

excellent illustration of the bureaucratic chain-of-command which had to be followed in order to obtain authorization for the acquisition of property.

- 2) The site is unusual in that all facilities were constructed within a line-of-site area. All other Angeles Forest Nike bases had launch control areas in more remote areas, as was more typical of Nike bases nationwide.
- 3) The lack of consideration for the cost of supplying water to the base is a particularly interesting feature, reflective both of the urgent need to establish an air defense system and the need to site installations in optimum locations. The water line constructed was in fact a major focal point of the deactivation and disposal process in consultation with the Forest Service. It was, and has since proven to be, a major asset in the prevention of forest fires in the region.

MAGIC MOUNTAIN/LANG

Magic Mountain (98-C) and Lang (98-L) were originally known only under the installation name Magic Mountain. When the launch control area (98-C) was abandoned the installation eventually became known only as Lang (98-L).

Acquisition

Land for the construction of the Magic Mountain/Lang Nike installation was acquired both under special use permits from the Forest Service, and from the purchase or easement of private property. On November 22, 1954 Commanding General Francis M. Day, 47th AAA Brigade, expressed an interest in the acquisition of property noting:

LA-98-C and L; Magic Mountain. The Control Site is located on Federally owned property, a part of the Angeles National Forest. Some removable mask exists in the nature of 12 inch to 30 inch coniferous trees. These must be removed and the removal coordinated with the U. S. Forestry Service. Access roads must be constructed and easements obtained. No restrictive easement for line of sight purposes will be necessary due to the configuration of the terrain. The Launcher Site is located on privately owned land. No removable mask presently exists, however, it is conceivable that in the future some power and telephone line development could cause a mask in this vicinity. Some access road easement will have to be obtained. It is possible that some easement for water lines will also be necessary.

On October 19, 1954 a siting team had visited both the control and launch areas. Despite severe doubts about the availability of an adequate water supply at the control site they concluded that from "an engineering standpoint, no major problems are anticipated." Again, as in the case of the Los Pinetos site, cost does not seem to have been a factor in the face of a pressing need for air defense.

In response to these needs the Undersecretary of the Army, John Slezak, recommended that acquisition proceedings begin immediately in a letter addressed to the Chief of Engineers, Washington, D.C., on December 8, 1954. Subsequently, the Headquarters Army Aircraft Command, Colorado, issued a directive authorizing such acquisition on April 14, 1955.

Action was taken by the Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers, and on June 28, 1955 Chief of the Appraisal Branch, L. B. Otterness, summarized the acquisition process. He also recommended that Forest Service lands be the first to be acquired.

Chain of correspondence, basic letter dated 14 April 1955 from Headquarters, 47th AAA Brigade, Fort MacArthur, California to Commanding General, Western Army Antiaircraft Command, Fort Baker, California, file reference BRS3 601, subject: "Nike Site Request, LA-98-C&L, Magic Mountain." 4th Indorsement dated 24 May 1955 from Headquarters, 6th Army, Presidio of San Francisco, California to the South Pacific Division Engineer, states that it has been established that a military necessity exists for the acquisition of an appropriate interest in the real property identified in the preceding correspondence, and requested that action be initiated towards its acquisition.

Request that action be taken to obtain necessary real estate instrument from the U. S. Forest Service, covering the areas outlined on subject drawings, for so long as required for any antiaircraft purpose.

On October 31, 1955, following negotiations with the Forest Service, a special use permit was signed. The conditions of this permit were substantially the same as those set forth at Los Pinetos. Special considerations imposed at the Magic Mountain site were:

Permission is granted to do this work subject to the following conditions:

1. Before beginning this work the district ranger located at Newhall at the above address will be notified.
2. All tractors and power equipment will be equipped with adequate spark arresters, fire extinguisher, shovels and axes.

3. Because of the high fire hazard any personnel assigned to the project who smokes, will do so only at designated areas.

The above stipulations apply to all work performed within the area. The following apply to operations on land of the U. S. Forest Service.

