



# Bay Area Ridge Trail

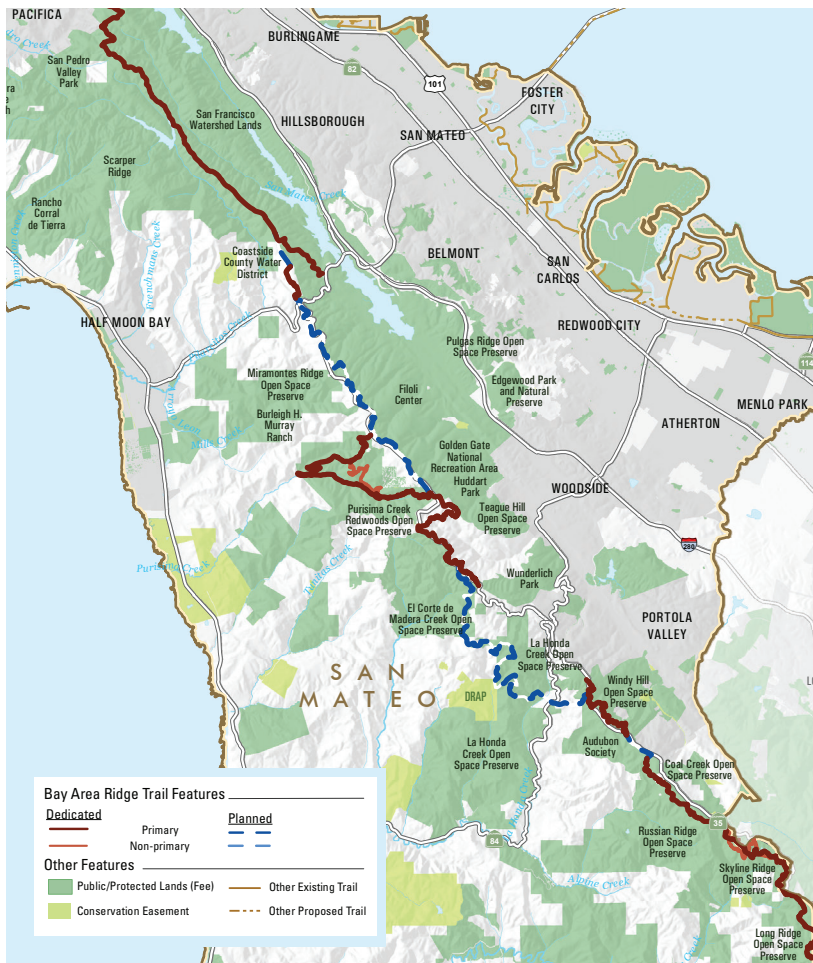
*The vision for the Bay Area Ridge Trail is to unite the ridgelines of the nine Bay Area Counties with a 550-mile continuous multi-use trail.*

Today, more than 375 miles of Ridge Trail in place for both close-to-home outings and epic multi-day adventures.



## Ridge Trail in San Mateo County

San Mateo County is the home of the first Ridge Trail dedication at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve in May 1980. Thirty years later, San Mateo is more than 70% complete, thanks to the historic trails and successful partnerships with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), San Francisco Public Utility District (SFPUC), San Mateo County Parks, and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).



San Mateo County is the southern terminus of the Ridge Trail's longest continuous stretch for hikers spanning over 88 miles from Big Rock in Marin to Highway 92.

There are only 20 remaining miles of planned in San Mateo County. Six of these miles, from Highway 92 to Purisima Creek Redwoods, are expected to open to the public in the next two to three years on SFPUC land.

## Upper La Honda Creek

The planned trail system in Upper La Honda Creek includes close to 5 miles of Ridge Trail. Opening the trails would close more than half of the the planned Ridge Trail in San Mateo County.

Please note that all planned trail routes are conceptual.



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## **La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study**

### **Typical Planning Process for Master Plans, Preserve Plans and Site Plans September 12, 2019**

The District leads planning processes to develop comprehensive, long-term policies and guidelines for future uses and management of its open space preserves. The resulting master plan (or preserve plan) outlines long-term uses including public access improvements, environmental education and visitor amenities, habitat enhancements, resource management and other management activities. The planning process engages numerous stakeholders, community members, District staff and the Board of Directors. It also follows multiple steps: project initiation, inventory and analysis, plan development, environmental review, and plan review and adoption.

After the Board approves a master plan (or preserve plan) and its associated environmental review document, the District would initiate site specific projects like new public parking and trailheads. If a conceptual site design was not developed as part of the master planning process, these projects sometimes require more detailed site planning and design and additional environmental review. The site planning process would be similar to the above master plan development process to develop a more detailed site design that can be used for subsequent environmental review, where needed. During environmental review, the District identifies and analyzes any potentially significant environmental impacts of the project and how to avoid or mitigate those impacts. The site planning process follows similar steps to developing a master plan: project initiation, inventory and analysis, plan development, environmental review, and plan review and adoption.

Following Board approval of the site plan and environmental review, the District implements final design, permitting and construction of the parking and trailhead improvements.

