



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-14-36
February 18, 2014

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM

Approval for Demolitions

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "SMA".

Requested Committee Actions to Forward to Full Board as Recommendations:

1. Revise the previous Board approval for residential use of the "Skunk House" and "Caretaker House" on the Hicks Creek Ranch property in Sierra Azul Preserve to approve demolishing the structures due to their deteriorated condition. Approve sale of the equestrian facility infrastructure.
2. Affirm the findings of the evaluation, conducted per the Board approved preliminary use and management plan, that the three ranch barns on the South Area Outpost property (A.K.A. "Slaght") in Sierra Azul Preserve should be demolished.
3. Affirm the findings of the evaluation, conducted per the Board approved preliminary use and management plan, that the main house, utility building, two sheds, and associated infrastructure on the Maas property in Sierra Azul Preserve should be demolished.
4. Affirm the findings of the evaluation, conducted per the Board approved preliminary use and management plan, that the winery barn on the Sherrill Winery property (A.K.A. "Grainger et. al") in Montebello Preserve should be demolished.

SUMMARY

Multiple structures on several properties owned by the District are in need of demolition and have previously been approved by the Board for either demolition or further evaluation as part of the properties' Preliminary Use and Management Plans. These properties include Hicks Creek Ranch (R-08-64), Maas (R-09-126), and South Area Outpost (R-10-114 and 10-117) in Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (Sierra Azul) and the Sherrill Winery barn (R-98-114) in Montebello Open Space Preserve (Montebello). The Crites property (R-11-73) in Sierra Azul and the McDonald Ranch House (La Honda Creek Master Plan) in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (La Honda Creek) have already been approved for demolition and will be demolished at the same time as other projects. A staff effort is underway to address the needs of these structures in Fiscal Year 2014-15. This memorandum describes these properties, their current physical condition, and the previous actions taken by the Board regarding demolition or evaluation. Funds for demolition and evaluation are included in the FY 2014-15 Action Plan and Budget, which recently was reviewed by the Action Plan and Budget Committee, and will be considered by the full Board in late February and March. It has been past practice for a Board Committee to review and recommend structure demolitions for full Board consideration.

DISCUSSION

With the recent hiring of the Contingent Project Manager position in Operations, the department has made progress toward the evaluation and demolition of these types of structures. This priority is reflected in the FY 2013-14 Action Plan and continues as a staff priority in the FY 2014-15 Action Plan, which recently was reviewed by the Action Plan and Budget Committee, and will be considered by the full Board in late February and March..

Former Housing Structures and Associated Infrastructure

Since their acquisition, the two habitable houses at the Hicks Creek Ranch, the Skunk House and Caretaker House, have not been maintained and are now dilapidated. The property experiences regular trespass, vandalism, and was the site of a suicide. For this reason, the Operations Department patrols these structures with regularity at the expense of other priorities.

Hicks Creek Ranch was originally envisioned to be suitable for staff housing and required a caretaker to maintain the property's infrastructure. A lack of potable water, the absence of a fire escape route, and the poor condition of the structures led staff to subsequently determine that the two structures in question were either not suitable for staff/caretakers, or had degraded beyond repair. These two structures now require demolition, along with the other five structures on the property previously approved for demolition by the Board of Directors.

Equestrian Facility

The prior owner of the Hicks Creek Ranch property constructed an extensive facility in the back part of the property intended to be a commercial equestrian operation. Once the facility was made known to Santa Clara County, they deemed the use unacceptable in part due to the unstable insufficient one-lane access road, an assessment that was subsequently confirmed by a consultant hired to produce a road inventory for the property.

As follow up to the Preliminary Use and Management plan, District staff toured the facilities with Bear Creek Stables tenants in 2009-10. The tenants desired to purchase select portions of the facilities, but the breakdown, transport, and sale of District assets to a private buyer was deemed not cost effective at that time.

District staff concluded no recreational or commercial use of the road was appropriate and therefore the equestrian facilities were not suitable for this location. The preliminary U&M considered the sale or auction of the equestrian facilities if the Bear Creek Stables were not interested in using the facility. Because vandalism and trespass have increased due to a lack of a caretaker on the property and since the value of the equestrian infrastructure will diminish with time as the materials degrade, staff thinks it prudent to sell the equestrian facility infrastructure. See **Exhibit A, Hicks Creek Ranch**.

