Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction

1. Project Overview

	Proposed	Actual
Treated Acres	37.00	Project Not Finished
Start Date	06/01/2026	Project Has Not Started Yet
End Date	05/31/2028	Project Has Not Started Yet

Primary Project Objectives

Removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees,Removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation, CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans,Removal of vegetation for community defensible space,Removal of vegetation along roadways, high-ways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and/or to reduce roadside ignitions,Maintenance of previously established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects

Anticipated cooperating agencies and/or resources

CalFire BEU/Monterey Unit
California Conservation Corps (CCC)
Mid-Coast Fire Brigade

2. Applicant Information

Name

Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

Organization

Public Agency

3. Jurisdictional Information

Responsibility Area

State

CAL FIRE Unit

BEU

4. Commercial Component

Will this project generate revenue? - No

If yes, explain:

5. Acres by Treatment Type

Mechanical 0	**Manual** 37
Prescribed Herbivory 0	**Herbicide** 0
Pile Burning 0	**Broadcast Burning** 0
Cultural Burning 0	**Other** 0

Other Approved Activities

No Other Activities are approved for this project

6. Project Details

Description of Work

Defensible Space to 100ft around park structures in high fire risk area, heavily loaded with 5- and 10-hour fuels. Roadside fuel reduction along access road up to 50ft from centerline.

Project will improve firefighter access within the park boundary and serve as a fuelbreak providing protection between the backcountry and the community.

Trees (>8" DBH) will be limbed to 8 ft (NTE removal of 25% of existing canopy, or 50% of individual crown). Dead/dying oaks infected with SOD will be thinned regardless of size. Understory brush and shrubs (<8" DBH) will be thinned.

Brush/shrubs (<8" DBH) will be thinned to have enough spacing to significantly slow wildfire spread, while preventing type conversion, providing habitat, and seedbank. Steep slopes may require greater horizontal distance. Shrubs identified as rare/sensitive will not be treated.

This project directly supports priorities in the Cal Fire San Benito – Monterey (BEU) unit fire plan (2024) and the Monterey County community wildfire protection plan (CWPP) by decreasing wildfire risk in high-threat WUI region and restoring ecosystem function.

Fuels Management

Thinning will extend up to 50ft from centerline of existing access road, and 100ft from buildings.

Trees (>8" DBH) limbed to 8ft (not to exceed removal of 25% of canopy, or 50% of individual crown). Dead limbs will be limbed up to 10ft. Dead/dying trees with SOD will be removed.

Brush/shrubs (<8" DBH) will be thinned to a) create mosaic (i.e. spaced 2-4 x shrub height) to slow fire spread while preventing type conversion, providing habitat, and seedbank (steep slopes may require more spacing), b) preferentially target invasive species, c) not remove species identified as rare/sensitive.

Ground-based Equipment

Work will use light weight equipment operated by trained crews under supervision of MPRPD staff, CALFIRE, and/or the CCC.

Chainsaws, pole saws, brush cutters, weed trimmers, hand tools, 4x4 trucks, UTVs will be used in thinning.

Chippers will be used in slash disposition.

Vehicles/equipment will stay on established roads except under emergency situations.

No new roads will be built. No new/temporary stream crossings will be necessary.

Ground disturbance is outside the scope of this project.

Slash Treatment

Slash will be managed within the season that it is cut to prevent fuel buildup and to protect soils.

Material will either be chipped in place or lopped and scattered (no greater than 8'' fuel bed thickness, no greater than 4" in sensitive areas).

Large logs (<10") will be laid flat to ground and retained for habitat.

Timing of treatment of French Broom may be modified to limit seed cast potential.

Work will be follow SOD hygiene BMPs. No woody material will be removed from sight.

50ft buffers will be implemented around intermittent streams crossings.

No slash will enter waterways.

Maintenance Plan

MPRPD will maintain the land through ongoing monitoring, retreatment and community engagement.

MPRPD staff will track vegetation recovery, invasive species control, and fuel loads

annually to guide adaptive management.

The proposed project area is expected to require re-treatment (either re-burning, mechanical treatment, or prescribed herbivory) every 5-10 years, as needed.

MPRPD will partner with Cal Fire, local and regional partners for any follow-up treatments.

Long term stewardship will be funded through public and/or private grants.

7. Beneficial Fire Information

Burn Duration Estimate (Hours) -

Overnight Activity -

Impact on Smoke Sensitive Areas -

Burn Management

Smoke Sensitive Areas

Actions Taken

Public Notification

Joshua Carpenter

From: Mendez, Nicole@CNRA <nicole.mendez@resources.ca.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 17, 2026 12:50 PM
To: Joshua Carpenter
Subject: CalEPA/CNRA SECRETARIAL SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION - Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction
Attachments: Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction_CDFW_Advisories.pdf; Fuels Reduction Authorization Mill Creek Roadside.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District

Regarding Project ID: d87d0796-3deb-4464-8a09-e9cfae7f6f2b

Please refer to the attached letter of determination for the above-referenced project. Please note that prior to commencing project activities Applicant must submit a **Notice of Commencement** specifying the date activities will actually commence.

Of special note:

- Be advised that the **Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan** (EPP) referenced in the attached approval letter was recently updated December 2025; please review the updated requirements and guidance.
- **CA Geological Survey**
  1. The project proposes vegetation fuels treatments on steep streamside slopes along segments of Palo Colorado Road and adjacent to park buildings. Review of lidar imagery appears to show the presence of areas of shallow- and deep-seated landsliding where treatments are proposed upslope and downslope of Palo Colorado Road.
     a. The mapped deep-seated landslides generally appear characterized by subdued failure slopes below rounded scarps, suggesting that they are dormant.
     b. Evidence of shallow-seated landsliding was noted within steep incised drainages below headwall swales.
  2. While Palo Colorado Road generally appears intact, several existing side roads and trails observed in lidar imagery across the steep streamside slopes downslope of Palo Colorado Road appear to have been impacted by the shallow-seated sliding. Because the project includes manual treatments only and is limited to within 50-feet of the centerline of Palo Colorado Road and 100-feet of park buildings, it appears that the treatments are designed to minimize adverse impacts to slope stability by retaining most of the existing canopy and root function within the apparent slide areas.
  3. We advise you to review the information at https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fwg/fr-vm for an understanding of known potential geologic hazards throughout California and "Guide to determining need for geologist" at https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b1a93eb9772aeb4c16f32da/t/64a85eeb34b6e96f1d0b6925/1688755947490/4-CLFA_Guide+To+Determining+Need+For+A+Geologist.pdf for guidance

in identifying potential unstable areas within your project boundary. You may contact us with geologic hazard concerns if they arise at fwgp@conservation.ca.gov.

- **CDFW:** See attached advisory.
- **Water Boards**
  1. Work near watercourses – pollution prevention: Perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams are mapped throughout and adjacent to the treatment area. Ensure thinning, chipping, slash management, and other vegetation treatment activities are implemented in a manner that prevents chipped material, slash, or disturbed soils from entering nearby drainages, consistent with EPP Section 4(d).
  2. Work from existing roads: The project description states vehicles and equipment will remain on established roads except during emergency situations, and that no new roads or temporary stream crossings will be constructed. Ensure all treatment and access activities remain limited to existing roads and previously disturbed areas to avoid sediment delivery to nearby watercourses, consistent with EPP Sections 1(g) and 4(d).
  3. Stream buffers and slash management: The project proposes 50-foot buffers around intermittent stream crossings and states that no slash will enter waterways. Ensure chipped and lopped material is managed in a manner that prevents accumulation or mobilization within nearby drainages, particularly along steep roadside areas, consistent with EPP Section 4(d).
  4. Saturated soil conditions: Ensure vegetation treatment and chipping activities do not occur during saturated soil conditions when there is increased risk of erosion and sediment mobilization, consistent with EPP Section 5(d).
  5. Steep slopes and erosion potential: The project occurs within steep terrain and includes roadside thinning activities. Ensure vegetation treatment does not create concentrated runoff pathways or destabilize slopes where sediment could be delivered to nearby drainages, consistent with EPP Sections 1(g) and 4(d).
  6. Maintenance and repeated entry: The project description indicates maintenance treatments may occur every 5–10 years and may include additional treatment methods. Ensure future maintenance activities are implemented in a manner that avoids progressive ground disturbance, soil compaction, and sediment delivery to nearby watercourses over time, consistent with EPP Sections 1(g) and 4(d).
- **Coastal Commission**
  1. This area is listed as being treated in 2020 as part of the Calfire 'Palo Colorado Fuel Break' project. This area overlaps with areas of known coastal sage scrub and/or chaparral. Ensure that current proposed treatment does not result in conversion from native shrub species to weedy herbaceous cover or annual grasslands, consistent with EPP BMP 3e.
  2. This area could host rare plant species. Rare species, including rare maritime chaparral species (e.g., manzanita spp.), should be identified during the appropriate season, flagged, and avoided, consistent with EPP BMPs 1d & 3d.
     a. Prioritize thinning and removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees and shrubs first, followed by invasives, non-listed species, and finally avoid sensitive native species as much as possible, consistent with EPP BMP 8e.
     b. If large areas of rare species and/or sensitive natural communities cannot be avoided, please consult with CCC staff before removal, consistent with EPP BMP 3d.
  3. Implementation of EPP BMPs 3g and 4a-4f should avoid impacts to watercourses.

