

*A Vision Plan for the  
Carmel River Parkway  
Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan*



Design Team:  
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October 2005



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Prepared for:  
Big Sur Land Trust

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# Purpose

## Purpose

This document describes the Carmel Valley Sub-region of the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*. The Carmel River Parkway vision planning process is intended as a catalyst toward raising public awareness of landscape conservation and restoration surrounding the Carmel River. To this end, a broad spectrum of community input was solicited and incorporated into the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*. The outreach has resulted in a contagious enthusiasm among many community groups to collaborate efforts in conservation, restoration, and recreation planning for the entire Carmel River Valley. To this end, previous efforts conducted by community groups in trails planning, restoration, and conservation have been incorporated into *The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan*.

## Research and Analysis

The study was approached from a watershed systems method of landscape planning. Accordingly, research and analysis from the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan* document largely covers broader issues this planning area of *The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan*, including the discussions of geomorphology, climate, hydrology, flora, and fauna. There are, however, some cultural and land use issues particular to the Carmel River Valley that are discussed specifically in *The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan*.





### Sub-regions

-  Carmel Valley
-  Mouth of the Valley
-  Hatton Canyon
-  Martin Canyon
-  Lagoon/Palo Corona
-  Point Lobos Ranch
-  Big South
-  Carmel River
-  Carmel River Watershed
-  Public Lands

## Setting and Location

The planning area of *The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan* includes the Carmel River Valley from the Hidden Hills Shopping Center (approximately 3.5 miles east of Highway 1) to the headwaters of the Carmel River in the Ventana Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest. This corridor includes approximately 23 miles of the Carmel River.

Based on the “sub-region” organizational model of the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*, this section of the planning area is called the Carmel Valley Sub-region. Due to the long and linear nature of this sub-region, it is further defined by *runs* of the river. The *runs* create discreet planning sections to address the specific character, function, and trail alignments for the *Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan*.

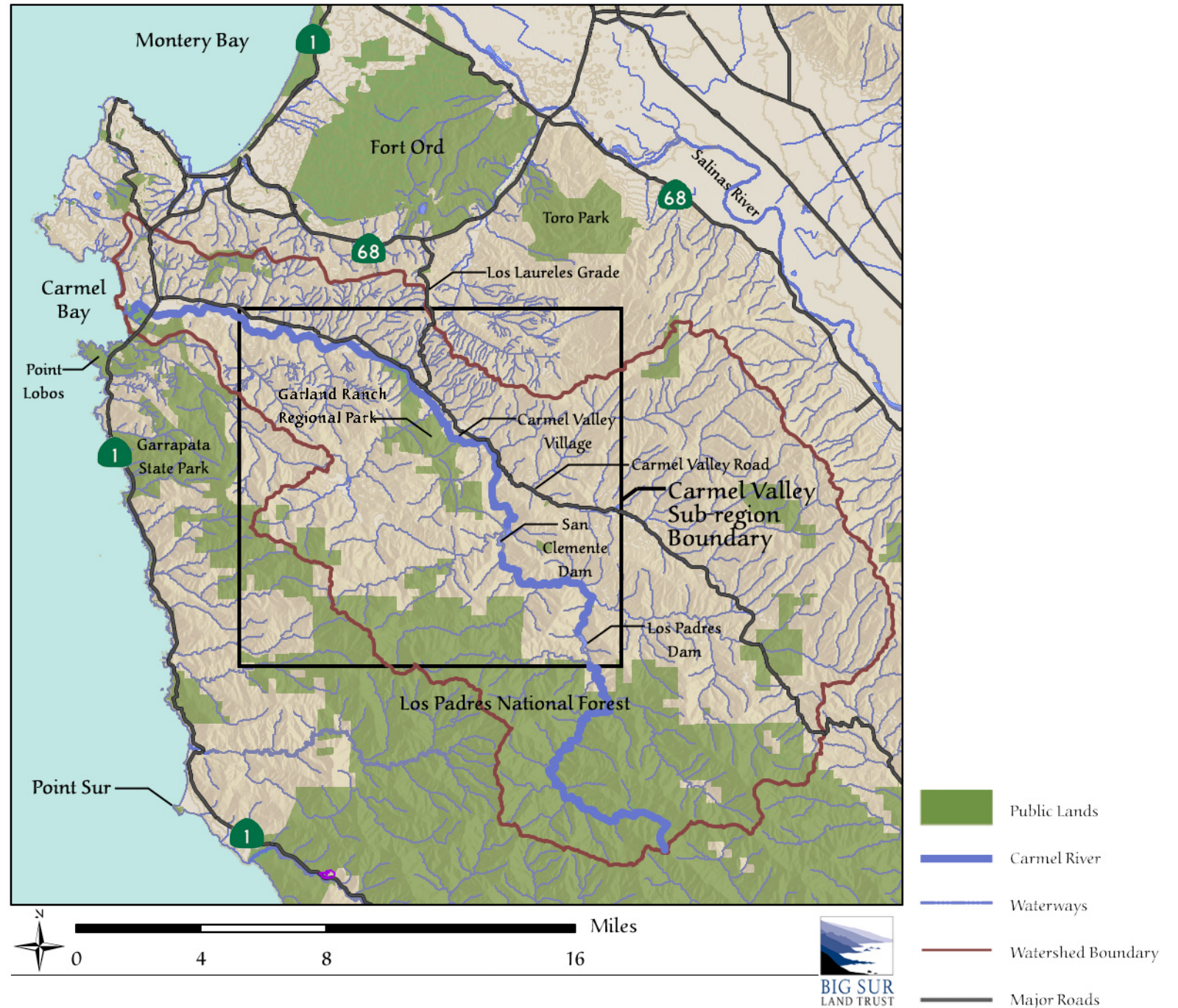


Project Location



# Setting and Location

Numerous private property owners line the Carmel River. This land use pattern requires sensitive planning strategies toward conservation, restoration, and recreation planning. One large public park lies along the south margin of the Carmel Valley. Garland Ranch Regional Park is owned and operated by the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District. The park skirts numerous neighborhoods along the valley floor. The headwaters of the Carmel River descend from the large open spaces of the Ventana Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest. This land is remote and far removed from everyday interface with the general community. Other public parcels are small and scattered throughout the Carmel Valley Sub-region. Residential neighborhoods, large ranches, agricultural lands, and commercial centers line the Carmel River Valley making a river parkway plan essential to tie the human and natural systems into one cohesive long-term vision for the Carmel Valley.





## A Brief History

Large ranches of the Carmel Valley preserve a legacy of California's history. Likewise the subdivision of the large ranches illustrates the growth pressures facing the Carmel Valley. The construction of San Clemente Dam in 1921 and Del Monte Properties' purchase and subdivision of lands in the Carmel Valley marked the beginning of the changes in land use and character of the valley. The San Clemente Dam allowed water to service a broader spectrum of lands and land use, increasing developments in the Carmel Valley and Monterey Peninsula cities.

The mouth of the Valley, the original site of the 4,367-acre Rancho de la Segunda Mexican land grant, and the subsequent Hatton Dairy, has become the site of the commercial areas

adjacent to Highway 1 and Carmel-by-the-Sea. The mid-valley was once blanketed in pear orchards, where Winter Nellis pears grew destined for London and Paris. Over time the pear orchard lands have become neighborhoods, golf course developments and specialty agriculture such as organic farms, nurseries and vineyards. The Village area, once the Mexican Rancho Los Laureles has become the rural center of life in the Carmel Valley. Neighborhoods and ranches intermix around this commercial center. Large ranches in the Upper Valley have historically been cattle ranches. Many of the remote ranches carry on the tradition today. Other large ranches have converted to vineyards as wine production increases in the region.



**This page:** (upper left to lower right) Carmel Valley Village, view of organic farmlands from Quail Lodge Golf Course, Equestrian property, Valley Hills Center.

**Facing page:** (Clockwise from upper right) Wine tasting, Equestrian facility, Mid Valley Artisan Studio, Carmel Valley Ranch, Earthbound Farms.



# Carmel Valley Character

## Character of the Carmel Valley

Throughout the changes and development of the Carmel Valley, the rural character, eclectic charm, and scenic beauty have remained central to the identity of the place. Equestrians, farmers, golfers, wine connoisseurs, artisans and residents share their appreciation for the quality of the Valley's natural resources. While the surrounding cities of the Monterey Peninsula and beyond carry on a quickened pace of life, the Carmel Valley maintains its ties to another time in California.

Residential neighborhoods dot the valley floor. In between, larger rural residential properties include horse ranches, small-scale agricultural crops, and natural open areas of riparian vegetation, redwood canyons, and oak studded rolling grasslands. The main commercial centers are at the Mouth of the Valley, Mid-Valley, and the Carmel Valley Village. Other small specialty businesses dot the length of Carmel Valley as far out as the Village. Vineyards and tasting rooms are emerging throughout the Carmel Valley with the development of the wine industry of the Carmel Valley and adjacent Santa Lucia Highlands.





## Planning Issues

### Strained roadway infrastructure

Carmel Valley Road is the main East-West thoroughway of the Carmel River Valley. One North-South winding pass, the Los Laureles Grade, connects north to Highway 68 ten miles out on Carmel Valley Road. By and large, the Carmel Valley Road is now a paved winding two-lane country road. Center turning lanes have been added in a number of sections and a Class II bike lane adjoins portions of the road. The limited road capacity and lack of space available for expansion have prevented development in the Carmel Valley. A number of schools and neighborhoods line the Valley with no connecting alternative transportation routes for children to travel. Safe alternative transportation routes are needed in this corridor.

### River restoration

The Carmel River has suffered from severe over-pumping to serve the needs of the Monterey Peninsula and Carmel area. The pumping of the river's shallow alluvial aquifer (thoroughly explained in the original document's *hydrology* section) has created significant disturbances to the river's systems. Similarly, human development along the river corridor and in the floodplain has altered the river's meandering nature. The long-standing water challenges of the Carmel River have made the need for restoration efforts to the river's systems a concern of the community and governing agencies. Though, new water sources for the area have not been agreed upon, restoration efforts must be undertaken now to save the river systems from disrepair. Likewise, outreach to the community needs to be continued to educate about the importance of the interrelated river systems and issues to encourage sustainable planning practices throughout the region.



**This page:** (upper) Traffic on Carmel Valley road, (lower) River access at MOO property at Dampierre Little League Park.

**Facing page:** (upper) Private property parcels along river corridor, (lower) Changing land uses.

# Planning Issues

## Private property concerns

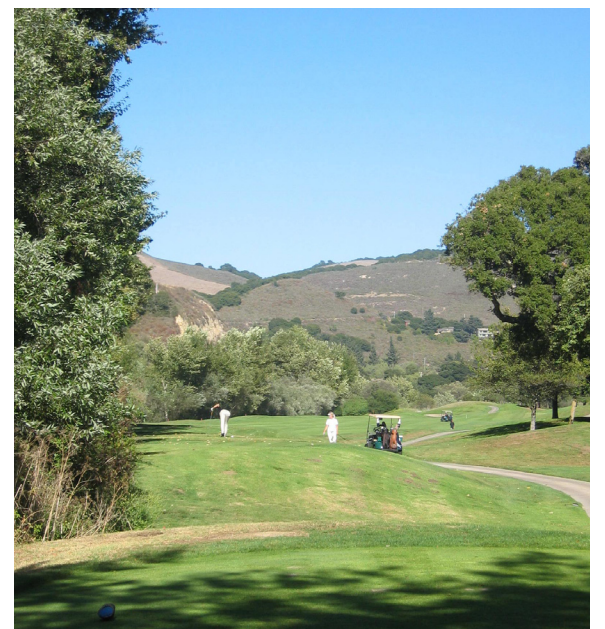
Unlike the other portions of the Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan, the Carmel Valley floor and riverfront are lined with hundreds of private property owners. This ownership pattern creates challenges in providing recreation and access along the Carmel River. Special sensitivity to privacy is central to this parkway plan. Conversely, the numerous land owners and community members that line the corridor provide an opportunity to reach a broad spectrum of the community through a river parkway. Proactive planning for this community asset has the potential to provide a catalyst for community planning, education, recreation, and restoration of the river corridor. While this document does not contain specific river restoration recommendations, a movement toward conserving riverfront property and community outreach through the development of a river parkway will assist in efforts to restore the endangered Carmel River.