Uninhabitable Structures Approved for Further Evaluation

The Maas property has a house and accessory structures that were originally considered potentially useful as part of a Real Property exchange with San Jose Water Company, which owns the adjacent land. Real Property has determined this transaction is no longer feasible and recommends approval for the demolition of the house and accessory structures, which include a utility building, two small sheds, and a garage/carport. See **Exhibit B, Maas**.

The South Area Outpost, where some District staff report to duty, has three remnant ranch barns that require demolition. A house, rented to District staff, a house used as the Outpost, and two

sheds are utilized by staff. The remnant farm structures provide no utility to the Outpost. They are known to contain lead paint and asbestos and are in a state of disrepair. Operations is seeking approval for the demolition of the ranch barns. See **Exhibit C, South Area Outpost**.

The Sherrill Winery Barn was in poor condition at the time of purchase. The long term use was to be assessed at a later date. Now 16 years after acquisition, its condition is much worse. The structure was considered by the South Skyline Association as a potential volunteer fire station, but they determined this idea was not feasible. The adjacent residence, however, is in good habitable condition and is currently rented by a member of the public. Staff will give the tenant notice of the proposed demolition timeline as soon as a contract is awarded. Operations is seeking approval for demolition of the barn. See **Exhibit D, Sherrill Barn**.

Already Approved For Demolition

The Crites property, located in Sierra Azul adjacent to the Hicks Creek Ranch, was approved for demolition by the Board July 13th, 2011 as recommended by staff in report R-11-73. A foundation and retaining wall is cut into the steep hillside. The demolition will require special considerations by the equipment operators and some slope stabilization after demolition.

The McDonald Ranch House, located in La Honda Creek Preserve near the Red Barn, was approved for demolition through the Master Plan and its Mitigated Negative Declaration. The structure requires further review by an architectural historian and review by San Mateo County for historical significance prior to demolition

Current Project Scope

None of the structures appear to have any historical significance. However, all structures over 50 years old require a historical assessment in order to obtain a permit for demolition. When required the District will hire a consultant to conduct a historical review which then will be submitted to the permitting agency for approval. Any structure that is determined to have historical significance will return to the Board for further review. Most of the structures require testing for lead and asbestos. Abatement and mitigation will be particular to each structure. Site grading and landform restoration will be considered as part of each project, though no significant grading is anticipated on any of the projects, except for the Crites property.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is estimated that all of these demolition projects would cost \$720,000. Operations has requested this amount of funding in the FY14-15 Budget. This amount includes hazardous materials assessment, historical review, CEQA, permits, abatement for hazardous materials, demolition, and site restoration where appropriate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Adjoining owners within 300 feet of structures proposed for demolition were notified of this meeting.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The structures already approved for demolition were determined by the Board at the General Manager's recommendation to be categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff anticipates using the categorical exemption for the remainder of the

demolitions, like the recent Powell property demolition, unless a historically significant resource is identified.

NEXT STEPS

The Committee's recommendations will be taken to the full Board for approval. If the Board approves the demolition of these structures, Operations will solicit bids to demolish the structures along with those already approved by the Board for demolition. In Sierra Azul, the Hicks Creek Ranch, Crites, Maas, and South Area Outpost demolitions will be done under one contract. The Sherrill Winery in Monte Bello and the McDonald Ranch House, in La Honda Creek, will be done under another contract. Approval of final demolition contracts will be agendaized for Board approval in the future.