4. Any project areas visible from Highway 1 should implement EPP BMP 8d and feather edges of fuel break within the 50 feet proposed fuel break to achieve a natural transition appearance.
5. If work must occur during nesting or roosting season, work areas should be inspected for nests and roosts and avoided until vacated, consistent with EPP BMPs 1d, 3b, and 3h.

Any questions related to your project should be directed to: **fuelsreductionsoe@resources.ca.gov**. Please reference your project name and project ID in your email. Thank you for your submission.

Nicole A. Mendez (she/her)
Deputy Director

CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
715 P St, 20th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Twitter | Instagram | LinkedIn | YouTube
Sign up for our Agency newsletter, *The Buzz: News to Know*,
and check out our blog, *NatureWorks.*

Date: July 14, 2026
Project No.: d87d0796-3deb-4464-8a09-e9cfae7f6f2b – Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction

SECRETARIAL SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION

BACKGROUND

On March 1, 2025, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency to exist in the State of California due to the catastrophic wildfire risks created by forest conditions across the state. It was extended by Executive Order N-38-25, signed on December 31, 2025. The Proclamation suspends state statutes, rules, regulations, and requirements that fall within the jurisdictions of the boards, departments, and offices within the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to the extent necessary for expediting certain critical fuels reduction projects. It requires individuals or entities who desire to conduct such activities under the suspension to request that the appropriate agency secretary, or the secretary's designee, make a determination that the proposed activities are eligible to be conducted under this suspension. (That determination is referred to herein as the "secretarial suspension authorization" or "suspension authorization.") The Secretary for CalEPA and the Secretary for CNRA must use sound discretion to ensure that the secretarial suspension authorization serves the purpose of accelerating critical fuels reduction projects, while at the same time protecting public health and the environment.

The Proclamation further provides that critical fuels reduction projects are eligible for a suspension authorization only if they are initiated and if they include as a primary objective at least one of the following activities ("permissible primary objective"): removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans; removal of vegetation for community defensible space; removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and to reduce roadside ignitions; removal of vegetation using cultural traditional ecological knowledge for cultural burning and/or prescribed fire treatments for fuels reduction; or maintenance of previously-established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects.

The Proclamation further requires that any activities performed under the suspension be in accordance with the State Environmental Protection Plan describing how such actions will balance expeditious fuels reduction and environmental protection. The Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan was developed by CalEPA, CNRA, the California Air Resources Board, the California Coastal Commission, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (each a Regional Water Board), the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the California Geological Survey, to apply to fuels reduction projects granted a secretarial suspension authorization. The EPP is appropriate for application to certain fuels reduction activities. It specifies methods

intended to allow the fuels reduction activities to continue without delay while still preserving the intent of the suspended laws and protecting the environment.

Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (Applicant) has submitted a request for a suspension authorization (Application) on April 13, 2026. Applicant has included a description of the work, a description of treatment activities, a long term maintenance/retreatment plan and included a project map. The activities described in the Application are hereinafter referred to as the Project. The information contained in the Applicant's Application is hereby incorporated by reference.

CONDITIONS OF SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION

The suspension of laws set forth below is conditioned on the following:

1. **Applicability:** This suspension authorization applies only to the Project. It does not apply to any activities not set forth in the Application. This suspension authorization does not alter any requirements imposed by any law not specifically identified herein, including local and federal laws, and any material modification of or departure from the Project described in your Application may independently trigger obligations under the state laws identified in this authorization.
2. **EPP:**
    - The Project must be conducted in conformance with the EPP. This suspension authorization is only valid to the extent the Applicant and individuals conducting Project Activities comply with the EPP. Failure to comply with the EPP, and with any applicable federal and non-suspended state and local environmental laws and regulations, may result in an enforcement action by CalEPA departments and/or CNRA departments.
    - Staff of the State Water Board, appropriate Regional Water Board, California Air Resources Board, California Coastal Commission, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the California Geological Survey will have the opportunity to inspect operations and verify proper implementation of best management practices and other measures set forth in the EPP. Inspections may occur throughout the life of the project and within eight months of filing a Notice of Completion to the State. Staff will ensure they provide reasonable notice to the applicant for all site visits. Applicant must work with staff to ensure access is granted.
    - The EPP may be amended at any time during planning or implementation of project activities. The Project must be conducted in conformance with the then-applicable EPP. If such amendment occurs, CNRA and CalEPA will notify all applicants of such changes.
3. **Qualified Responsible Party**:
    - All Project work must be conducted by or under the direction of a qualified responsible party, such as a Registered Professional Forester, Certified Rangeland Manager, qualified vegetation management contractor, qualified incident commander, certified arborist, certified burn boss and/or authorized cultural burner.
    - If no qualified responsible party was listed in the Application, or the Applicant substitutes a different or adds additional qualified party/parties, Applicant must submit a Notice of Qualified Responsible Party prior to commencement of on-the-ground work.

4. **Landowner Consent**: Applicant must have a legal entitlement to enter the property or consent of landowner of record.
5. **Commencement and termination of on-the-ground project activities:**
    - On the ground fuel project activities must commence no later than October 15, 2026.
    - Applicant must submit a Notice of Commencement to CalEPA, CNRA, and the applicable CAL FIRE unit prior to commencing on-the-ground project activities and specifying the date on which on-the-ground project activities will actually commence. Ideally, this will be the same date set forth in the Application. The Notice of Commencement must set forth the target completion date.
    - Operations should conclude no later than 2 years after commencement of on-the-ground project activities.
    - In the event operations will not conclude before the target completion date identified in the Notice of Commencement, Applicant must submit of a Notice of Amended Completion Date prior to the previously identified target completion date.
    - Applicant must submit a Notice of Completion promptly after on-the-ground work has been completed. The Notice of Termination will specify the date on which on-the-ground project activities concluded and identify the total acres treated.

SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION BY CALEPA

I, Alana Mathews, Deputy Secretary for Law Enforcement and General Counsel, have been delegated authority by Secretary for Environmental Protection Yana Garcia, to issue suspension authorizations where appropriate. I find that Applicant's Project is eligible for a suspension authorization because it was submitted by May 1, 2026, and has the permissible primary objective(s) of removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans; removal of vegetation for community defensible space; removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and to reduce roadside ignitions; maintenance of previously-established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects. I further find that issuance of a suspension authorization in this case would serve the purpose of expediting critical fuels reduction activities and that Applicant's compliance with the EPP in conducting the Project will protect public health and the environment.

Based on the foregoing, I find that the Project is eligible to be conducted under the suspension authorized by the Proclamation. This suspension authorization, however, is conditioned on compliance with the conditions listed above. In the exercise of my discretion under the Proclamation, I hereby authorize the Project to proceed pursuant to the suspension of the following laws within the jurisdiction of the State Water Resources Control Board or appropriate Regional Water Board and the following laws within the jurisdiction of the California Air Resources Board:

- California Water Code, § 13160, and all regulations pursuant to that section; requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity which may result in any discharge to navigable waters to file an application for a water quality certification from the appropriate Regional Water Board or the State Water Board.

- California Water Code, § 13260, and regulations pursuant to that section; requires that any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the quality of waters of the state shall file with the appropriate Regional Water Board a report of the discharge.
- Cal. Code Regs., tit. 17, §§ 80100-80330; establishing smoke management guidelines for agricultural and prescribed burning.

