Katherine Haase

Subject: FW: Flat Top and Los Ochos Towers for Viaero Wireless
Attachments: Flat Top Tower Viaero.kmz; Los Ochos.kmz

Importance: High

From: Jon J. Becker [mailto:Jon.Becker@viaero.com]
Sent: Monday, November 09, 2015 1:44 PM
To: Paula Swenson
Cc: Scott Morrill
Subject: FW: Flat Top and Los Ochos Towers for Viaero Wireless

Chair Swenson,

From our conversation I am sending you information regarding our purchase of two towers in southern Colorado on BLM land. These towers are in Gunnison and Saguache counties. They are established towers that have been in operation for over 5 years. They were built by a private party (Mark Jiganti) to get internet to his home in the mountains. The private party has been working over 4 years to get a power permit to get power to one of the towers (Flat Top). All that time the Colorado State Patrol has been waiting to locate their equipment on these towers to improve public safety communications. They cannot locate on the Flat Top tower without power.

The private owner contacted Viaero Wireless to see if we would purchase the towers. He thought that we could better upgrade the towers for public safety and keep reliable internet to all using the towers. Viaero agreed to purchase the towers in April this year. We turned in the Assignor Consent form to the BLM in June of this year. Per the BLM this transfer of lease should take 2 weeks. We have now been waiting almost 3 months. Every time I call Mrs. Medina at the BLM office she states that they are overworked and more pressing projects need to get done. We finally received the lease transfers in October.

On top of that, the private owner and Gunnison Electric applied for the power permit for the Flat Top tower in 2011. They are still waiting on the permit to be approved. Again, the BLM states that they are overworked and more pressing projects have come up. They have had the state patrol call to say this is a matter of public safety and they do nothing. They have had federal officials call and state this is a matter of public safety and nothing happens. Gunnison Electric has stated that this is the longest running application they have ever had.

On top of all of this I have spoken with the new director of the Gunnison BLM office Elijah Walters. He stated that they dropped the ball on the power application and it should have been completed long ago. But, instead of fast tracking the application, he stated that it will take at least 4 months for his biologist to complete the work to approve the power application and then another 6 months for fish and wildlife to approve the application.

Mr. Waters also stated that if we moved to an underground power line that it would still take 4 to 6 months to complete. So, I then explained that we are looking at just 4 straight power poles with no t posts. Then we would put spikes on the top of those poles to eliminate the threat of birds of prey perching on them. He said that did not matter.

It looks like now we are going to be waiting another year to get this project complete. To me this is unacceptable to delay this project even more. I have reached out to Senator Gardner's Office, Senator Bennet's Office, the state contact

for the BLM, and other state legislators. With all of them helping we still have not been able to move the power permit any faster.

I need any help you can offer as we are desperately trying to complete the sale of these towers and upgrade them before snow fall. This is a matter of public safety and it is absolutely ridiculous that a government worker can hold up a project for 4 years! We really need your help in getting this project moving forward.

I have attached to google earth locations of the towers. Let me know if you have any questions.