#### **Master or Preserve Plan**

##### **Project Initiation**

- Vision
- Goals and objectives
- Public tours
- Stakeholder interviews

##### **Inventory & Analysis**

- Existing conditions
- Comprehensive road & trails assessment
- Policy analysis
- Opportunities and constraints
- Public workshops
- Stakeholder interviews
- Public tours

#### Master Plan Development

- Programming
- Public tours
- Stakeholder meetings
- Master Plan alternatives
- Draft Plan
- Board committee review

#### Environmental Review

- Technical studies
- CEQA analyses
- Proposed Master Plan (proposed project)
- Public open houses
- Board committee review

#### Plan Review and Adoption

- Public hearings (Committee and Board meetings)

### **Site Plan Development Phase – Parking and Trailhead Projects**

#### Project Initiation

- Goals and objectives

#### Inventory & Analysis

- Data collection
- Existing conditions site assessment

#### Programming/Site Plan Development

- Programming
- Site plan alternatives
- Technical studies
- Public workshops
- Stakeholder interviews
- Regulatory agency outreach
- Conceptual design (proposed project) for environmental review phase

#### Environmental Review

- Additional technical studies
- Public workshops
- Regulatory agency review

#### Plan Review and Adoption

- Public hearings (Committee and Board meetings)

### **Design and Construction Phase – Parking and Trailhead Projects**

- Final design
- Construction documents
- Permitting
- Bidding and construction
- Project completion
- Open to the public



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## La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study Site Development Assessment Criteria September 12, 2019

When a site is being assessed for its suitability as a parking and trailhead location, project teams evaluate it using assessment criteria listed in Table 1 below. Project specific goals and objectives are then added to these criteria. The La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study's specific project goals and objectives are listed in Table 2.

**Table 1. General Site Development Assessment Criteria**

Criterion	Description
Adequate line of sight at entrance	Assess adequacy of line of sight at location of the entrance onto the main road or highway. Does the location provide enough reaction time for drivers on the road or highway and in the entrance to see one another?
Safe ingress/egress	Ingress/egress allows for stacking or maneuvering of large vehicles, e.g. horse trailers. Is there space for vehicles to maneuver safely into and out of the site?
Ability to meet desired parking capacity	Enough space for enough cars to meet public demand and to make the project cost effective. Sizeable, flat sites are ideal as they minimize amount of grading needed.
Minimize amount of grading required	Is the topography steep or gently sloped? Amount of grading can affect the difficulty and cost of implementing a project. Does site topography generate a lot of grading, which can have negative aesthetic impact on the site as well as drive up cost?
Amount of tree/vegetation removal	Minimize removal of large trees or many trees.
Ability to connect to trail system or regional trail	Is there a feasible trail connection to the existing preserve trail network? Is there a regional trail that this site would connect to? Distance, steep topography, erosive soils, and stream crossings are factors that can affect cost and constructability.
Level of use on connecting trails or within preserve	Is there a high demand for more access at this location and would this site fulfill that?
Opportunities for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility	Does the terrain or topography offer opportunities for accessible trails that meet the guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas?
Proximity to existing preserve parking	Is the parking distributed across the preserve to provide access evenly?
Located away from residential/commercial/intersections	Consider compatibility with and impact to adjacent uses. Would the development of the site negatively affect nearby uses including activities within the preserve itself, e.g. grazing operations?

History of prior use	Prior use may leave behind site issues that need to be addressed, e.g. hazardous materials, unusable or unsafe infrastructure.
Use conflicts (grazing, staff facilities, etc.)	Consider compatibility with and impact to existing and future uses at or near the site. Can the site accommodate all of the planned uses?
Disturbed habitat/area	Consider if the site is already disturbed, requiring less grading and vegetation removal. Lessens impact to pristine open space.
Minimize impacts to sensitive natural and cultural resources/habitats	Assess presence of high value habitat and high value cultural resources. Is the site compatible with the protection of high value resources?
Species (plants, wildlife)	Note special-status species and habitats to avoid impacts. Does the site have species that would preclude its use or affect construction feasibility?
Soil stability (landslides)	Soil stability for built infrastructure, e.g. restroom, parking area. Are the soils adequately stable for proposed uses?
Hydrology (creeks, drainages)	Prevent impact, e.g. pollutants, sedimentation, to watersheds and creeks. Flood plain considerations. Is the area prone to flooding?
Hazardous materials	Hazardous materials can require mitigation, increasing project costs. Is significant site cleanup needed before improvements can be made?
Infrastructure required (bridges, retaining walls)	Is significant infrastructure required? Does it require excessively expensive infrastructure improvements?
Aesthetics/viewshed	Visual compatibility with open space character. Is this in a scenic corridor?
Patrol/safety	Patrol considerations. Open views into site. Can the site be easily seen by patrol staff? Is it far into a preserve where patrol is challenging?
Other major concerns/issues to resolve	Are there other site specific issues to address?

**Table 2. Project Goals and Objectives**

Below are criteria specific to the La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study project.

<b>Project Specific Site Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Description</b>
Establish new public access in the central portion of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve	A key goal is to provide access to the central area of the Preserve. Existing Preserve access is available through Allen Road parking area in the north and Sears Ranch Road parking area in the south.
Design elements to reflect the rural character of the site and the Red Barn	Design aesthetic should acknowledge rural nature and ranching history of the Preserve.
Provide safe public access	Ingress and egress points should meet safety standards of Highway 84.
Balance public access with grazing activities	Parking area and trailhead design and location should accommodate grazing operation needs.
Include amenities that facilitate environmental education	When envisioned as part of the 2014 Vision Plan, the Red Barn was seen as a potential educational focal point for family friendly activities. A similar opportunity elsewhere would be desirable.
Protect scenic views of and from the site	The Preserve is located on Highway 84 which is County-designated scenic corridor. The project should be compatible with the aesthetic of the surrounding rural environment.



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Open Space District

## La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study Assessment for Event Center and Sears Ranch Road Sites September 12, 2019

On June 12, 2018 the District Board of Directors directed staff to assess the Event Center site and Sears Ranch parking area as potential alternatives to the Red Barn. These alternatives are the expansion of the Sears Ranch Road Parking Area and the development of a new parking area at the Event Center.

Below is the assessment of both sites per criteria used by the District to evaluate a site's suitability for parking and trailhead access.