Suspension Approved by:

Alana Mathews 7/16/2026

Alana Mathews, Deputy Secretary for Law Enforcement and General Counsel
California Environmental Protection Agency **Date**

SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION BY CNRA

I find that Applicant's Project is eligible for a suspension authorization because it was submitted by May 1, 2026, and has the permissible primary objective(s) of removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans; removal of vegetation for community defensible space; removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and to reduce roadside ignitions; maintenance of previously-established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects. I further find that issuance of a suspension authorization in this case would serve the purpose of expediting critical fuels reduction activities and that Applicant's compliance with the EPP in conducting the Project will protect public health and the environment.

Based on the foregoing, I find that the Project is eligible to be conducted under the suspension authorized by the Proclamation. This suspension authorization, however, is conditioned on compliance with the conditions listed above. In the exercise of my discretion under the Proclamation, I hereby authorize the Project to proceed pursuant to the suspension of the following laws within the jurisdiction of the following agencies:

- California Fish and Game Code (FGC) § 86 where "Take" shall be avoided. Take is defined as to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.
- FGC § 1600 et seq.; Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement, notification of significant alteration to stream channel, bank, or bed.
- FGC § 1900 et seq.; Native Plant Protection Act.
- FGC § 1927 et seq.; Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act.
- FGC § 2000; Taking is unlawful except as provided.
- FGC § 3503 and § 3503.5; Protection for bird nests and eggs and birds of prey.
- FGC § 3511; California Fully Protected Birds.
- FGC § 3513; California Migratory Bird Protection Act.
- FGC § 4700; California Fully Protected Mammals.
- FGC § 5050; California Fully Protected Reptiles and Amphibians.
- FGC § 5515; California Fully Protected Fish.
- FGC §§ 5650 and 5652; Deposition of deleterious material into waters of the state.
- FGC § 5901; Fish passage.

- FGC § 5937; Sufficient water for fish.
- FGC § 5948; Obstruction of streams.
- FGC §§ 2050-2115.5: California Endangered Species Act; prohibition of the take of any species of wildlife designated as endangered, threatened, or candidates for listing.
- Public Resources Code §§ 30000-30900: California Coastal Act
- Public Resources Code §§ 21000-21189.91: California Environmental Quality Act
- All regulations implementing the code sections identified above.

Suspension Approved by:



Keali'i Bright, Undersecretary — July 17, 2026

California Natural Resources Agency — **Date**

Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction

CDFW Biological Resources Advisories

1. (a) The Project has the potential to impact the following species and sensitive natural resources: the State and federally endangered foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii pop. 6*); the State endangered seaside bird's-beak (*Cordylanthus rigidus ssp. littoralis*); the federally endangered Smith's blue butterfly (*Euphilotes enoptes smithi*) and Yadon's rein orchid (*Piperia yadonii*); the State and federally threatened California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense pop. 1*); the State threatened tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*); the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana drayronii*) and Gowen cypress (*Hesperocyparis goveniana*); the State rare adobe sanicle (*Sanicula maritima*), Dudley's lousewort (*Pedicularis dudleya*), and Pacific Grove clover (*Trifolium polyodon*); the State proposed endangered western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*); the federally proposed threatened California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis pop. 1*), monarch (*Danaus plexippus plexippus pop. 1*), southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys pallida*), and western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*); the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.1 Eastwood's goldenbush (*Ericameria fasciculata*), Kellog's horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata var. sericea*), Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*), Robbins' broomrape (*Aphyllon robinsii*); the CRPR 1B.2 Arroyo Seco bushmallow (*Malacothamnus lucianus*), Blasdale's bent grass (*Agrostis blasdalei*), compact cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale var. compactum*), fragrant fritillary (*Fritillaria liliacea*), hooked popcornflower (*Plagiobothrys uncinatus*), Hooker's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos hookeri ssp. hookeri*), Hutchinson's larkspur (*Delphinium hutchinsoniae*), Jolon clarkia (*Clarkia jolonensis*), Little Sur manzanita (*Arctostaphylos edmundsii*), marsh microseris (*Microseris paludosa*), Monterey spineflower (*Chorizanthe pungens var. pungens*), pine rose (*Rosa pinetorum*), sand-loving wallflower (*Erysimum ammophilum*), twisted horsehair lichen (*Sulcaria spiralifera*); and the CRPR 1B.3 bristlecone fir (*Abies bracteate*), Cone Peak bedstraw (*Galium californicum ssp. luciense*), Pinnacles buckwheat (*Eriogonum nortonii*), Santa Lucia bedstraw (*Galium clementis*), tear drop moss (*Dacryophyllum falcifolium*), umbrella larkspur (*Delphinium umbraculorum*).

   (b) CDFW advises the applicant contact the USFWS regarding federally listed species.

   (c) Please refer to EPP Section 1(d) regarding identifying and marking sensitive resources prior to project commencement, and EPP Section 3 which includes BMPs for sensitive biological resources. There are several known sensitive biological

resources within treatment areas and it is unclear if these areas can be fully avoided, per EPP Section 3(a) the applicant shall contact CDFW regarding location and avoidance of sensitive biological resources prior to project activities, please email R4Timber@wildlife.ca.gov.

2. Operations areas are adjacent to or within known California spotted owl territories. California spotted owls and their habitat may be impacted by vegetation management through disturbances to nesting and habitat modification so that the habitat is no longer suitable. Project activities shall not occur within ¼ mile of all known previously occupied spotted owl nest sites/stands during the breeding season (February 1st through August 15th) unless protocol surveys confirm that the spotted owl territory is not occupied. If new spotted owl territories are located before or during project implementation those locations shall also be protected as above. If avoidance buffers cannot be maintained the applicant shall coordinate with CDFW at R4Timber@wildlife.ca.gov, prior to conducting operations within the buffer during the nesting season. Known nest trees shall not be cut unless they are considered imminent threats to life and/or property, the applicant shall coordinate with CDFW prior to the removal of any nest tree. If operations could impact any spotted owl nests, stands, and/or activity centers that occur on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) properties CDFW advises the applicant contact the appropriate USFS office prior to any operations that could impact spotted owl.

3. The project area shall be evaluated by a qualified biologist for suitable monarch habitat utilizing habitat assessment strategies provided by the Xerces Society (https://xerces.org/). If suitable habitat is present a monarch specialist shall confirm and mark cluster trees for retention. Verified sites and any identified overwintering sites shall be clearly delineated on project maps and in the field and conveyed to work crews and equipment operators. For project areas with overwintering habitat, vegetation and fuels work shall be conducted outside of the overwintering season (October 1st -April 1st), please note these dates change annually and should be verified by a qualified biologist each year of work). The removal of vegetation shall only occur if suitable wind protection can still be maintained at the site. Additionally, some areas of shade shall be retained to create a heterogenous habitat that provides access to areas with fill sun, dappled sunlight, and shade. The project shall avoid unnecessary removal of underbrush & winter blooming vegetation within site boundaries as these provide nectar resources for monarchs. If overwintering cluster trees cannot be avoided and/or work cannot be conducted outside of the overwintering season, CDFW shall be contacted to develop additional protection measures at R4Timber@wildlife.ca.gov.

4. Please be advised that future maintenance will be subject to the Fish and Game Code. Please contact CDFW at R4Timber@wildlife.ca.gov for future maintenance activities.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT
725 FRONT STREET, SUITE 300
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
PHONE: (831) 427-4863
EMAIL: CENTRALCOAST@COASTAL.CA.GOV
WEB: WWW.COASTAL.CA.GOV

June 23, 2026

Sent electronically: carpenter@mprpd.org

Subject: **Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuel Reduction**

Dear Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District:

We are in receipt of the Fuels Reduction Suspension Request you submitted pursuant to Governor Newsom's March 1, 2025 State of Emergency Proclamation (SOE) in Monterey County. This letter does not serve as authorization of the Request, but describes the measures needed to carry out the project consistent with the Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) as it relates to coastal resource protection.

The fuels reduction project request consists of manual treatment across 37 acres focusing on defensible space to 100' around park structures in high fire risk areas. We recommend the following measures to ensure that the requested work adequately protects coastal resources, most notably potential environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) identified in the [JURISDICTION] Local Coastal Program. These measures are needed to comply with the EPP requirements related to coastal resources, and shall be carried out in addition to any other requirements of the EPP:

- This area is listed as being treated in 2020 as part of the CalFire 'Palo Colorado Fuel Break' project. This area overlaps with areas of known coastal sage scrub and/or chaparral. Ensure that current proposed treatment does not result in conversion from native shrub species to weedy herbaceous cover or annual grasslands, consistent with EPP BMP 3e.
- This area could host rare plant species. Rare species, including rare maritime chaparral species (e.g., manzanita spp.), should be identified during the appropriate season, flagged, and avoided, consistent with EPP BMPs 1d & 3d.
    - Prioritize thinning and removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees and shrubs first, followed by invasives, non-listed species, and finally avoid sensitive native species as much as possible, consistent with EPP BMP 8e.
    - If large areas of rare species and/or sensitive natural communities cannot be avoided, please consult with CCC staff before removal, consistent with EPP BMP 3d.
- Implementation of EPP BMPs 3g and 4a-4f should avoid impacts to watercourses.