4. There shall be no unnecessary destruction of watershed cover.
5. No work will be done on roads leading to the site without written permission from District Ranger Berriman.
6. Soil and rock removed from any area will be stored in such a manner that it will remain on the site. (COE: Berriman, August 25, 1955)

Acquisition of lands at the launch area considerably post-dated that of land under Forest Service jurisdiction, and the finalization of deeds, licenses and easements was not completed until March 4, 1957. The acquisition process at the launch area is summarized as follows:

Final Opinion, dtd 27 Dec 1956	Deed dated 6-14-56	Albert J. Malano, et al
Final Opinion dtd 27 Dec 1956	Permanent Restrictive Easement for Safety Area from 14 June 1956	Albert J. Malano, et al
Final Opinion dtd 27 Dec 1956	Permanent Restrictive Easement for Safety Area from 14 June 1956	Albert J. Malano, et al
License No. LA-1047, dtd 4 Mar 1957	License for roadway for indefinite period from 4 Mar 1957	Southern Pacific Company
Final Opinion, dtd 24 Jan 1957	Deed dated 4-25-56	Charles G. Scharf, et al
	Permanent Restrictive Easement for Safety Area from 25 Apr 1956	Charles G. Scharf, et al

Construction

No construction records exist for the Magic Mountain/Lang installations, but a general idea of the construction can be obtained from an examination of deeds, special use permits and station lists. The issuance of special use permits is summarized as follows:

Department of Agriculture Forest Service	Special Use Permit No. LA-907, dtd 17 Oct 1955, Amend- ment No. 1 dtd 5-24-63 and Amendment No. 1 dtd 5-21-68.	Special Use Permit for Control & Launcher Sites and access road indefinite period from 17 Oct 1955
Department of Agriculture Forest Service	Special Use Permit No. LA-974, dtd 17 Aug 1956	Special Use Permit for water pipeline, tank, pumphouse and access trail, in- definite period from 17 Aug 1956
Department of Agriculture Forest Service	Special Use Permit No. LA-976, dtd 6 Sep 1956	Special Use Permit for transmission line indefinite period from 6 Sep 1956

Construction at the site probably began late in the fall of 1955 following the Corps of Engineers October 31st signing of the October 17, 1955 special use permit issued by the Forest Service. This permit allowed for the construction of access roads only. A permit for the construction of water lines was not issued until August 17, 1956 so it is obvious that the construction of the access road to the launch control facility (98-C) at Magic Mountain took a considerable period of time. A final permit for the construction of a transmission line was issued on September 6, 1956. This was probably issued to connect the launch and control areas as they neared completion.

Construction does, therefore, appear to have been near completion in the fall of 1956. The base was, however, probably not opened until early in 1957 as the final license was not signed until March of that year. In addition, station lists first show Army occupancy in 1957.

The construction history of the Magic Mountain/Lang site is interesting in that it took longer to build and occupy than other Angeles Forest Nike installations. This is very likely due to the fact that it was the last area to be acquired under special use permit and deed. By the time all of the land was acquired the Army already had an extensive building program underway and the Magic Mountain/Lang site probably received a lower priority.

As completed, the control site was located atop a rather barren scrub brush mountain top and consisted of two major and one minor component that included: 1) the radar observation area, now occupied by a new microwave tower, 2) barracks and a probable command office, and 3) another smaller radar or electrical area located on a hill to the east of the complex. Today, the site has no standard Nike period

architecture, with the exception of two large water tanks. Overall, the Magic Mountain Nike site (98-C) has not retained its architectural integrity due to demolition and vandalism (see Appendix for a list of original facilities).

Lang Station Nike site (LA-98-L) is located in Soledad Canyon on the southern bank of the Santa Clara River. Access was gained by a small two lane road that connects to Highway 14. Site integrity has been severely impacted by recent construction, including the addition of concrete block walls, new structures, and vandalism. The overall site exists in 3 components: 1) the missile launch facility, 2) a barracks area, and 3) a command station with numerous associated buildings, and exercise facilities. Structures are built of concrete block. Launch silos and launch pads are constructed of reinforced poured concrete (Figures 30 and 31) (see Appendix for a listing of on-site facilities).

Deactivation

The deactivation of the Magic Mountain/Lang facility proceeded in three phases. The initial phase was implemented in 1961 with the planned deactivation of both the launch and battery control areas. A letter from John Shipley, Chief of the Real Estate Division, Los Angeles, to the Division Engineer, San Francisco notes:

Reference is made to Department of the Army phase-out program and 4th Indorsement from your office dated 26 July 1961, basic letter 22 June 1961, subject: Report of Excess Real Property, NIKE Site LA-98, requesting screening and submission of Eng Form 2187, and GSA Standard Form 118 for subject site, which is scheduled to be available for excess status on 31 December 1961. By message SPLRM-D 2543 dated 14 August 1961, your office was advised that screening has been completed with negative results.