**Table 1. General Site Development Assessment Criteria**

Criterion	Sears Ranch Road Parking Area Expansion	Event Center
Adequate line of sight at entrance	Access is through a gate at the end of Sears Ranch Road. Line of sight is adequate as there is no intersection.	Potential entrance appears to be on a section of road with good line of sight. Would need to be evaluated and confirmed by a traffic engineer.
Safe ingress/egress	Ingress/egress existing at the end of Sears Ranch Road. Adding equestrian use may require widening and improvement to road per County.	Ingress/egress likely at entrance to property. Very wide apron. Improvements to define driveway apron would be needed to direct vehicles to point where line of sight optimum but would also need to accommodate heavy vehicles used to move cattle.
Ability to meet desired parking capacity	Expansion of existing parking area.	Potentially 20-30 cars in area near the tunnel under Highway 84.
Minimize amount of grading required	Sloping. Would require grading to flatten expansion area.	Flat area near tunnel. Unclear how drainage performs.
Amount of tree/vegetation removal	No tree removal needed.	No tree removal needed.
Ability to connect to trail system or regional trail	Existing connection to existing road and trail system. About 4 miles from Red Barn on existing roads.	Existing connection to existing road through tunnel under Highway 84. Steep hike to Preserve interior. About 4 miles from Sears Ranch Road parking area.
Level of use on connecting trails or within preserve	Existing parking area is not at capacity. Use level is regular but low compared to other Skyline preserves.	Currently closed except for permit equestrian use. Would increase access to southernmost area of Preserve.

Opportunities for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility	Potential. Would require grading existing road.	Unlikely due to steep topography encountered after tunnel under Highway 84.
Proximity to existing preserve parking	Expansion of the existing parking area would be near the current parking lot, about 1 mile away.	Currently there is no formalized public parking area at Event Center; only equestrian parking area through permit.
Located away from residential/commercial/intersections	Yes. Close to occupied ranger residence and La Honda Elementary School.	Proximity to non-profit organization property.
History of prior use	Ranch uses prior to 2017 opening of the Lower La Honda Creek preserve area to public use.	Oil facilities, ranch, former rodeo, equestrian activities prior to 2017 opening of Lower La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve to public use.
Use conflicts (grazing, staff facilities, etc.)	Grazing operations requires fencing off drive and parking area from cattle.	Site layout and use need to accommodate active grazing operation that uses existing cattle infrastructure. Also requires fencing off the driveway and parking area from cattle.
Disturbed habitat/area	Potential expansion of existing parking area into meadow may impact grasslands habitat.	Yes.
Minimize impacts to sensitive natural and cultural resources/habitats	Grasslands. Preserve known to have several special-status plants and animals. No known cultural resources near existing parking area. Proximity to turtle breeding ponds and dispersal habitat between ponds and aquatic sites in creek.	Riparian buffer zone along San Gregorio Creek. Ongoing instream or riparian restoration at San Gregorio Creek to enhance Steelhead trout/Coho salmon habitat. Recent installation of woody debris in stream channel to improve habitat. Critical habitat for Steelhead trout. Proximity to California red-legged frog breeding ponds and aquatic habitat in San Gregorio Creek.
Species (plants, wildlife)	Entire Preserve is federally designated as critical habitat for California Red-Legged Frog.	Steelhead trout/Coho salmon known to occur.
Soil stability (landslides)	Entire Preserve prone to landslides, though the site is less active than many other portions of the Preserve.	No known landslides are mapped on the parcel. Will require additional analysis.
Hydrology (creeks, drainages)	Located at upper area of the Harrington Creek watershed (approx. 1.5 miles from creek) and from La Honda Creek Watershed (approx. 0.5 mile from creek).	Adjacent to San Gregorio Creek. Improper location of parking area could result in flooding. Protection from pollutants and sedimentation that affect water quality is of vital concern.
Hazardous materials	Hazardous materials can require mitigation, increasing project costs. Need to evaluate if significant site	Trace amounts of hazardous materials, which do not require mitigation measures. Not tested for

	cleanup needed before improvements can be made.	parking area use, so additional best management practices and/or testing may be necessary depending on exact location and depth of excavation.
Infrastructure required (bridges, retaining walls)	No new infrastructure anticipated. Would use existing road and trail system.	Should assess structural stability of tunnel under Highway 84.
Aesthetics/viewshed	Not visible from Highway 84 and adjacent school.	Not visible from Highway 84 by topography and vegetation.
Patrol/safety	Patrol considerations. Open views into site. Patrol of site relies on open visibility from patrol staff. Potential concern with locating parking area too far into a preserve where patrol access may be more challenging.	Driveway from Highway 84 would need to be evaluated for emergency vehicle access into Event Center.
Other major concerns/issues to resolve	Circulation needs for equestrian and emergency vehicles and parking.	Uses and conditions of Lease and Management Agreement approved 12-11-2013. Year-round grazing under the existing grazing lease. Ongoing shipping/receiving livestock and livestock processing associated with cattle grazing operation.

**Table 2. Project Goals and Objectives**

The following criteria are specific to the La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study project goals and objectives.

<b>Project Specific Site Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sears Ranch Road Parking Area Expansion</b>	<b>Event Center</b>
Establish new public access in the central portion of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve	Southern area of the Preserve. Does not provide direct access to central La Honda Creek area and will require an approximately 4 to 5-mile hike to the Red Barn area.	Southernmost area of the Preserve. Does not provide direct access to central La Honda Creek area and will require an approximately 9 to 10-mile hike to the Red Barn area.
Design elements to reflect the rural character of the site and the Red Barn	Not visible from Highway 84. Maintaining the rural character of site would be achievable.	Not visible from Highway 84. Maintaining the rural character of site would be achievable.
Provide safe public access	Adequate line of sight. Ingress/egress well off Highway 84.	Line of sight needs to be evaluated. May be adequate if ingress/egress properly sited.
Balance public access with grazing activities	Achievable. Expansion of the existing trails system in Lower La Honda Creek Open Space preserve are being planned in grazing areas	Achievable if parking, site amenities and trails are laid out properly within grazing operation activities and infrastructure.



	and will continue to balance public access with grazing activities.	
Include amenities that facilitate environmental education	Does not expand upon existing trailhead infrastructure and interpretive signage. Exposed site that does not lend itself to picnic area.	Isolated location among grazing infrastructure and no views of grasslands may not facilitate educational programming around conservation grazing. However, the San Gregorio riparian area presents new opportunities for educational awareness about creeks and watersheds. Also could have information on historic equestrian and ranching uses.
Protect scenic views of and from the site	Set back from Highway 84. Not visible from La Honda Elementary School.	Not visible from Highway 84.