## Land Use in the Carmel Valley

The large ranches of an era past continue to be subdivided as property values and development pressures increase. Roadway infrastructure and water resources are currently strained. These two elements are often cited as the limiting factors in development of the Carmel Valley. With land use decisions made at the county level for this unincorporated planning area, some local groups have asserted that local preferences are not being considered in planning and permitting for the Carmel Valley. Land use decisions in the Carmel Valley continue to be a concern for local residents.



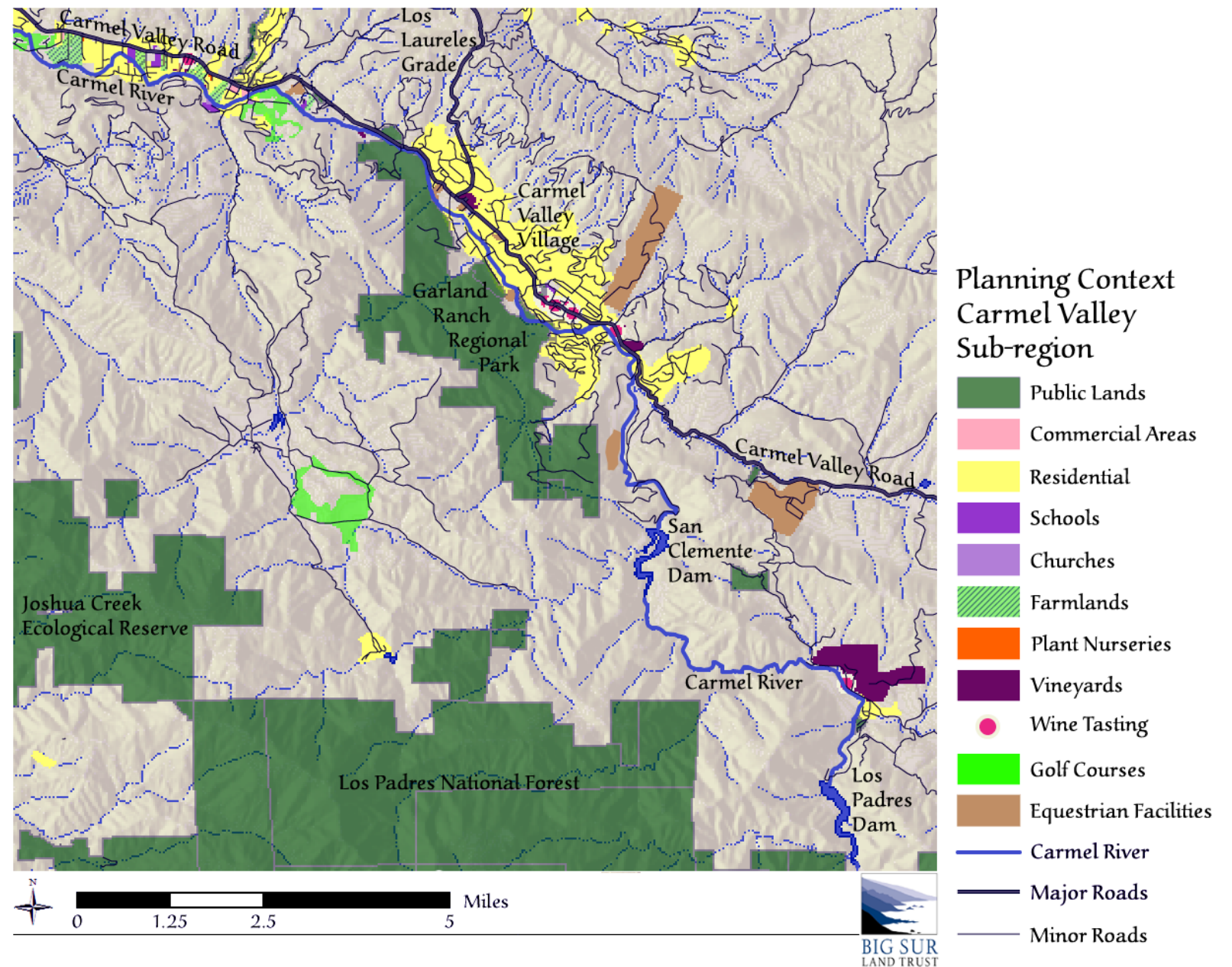
**This page:** (clockwise from upper left)  
Carmel River at Schulte Bridge, vineyards on  
residential home site, Carmel Valley Ranch  
Golf Course, retail plant nursery on Carmel  
Valley Road, .



# Planning Context

## Planning Context

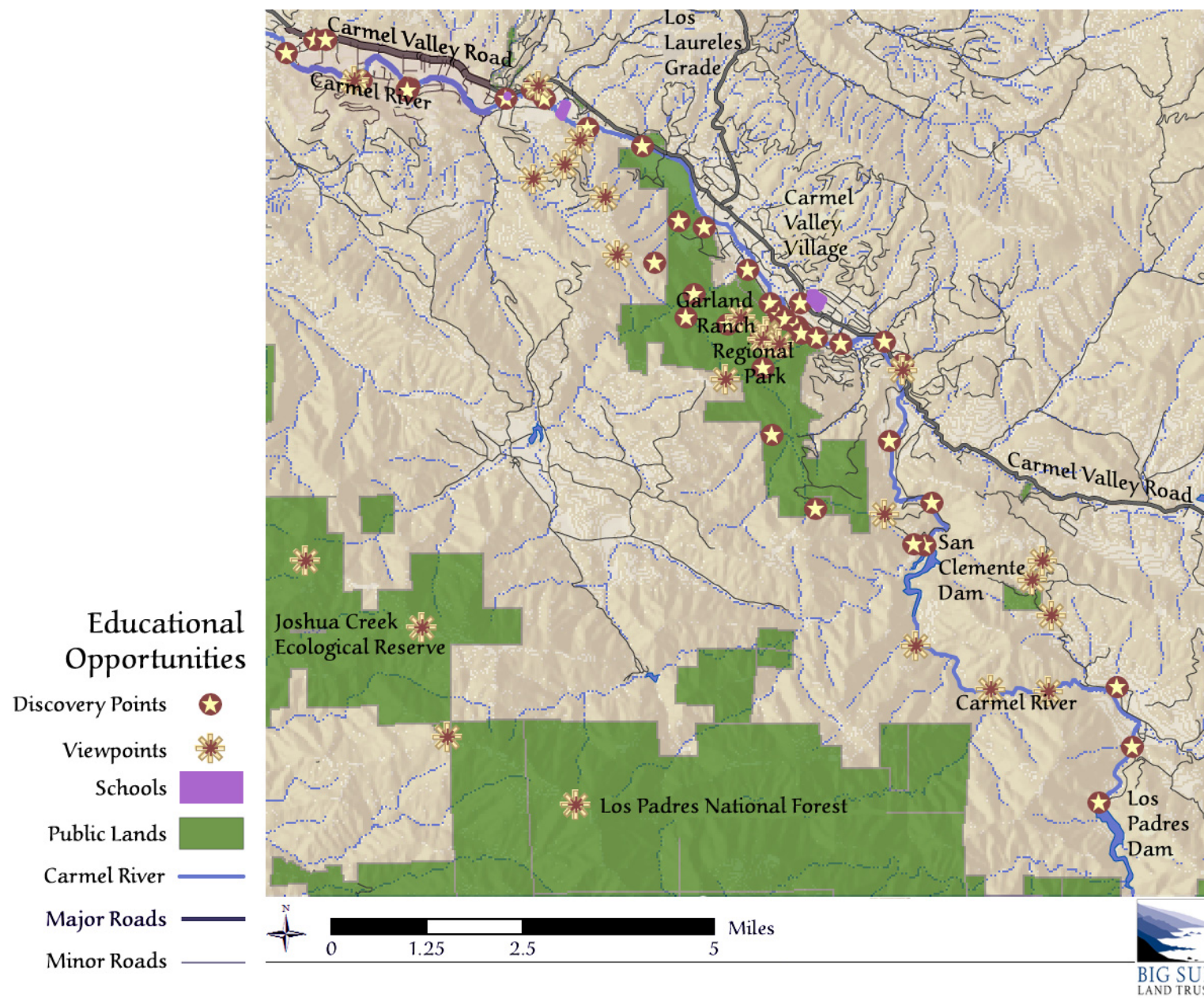
This map illustrates the spatial relationships of community life and land use in the Carmel Valley. Details of this map are shown in the discussion of each of the six *runs* in the section of this document entitled *Conceptual Plan*.



## Educational Opportunities

This map illustrates the spatial relationships of schools and discovery points and viewpoints along the Carmel River corridor. There are a number of types of schools along the Valley floor including preschools, elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, an adult school, and private schools. Proximity to the Carmel River provides opportunities to incorporate “hands-on” environmental education and art curricula into the river parkway. As discussed in the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan* “discovery points” and “viewpoints” provide places where interpretation would be well served. (For a more detailed discussion: please refer to *The Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*.) Interpretive opportunities for these points along river parkway might include:

- Riparian habitats and the importance of revegetation efforts
- Endangered fish habitats and care for riverine habitats
- Wildlife corridors and crossings
- Floodplain cycles and management
- Aquifer storage and water resources
- Organic farming practices
- Viticulture and wine-making
- Sustainable trail design



**Facing page:** (clockwise from upper left) Carmelo School on Carmel Valley Road, Earthbound Farms organic agricultural land, rock dam created in river.