Attachment(s)

- A. Hicks Creek Ranch Site Plan and Photos – Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve
- B. Maas Parcel – Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve
- C. South Area Outpost aka Slaughter – Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve
- D. Sherrill Winery Barn – Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

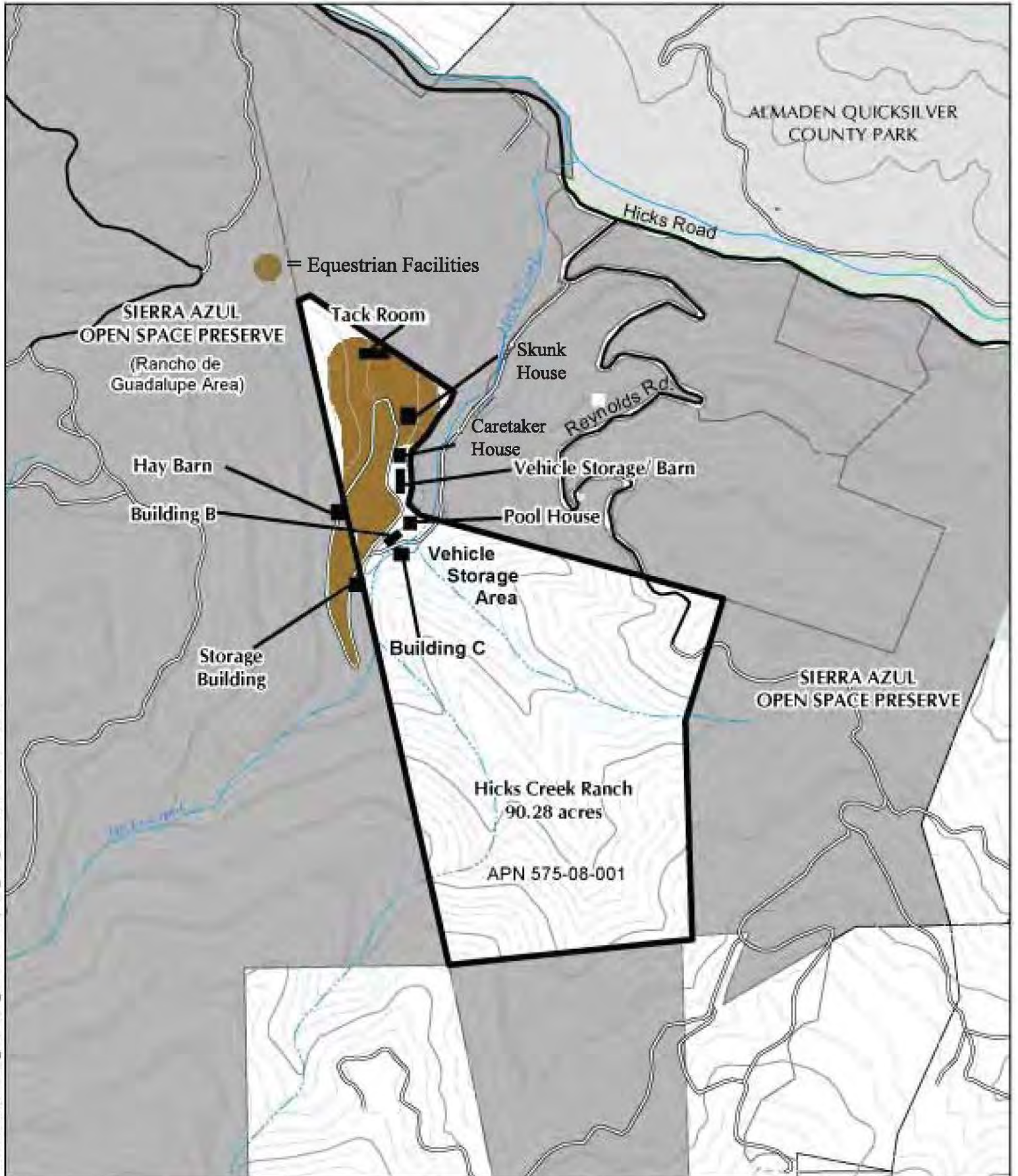
Responsible Department Head:

Brian Malone, Acting Operations Manager

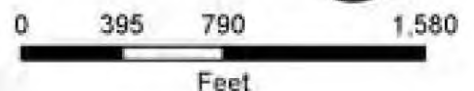
Prepared by:

