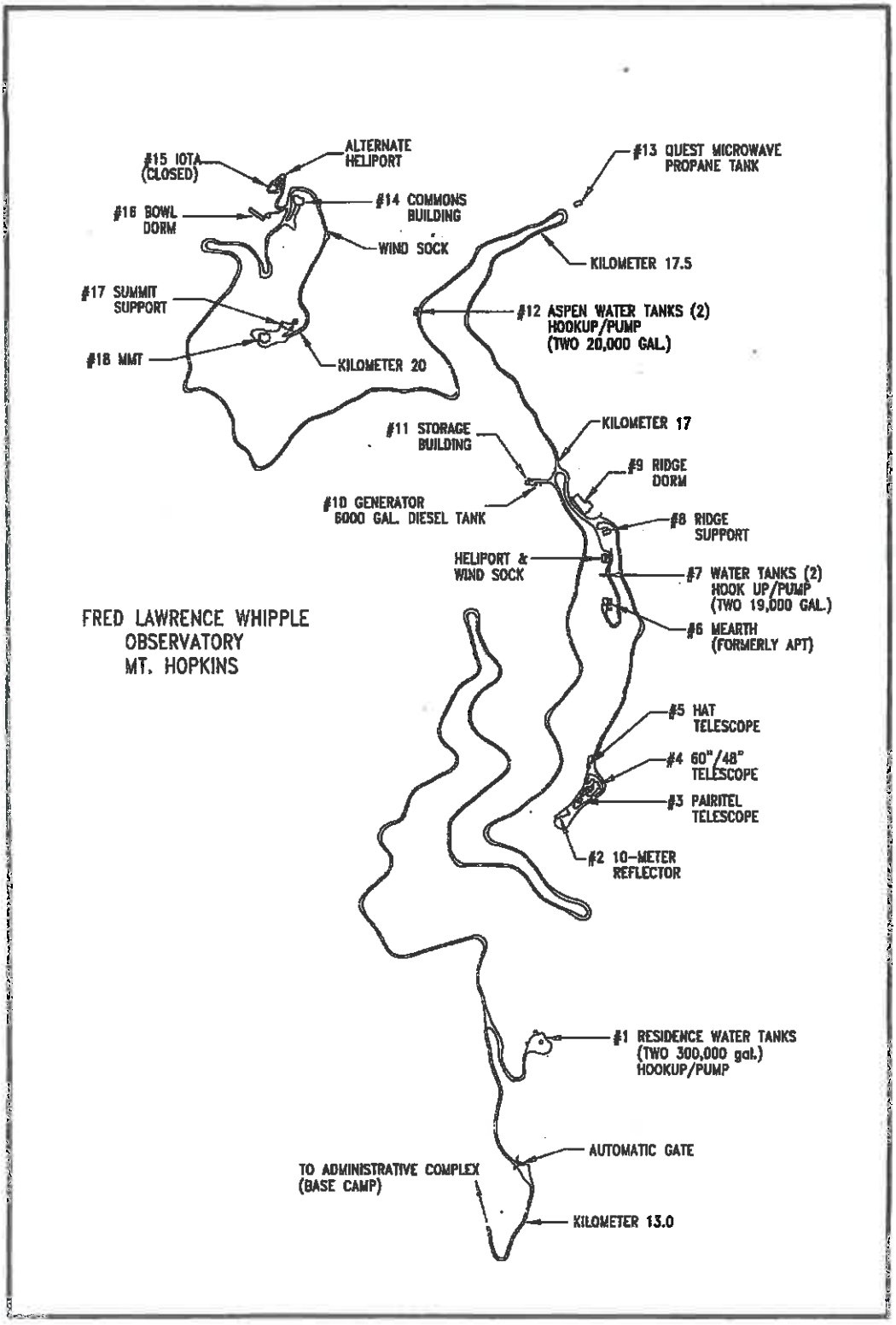
1. Forest Service
    a. Assume authority for direction of fire suppression forces.
    b. Direct mobilization of field forces as required.
    c. Alert all departments and agencies involved of hazardous or potentially hazardous conditions.
    d. Provide public information data to the news media.
2. Observatory
    a. Ensure that All Observatory staff and visitors are informed of the fire and prepare for action or evacuation. It is possible that staff could be sleeping in several buildings on the mountain, unaware of advancing fire. All building and sleeping quarters must be checked for sleeping staff members. Observatory staff will follow all fire related direction provided by the Incident commander.
    b. Assist the Forest Service in the location of water tanks or other facilities that may be required.
3. Sheriff's Department
    a. Establish and identify joint command post for the management of the law enforcement function.
    b. In coordination with the Forest Service, control personnel and vehicles traffic in the area.
    c. Provide field direction and control of all forces, except fire suppression, involved in the management of the emergency.