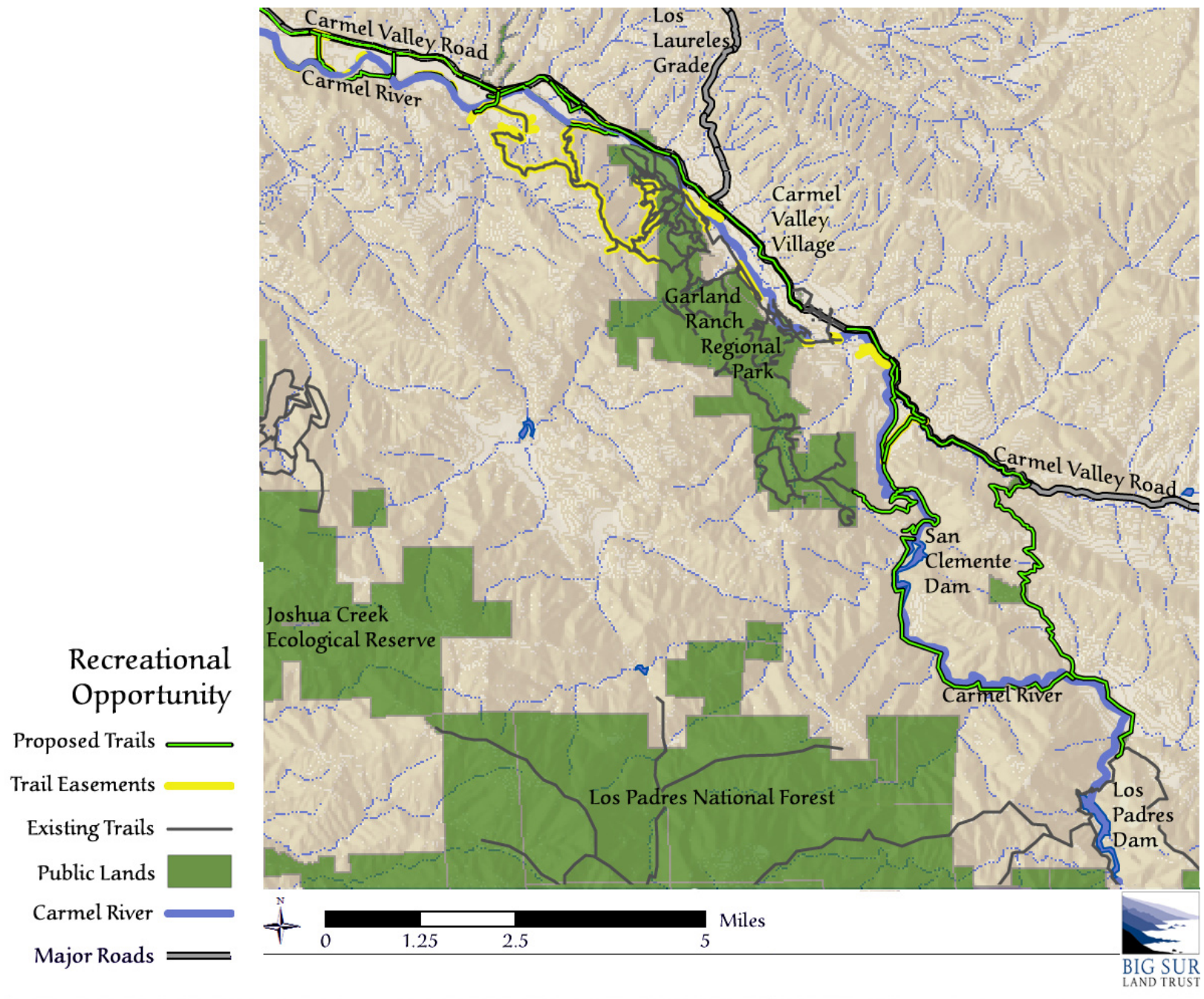
# Plan Opportunities



## Restoration Opportunities

Numerous areas along the Carmel River are in need of restoration. Further study is needed to address the specific sites and strategies for restoration projects. While some restoration opportunities are localized and immediate in nature, others are broad-based and in need of large scale watershed management strategies. (*The Physical and Hydrologic Assessment of the Carmel River Watershed California*, a study developed by the Watershed Institute at California State University, Monterey Bay discusses the impairments to the Carmel River Watershed's hydrological function and riparian and aquatic habitats in detail. The document can be found at [http://science.csUMB.edu/~ccows/pubs/reports/CCoWS\\_CRWC\\_CarmAssPhysHyd\\_041101.pdf](http://science.csUMB.edu/~ccows/pubs/reports/CCoWS_CRWC_CarmAssPhysHyd_041101.pdf))





## Recreational Opportunities

Existing trails in the Carmel Valley are generally located within Garland Ranch Regional Park and the Ventana Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest. By connecting the existing parkland trails with pathways adjacent to residential streets and Class II bikeways, there is great potential for an interconnected trail system throughout the Carmel River Watershed. In the Carmel Valley, the demand for equestrian trails will be greater than other sub-regions of *The Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*. Likewise, due to the gentle grades possible along the Valley floor, there may be more demand for bicycle trails away from the busy Carmel Valley Road. Consequently, special planning considerations regarding compatibility of trail uses will need to be addressed.

**This page:** Pedestrian access across the Carmel River at Garland Ranch Regional Park.

**Facing page:** (from left) Pedestrian roadway sharing on East Garzas Road, existing trail on MOO property, pathways in Carmel Valley Village.



## Trail Types

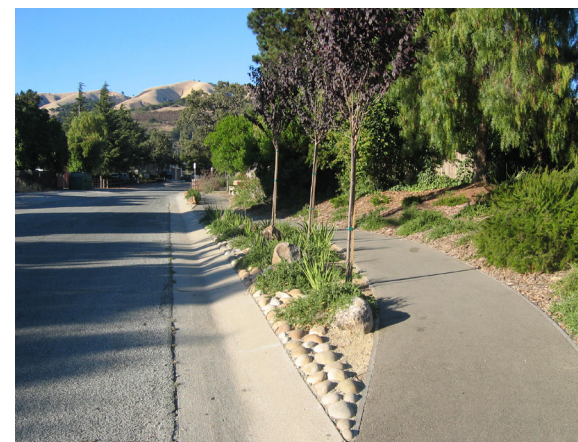
Due to the complex nature of the existing land uses along the river, a variety of trail types were considered to provide connectivity. It is preferable to have as much contact with nature and the river as possible, but in many areas existing roads and adjacent public right-of-ways represent an alternative to overcome potential conflicts. This plan seeks to recommend alignments that provide the greatest benefit to the community, while creating the least disturbance.

### 1. Unpaved Multi-use Trails

Trails through parklands provide a close encounter with natural riparian habitats and locations to reach the river itself. Unpaved multiuse trails are what most people identify with when they think of trails. These trails are very well suited for hikers and equestrians. Decomposed granite and coarse granite sands are popular base materials for these types of trails and occur naturally in the planning area. Care must be taken in construction and maintenance of these trails to assure that sediments do not erode into surrounding waterways. To avoid unnecessary construction these trails can utilize existing dirt roads in several areas. In more remote areas these types of trails are often only a few feet wide, but within the river corridor sufficient width to allow occasional maintenance vehicle access is desirable.

### 2. Roadside Adjacent Pathways

Most of the river frontage is lined with private property; trail alignments that run through adjacent neighborhoods allow shared use with bridges and use of public lands (county road right-of-way). These alignments through residential areas encourage parkway trails as an alternative means of transportation. The Carmel Valley Village Improvement Committee (CVVIC) has created a series of pathways throughout the village and adjacent neighborhoods. In this rural community, these pathways serve as a sidewalk, allowing pedestrians to walk off the busy roadways. *The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan* identifies several areas where this type of path would be appropriate. Roadside adjacent pathways can be paved or unpaved, with landscaping and large rounded river rocks along the margins. These pathways must be planned and constructed with sensitivity to the adjacent property owners and approval from the County.





### 3. Class II Bicycle Routes

Class II bicycle routes have a signed and designated lane along side roadways. These bicycle lanes provide an alternative to automobile travel along important roadways. Class II bicycle routes already exist along Carmel Valley Road from Highway 1 to the Mid Valley area. The Transportation Agency of Monterey County has plans to improve and continue the bicycle lane further into the valley. This will improve safety for cyclists along Carmel Valley Road, providing a relatively direct route through the valley. This plan also recommends completion of a continuous bicycle lane from Highway 1 to the Carmel Valley Village.



### 4. Class III Roadway Sharing

Class III trails share existing local streets with signage installed to warn cars of the presence of cyclists, equestrians or pedestrians. These trails are only appropriate on quiet residential streets with relatively low traffic volumes. One of the biggest advantages of this type of route is that little construction is necessary.

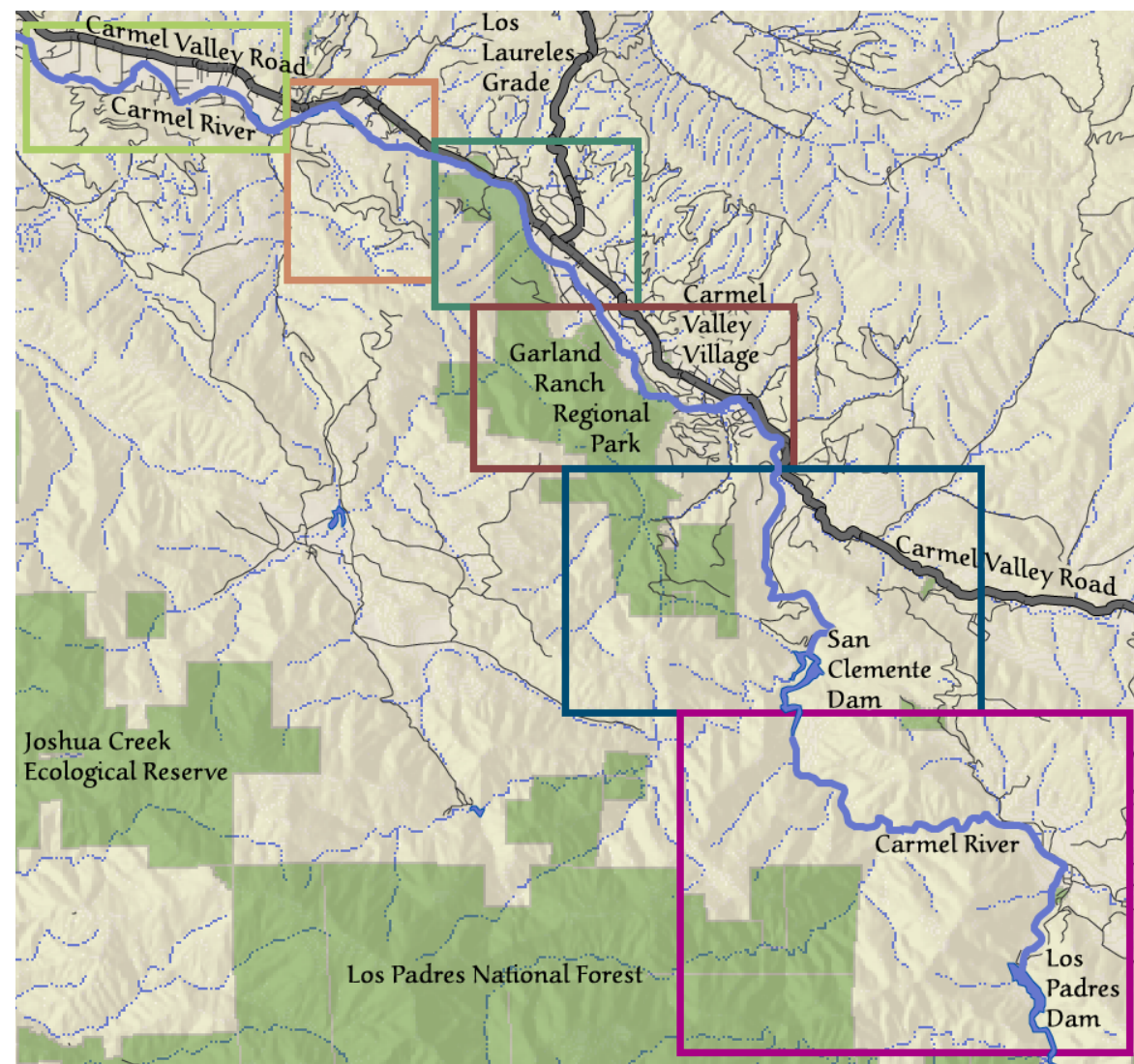
*This page: Examples of roadway sharing and roadway adjacent trails.*

# Conceptual Plan

## Carmel Valley River Parkway Runs

### Introduction

The size and characteristics of the Carmel Valley Sub-region required a further division of the planning area. *Runs* of the Carmel River were created to better discuss the issues associated with the discreet sections for parkway planning purposes. The six runs connect the original planning area to the Los Padres National Forest.



Carmel Valley Runs Key Map

- Earthbound to Mid Valley Run
- Mid Valley to Garland Park Run
- West Garland to Garzas Creek Run
- Garzas Creek to Camp Stefani Run
- Camp Stefani to San Clemente Dam Run
- San Clemente Dam to Los Padres Dam Run
- Public Lands
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads



**This page:** Earthbound Farms organic agricultural land, Quail Lodge Golf Course bordering Wolter's organic agricultural lands.  
**Facing page:** Wolter's organic agricultural lands.