- Any project areas visible from Highway 1 should implement EPP BMP 8d and feather edges of fuel break within the 50 feet proposed fuel break to achieve a natural transition appearance.
- If work must occur during nesting or roosting season, work areas should be inspected for nests and roosts and avoided until vacated, consistent with EPP BMPs 1d, 3b, and 3h.
- The request describes ongoing maintenance of the treatment areas. Please be advised that the suspension request does not authorize maintenance work in the future beyond the approval period specified by the suspension. Further authorizations will be required for work performed in the future.
- In addition to documentation requirements provided in the authorization letter you receive, the California Coastal Commission requests that photo documentation of treatment areas before and after treatment, as well as a final description of treatments completed, be submitted at the conclusion of the project. Reports and photos should be sent to CentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov.

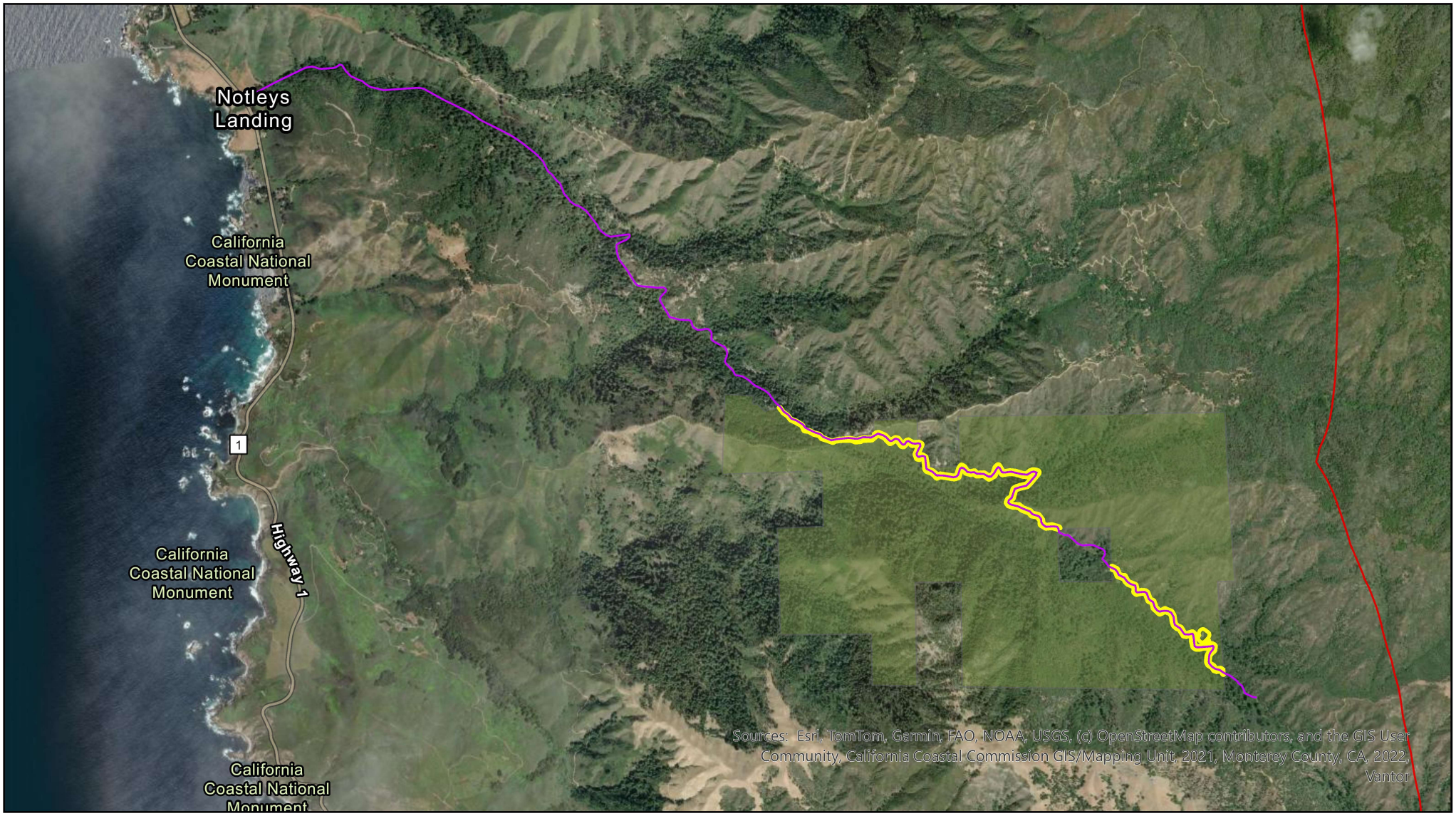
Additionally, current guidance for the SOE requires work to be completed within 2 years of initiation with limited exceptions. Continuation of this work beyond that timeline may require a coastal development permit. Correspondence with California Coastal Commission staff can help provide further details in the future. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Erin Prahler
Statewide Planning Manger
Statewide Planning Unit
California Coastal Commission

Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction

Upper Right: 121°48'6"W 36°24'20"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Coastal_Zone_Boundary
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

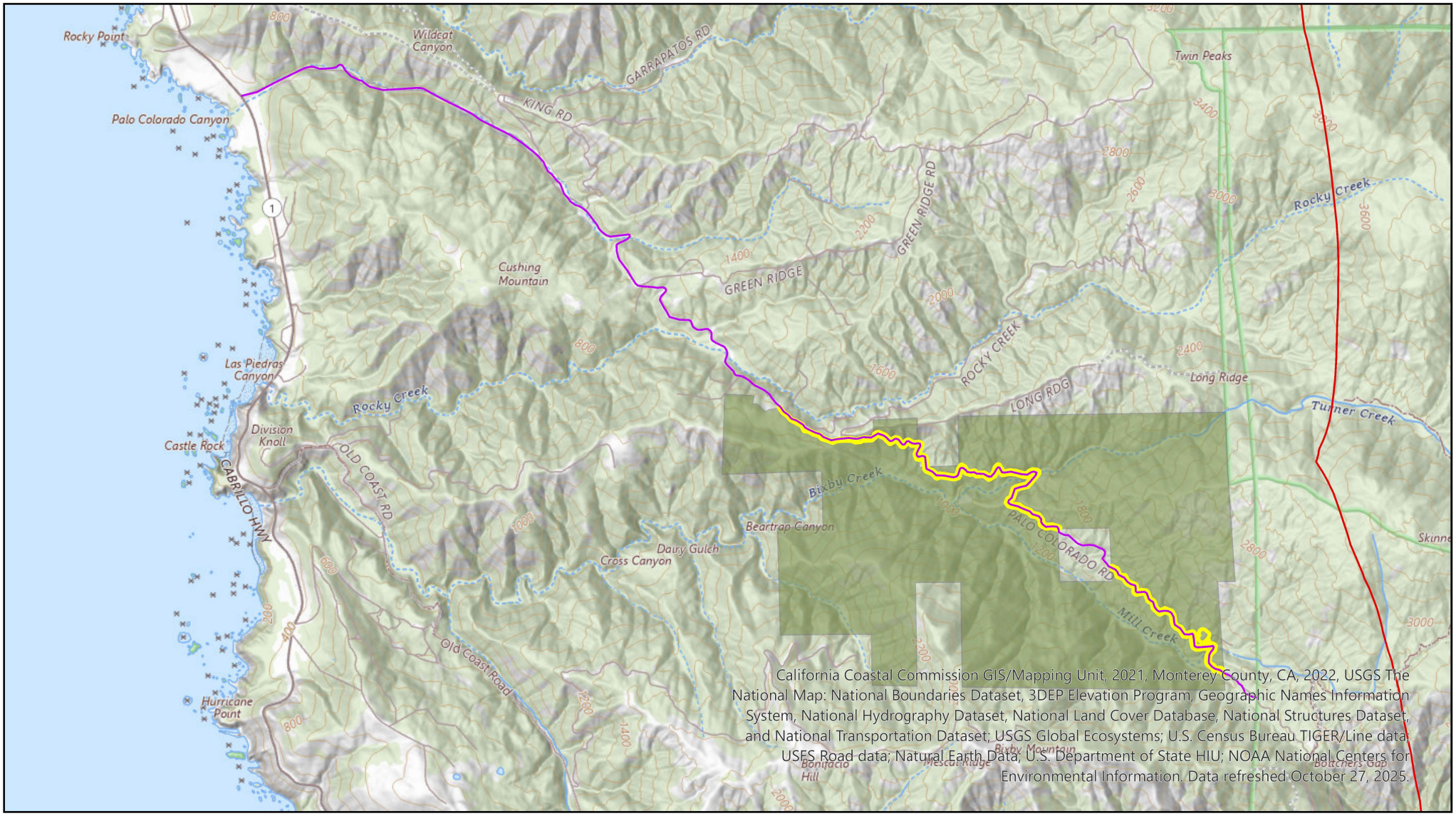
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction

Upper Right: 121°48'6"W 36°24'20"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Coastal_Zone_Boundary
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

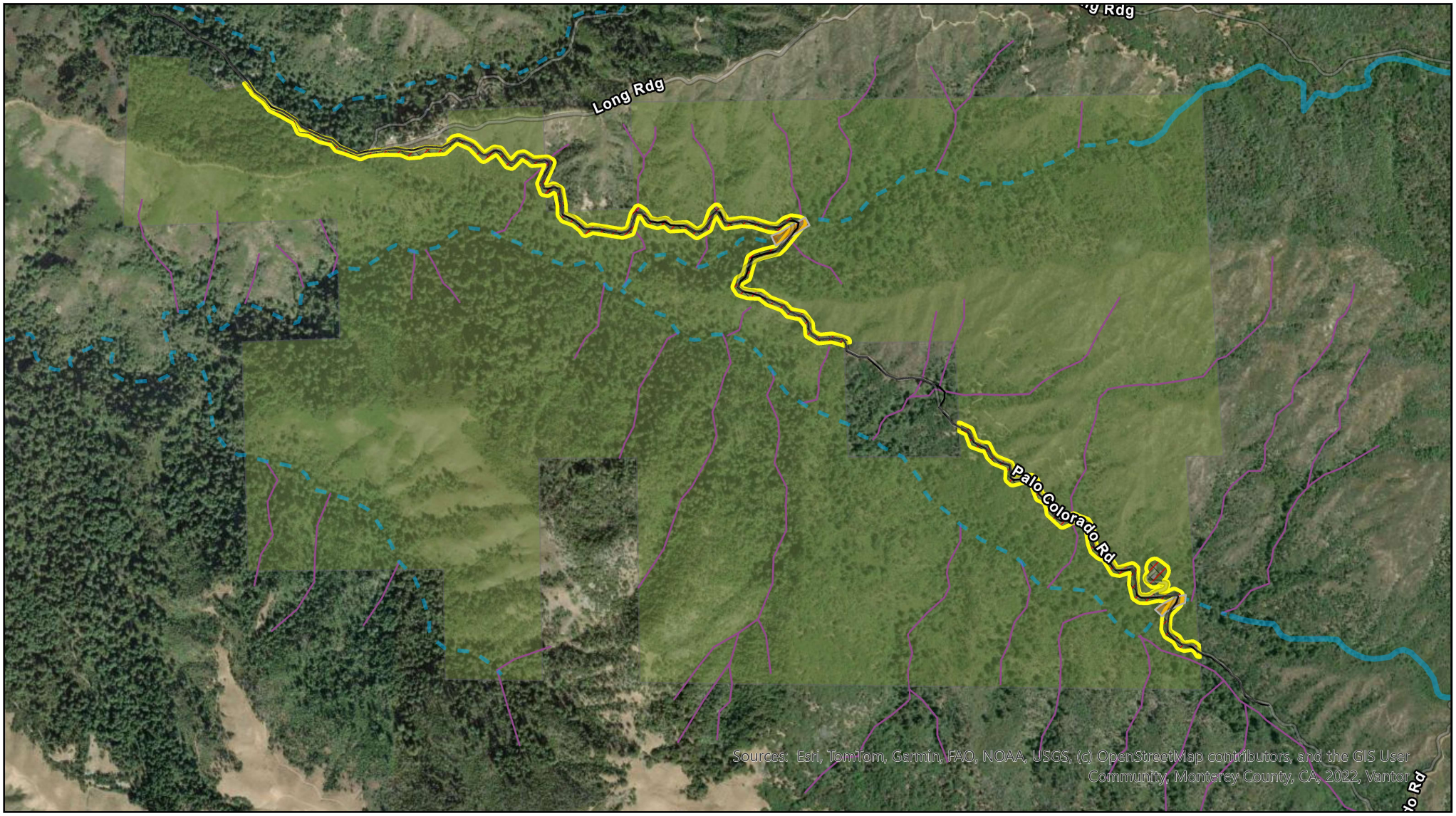
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Aquatic Resources w/ Buffers

Upper Right: 121°48'40"W 36°22'50"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- Stream Buffer_50ft
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.23 0.45 0.9 Miles

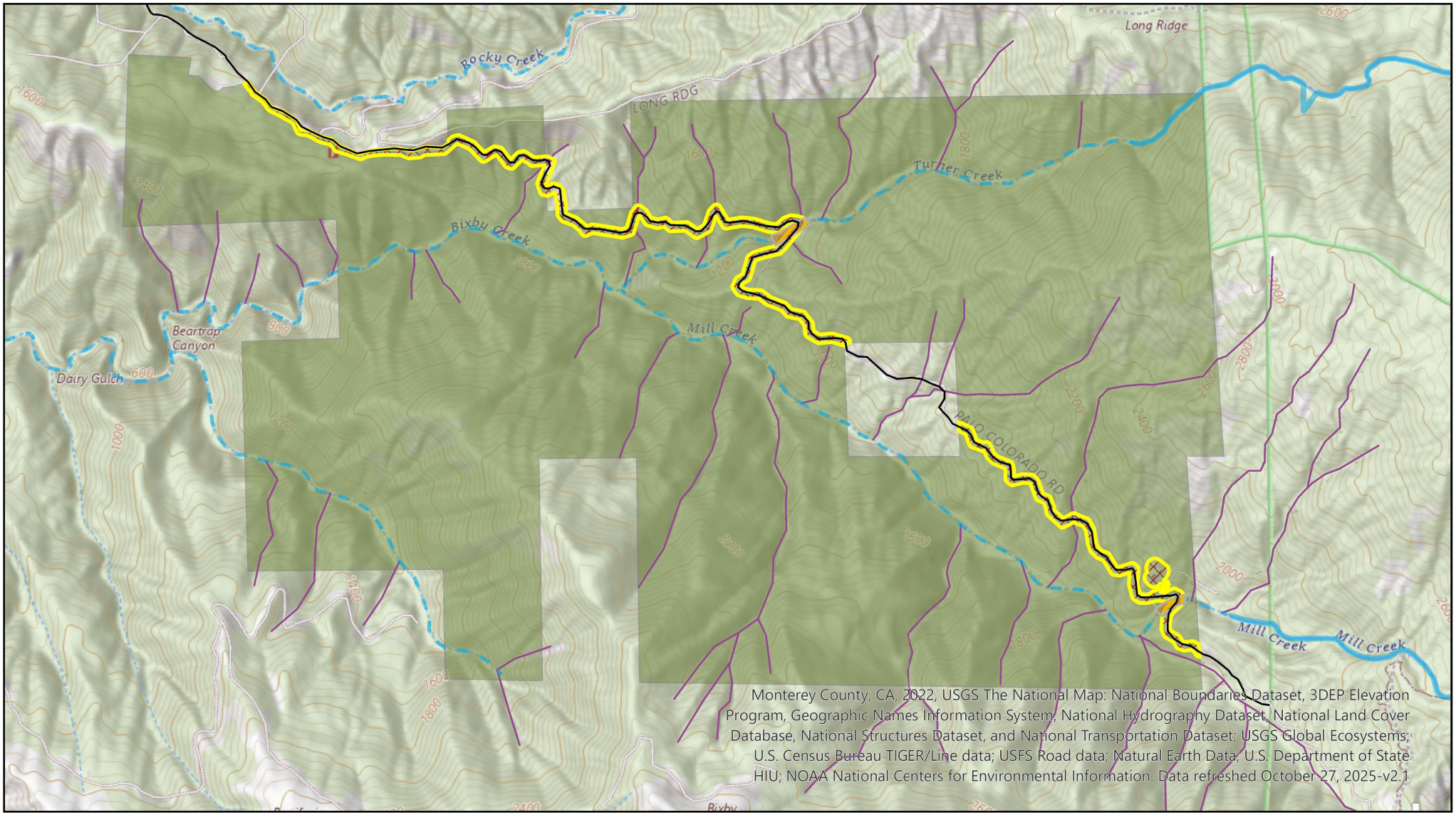
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Aquatic Resources w/ Buffers