BLM Contacts:
Elijah Waters
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Marnie Medina
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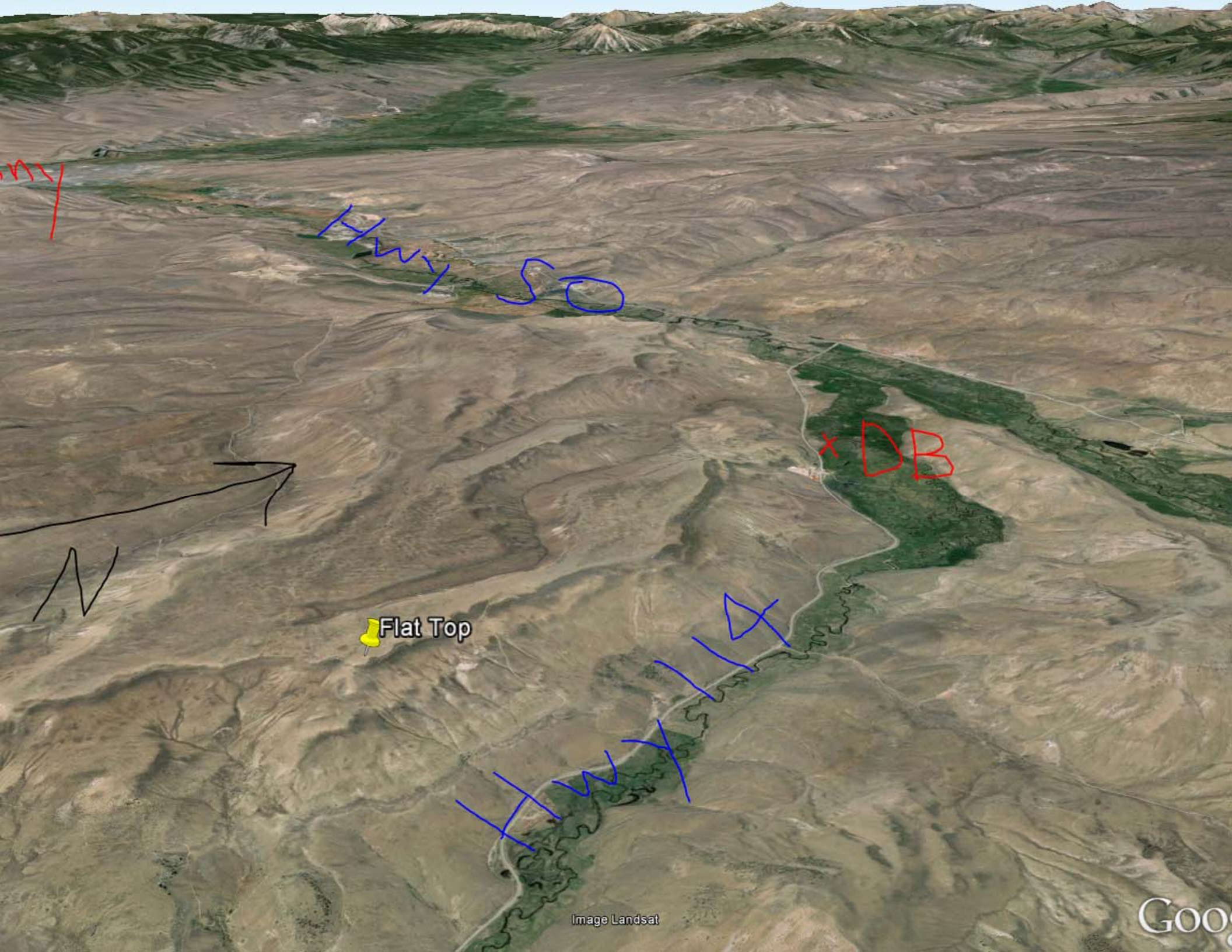
Hwy 50
x DB
N
Flat Top
Hwy 114
Image Landsat