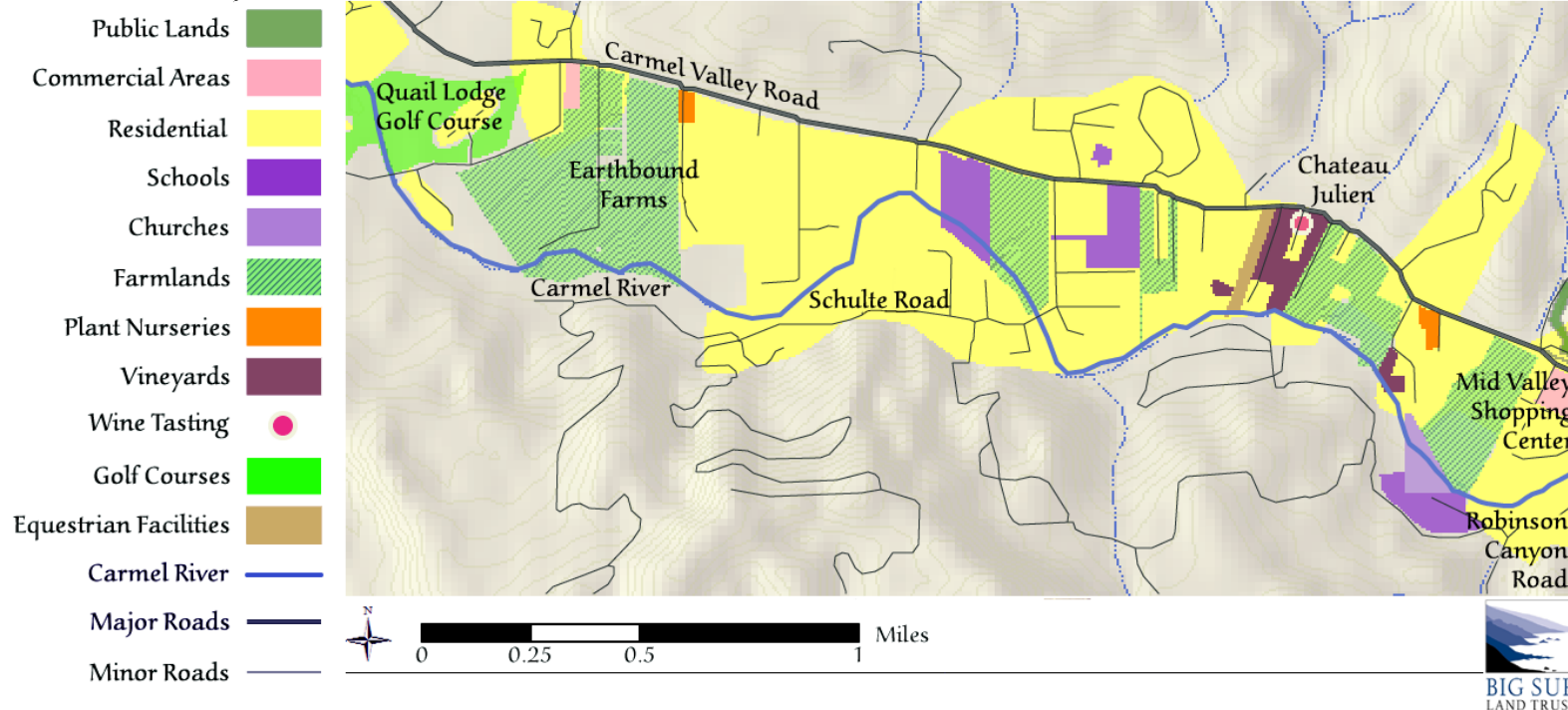


## Earthbound to Mid Valley

3.5 river miles

This run begins on Valley Greens Drive at the Carmel River Bridge near the eastern edge of the Mouth of the Valley Sub-region of the *Carmel River Parkway Vision Plan*. This run includes a golf course, shopping centers, schools, agricultural fields, equestrian facilities, plant nurseries, RV and camping facilities and residential areas. Existing residences make a riverfront trail unlikely along several sections. Trails and paths adjoining county road right-of-ways have the potential to help avoid conflicts. Several historical trail easements exist within this run.

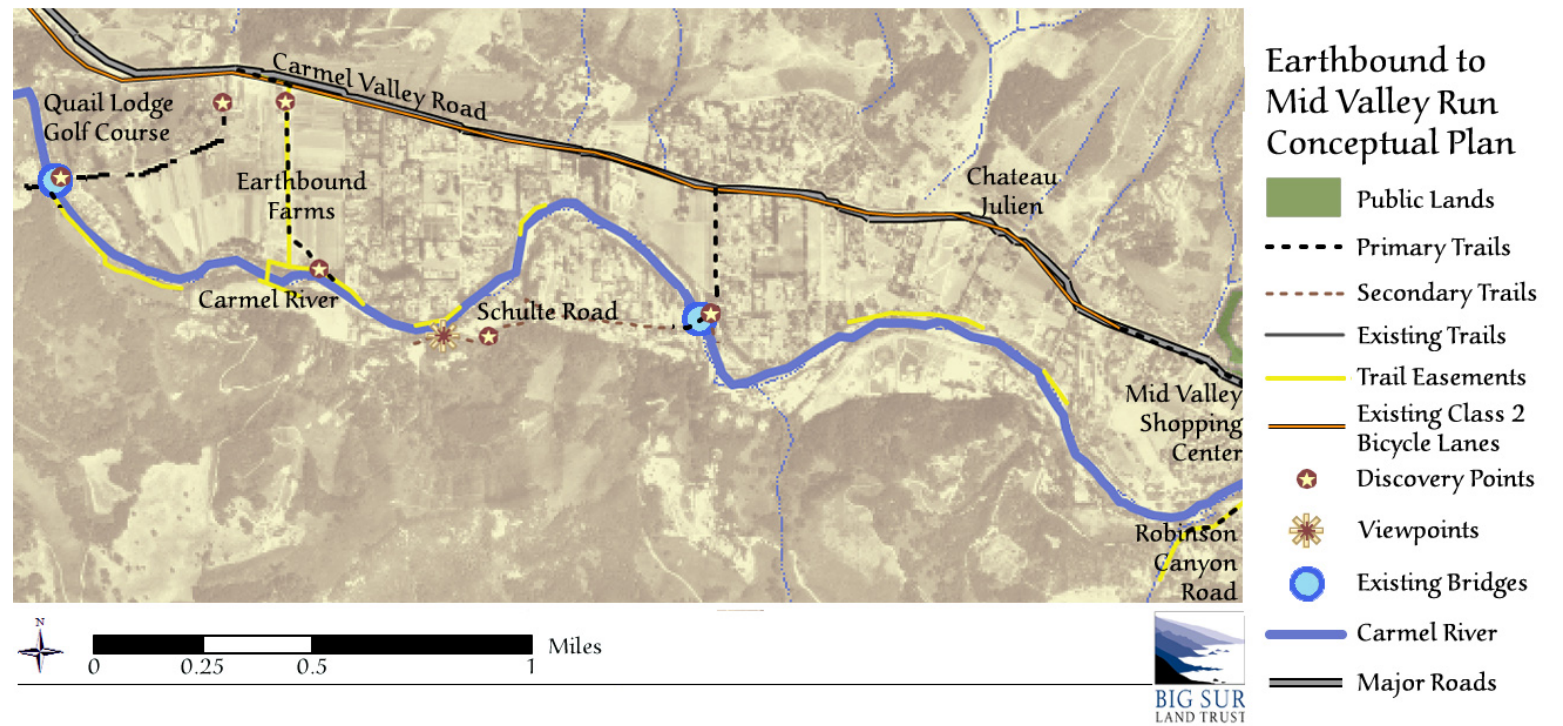
### Earthbound to Mid Valley Run



# Earthbound to Mid Valley

## Carmel Valley Road

Creating and improving bicycle lanes along Carmel Valley Road is an important component of the local trail system. The Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) has been improving Class II bicycle access along Carmel Valley Road for some time. Increased connectivity of the bicycle lanes further into the valley would provide additional options for commuters. Narrow sections along Carmel Valley Road make creating a continuous bicycle lane challenging. Connections to the Carmel River Trail could be made in many areas. It is important to remember that while a bicycle lane provides an opportunity for cyclists, other trails need to be established for pedestrians and equestrians to have pleasant connections up and down the valley.



**This page:** (top) The Carmel River from Schulte Road Bridge, (bottom left) signs leading to RV Park, (bottom right) Earthbound Farms agricultural land.

**Facing page:** (left) Potential river Connection along farm road, (right top) nursery on Carmel Valley Road, (right left) Schulte Road Bridge.



## Carmel River Trail Alignments

Upstream of the Carmel River RV Park, numerous private property parcels line the shores of the river on both sides. Several trail easements exist along this section of the river. However, the easements are patchy and isolated making a trail along this section of the river unlikely. Fortunately, Schulte Road runs parallel to the river through this section forming a scenic neighborhood feeder street providing the charm of a country lane. A small path along Schulte Road could potentially use the county right-of-way and help to facilitate pedestrian and equestrian use. The surrounding neighborhood has large lots and many people own horses, making them likely candidates to support development of equestrian trails. Class III bicycle route signage would likely be sufficient along this street for bicycle traffic. The section of Schulte south of the Carmel River is considered a secondary trail pending neighborhood support. The section of Schulte

between the river and Carmel Valley Road was deemed a primary alignment due to its importance as a connecting spur linking to the river. The Schulte Road path would provide over 1 mile of connectivity along the river with minimal disruption to daily lives, privacy, and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

## Additional Trail Connections

The Earthbound trail would follow the main access road through the middle of the Earthbound Farm fields. This would be a short trail along an easement owned by Canada Woods and leased by Earthbound Farms. It would provide a connection between Carmel Valley Road and the Carmel River Trail, and could incorporate interpretive signage to promote organic agriculture.



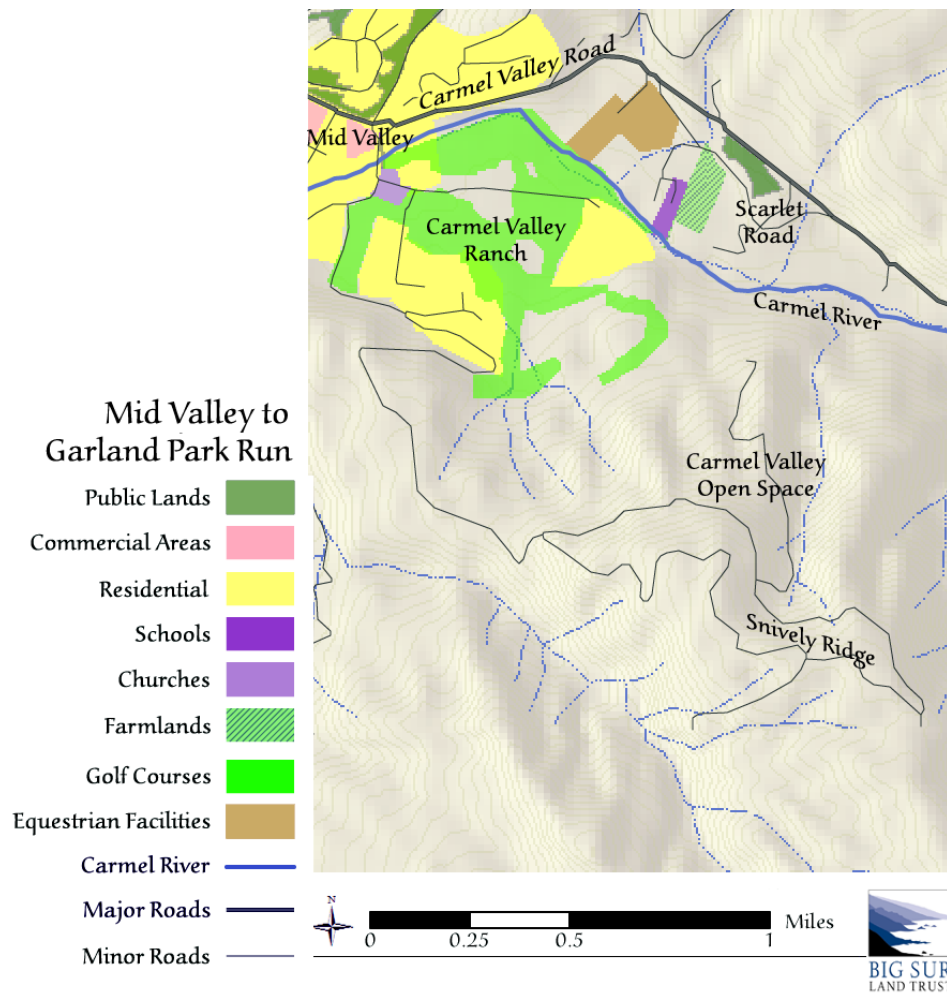






## Mid Valley to West Garland 2 river miles

The second run stretches from Robinson Canyon Road, near the Mid-Valley Shopping Center to Garland Regional Park encompassing 2 river miles. This run has shopping (commercial and artisan), churches, low density residential, private conservation lands, and the Carmel Valley Ranch Resort. This run has hills and cliffs rising abruptly causing the river to turn sharply. The most prominent hill along Carmel Valley Road makes a bicycle lane more difficult to construct and utilize in this stretch. Currently, a trail with a public easement connects to Carmel Valley Ranch from Garland Park. This trail known as Snively's Ridge is steep and challenging requiring over 4 miles and approximately 3,000 feet of elevation change to reach Garland Park. Snively's Ridge provides valuable access for equestrians and fit hikers, but establishing additional connections near the river at gentle grades is needed for a continuous Carmel River Parkway.



