

# Charismatic Critters

North Merced Prescribed Burn

Stanislaus National Forest

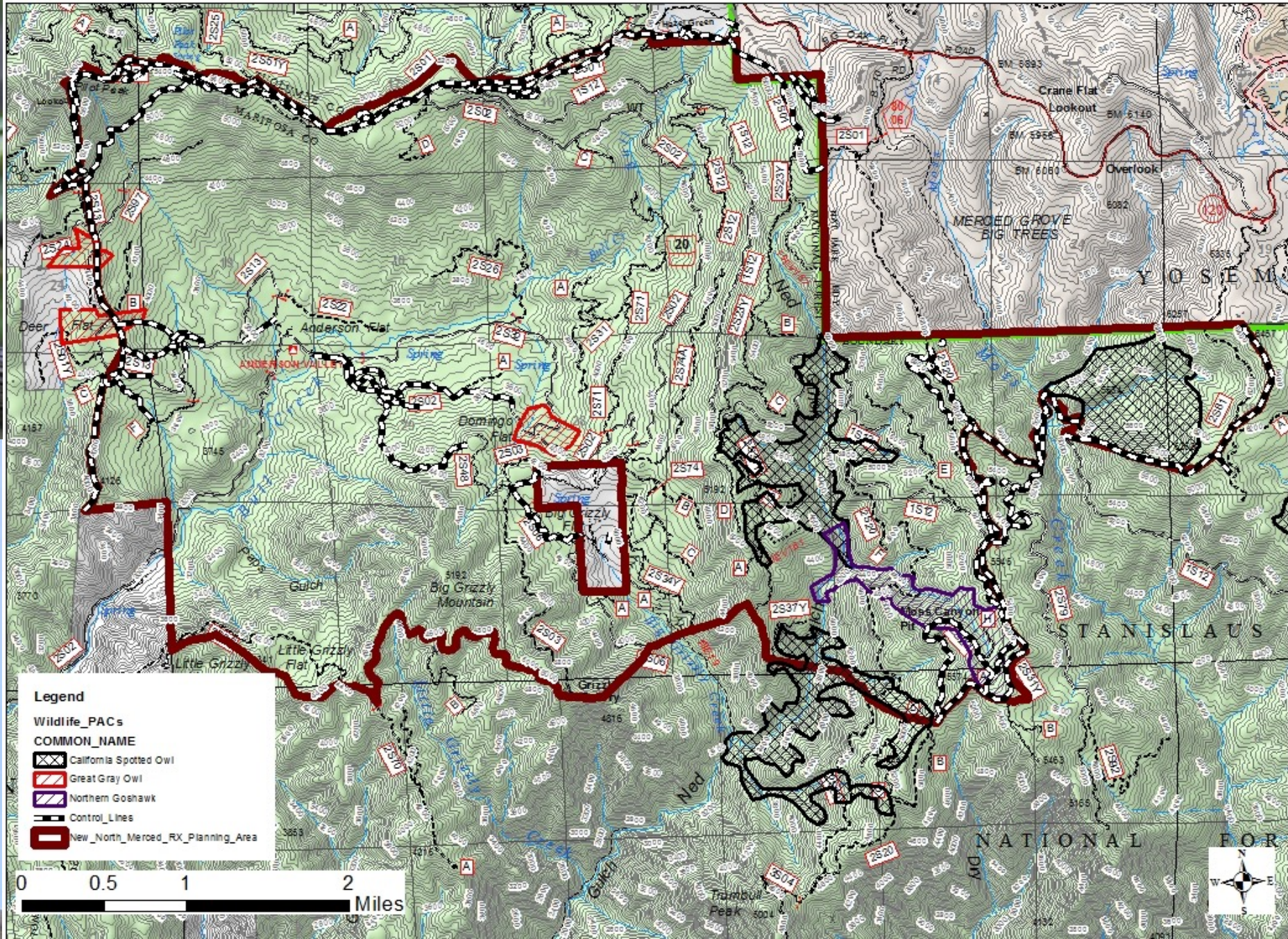
# Sensitive Species



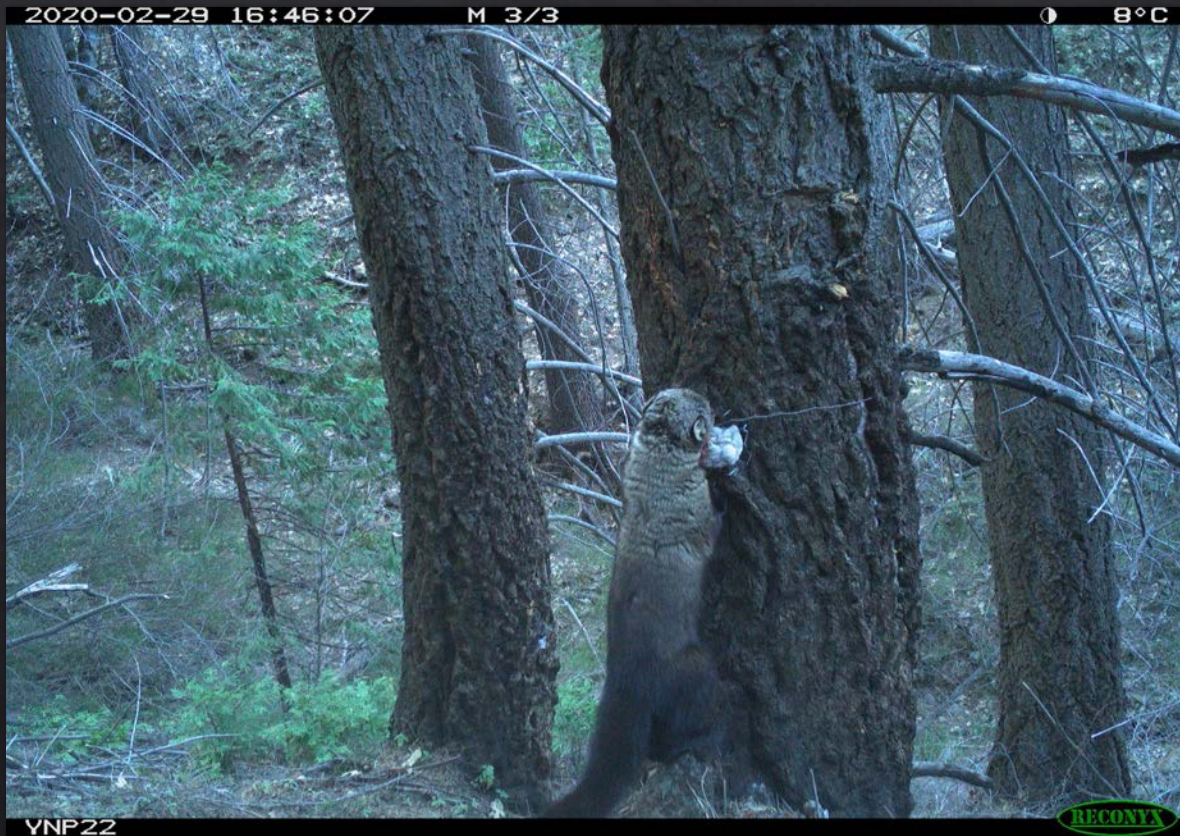




# North Merced Prescribed Burn Project



# Pacific fisher



# Maintain special habitat structures

- ◆ S&G 90: Prior to vegetation treatments, design measures to protect important habitat structures as identified by the wildlife biologist, such as large diameter snags and oaks, patches of dense large trees typically  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 2 acres, large trees with cavities for nesting, clumps of small understory trees, and coarse woody material. For example, use firing patterns, place fire lines around snags and large logs, and implement other prescribed burning techniques to minimize effects to these attributes.

- ❖ S&G 10: Determine down woody material retention levels on an individual project basis, based on desired conditions. Emphasize retention of wood in the largest size classes and in decay classes 1, 2, and 3. Consider the effects of follow-up prescribed fire in achieving desired down woody material retention levels.
- ❖ S&G 11: Determine snag retention levels on an individual project basis for vegetation treatments. Design projects to implement and sustain a generally continuous supply of snags and live decadent trees suitable for cavity nesting wildlife across a landscape. Retain some mid- and large diameter live trees that are currently in decline, have substantial wood defect, or that have desirable characteristics (teakettle branches, large diameter broken top, large cavities in the bole) to serve as future replacement snags and to provide nesting structure.

# Retain den and rest trees

- ◆ S&G 6: For all mechanical thinning treatments, design projects to retain all live conifers 30 inches dbh or larger. Exceptions are allowed to meet needs for equipment operability.
- ◆ S&G 23: During mechanical vegetation treatments, prescribed fire, and salvage operations, retain all large hardwoods on the westside except where: (1) large trees pose an immediate threat to human life or property or (2) losses of large trees are incurred due to prescribed or wildland fire. Large montane hardwoods are trees with a dbh of 12 inches or greater. Large blue oak woodland hardwoods are trees with a dbh of 8 inches or greater. Allow removal of larger hardwood trees (up to 20 inches dbh) if research supports the need to remove larger trees to maintain and enhance the hardwood stand.