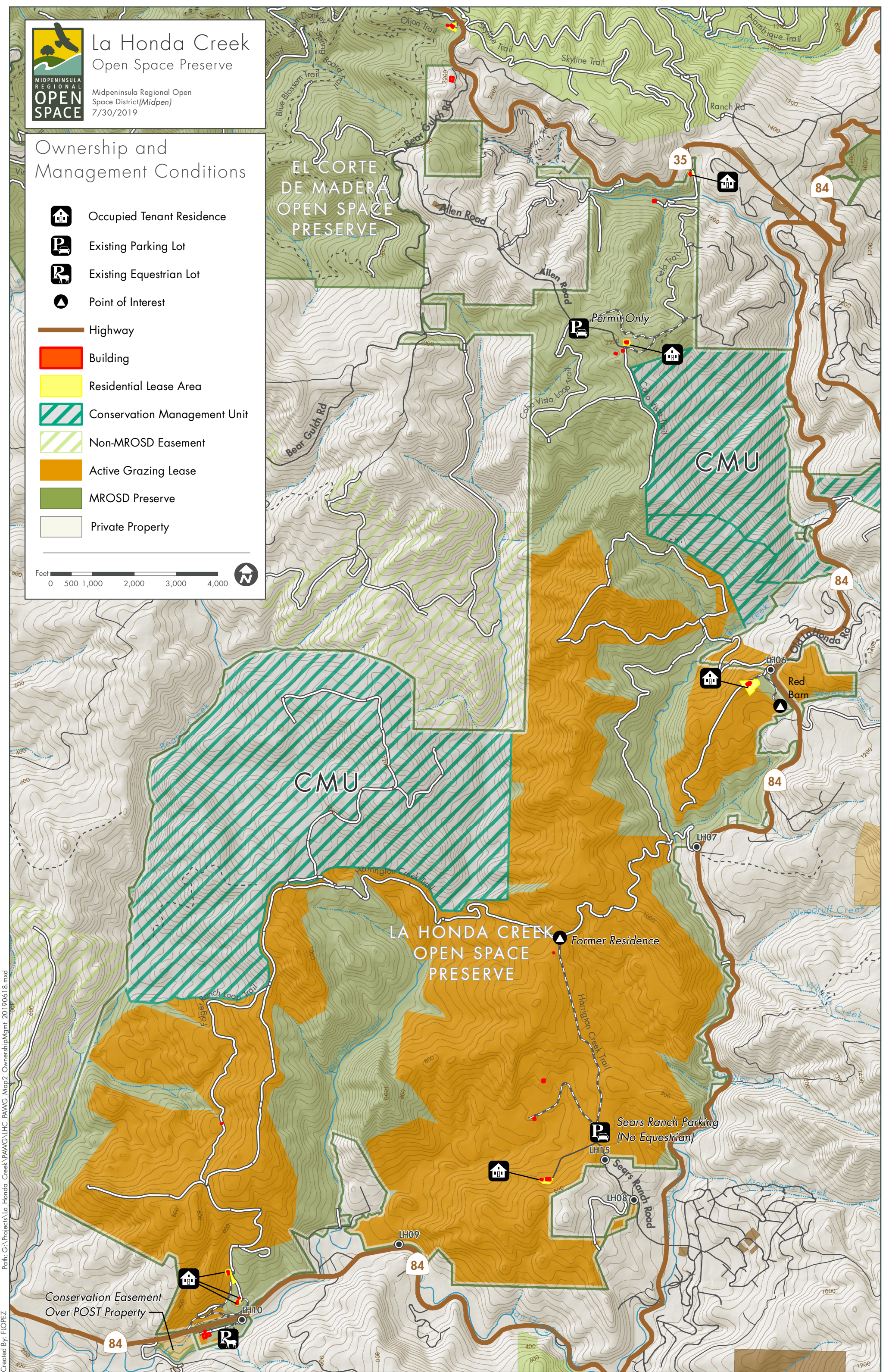
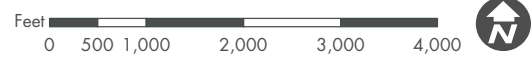
# La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

Midpeninsula Regional Open  
Space District (Midpen)  
7/30/2019

## Ownership and Management Conditions

- Occupied Tenant Residence
- Existing Parking Lot
- Existing Equestrian Lot
- Point of Interest

- Highway
- Building
- Residential Lease Area
- Conservation Management Unit
- Non-MROSD Easement
- Active Grazing Lease
- MROSD Preserve
- Private Property



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While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