# Mid Valley to West Garland

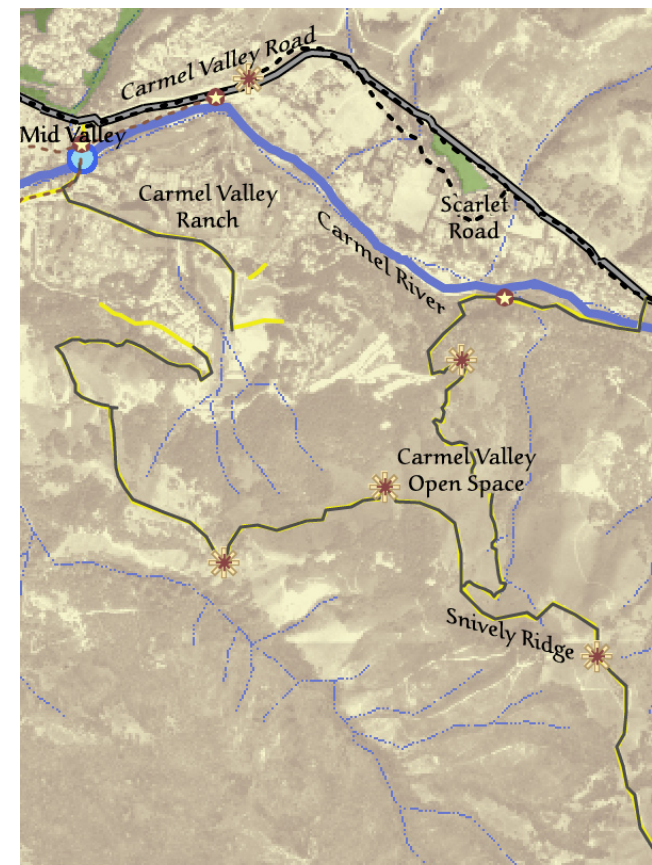
## Carmel River Trail Alignment

One route for the Carmel River Trail in this run was examined. Starting at Robinson Canyon Road the trail would run along the north side of the river along a thin sliver of land owned by Carmel Valley Ranch for nearly a mile. The trail could connect to adjacent equestrian properties. Further upstream along the river the lower portion of the closed palisades trail crossed the private Carmel Valley Open Space for a distance of a half mile. Any additional riverfront connectivity achieved in this run will help to provide trails of gradual grades stretching between the upper valley and the ocean.

## Additional Trail Connections

Robinson Canyon Road connects to Carmel Valley Road east of the Mid-Valley Shopping Center. A trail easement along the lower section of Robinson Canyon Road provides an opportunity to create an adjacent trail in the county road right-of-way. This trail would connect to Carmel Valley Road, the Carmel River Trail, and the neighborhoods up to Snively's Ridge.

The other important connection in this run is along Carmel Valley Road. This section of Carmel Valley Road has steep grades making it a difficult route to ride on a bicycle. Determined riders, however, would be rewarded with great views. This section of bicycle lane along Carmel Valley Road would be over 2 miles long. Along the route Scarlet Road forms a loop with Carmel Valley Road, and could provide a quiet alternative.



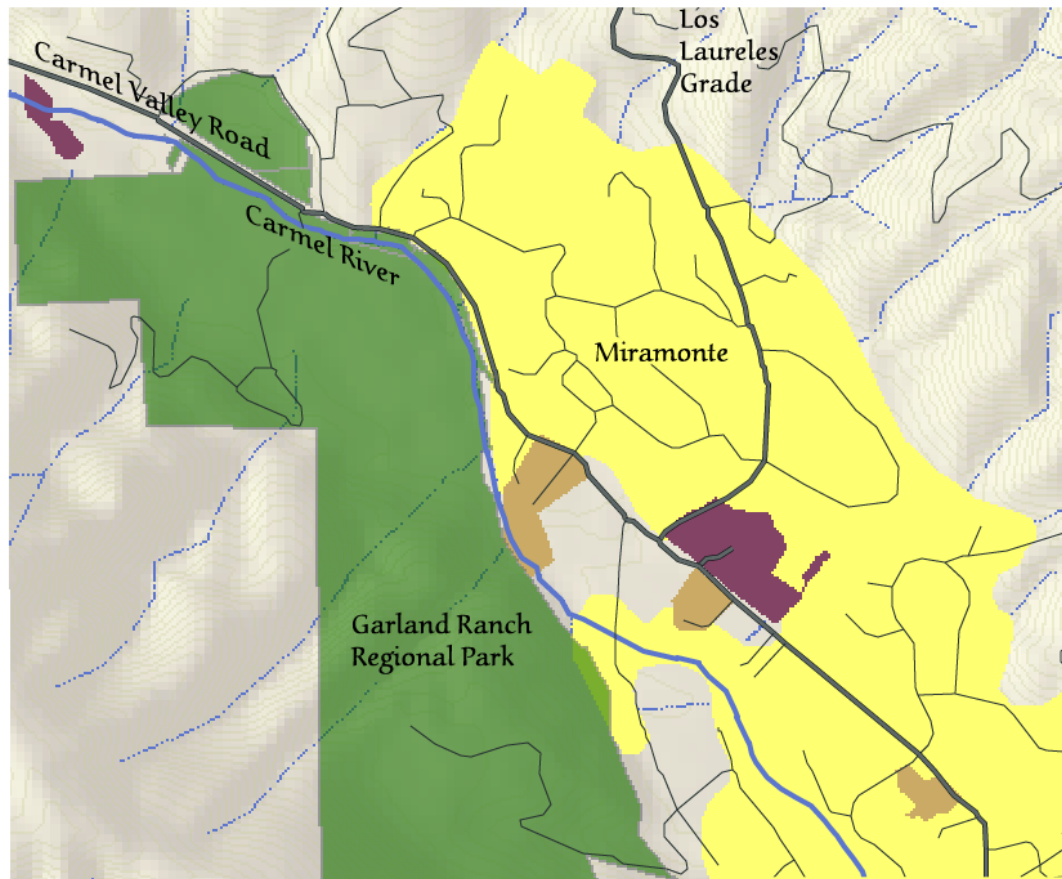
**This page:** (left) Robinson Canyon Road Bridge with pedestrian lane, (right) Scarlet Road intersection with Carmel Valley Road.

**Facing page:** (left) Views over Carmel Valley Ranch, (bottom) Local businesses at the Farm Center at Mid Valley, (right) river connection potential at Robinson Canyon Road.



**This page:** (left) Garzas Road Bridge over the Carmel River, (right) Garland Ranch Regional Park main entrance at Carmel Valley Road, (bottom right) seasonal footbridge at Garland Ranch Regional Park.

**Facing page:** (bottom left) County right-of-way along Carmel Valley Road between Garland and Carmel Valley Village, (top left) equestrian facility adjacent to Garland Ranch Regional Park, river access at Garland Park.



### West Garland to Garzas Creek Run

- Public Lands
- Residential
- Vineyards
- Equestrian Facilities
- Carmel River
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads

### West Garland to Garzas Creek

2.6 river miles  
 1.5 miles of Carmel River Trail in existence  
 2.25 miles of river trail connectivity exists, including easements along roadways

The next run encompasses the river from the northwest end of Garland Ranch Regional Park southeast to Garzas Creek. This run stretches along 2.6 river miles. This area can serve as the established recreational hub of the Carmel River Parkway system. This run includes the most heavily used sections of the locally popular Garland Park. This section of the corridor provides a model for the long-term vision of the river parkway, as trail easements across private properties connect the expansive parklands to surrounding neighborhoods and equestrian facilities.



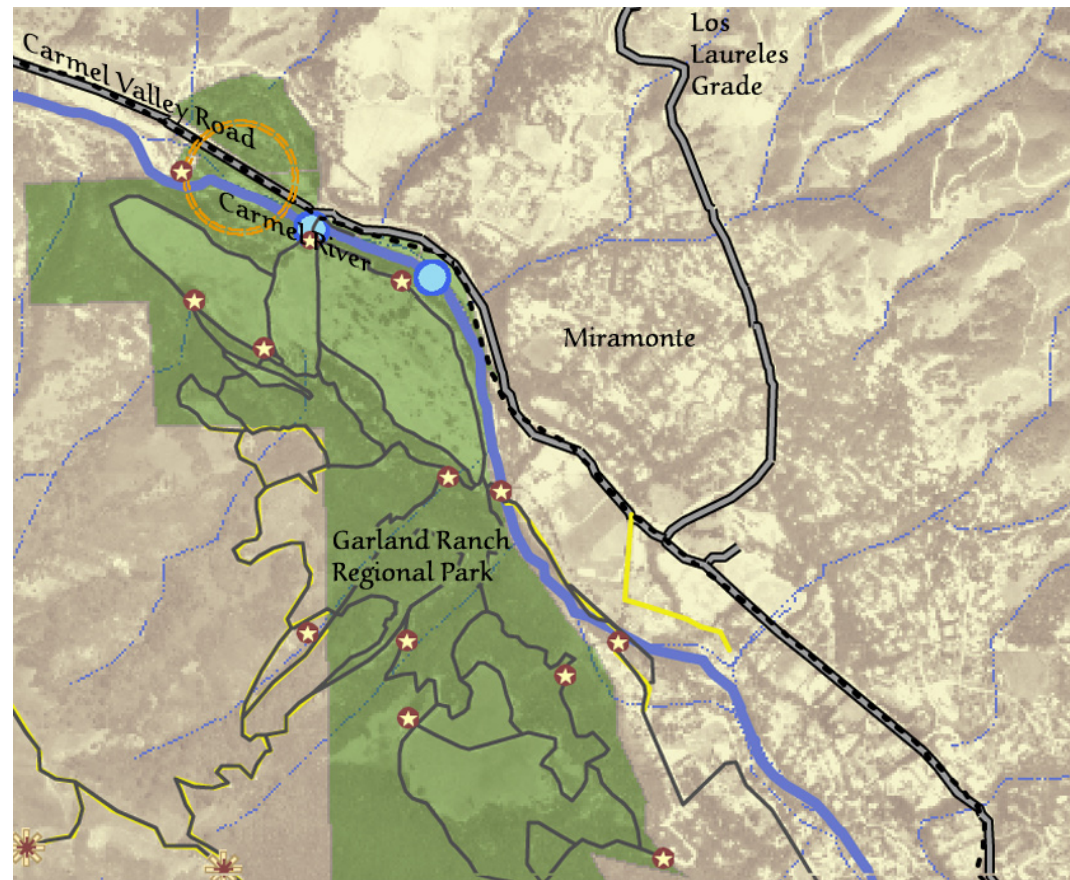
# West Garland to Garzas Creek

## Carmel River Trail Alignment

Parklands and existing easements combine here to create river access. 1.5 miles of the Carmel River Trail are currently existing and in use at Garland Park. Garland Park maintains several seasonal footbridges across the river and manages access to the river's edge. This park is enjoyed by the regional population, numerous Monterey County school groups and the local Carmel Valley community. Trail easements and road right of ways help extend the currently accessible Carmel River Trail in this run to 2.25 miles.

## Additional Trail Connections

The idea of a bicycle lane or pathway adjacent to Carmel Valley Road between Garland Park and the Carmel Valley Village has been discussed by local community groups and governing agencies for some time. This non-motorized addition would be challenging to construct in some areas of the busy roadway but is possible using the county right of way. This roadside trail should be viewed as a priority based on the connections it would establish between the neighborhoods and parks of Carmel Valley.



## West Garland to Garzas Creek Run Conceptual Plan

- Public Lands
- Primary Trails
- Secondary Trails
- Existing Trails
- Trail Easements
- Key Connections
- Discovery Points
- Existing Bridges
- Carmel River
- Major Roads



**This page:** (left) River access at MOO property adjacent to Dampierre Little League Park, (right) business along Carmel Valley Road at the Village.