Aaron Hébert, Contingent Project Manager

Exhibit A: Hicks Creek Ranch Site Plan and Photos



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Skunk House





Caretaker House

Equestrian Barn





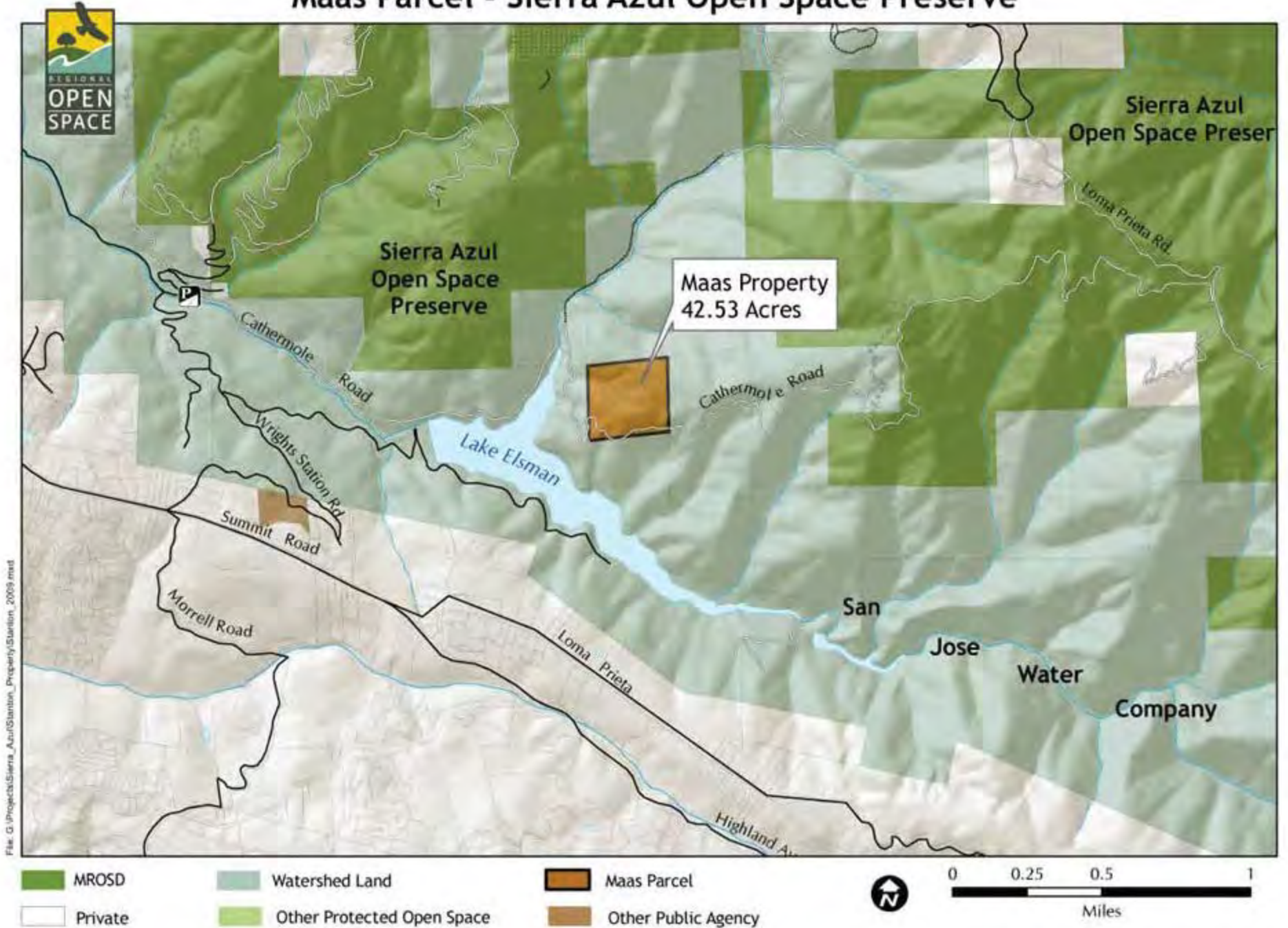
Grain Storage Barn







Maas Parcel - Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve



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Maas Site Plan



Garage and
Carport

Main House

Sheds

Utility
Building

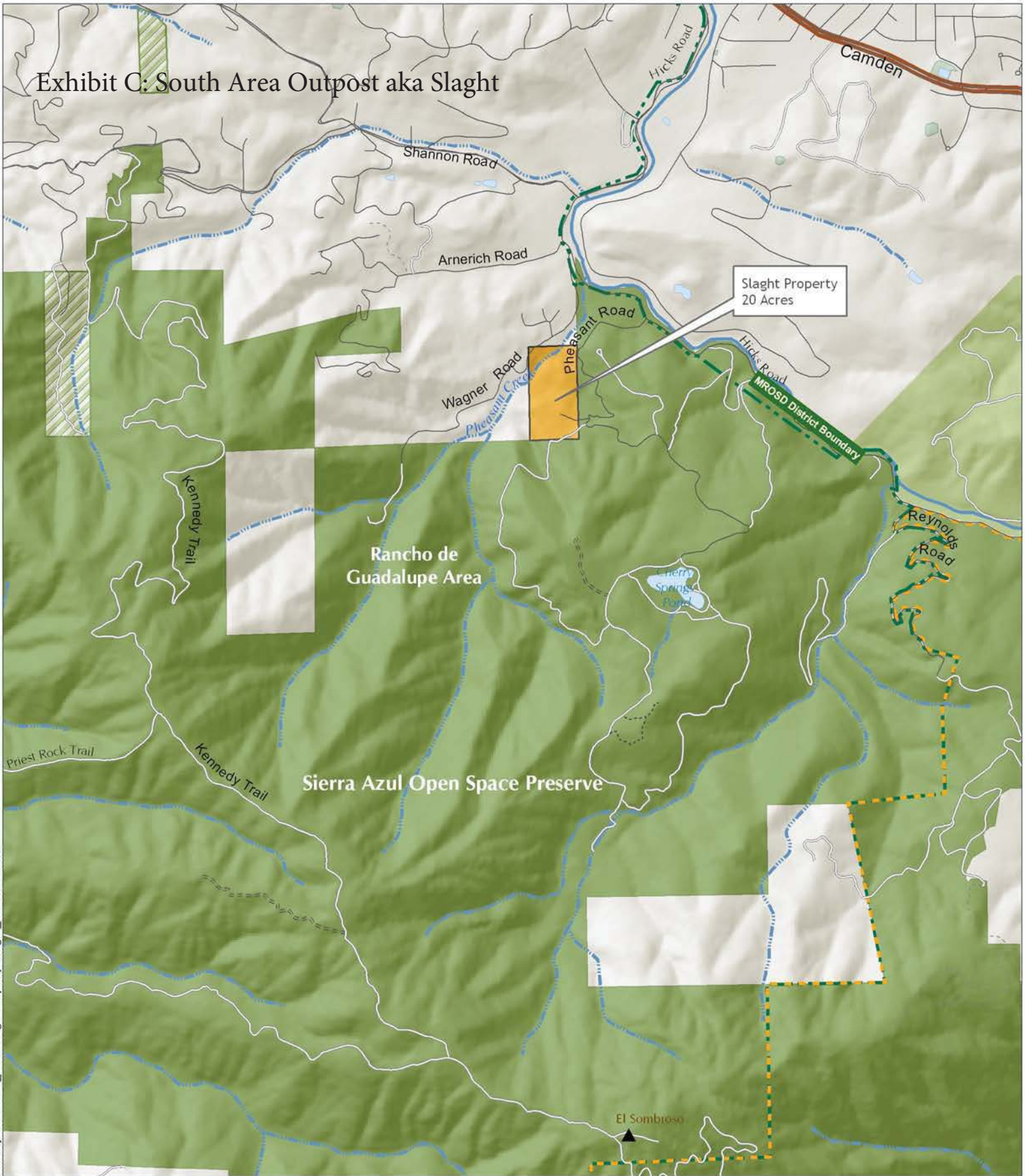








Exhibit C: South Area Outpost aka Slaght



Proposed Addition of Slaght Property, Rancho de Guadalupe Area of Sierra Azul OSP