# Maintain key habitat characteristics

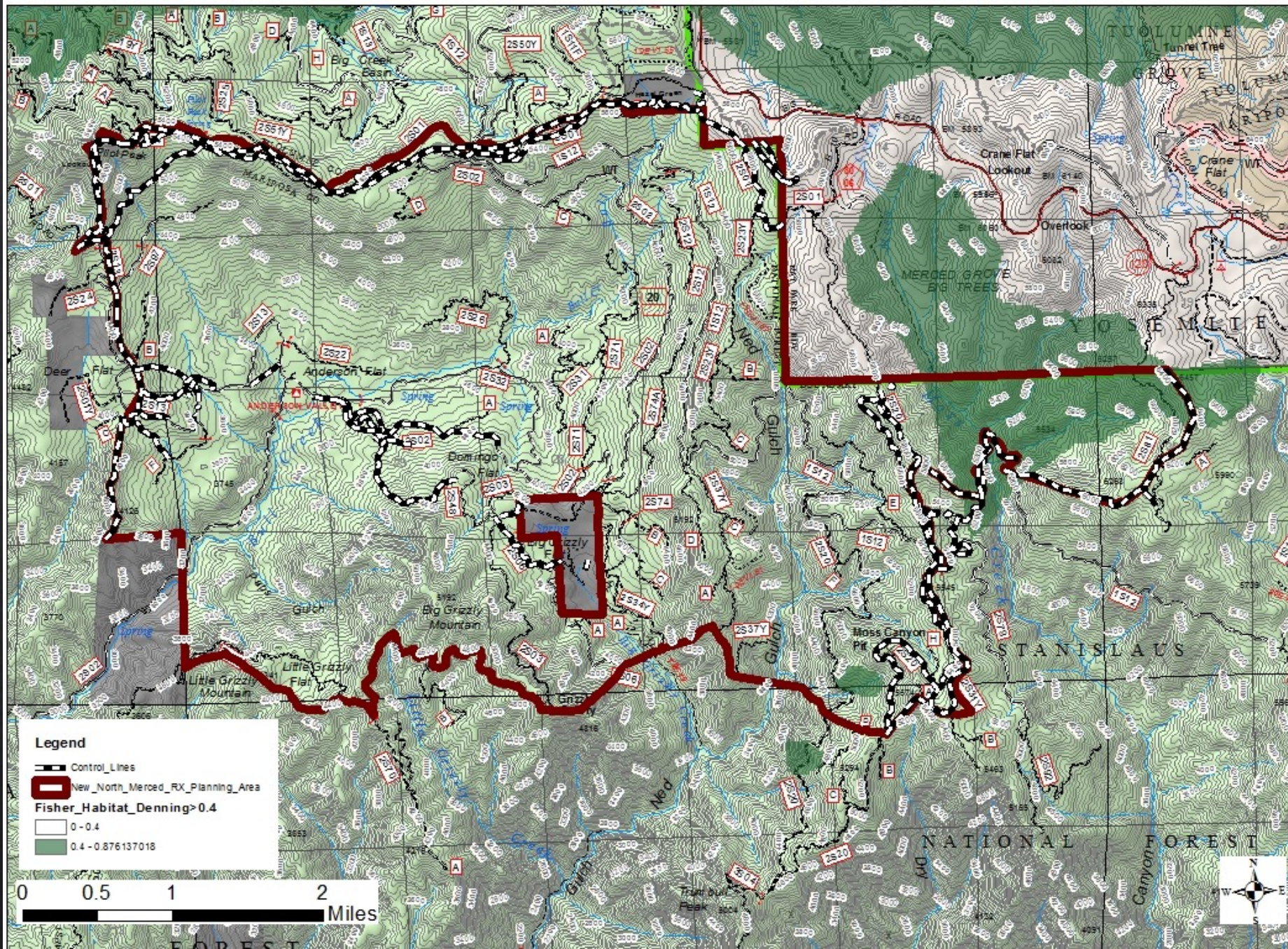
- ◆ S&G 7: For mechanical thinning treatments in mature forest habitat (CWHR types 4M, 4D, 5M, 5D, and 6) outside WUI defense zones:
- ◆ Where available, design projects to retain 5 percent or more of the total treatment area in lower layers composed of trees 6 to 24 inches dbh within the treatment unit.

# Protect denning habitat around known dens

- ◆ S&G 86: Avoid fuel treatments in fisher den site buffers [700 ac around known dens] to the extent possible. If areas within den site buffers must be treated to achieve fuels objectives for the urban wildland intermix zone, limit treatments to mechanical clearing of fuels. Treat ladder and surface fuels to achieve fuels objectives. Use piling or mastication to treat surface fuels during initial treatment. Burning of piled debris is allowed. Prescribed fire may be used to treat fuels if no other reasonable alternative exists.
- ◆ LOP from March 1 to May 1 for prescribed fire.



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# Retain high quality habitat in home range

- ◆ Do not reduce habitat quality of denning habitat; treat only surface and ladder fuels, in a patchy manner, to achieve fuels objectives and break up fuels continuity.
- ◆ If some reduction in denning habitat quality is necessary to increase habitat resilience and longevity on the landscape, ensure that sufficient denning habitat remains within each potential home range area post-treatment and habitat remains suitable to support fisher life requisites. To accomplish this, quality reduction is acceptable in no more than 50% of denning habitat at the 2500 acre scale, should not occur in the 60 acres surrounding known dens active within the last 5 years, and post-treatment condition must still be high value reproductive habitat, and contain patchy understory, downed woody material, and multistory conditions for escape and thermal cover

# Retain connectivity

- ◆ S&G 27: Minimize old forest habitat fragmentation. Assess potential impacts of fragmentation on old forest associated species (particularly fisher and marten) in biological evaluations.
- ◆ S&G 29: Consider retaining forested linkages (with canopy cover greater than 40 percent) that are interconnected via riparian areas and ridgetop saddles during project-level analysis.

# Reduce predation pressure

- ❖ Avoid creating permanent new linear or otherwise continuous areas of open canopy habitat in or adjacent to current fisher denning habitat, high value reproductive habitat, or key linkage areas that would isolate the habitat or substantially increase predator access.