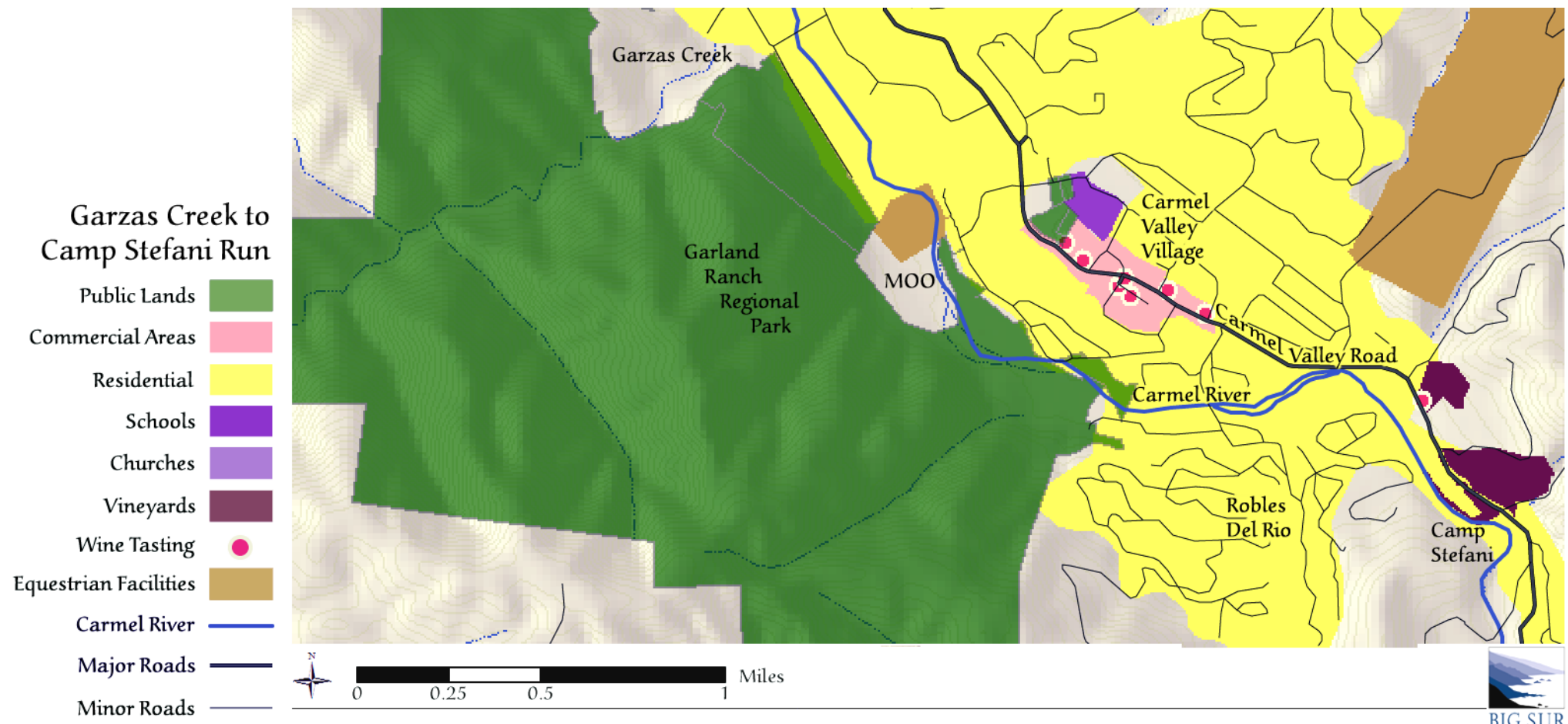
**Facing page:** (left) Paso Hondo neighborhood between Carmel Valley Road and Dampierre Little League Park and MOO property, (right) Dampierre Little League Park.



## Garzas Creek to Camp Stefani

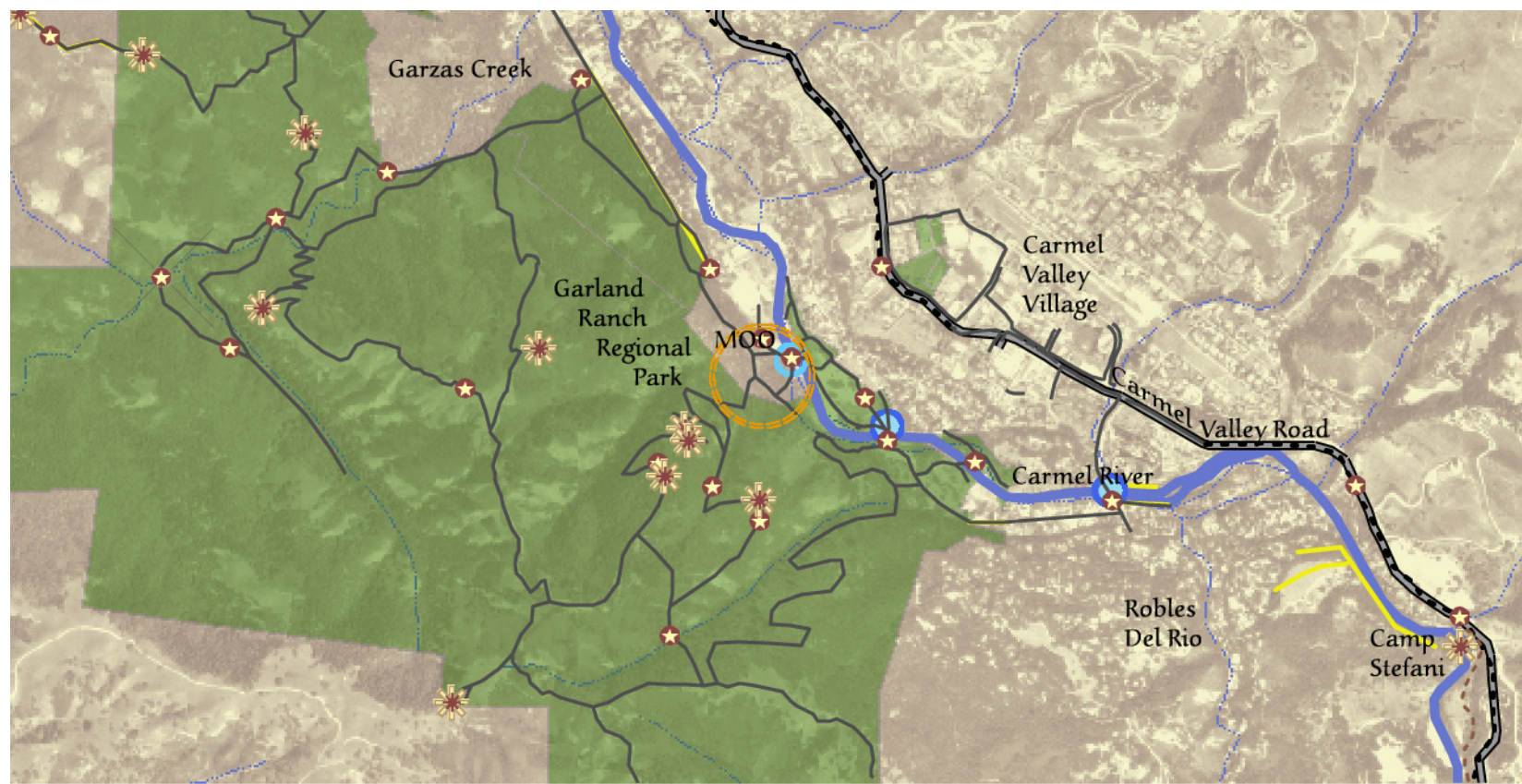
3 river miles  
 1.25 miles of Carmel River Trail in existence  
 2 miles of river trail connectivity exists, including easements along roadways

This run, from Garzas Creek to Camp Stefani, is 3 miles long and includes the heart of the Carmel Valley Village. The Village is a charming rural community known for its ranches, wineries, and equestrian facilities. The Carmel Valley Village Improvement



# Garzas Creek to Camp Stefani

Committee (CVVIC) has been successful in creating a series of paved pathways winding along the roads. These pathways are subtle and attractive responding to the character of the community and providing safer connections between neighborhoods and local businesses. In addition to the village pathways, several trails already exist along the river in and around the little league facilities at Dampierre and Garland Park.



Garzas Creek to Camp Stefani Run Conceptual Plan

- Public Lands
- Primary Trails
- Secondary Trails
- Existing Trails
- Trail Easements
- Key Connections
- Discovery Points
- Viewpoints
- Existing Bridges
- Proposed Seasonal Bridges
- Carmel River
- Major Roads



**This page:** (clockwise from lower right), Dampierre Little League Park adjacent to Moo property, seasonal bridge connecting Dampierre Little League Park to the eastern edge of Garland Ranch Regional Park, Garzas Road, the Carmel Valley Trail and Saddle Club, existing trails on MOO property from previous lease managed by Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District, view of the Valley from hillside of MOO property.

**Facing page:** (left) Aerial photo depicting strategic need for MOO property as park of the public parklands system, (right top to bottom) view from Gabilan Trail of in Garland park connecting through MOO property trails, easy river access at MOO property, Carmel Valley Village residents utilize MOO trails regularly.



## Carmel River Trail Alignment

Currently 1.25 miles of trails along the river could be incorporated into the Carmel River Parkway. Much of this trail was formerly accessible to the public through a lease of the MOO property to the Monterey Peninsula Parks District. The MOO Property in this section is currently for sale. The acquisition of this land for public use would make it possible to re-open this portion of the established river trail and hub of access to the public lands of Carmel Valley. Currently, many people unknowingly trespass onto the MOO property despite the terminated lease agreement. Continued public use of these trails demonstrates the public benefit of this endangered riverfront parcel.



The MOO property is extremely important because it is wedged between neighborhoods and precipitous mountain sides, making it the only viable riverfront connection to keep the river parkway continuous. The MOO property also provides the only viable access to the Saddle and Gabilan Trails up in the expansive high country of Garland Park. Equestrians from the adjacent Carmel Valley Trail and Saddle Club rely heavily on the connectivity the property provides. The MOO property and trails connect to Carmel Valley Village neighborhoods and Dampierre Little League Park where ample parking, restrooms, and other facilities are established. In addition to the existing sections of river trail, easements and county roads combine to make 2 miles along the river potentially accessible in this run. When evaluated with the previous run, a total of 4.5 miles of continuous Carmel River Trail are possible if public access was reestablished at the MOO property.