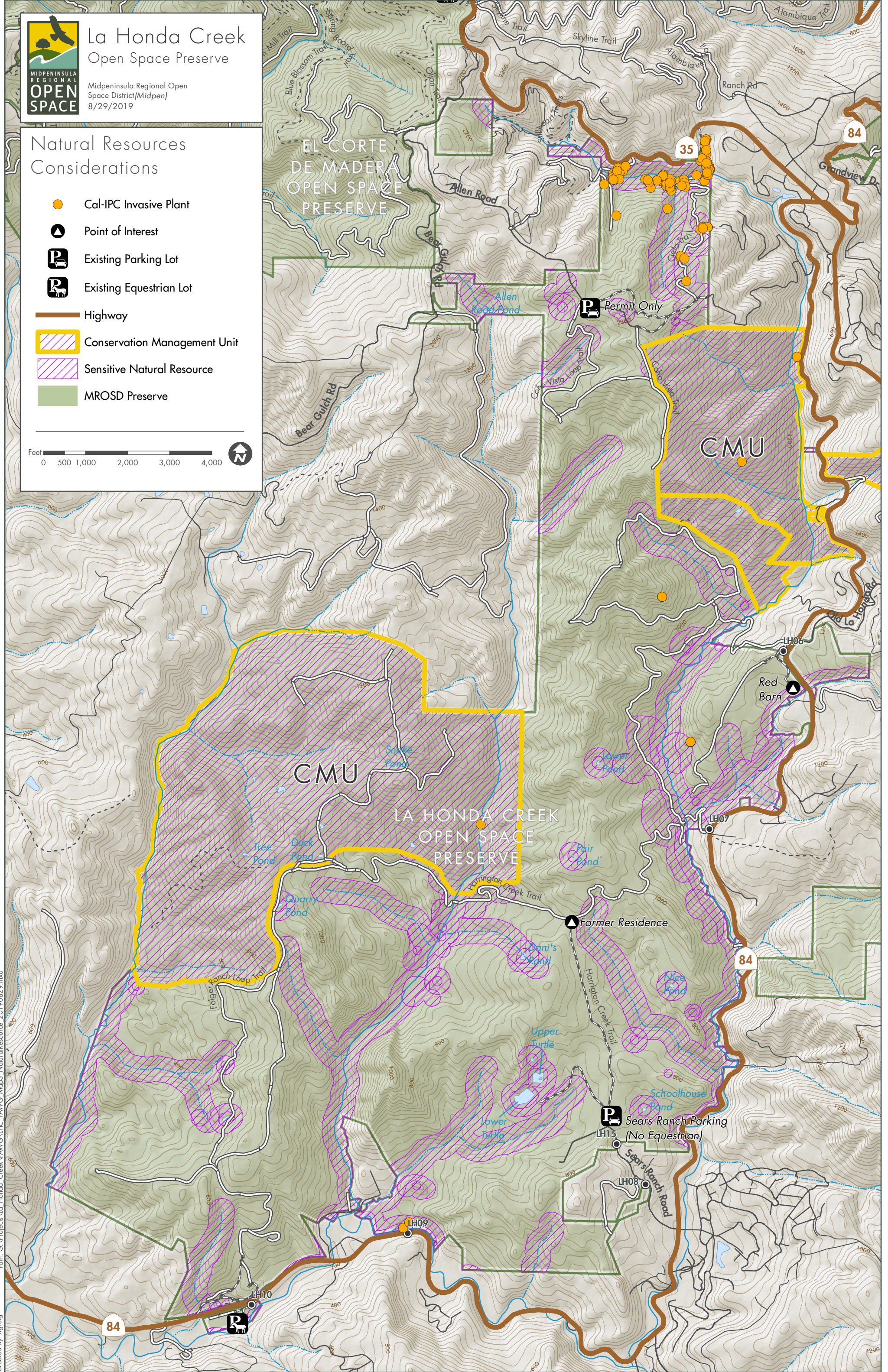


# La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen)  
8/29/2019

## Natural Resources Considerations

-  Cal-IPC Invasive Plant
-  Point of Interest
-  Existing Parking Lot
-  Existing Equestrian Lot
-  Highway
-  Conservation Management Unit
-  Sensitive Natural Resource
-  MROSD Preserve



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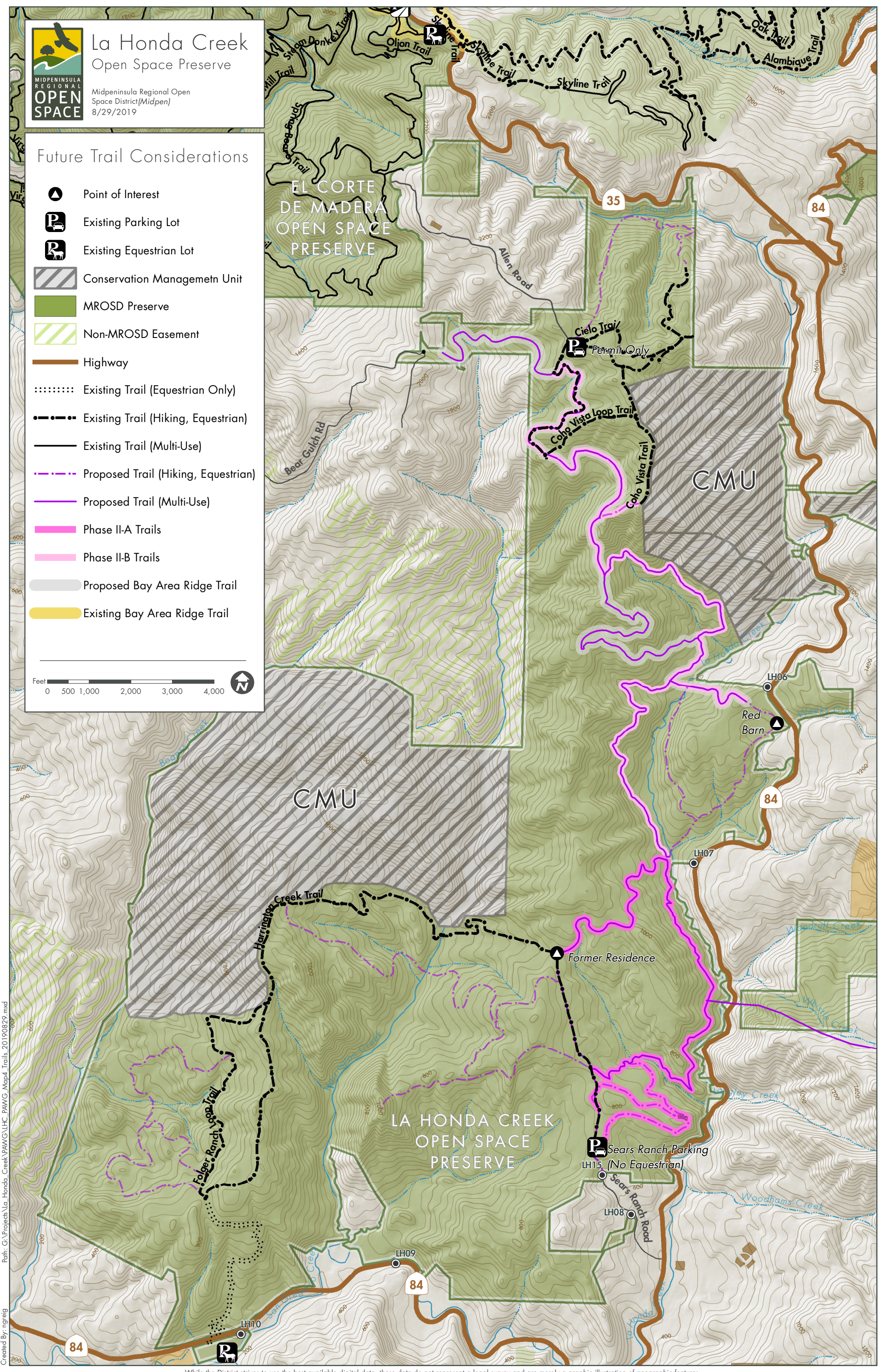
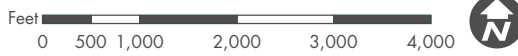