Upper Right: 121°48'40"W 36°22'50"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- Stream Buffer_50ft
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.23 0.45 0.9 Miles

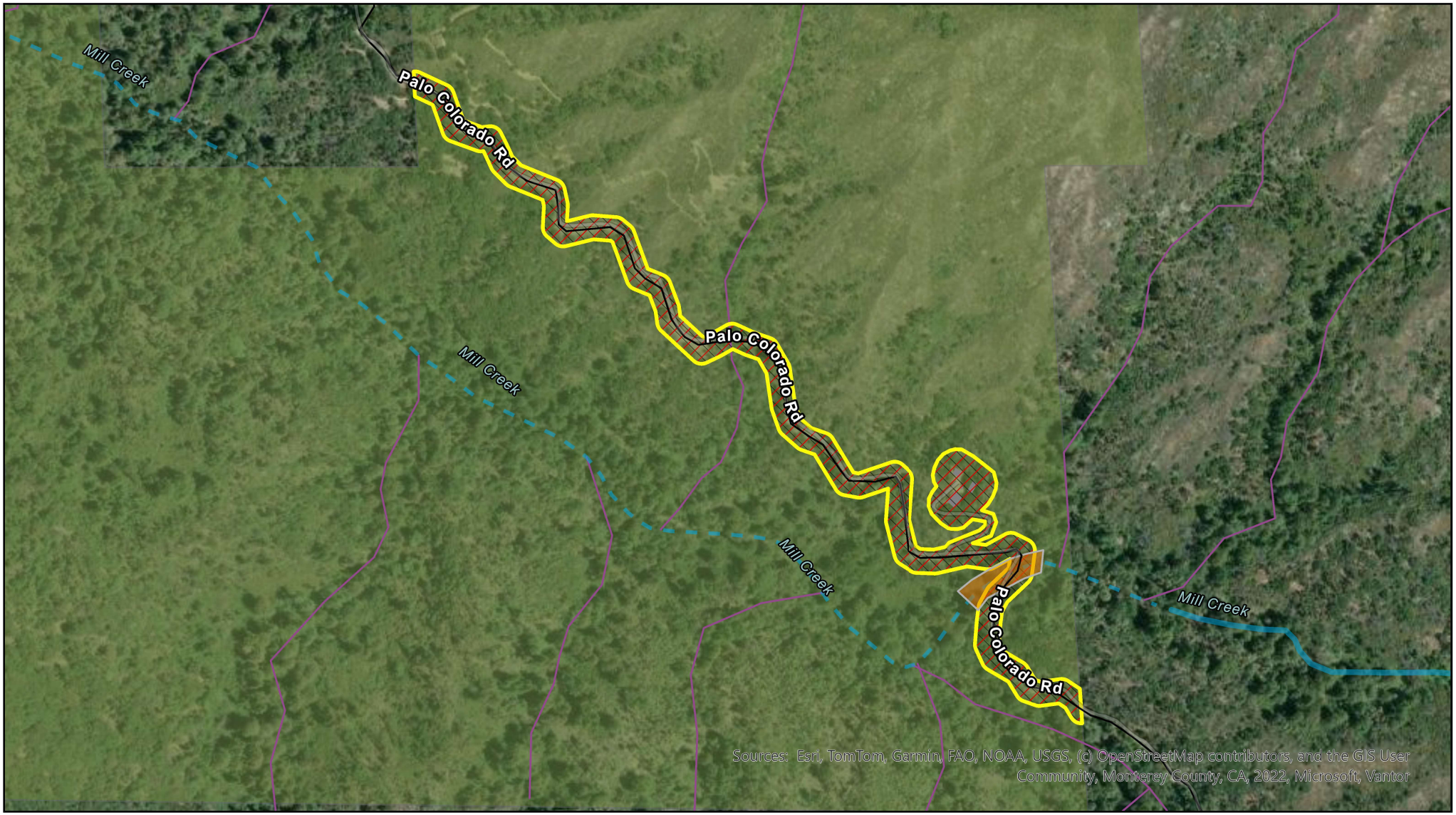
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Detail East

Upper Right: 121°48'57"W 36°22'5"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- IntermittentStreams_50f buffer
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.07 0.15 0.3 Miles

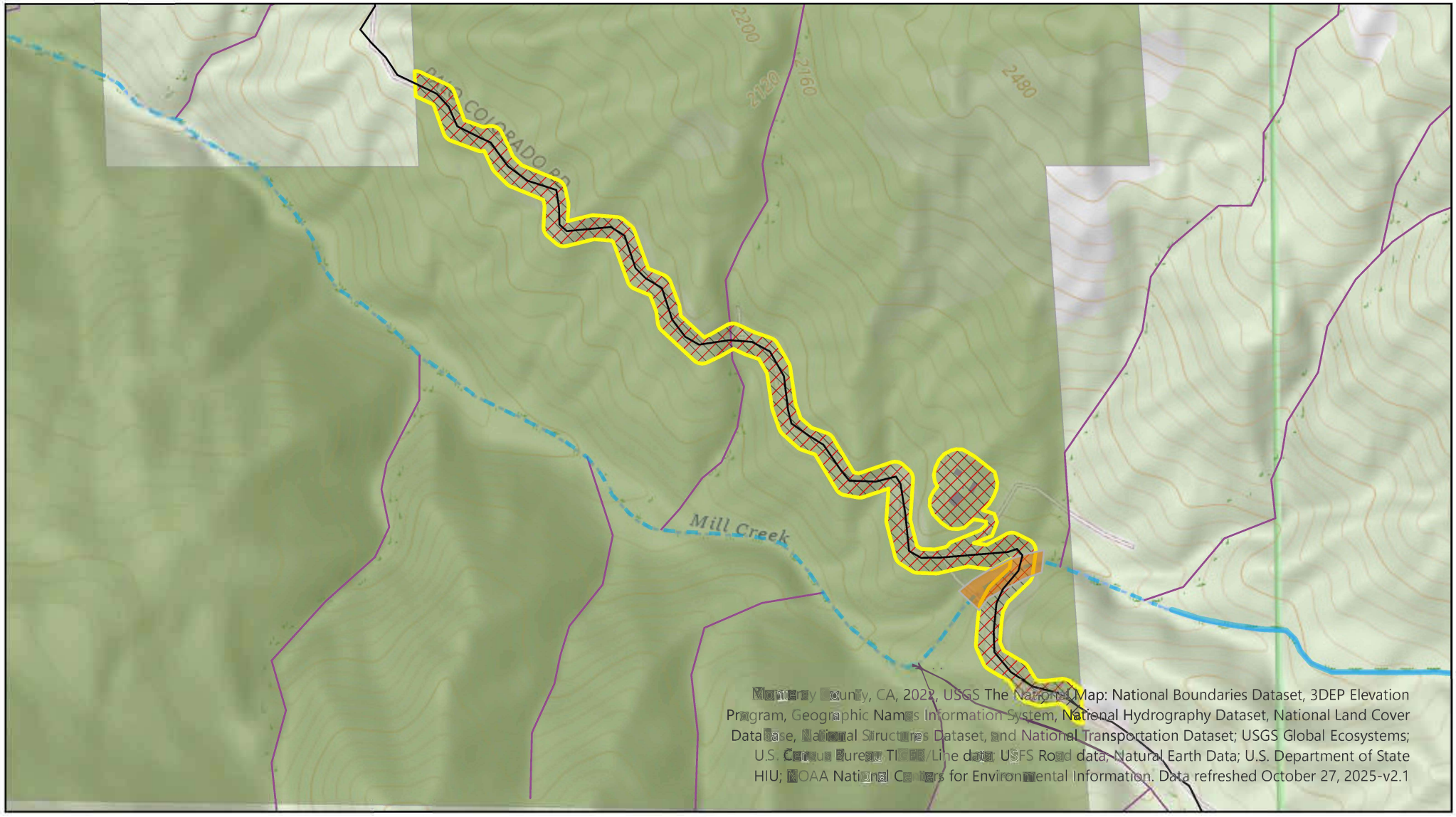
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