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

July 2010

- Proposed Addition
- MROSD
- Other Protected Open Space or Park Lands
- Conservation or Agricultural Easement
- MROSD Sphere of Influence
- MROSD Boundary



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MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

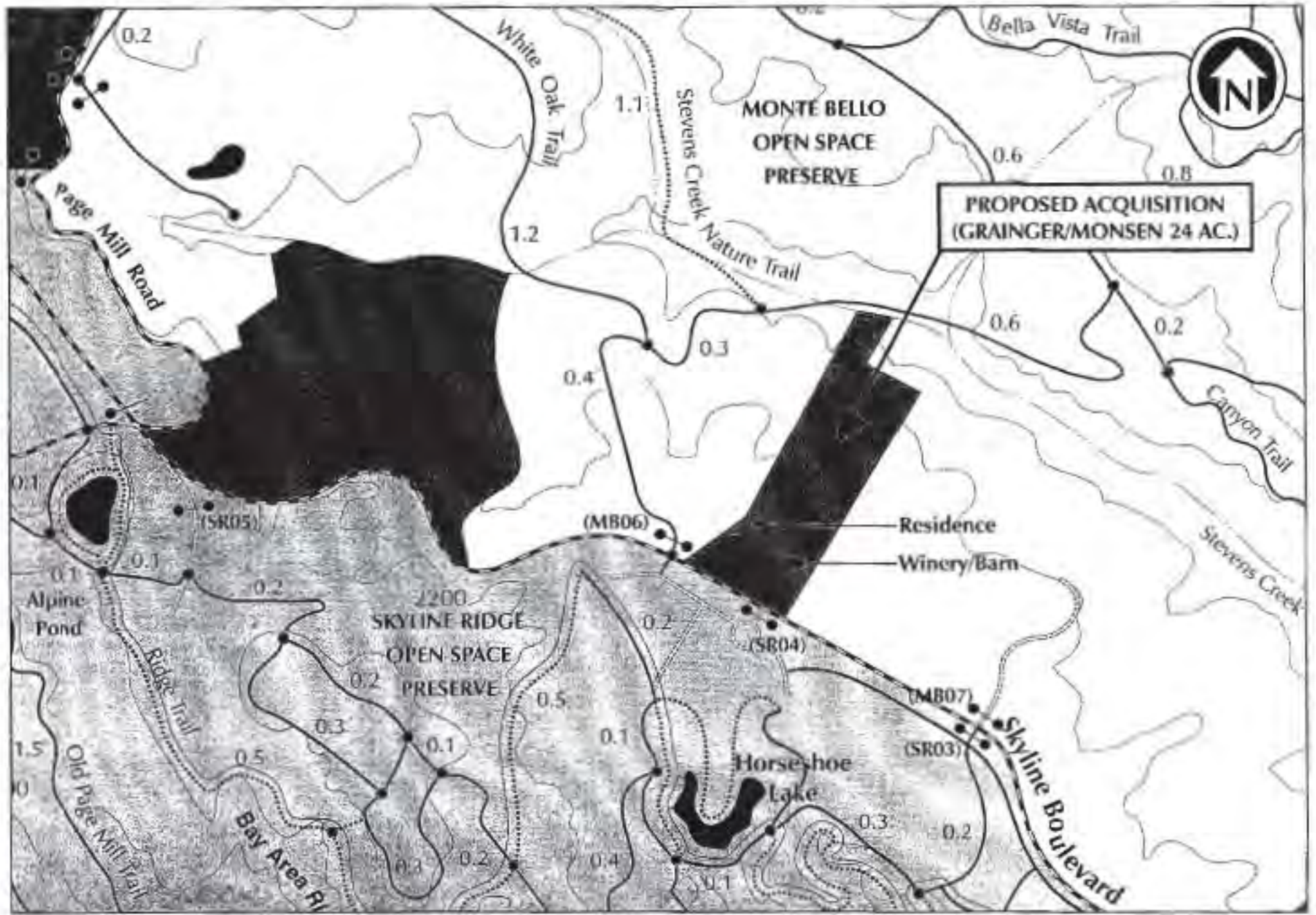


Exhibit D: Sherril Winery Barn