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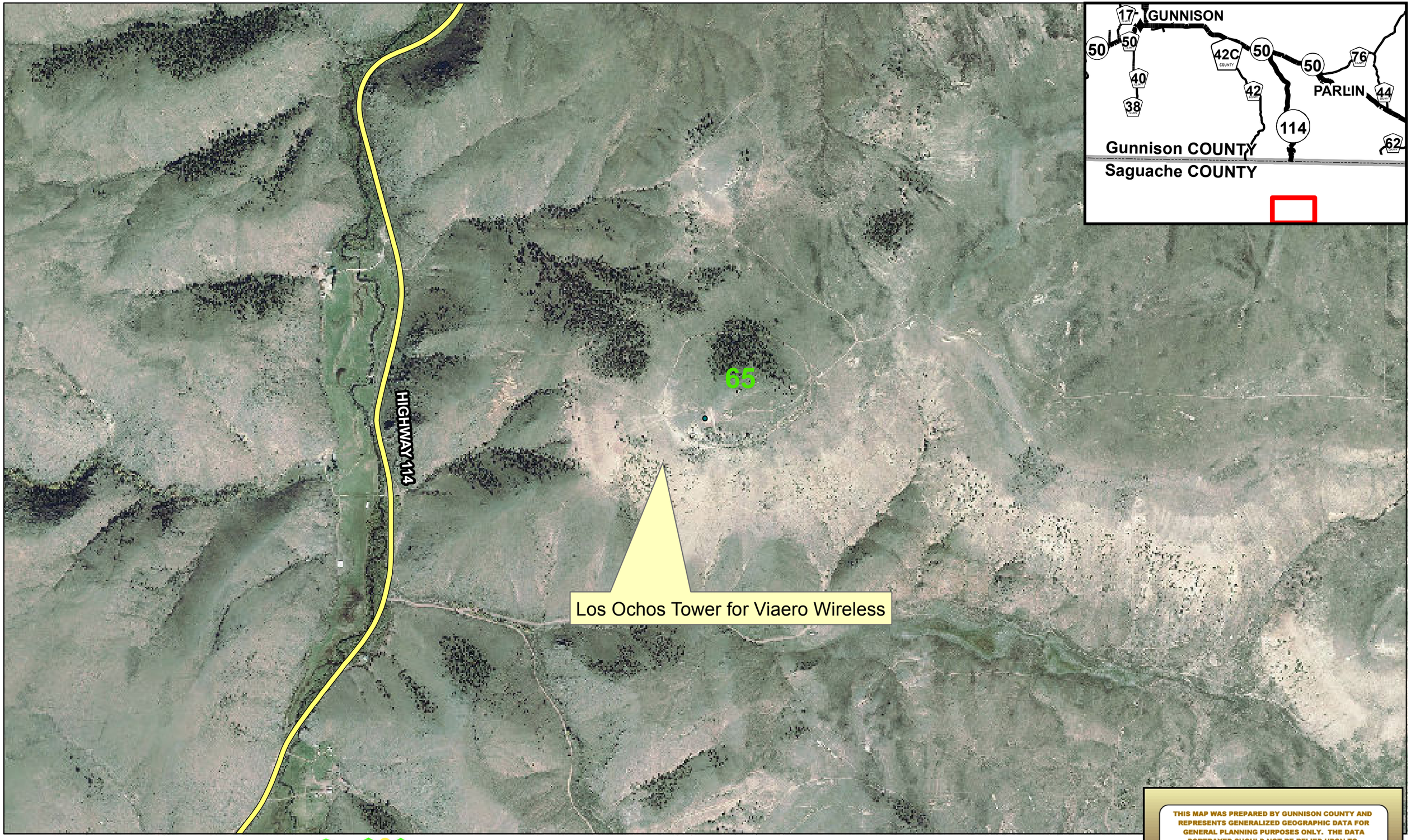
Gunnison County COLORADO

0 130 260 520 780 1,040 Feet

1 inch = 208 feet

Gunnison County GIS - 221 N. Wisconsin St, STE G - Gunnison, CO 81230 - (970) 641-7673

Sunny
Hwy 50
Los Ochos
Hwy 114
N
Razor Creek
Dome
Image Landsat
Goog



Gunnison County COLORADO

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

1 inch = 833 feet

Gunnison County GIS - 221 N. Wisconsin St, STE G - Gunnison, CO 81230 - (970) 641-7673

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Office of Emergency Management

November 13, 2015

Elijah Waters, Field Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Gunnison Field Office
210 West Spencer Av
Gunnison, CO 81230

Mr. Waters,

It has been brought to the attention of the Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners that there is yet another delay in the BLM completing the environmental assessment for the power line portion of the Flat Top communications site in Gunnison County. The Flat Top site is a critical link between the Los Ochos site and W Mountain for several public safety radio systems and cell phone coverage.

As you are aware, the Highway 114 corridor through Cochetopa Canyon and up to the top of North Pass has very limited radio coverage, and absolutely no cell phone coverage. Both of these issues create undue risks for first responders operating in the area as well as the public traveling and recreating in the area.

Local first response agencies, state agencies as well as the current and former owners of this site have been working for over three years in trying to establish communications sites that would fill this communications gap. The BLM has in the past been a good partner in these projects, however the continual delays are proving problematic in completing this important project.

We respectfully request that you to take whatever actions necessary to expedite the completion of the environmental assessment for getting grid power to the Flat Top site. This project should have been completed two years ago, and every delay needlessly endangers first responders and the public.

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