Copy Write: 2026 MPRPD

Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Detail East

Upper Right: 121°48'57"W 36°22'5"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- IntermittentStreams_50f buffer
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.07 0.15 0.3 Miles

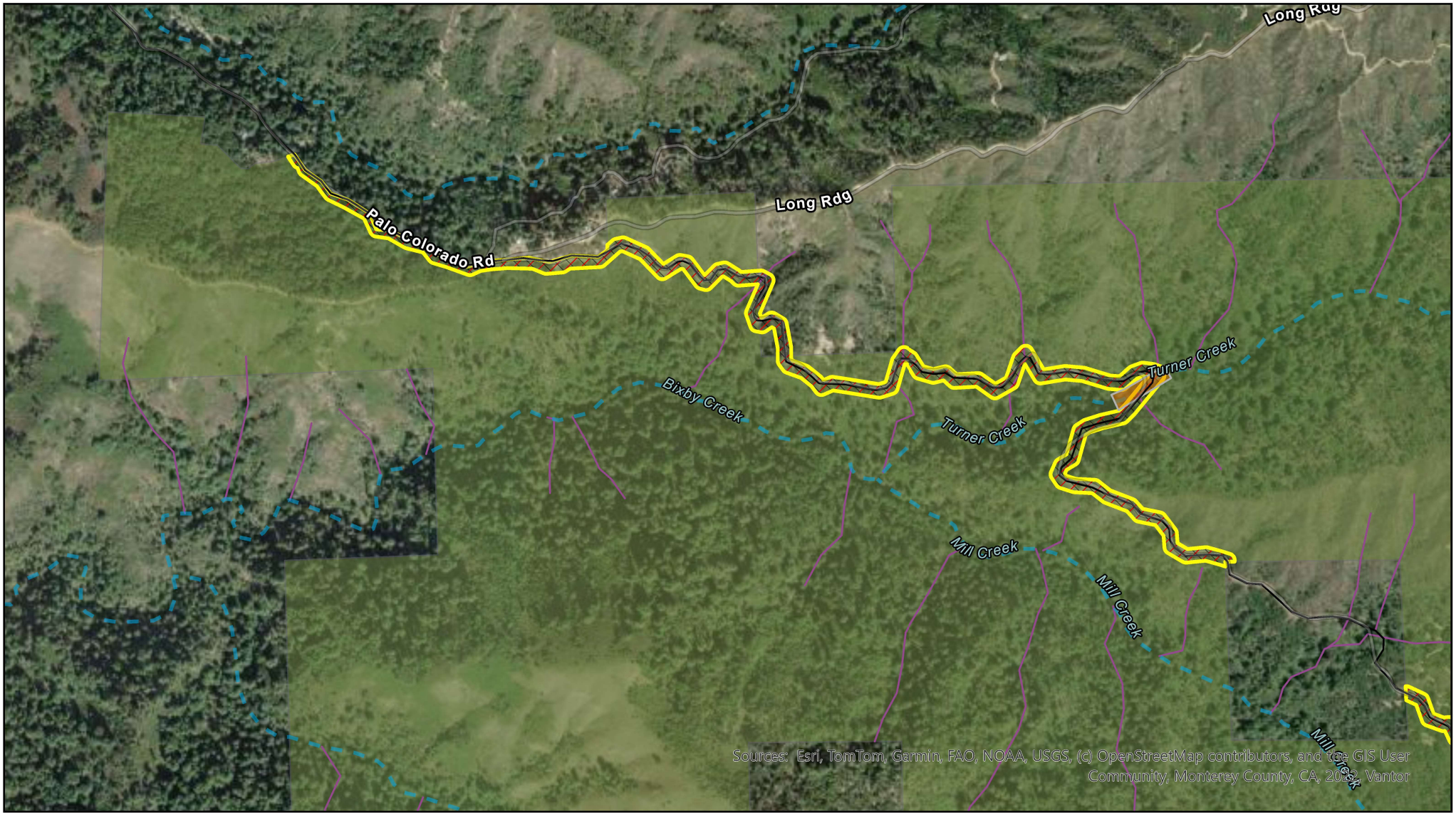
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Detail West

Upper Right: 121°49'46"W 36°22'52"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- IntermittentStreams_50f buffer
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles

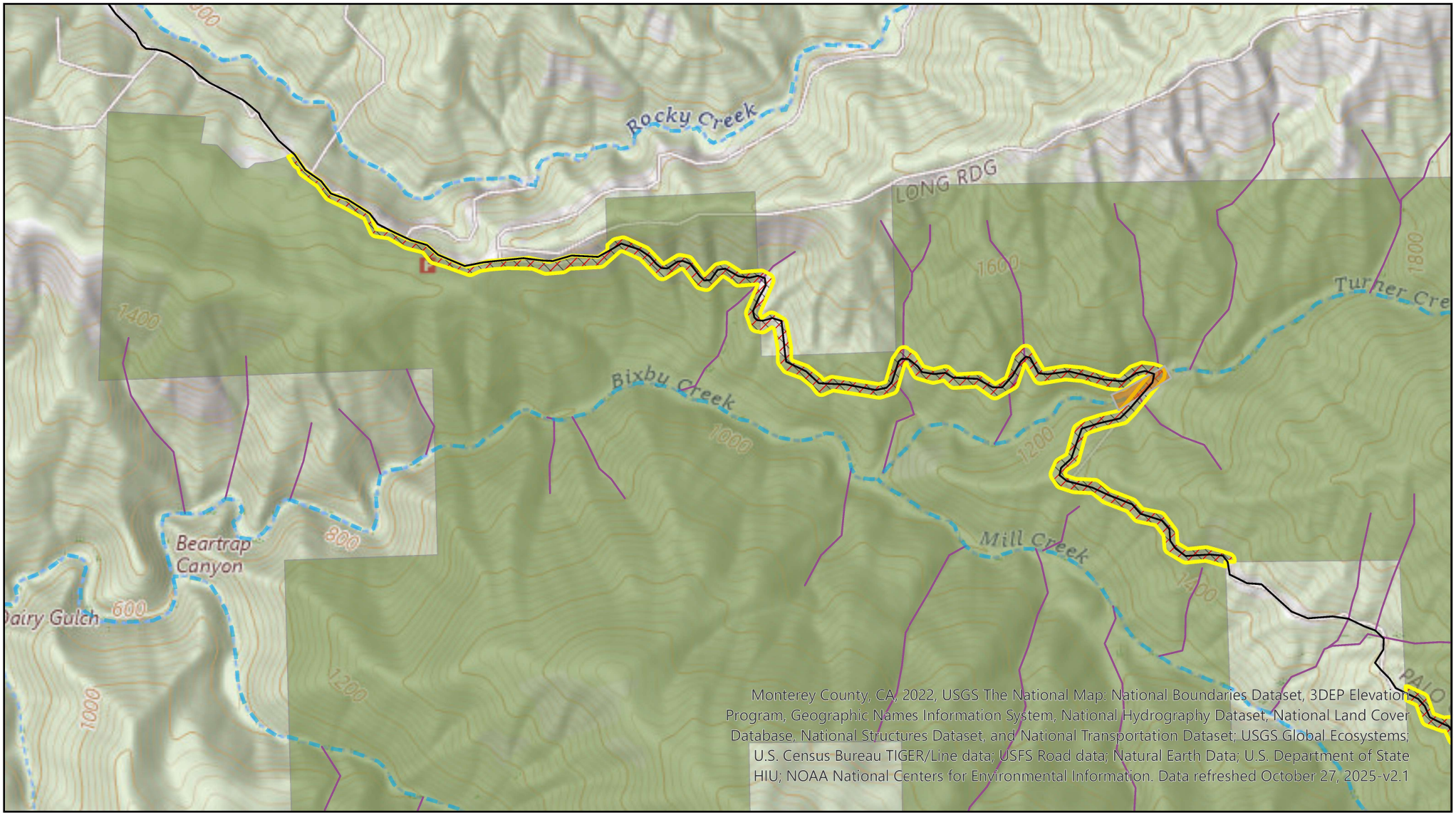
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Detail East

Upper Right: 121°49'46"W 36°22'52"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- IntermittentStreams_50f buffer
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles