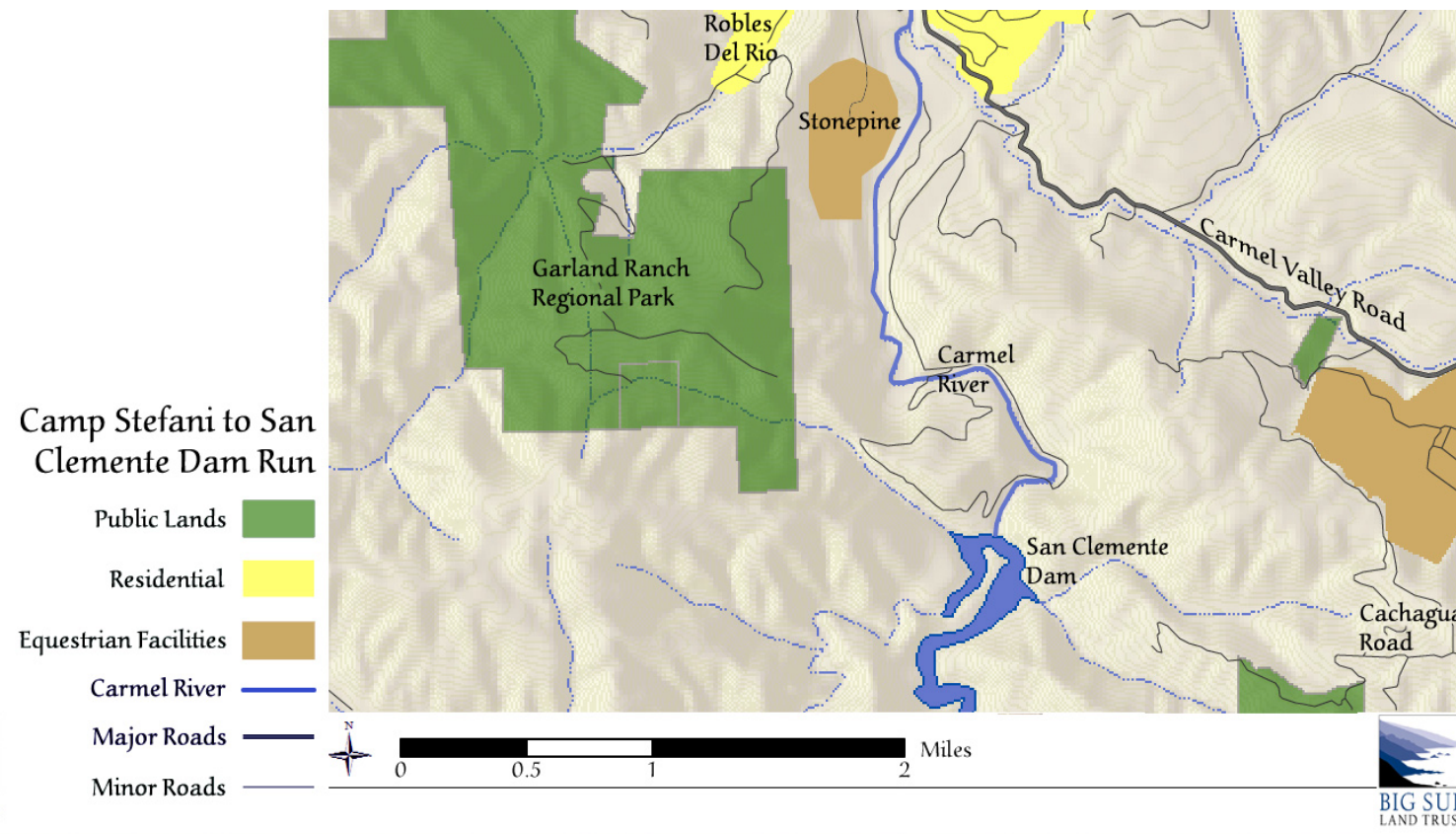
**This page:** San Clemente dam filled with silt and sediments. Source: Monterey Peninsula Water Management District website..

**Facing page:** San Clemente dam at various flow rates. Source: Carmel River Watershed Council..



## Camp Stefani to San Clemente 3.75 River Miles

The fifth run stretches 3.75 river miles from just upstream of Camp Stefani to the San Clemente Dam. All of the land along this section of the river is owned by Cal-Am Water Company. This section of trail is not likely to be constructed before issues of sedimentation and earthquake safety are addressed at the San Clemente dam. The dam has long been deemed unsafe, it will either need to be refortified or removed. Whatever is done with the dam there will be an opportunity during the process to call for greater public access to the river front above the village. Trail alignments along either side of the river were considered in this section.



# Camp Stefani to San Clemente

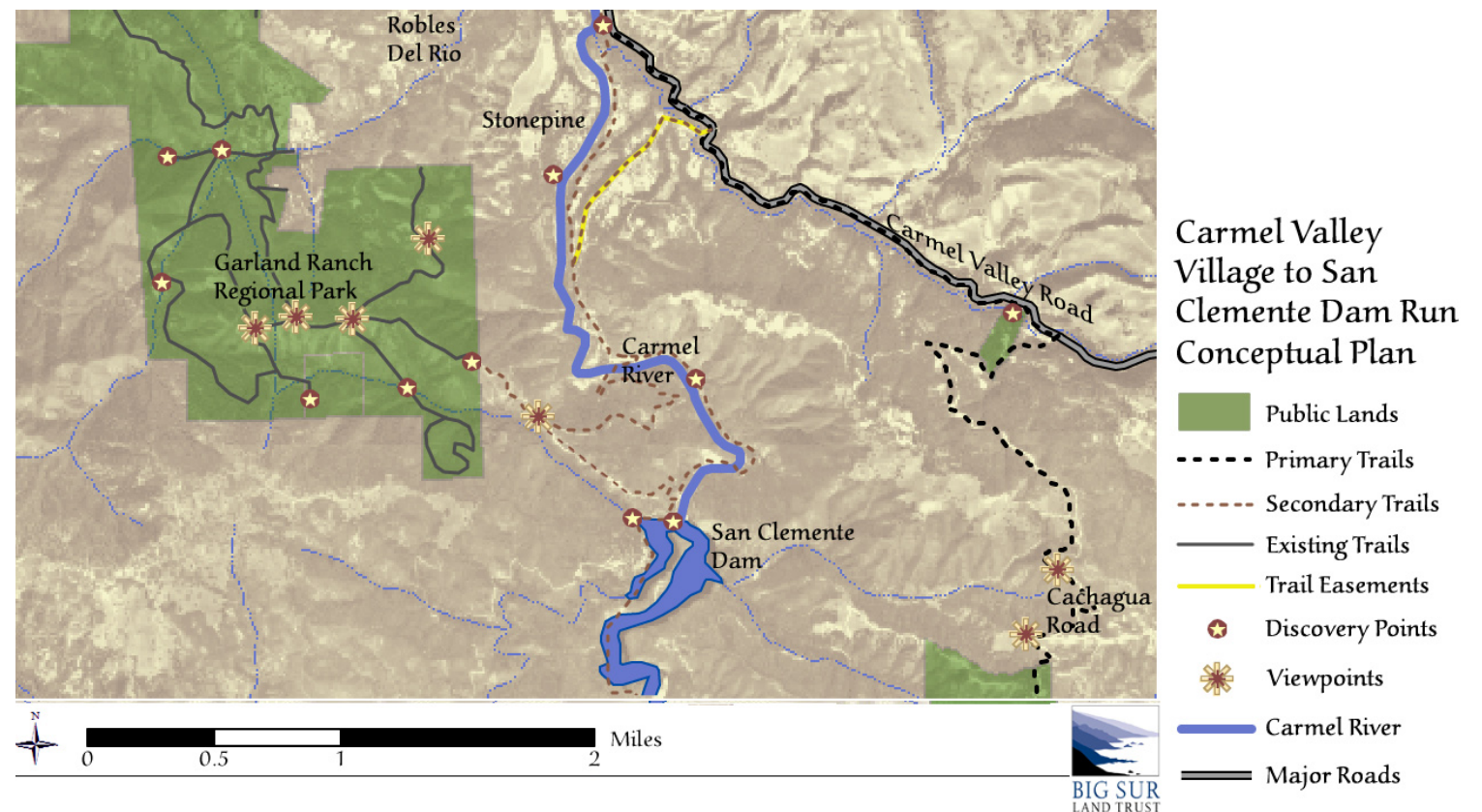
## Carmel River Trail Alignments

### Option 1

The west alignment for the Carmel River Trail would leave from near the Robles Del Rio neighborhood and connect along the river to the west side of the dam. Possible connections include Garland Park, the Stone Pine Resort and other potential trails further upstream. The adjacent Kahn Ranch section of Garland Park has trail connections along the ridge lines to Mid-Valley.

### Option 2

The east alignment of the Carmel River Trail would follow existing Cal-Am roads along the east side of the river. Closer to the dam there are two trail options crossing the river and heading up the ridge. Possible trail connections would include vineyards, ranches, stables, and surrounding neighborhoods. This section of the Carmel River Trail would parallel Carmel Valley Road. Carmel Valley Road takes on a different character this far up the valley. The roadway becomes increasingly quiet and narrow, making it difficult to extend a bicycle lane or adjacent pathways this far out into the valley. Cyclists already enjoy riding this outer portion of the valley. Safety could be increased with additional signage to alert drivers of the presence of cyclists.



**This page:** *Los Padres Dam.* Source: Monterey Peninsula Water Management District website.

**Facing page:** *Cachagua Community Park* own and managed by the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District.

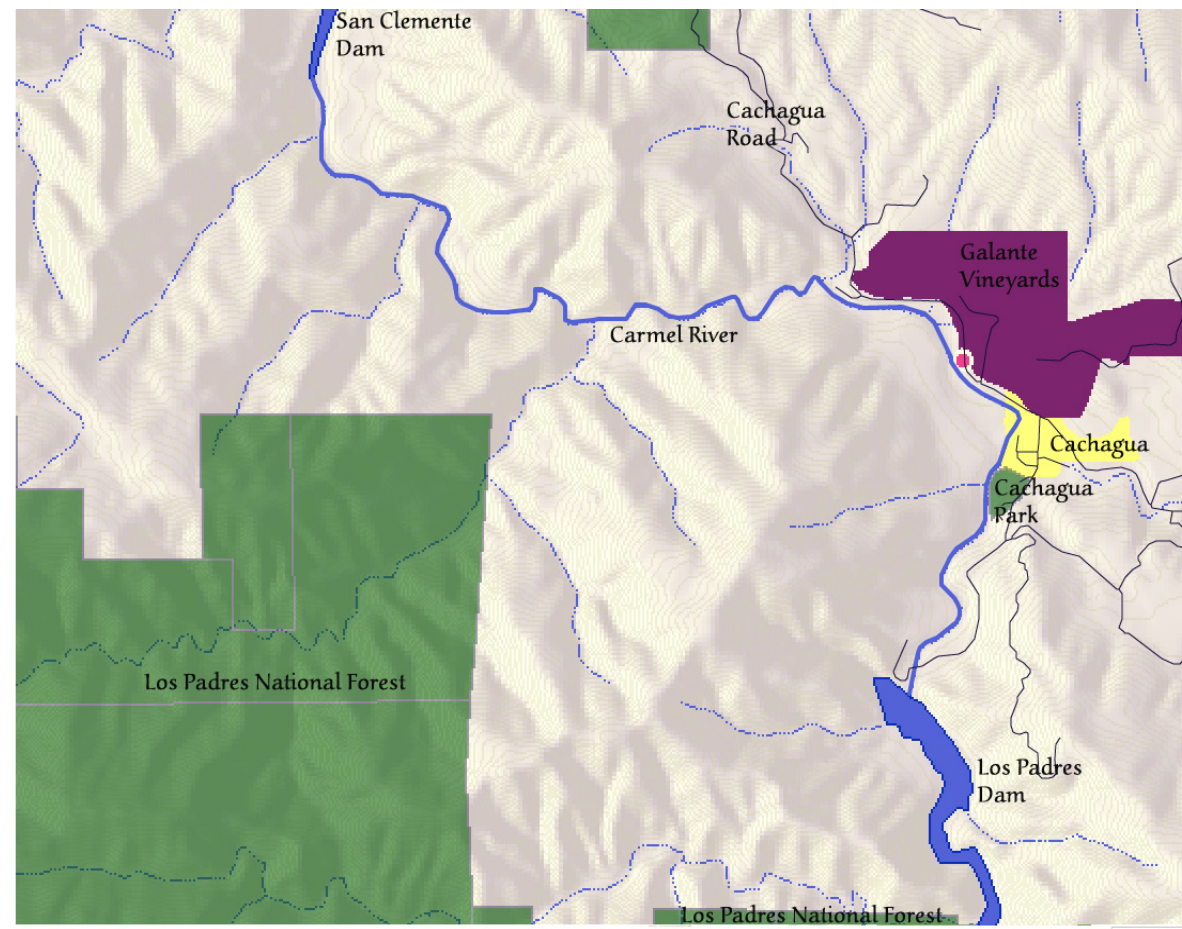


## San Clemente to Los Padres 6.5 river miles

The final run to connect the Carmel River Parkway together stretches from The San Clemente Dam to the border of the Los Padres National Forest above the Los Padres Dam. This is by far the longest run totaling 6.5 river miles. This run has long distances and several private owners making parkway planning more difficult. An alignment for the Carmel River Trail was explored utilizing primarily Cal-Am lands. In addition, Cachagua road was seen as a good connector for potential forms of recreation. Above the Community of Cachagua the trail could connect to the Los Padres Dam. The section of the Carmel River Trail above the Los Padres Dam has been in existence for many years. It is a continuous 13.5 mile trail that follows the Carmel River until reaching the watershed divide at Pine Ridge east of Big Sur. This section of trail alone highlights a significant distance of the Carmel River.