# La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen)  
8/29/2019

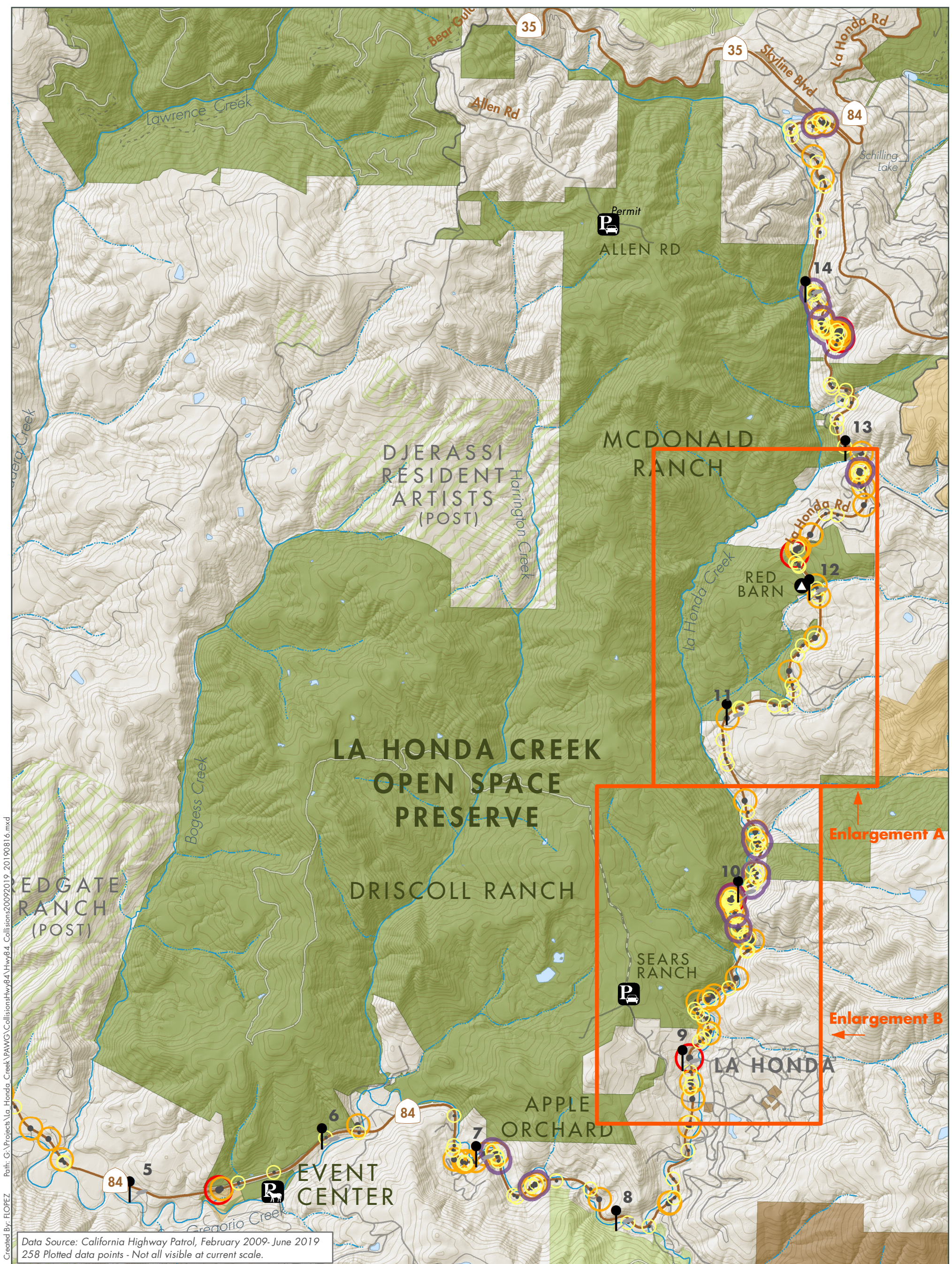
## Future Trail Considerations

- Point of Interest
- Existing Parking Lot
- Existing Equestrian Lot
- Conservation Management Unit
- MROSD Preserve
- Non-MROSD Easement
- Highway
- Existing Trail (Equestrian Only)
- Existing Trail (Hiking, Equestrian)
- Existing Trail (Multi-Use)
- Proposed Trail (Hiking, Equestrian)
- Proposed Trail (Multi-Use)
- Phase II-A Trails
- Phase II-B Trails
- Proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail
- Existing Bay Area Ridge Trail



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Data Source: California Highway Patrol, February 2009- June 2019  
258 Plotted data points - Not all visible at current scale.