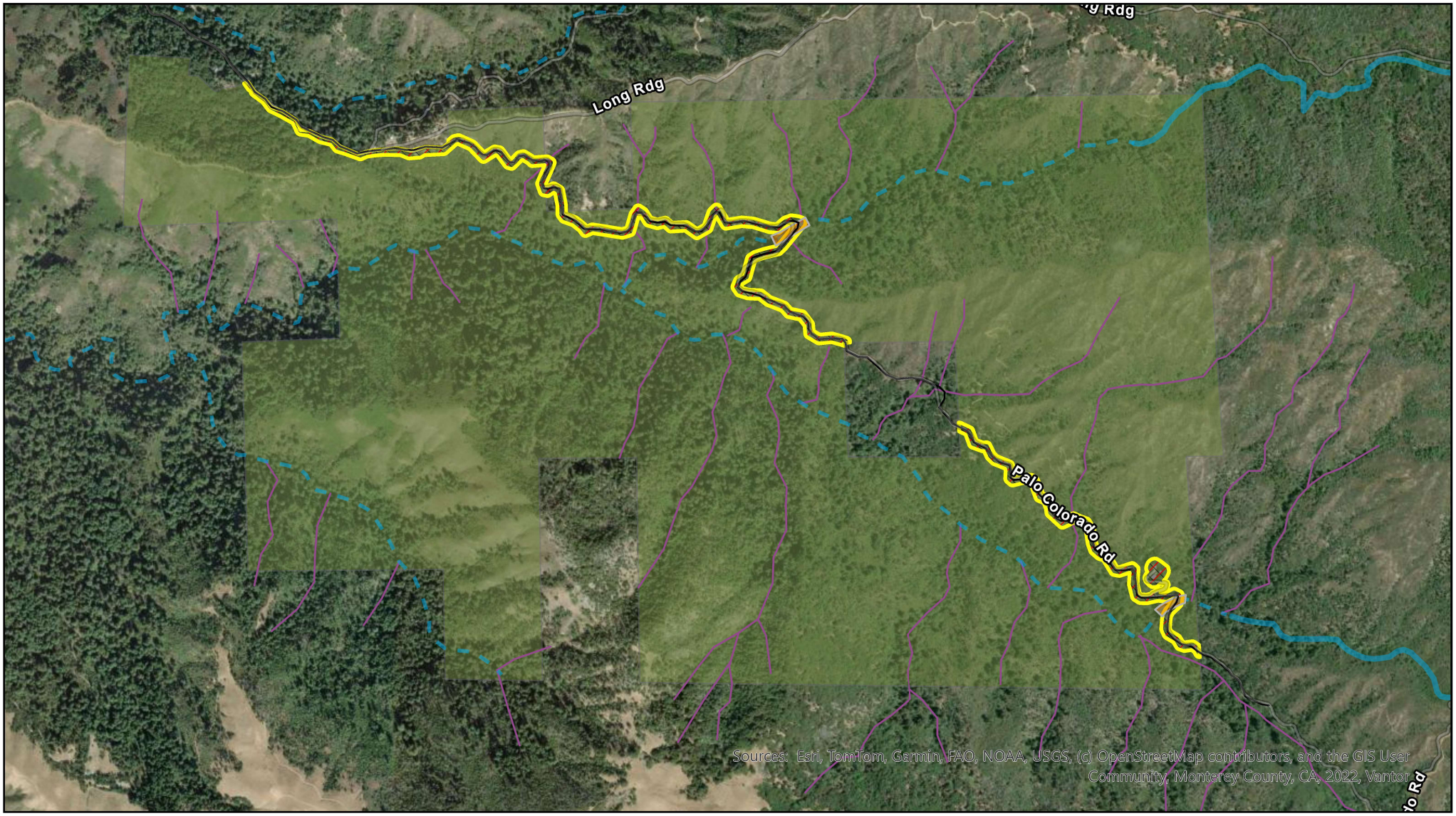
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Manual Understory Thinning & Chipping

Upper Right: 121°48'40"W 36°22'50"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- Stream Buffer_50ft
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.23 0.45 0.9 Miles

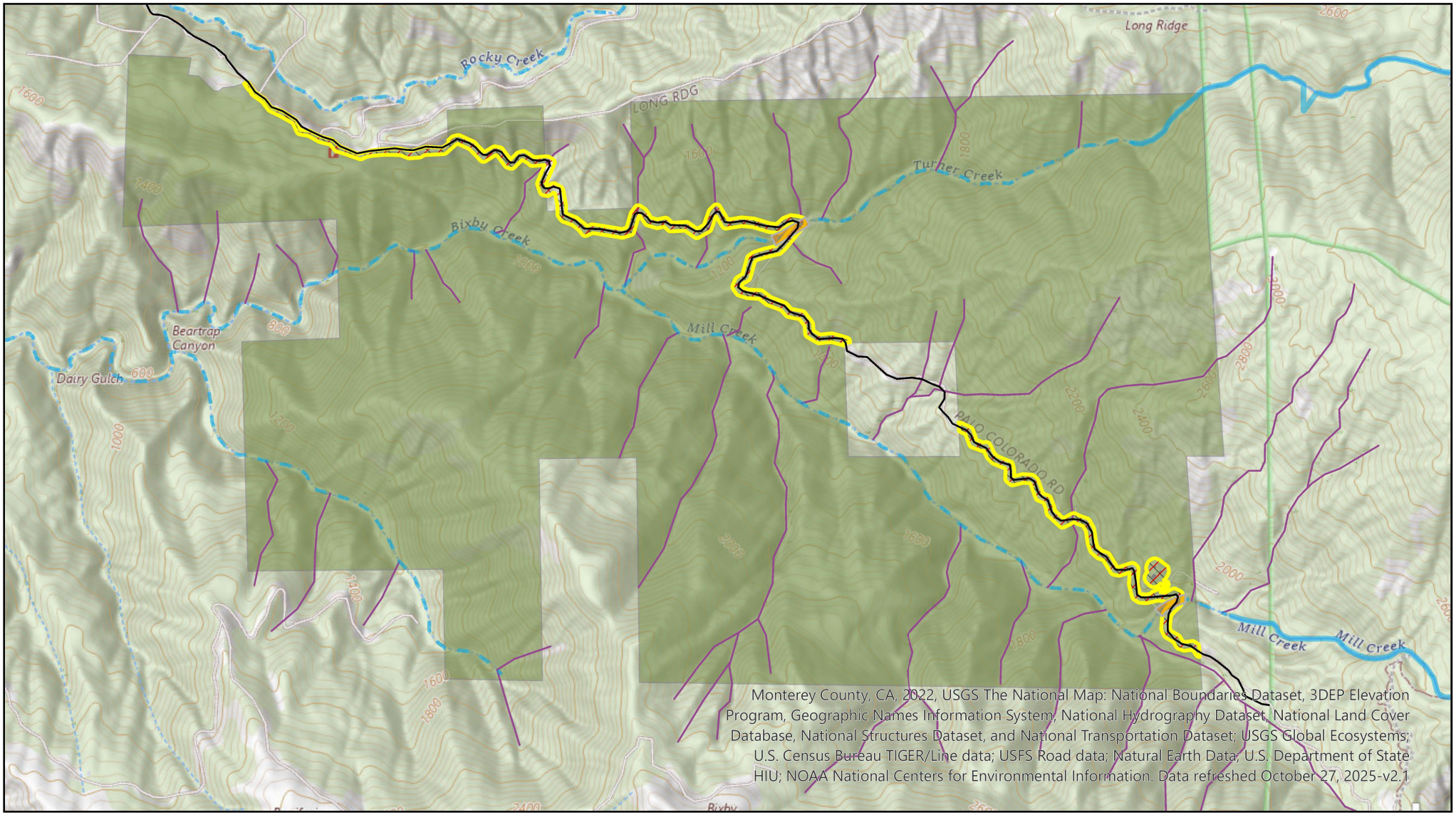
N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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Mill Creek Defensible Space and Roadside Fuels Reduction_ Manual Understory Thinning & Chipping

Upper Right: 121°48'40"W 36°22'50"N



Legend

- Fuels Treatment Boundary
- Understory Thinning_Manual
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- BuildingFootprint
- Stream Buffer_50ft
- MPRPD_LandHoldings
- Chipping in place
- Access_Palo Colorado Road

0 0.23 0.45 0.9 Miles

N

Author: Joshua Carpenter

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