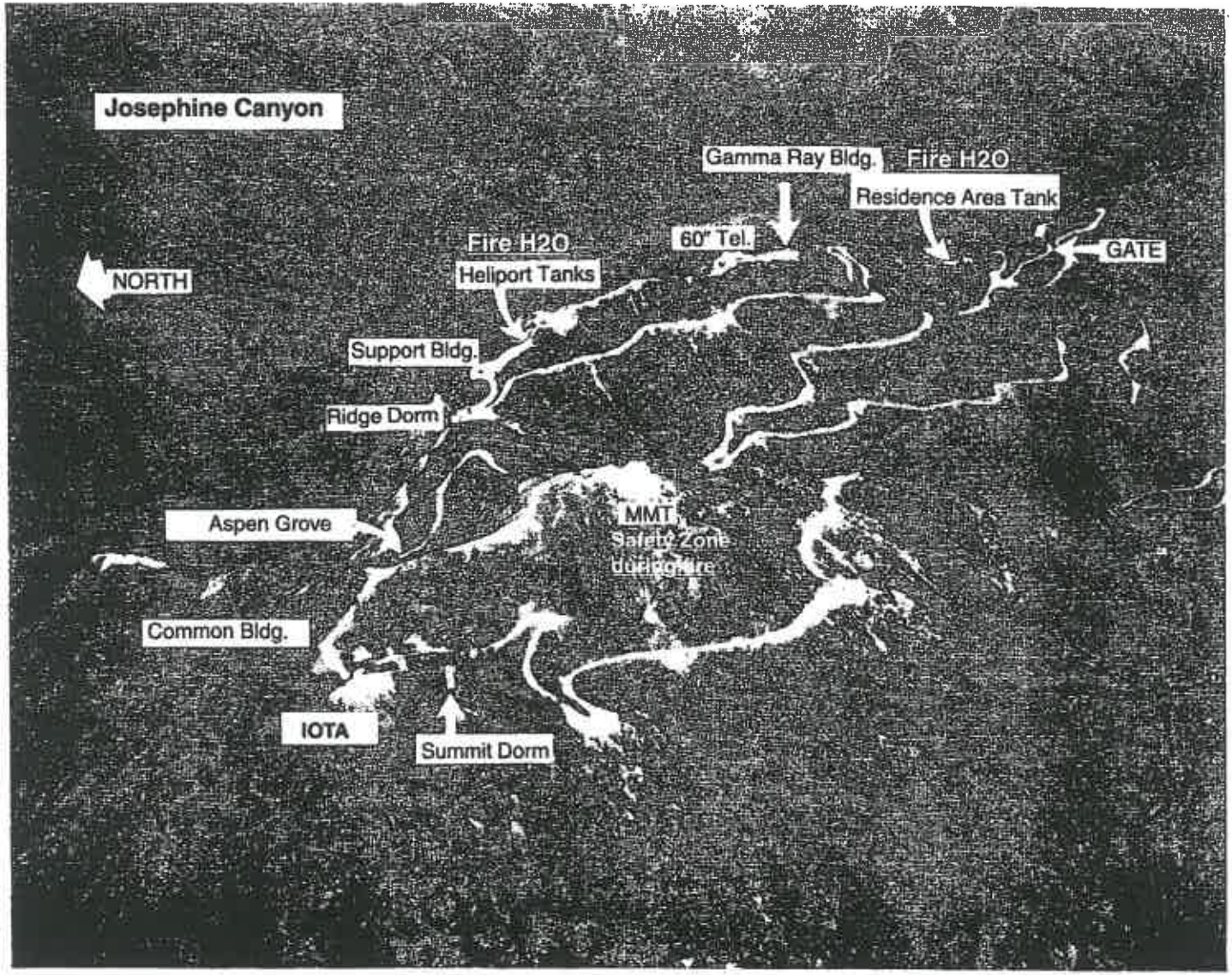
Road Reference Markers
En Route to Whipple Observatory