**CHP Collision Data for Highway 84 (SR 84)  
Between Skyline Blvd (SR 35) and SR 1  
February 2009 - June 2019**

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
(Midpen)  
9/5/2019

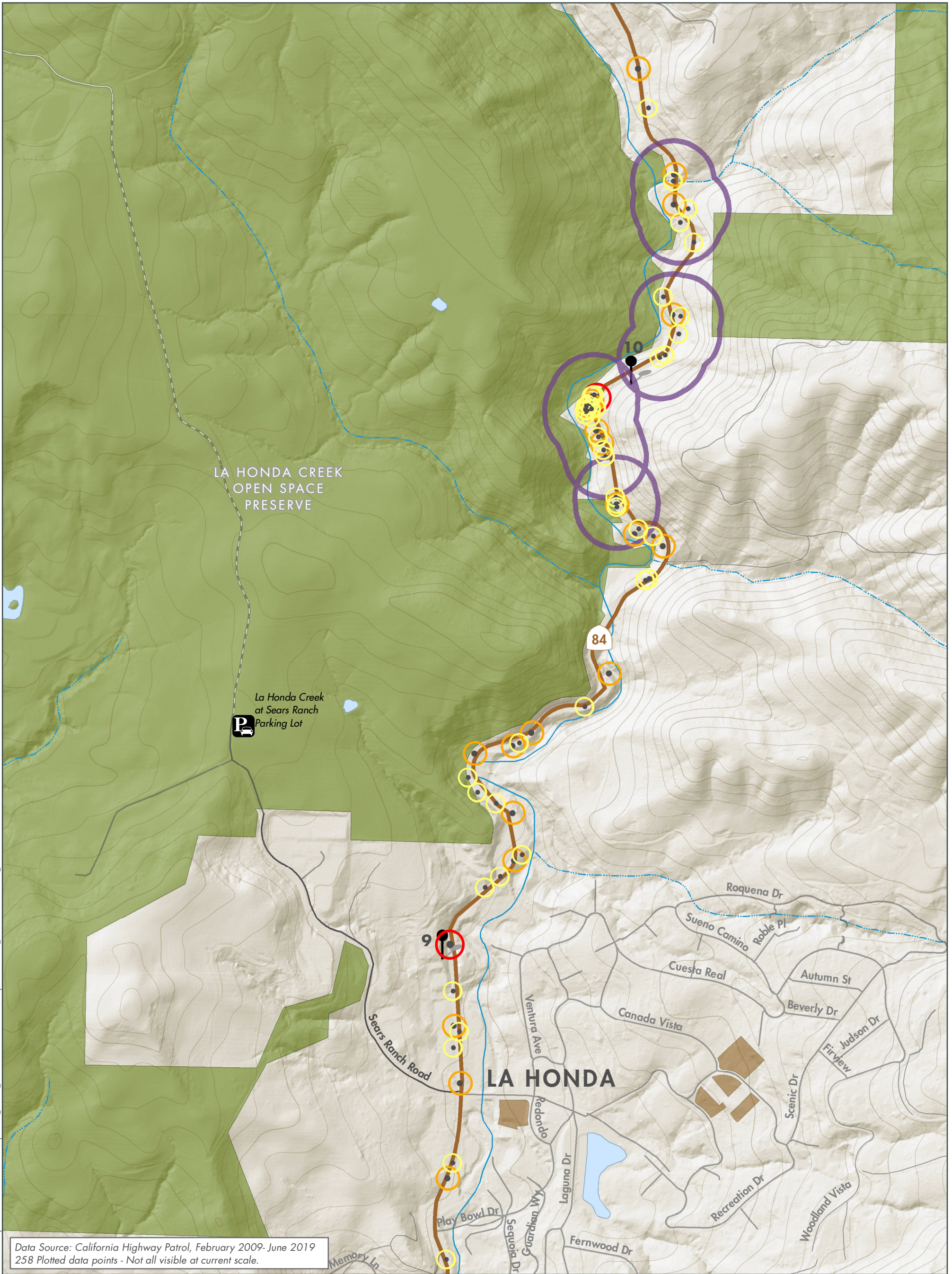


- One Party Involved (n = 162)
- Two Parties Involved (n = 90)
- Three Parties Involved (n = 6)
- Cluster of Five or more Collisions Within 200 Feet (n = 11)
- Caltrans Post Mile Marker



While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

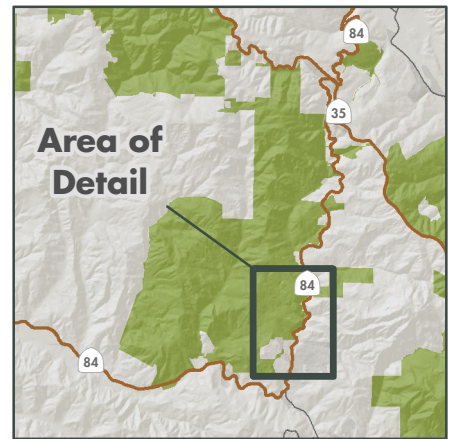
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Data Source: California Highway Patrol, February 2009- June 2019  
258 Plotted data points - Not all visible at current scale.