He also provides an excellent description of the property.

Improvements at this site, consisting of 22 buildings, 3 underground missile storage structures, 3 water storage tanks, roads, utilities and other facilities required for operation of NIKE Site LA-98, were constructed by the Department of the Army at a cost of \$1,632,297. Of the above improvements, there are 9 buildings, 2 water storage tanks, access road to control site, 2 underground missile storage structures and a major portion of the third underground storage structure located on land occupied under Special Use Permit LA-907. Inclosed is Engineer Sketch 1123 - Site 98-L Boundary, dated 8/11/61, showing the perimeter boundary of one of the underground structures in the Launcher area, a portion of which is located on fee-owned land (Tract A-101) and a portion is located on



Upper launch site at Lang Station with water tank in background.



Lower launch site at Lang Station as seen from the middle launch site. Note the later additions of a small concrete block structure and large concrete block walls in background. These were constructed in the early 1970's after the installation was abandoned without the permission of the Forest Service.

Lang Nike Site

FIGURE
30



Support structures at Lang Station.



Guard house at the Main entrance to Lang Station.

Lang Nike Site

**FIGURE
31**

land covered by Special Use Permit (Tract A). The actual underground missile storage structure has been plotted on the inclosed drawing, which shows the major part of the structure is on permitted land, but a small portion (shaded area) is located on fee-owned land.

The second phase in the deactivation process took place from late in 1961 through the spring of 1963. The Army abandoned the launch control area in December of 1961 when 98-L was converted from Ajax to Hercules missiles, but continued to maintain the launch area at Lang Station. A decision was subsequently made, early in 1962, to continue to operate the launch area. In a letter to the Forest Service, Shipley amended his earlier recommendation. He notes in his formal request for transfer of lands:

Subject buildings and improvements are located on the Control Area (Magic Mountain), NIKE Battery Site LA-98, used by the Department of the Army under Special Use Permit LA-907 dated 17 October 1955. This permit is to be amended to delete the Control Area containing approximately 25 acres, effective 1 May 1962. The access road is covered in Special Use Permit LA-1069 dated 27 February 1956, which is also to be amended to delete the access road to the Control Area (Magic Mountain). special Use Permits LA-974 and LA-976 dated 17 August 1956 and 6 September 1956, respectively, covering water line and power line for Control Area are to be terminated as of 30 April 1962. (COE: Shipley, May 1, 1962)

The Forest Service response was delayed for a considerable period of time. It was not until March 6, 1963 that Forest Supervisor, Sim E. Jarvi, responded. The reasons for this delay are not documented, but they were probably related to the demolition and removal of facilities at the installation. Jarvi requested additional information noting:

This is to advise you that in accordance with your request in your letter of May 1, 1962, the following permits are terminated effective as of 30 April 1962.

Permit LA 1974 dated 17 August 1956 covering water system for the Control Area (Magic Mt.) Site LA-98.

Permit LA 976 dated 6 September 1956 covering power line for the Control Area (Magic Mt.) Site LA-98.

The access road to Control Area (Magic Mt.) Site LA-98 is included in a master Special Use Permit LA 1069 dated 27 February 1957. This permit was amended on 7 December 1962 to delete the above

access road. This amendment was sent to your office with our letter of 12 December 1962.

This should complete all needed action on NIKE Site LA-98 except amendment of Special Use Permit LA-907 dated 17 October 1955 covering the Launcher and Control Areas (Lang and Magic Mt.).

The information was quickly provided by the District Engineer, and on May 24, 1963 the final permits were terminated to complete the second phase of the Magic Mountain/Lang deactivation.

The third deactivation phase consisted of the closure of the facility at Lang Station (98-L) which had become a Battalion Headquarters. Plans were made to implement this in the summer of 1968 and a formal announcement was made on August 16. The closure was a direct result of the Revenue and Expenditures Control Act of 1968, which forced budget cuts brought on by the Vietnam War. The deadline for Army evacuation of the base was December 31, 1968. Subsequently, the property was officially declared to be surplus by the Department of Defense on October 15, 1968.

The December 31, 1968 target date was apparently not met as the 1969 Station Lists show that the base was still occupied in June of that year. This was probably only a small crew, primarily employed for security reasons, for the Army had completely abandoned the site by 1970.