The Observatory Road is marked with kilometer posts starting at the Base Camp and ending on the summit. These reference points can be used to identify locations on the road.

Distance (km/miles)	Altitude (meters/feet)	Location
0/0	1306/4285	Whipple Observatory Base Camp
1/0.6	1357/4450	Montosa Wash crossing
2/1.2	1145/4740	Amateur Astronomy Vista
3/1.9	1512/4960	No landmark
4/2.5	1595/5230	100' before Rocky Point
5/3.1	1640/5380	800' before top of Montosa
6/3.7	1713/5620	No landmark
7/4.3	1774/5820	300' beyond Iron Springs
8/5.0	1846/6055	Bifurcation
9/5.6	1909/6260	100' beyond Lobo Canyon
10/6.2	1979/6490	400' before Jessie's Mine
11/6.8	2040/6690	Directly across Toyota Canyon
12/7.5	2084/6835	No landmark
13/8.1	2171/7120	100 yd. before road gate
14/8.7	2183/7160	500' beyond Lower Spring
15/9.3	2236/7335	100 yd. above Upper Spring
16/9.9	2302/7550	Road below Knoll 1
17/10.6	2384/7820	100 yd. past Ridge Dorm
18/11.2	2450/8035	Turn above Aspen Grove
19/11.8	2515/8250	Switchback below Bowl
20/12.4	2607/8550	Summit


CORONADO NATIONAL FOR
SANTA RITA MOUN
Cottonwood
Canyon
Spring
Ridge
Juana
Copyright (C) 1997, Maptech, Inc.


#15 IOTA (CLOSED)
ALTERNATE HELIPORT
#13 QUEST MICROWAVE PROPANE TANK
#16 BOWL DORM
#14 COMMONS BUILDING
WIND SOCK
KILOMETER 17.5
#17 SUMMIT SUPPORT
#12 ASPEN WATER TANKS (2) HOOKUP/PUMP (TWO 20,000 GAL.)
#18 MMT
KILOMETER 20
#11 STORAGE BUILDING
KILOMETER 17
#9 RIDGE DORM
#10 GENERATOR 6000 GAL. DIESEL TANK
#8 RIDGE SUPPORT
HELIPORT & WIND SOCK
#7 WATER TANKS (2) HOOK UP/PUMP (TWO 19,000 GAL.)
FRED LAWRENCE WHIPPLE OBSERVATORY MT. HOPKINS
#6 MEARTH (FORMERLY APT)
#5 HAT TELESCOPE
#4 60"/48" TELESCOPE
#3 PAIRITEL TELESCOPE
#2 10-METER REFLECTOR
#1 RESIDENCE WATER TANKS (TWO 300,000 gal.) HOOKUP/PUMP
AUTOMATIC GATE
TO ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX (BASE CAMP)
KILOMETER 13.0


Josephine Canyon
Gamma Ray Bldg.
Fire H2O
Residence Area Tank
60" Tel.
GATE
Fire H2O
Heliport Tanks
NORTH
Support Bldg.
Ridge Dorm
Aspen Grove
MMT
Safety Zone
during fire
Common Bldg.
IOTA
Summit Dorm