### CHP Collision Data for Highway 84 (SR 84) - Enlargement B Between Skyline Blvd (SR 35) and SR 1 February 2009 - June 2019

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
(Midpen)  
9/5/2019

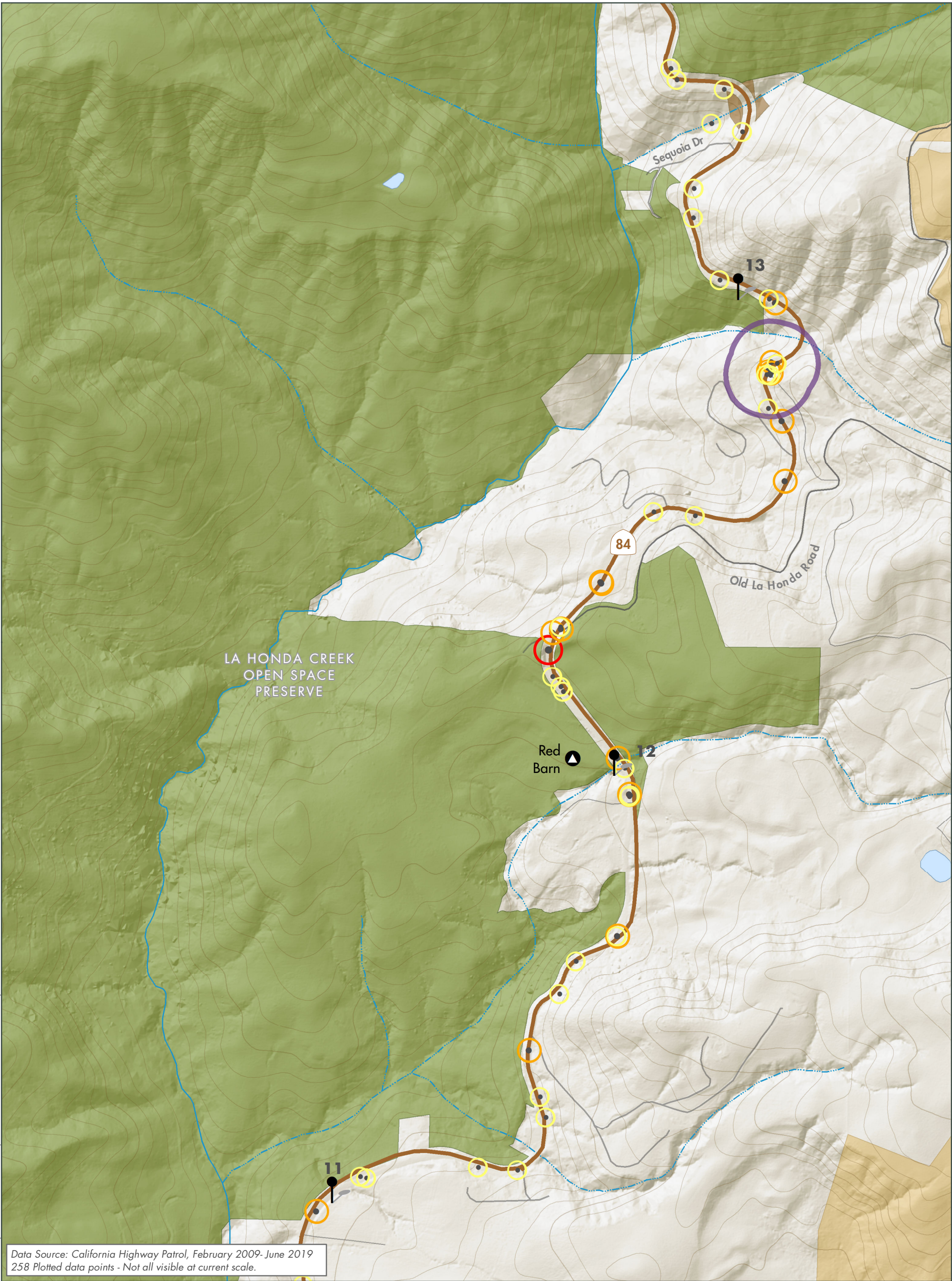


- One Party Involved
- Two Parties Involved
- Three Parties Involved

- Cluster of Five or more Collisions Within 200 Feet (n = 11)
- Caltrans Post Mile Marker



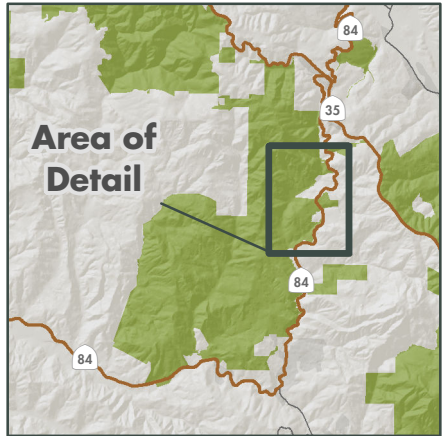
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Data Source: California Highway Patrol, February 2009- June 2019  
258 Plotted data points - Not all visible at current scale.

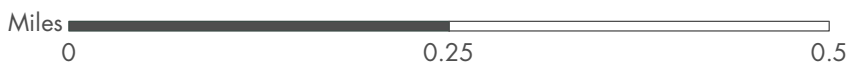
### CHP Collision Data for Highway 84 (SR 84) - Enlargement A Between Skyline Blvd (SR 35) and SR 1 February 2009 - June 2019

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
(Midpen)  
9/5/2019



- One Party Involved
- Two Parties Involved
- Three Parties Involved

- Cluster of Five or more Collisions Within 200 Feet (n = 11)
- Caltrans Post Mile Marker



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