### San Clemente Dam to Los Padres Dam Run

- Public Lands
- Residential
- Vineyards
- Wine Tasting
- Carmel River
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads



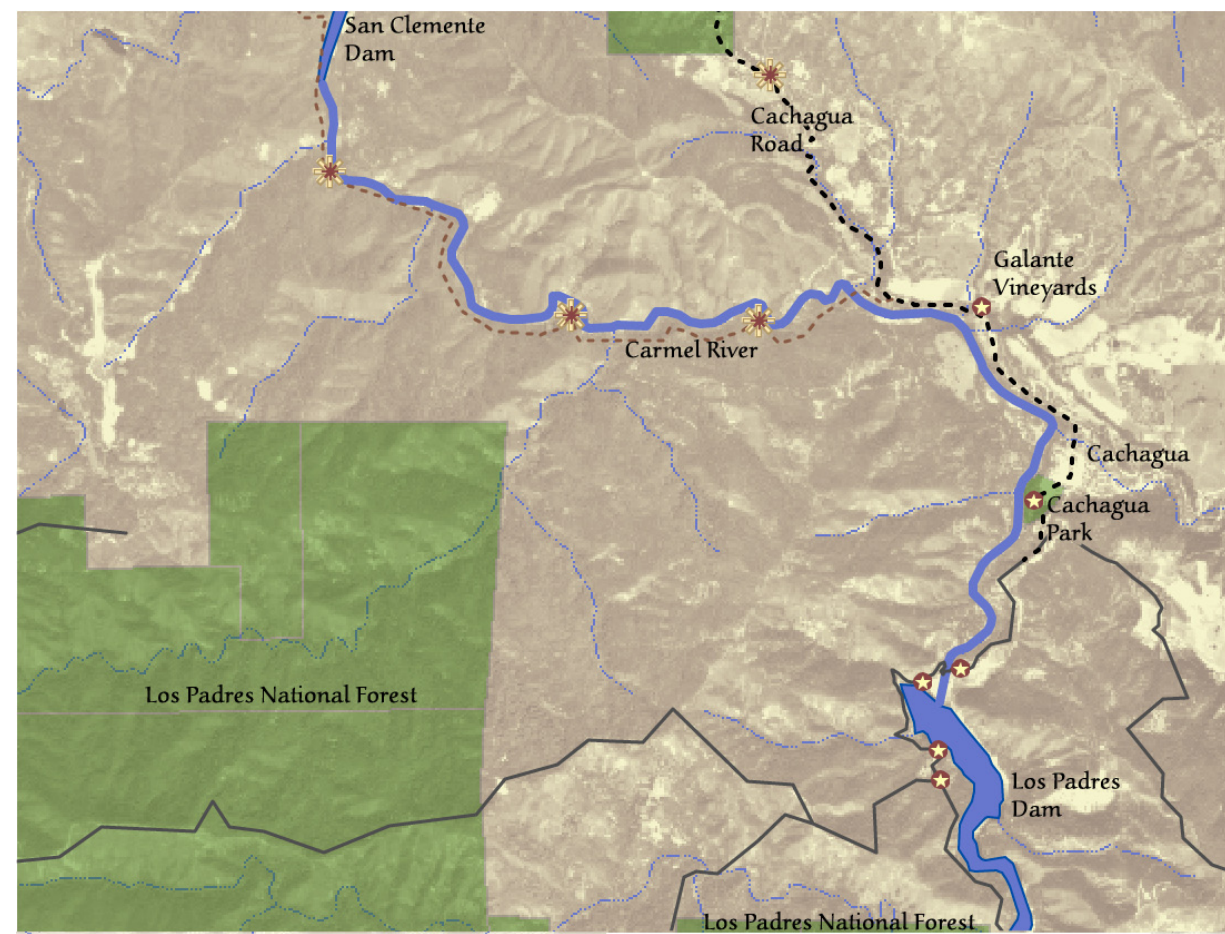
# San Clemente to Los Padres

## Carmel River Trail Alignment

The Carmel River Trail would leave the San Clemente dam and reach Cachagua along the river, only crossing Cal-Am property, the San Clemente Ranch, and a few residential parcels near Cachagua road. This route would stay to the west and south sides of the river only crossing just before intersecting with Cachagua road. The final 3 miles of the trail is essentially in existence from the Cachagua Community Park to the Carmel River Trail at the Los Padres Dam. From that point connectivity exists to the many trails through the Ventana Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest.

## Additional Trail Connections

Cachagua road is a small winding county road that snakes over Tularcitos Ridge connecting the quiet residential area of Cachagua out to Carmel Valley Road. Cyclists currently ride the steep twisting curves of Cachagua Road. Class III style signage could improve safety along the route. This bicycle route would potentially link several parks and residential areas in the upper Carmel Valley.



San Clemente Dam to Los Padres Dam Run Conceptual Plan

- Public Lands
- Primary Trails
- Secondary Trails
- Existing Trails
- ★ Discovery Points
- ✱ Viewpoints
- Carmel River



**This page:** *A seasonal footbridge allows parkway users close contact with the river at Garland Park, managed by the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District.*



## Conclusions

The Carmel Valley Sub-region contains a set of unique planning issues. Planning efforts for the lowest reach of the Carmel River Parkway, were surrounded by large parklands, commercial areas and transportation corridors. Upstream in the Carmel Valley corridor, significant stretches of the river and floodplain are home to hundreds of private properties. Consequently, this planning document lays the groundwork and illustrates the potential for more in-depth planning studies and outreach to the community of the Carmel Valley.

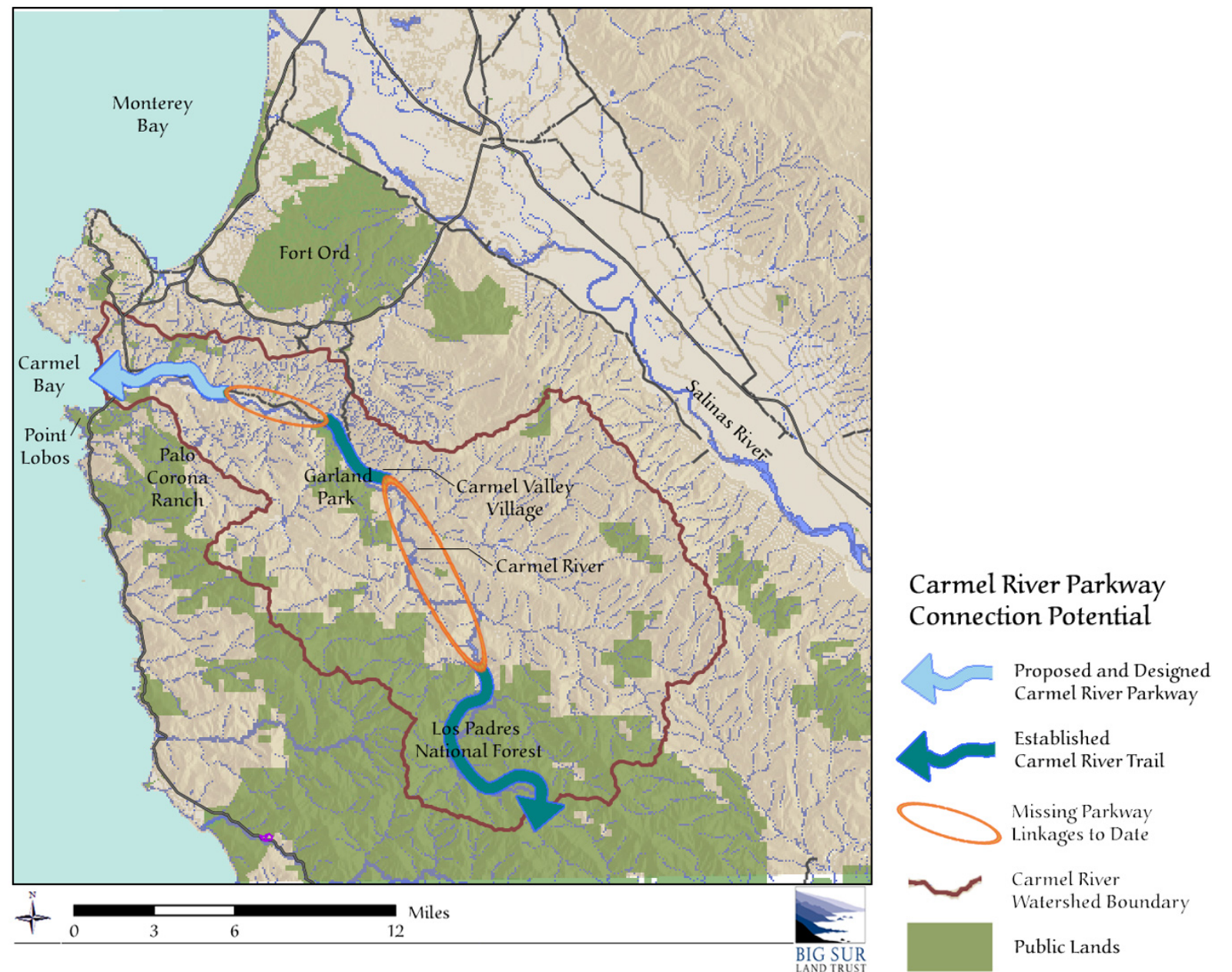
*The Carmel Valley Conceptual Plan* explores the viability of the river parkway into the Carmel Valley. Examination of existing and potential trail alignments reveals a promising pattern for the parkway corridor. The upper portion of the Carmel River Watershed in the Los Padres National Forest has over 13 miles of established Carmel River Trail. The Garland Ranch Regional Park, a treasured jewel of public parkland in the middle of the river corridor, maintains over 4 miles of Carmel River Trail<sup>1</sup>, linking residential neighborhoods to public parklands. The parkway plan for the lowest reach of the river has been studied extensively and trail alignments have been discussed with private property owners.

1. This continuous trail is contingent upon the acquisition of the MOO property near the Carmel Valley Village.

# Conclusions

The gaps in the parkway corridor explored through this study show great potential to connect the established portions of the Carmel River Trail into a continuous corridor that connects the length of the Carmel River from the watershed divide to the restored wetlands at Carmel Bay. The continuous trail could connect the schools to residential neighborhoods, the public to the educational opportunities along the riverfront, through organic agricultural lands, and into nearby wildlands. Commercial interest along the parkway could be incorporated to enhance the function of the corridor and experiences for the users. Finally, the potential for providing for alternative means of transportation for the Carmel Valley corridor is noteworthy.

The Carmel River Trail becomes the conduit for other elements of the parkway planning. Once access is established, educational and additional recreational opportunities can be planned and designed. Similarly, further collaboration between planners and river researchers can bring forth dynamic river restoration plans. This conceptual plan provides a conceptual overview for the reconnection of the community to the river and the ecosystems of the Carmel River Watershed.







# Appendix A: Trail Statistics

The following chart provides details of the trail alignments described in this document to facilitate future trail planning efforts.

Trail Name	Trail Length	Elevation Change	Average Slope	Highpoint	ADA
Schulte Rd River Trail	1.25 miles	250 feet	4%	160 feet	yes
Earthbound Trail	.5 miles	60 feet	2%	95 feet	yes
CRT alignment Carmel Valley Ranch sliver	.35 miles	60 feet	3%	160 feet	yes
Robinson Canyon Road	.5 miles	50 feet	2%	140 feet	yes
Carmel Valley Road Carmel Valley Ranch	3.25 miles	500 feet	3%	260 feet	no
Scarlet Road	.6 miles	50 feet	2%	240 feet	no
CRT Garland	2.25 miles	240 feet	2%	340 feet	no
Carmel Valley Road Garland to Village	2.8 miles	250 feet	2%	400 feet	no
CRT Moo Area	2 miles	60 feet	1%	380 feet	no
CRT cal-am west	3.25 miles	900 feet	5%	1300 feet	no
CRT cal-am east	3.5 miles	300 feet	2%	800 feet	no
CRT SC to LP	5 miles	400 feet	2%	1000 feet	no
Cachagua Rd	6 miles	2000 feet	6%	1640 feet	no
Existing CRT LPNF	13.5 miles	4,000 feet	6%	4500 feet	no

Abbreviations:  
 CRT - Carmel River Trail  
 LPNF - Los Padres National Forest  
 LP Los Padres Dam  
 SC - San Clemente Dam