



SHERIFF

CHRISTINA CORPUS

SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Public Information Officer - [PIO@smcgov.org](mailto:pio@smcgov.org)

330 Bradford Street, Redwood City, CA 94063

(650) 421-1243

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact for further information: Gretchen Spiker, Director of Communications, pio@smcgov.org

May 6, 2025

Search for Missing Hiker in Portola Valley Moves to 'Limited Continuous Search' Phase

PORTOLA VALLEY, Calif. – In its sixth day, the search for missing hiker 79-year-old Margaret “Elaine” McKinley continues in the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve and surrounding areas. Tuesday evening at sunset, the search will move into a Limited Continuous Search phase, in accordance with search and rescue best practices. This phase refers to a search operation that continues indefinitely or until the missing person is located, but with resources that are scaled down compared to the initial, more intense phase.

Elaine was last seen Thursday, May 1, 2025 hiking along the Lost Trail in the preserve. Since that time, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, partner agencies and more than 500 specialized search and rescue volunteers have searched for Elaine. Unfortunately, despite exhaustive efforts, there have been no confirmed sightings of Elaine. In this next phase of the search, the Sheriff's Office and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will continue to deploy resources and encourages anyone with information or sightings to call 911.

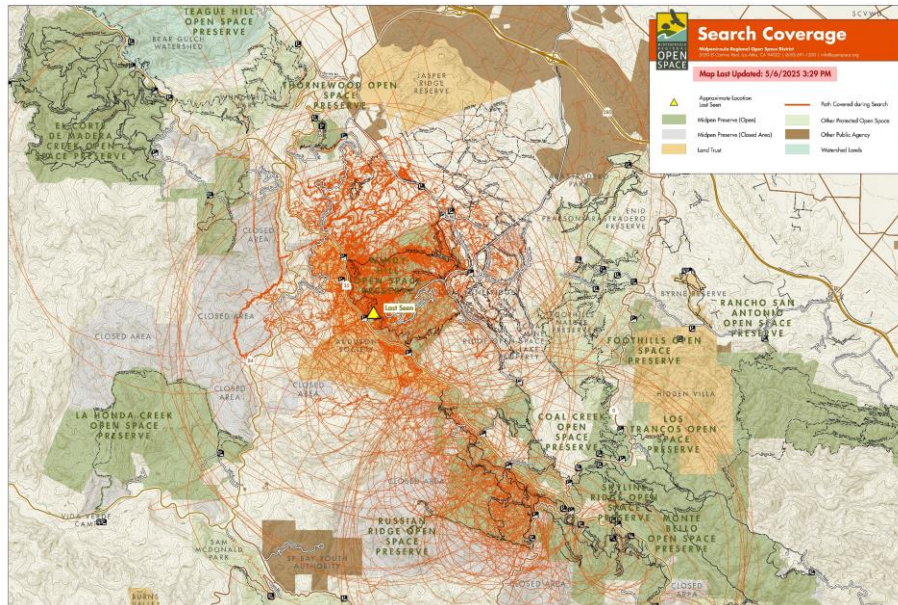
“I am proud of the enormous collaborative efforts by Sheriff's Office personnel and volunteers, along with specialized search and rescue personnel from around the state to search for Elaine,” said Sheriff Christina Corpus.

On Tuesday, May 6, 2025, more than 80 search and rescue personnel from Marin, Merced, Nevada, Placer, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta and Yolo Counties are assisting San Mateo County with the search. Search teams are using every available resource to aid in the search including drones, horses, tracking and trailing K-9s, off-road bikes and motorcycles, planes, specialized mapping software and more. Officials have reviewed more than 25 cameras on trails, private and public property. More than a dozen community members have responded to the Sheriff's Office [request to review doorbell and security footage](#), and residents are asked to continue sharing information.

Search coverage has been extensive and is depicted in the map below as of May 6 at 3:29 p.m. This coverage map includes ground searches and searches by plane, but does not account for searches using drones. Some areas may not be tracked on the map by search teams due to inaccessible terrain or other obstacles. Teams have made every effort to search all accessible areas.

In sharing the coverage map, the Sheriff's Office hopes to demonstrate the incredible efforts of the search and rescue teams and show the sophistication of a search and rescue operation of this scale.

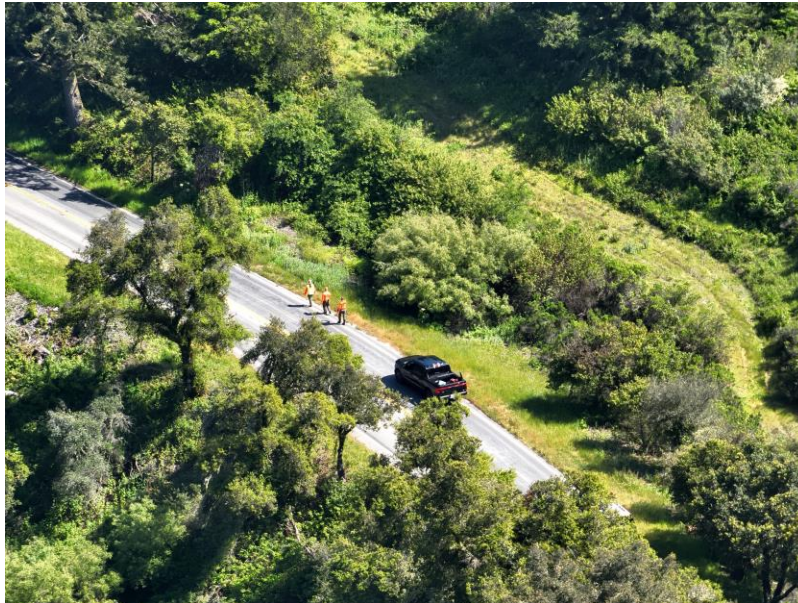
In the Limited Continuous Search phase, the Sheriff's Office is committed to sharing noteworthy updates, but will likely not continue daily updates. Anyone with sightings or information about Elaine's whereabouts is asked to call 911.



Search Coverage Map as of May 6, 2025 at 3:29 p.m.



Search and rescue personnel meet for morning briefing on Tuesday, May 6, 2025



Teams search the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve and surrounding areas



Margaret "Elaine" McKinley, pictured in the clothing she was last seen wearing