Marijuana Cultivation on Timberlands: Conversion Crisis

CDFW Watershed Enforcement Team

- Protect Public Trust Resources
- Enforce Fish & Game Code (1602, 5650, 5652), CESA, etc.
- Enforce all applicable state laws
- Work in cooperation with other state agencies
- Permit Marijuana Cultivation Sites in compliance with Fish & Game Code

Natural Resource Impacts Associated with Marijuana Cultivation

- **<u>Water Diversion</u>: During low-flow periods, no screening, oversized pumps**
- **<u>Pollutants</u>: Sediment, petroleum products, fertilizers, pesticides**
- **<u>No BMPS</u>: No Riparian & Stream Protection Areas**
- **<u>Conversion</u>/Fragmentation of lands**

Sensitive Fish and Wildlife Species

Steelhead trout,
Oncorhynchus mykiss

Coho salmon,
Oncorhynchus kisutch

Chinook salmon,
Oncorhynchus tshawytscha

Sensitive fish and wildlife species

Southern torrent salamander, *Rhyacotriton variegatus*

Coastal tailed frog, *Ascaphus truei*

Coastal cutthroat trout, *Oncorhynchus clarki clarki*

Sensitive fish and wildlife species

Pacific fisher, *Martes pennanti*

Northern Spotted Owl, *Strix occidentalis c.*

Townsend's big-eared bat, *Corynorhinus townsendii*

<3 Acre Conversion Issues

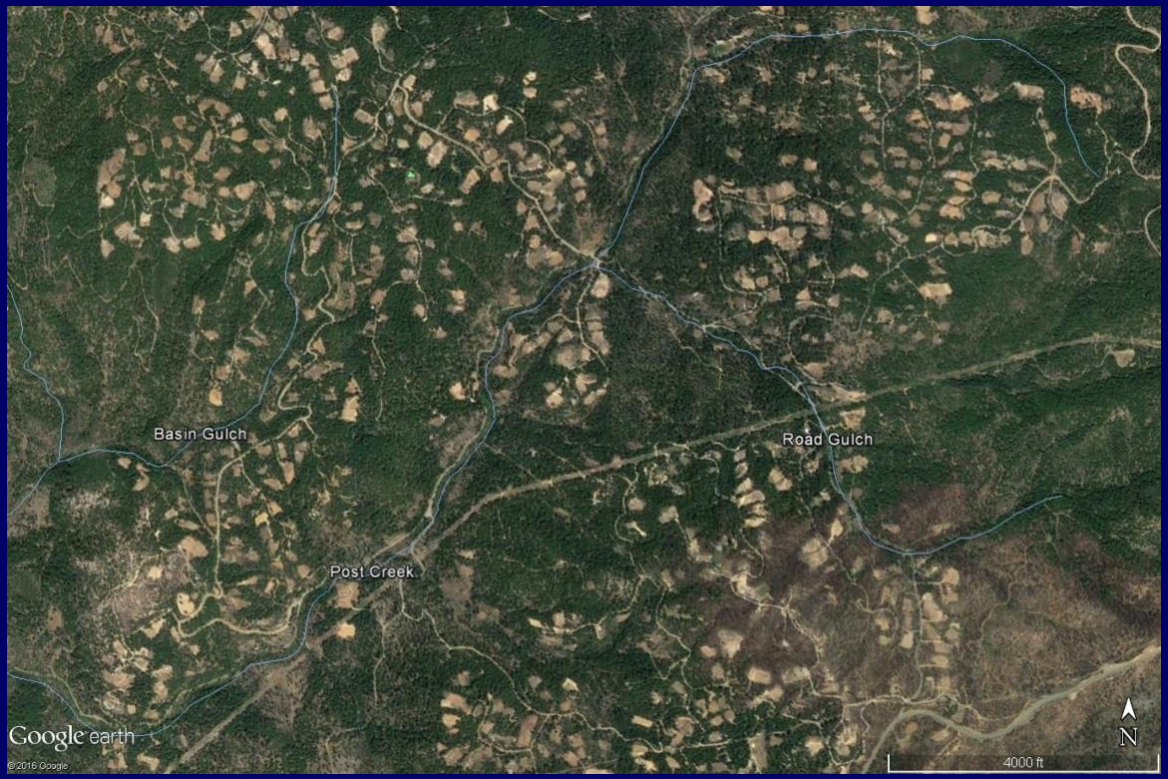
- Permanent conversion of forest habitat.
- Unregulated grading
- No Geologic review for slope stability, erosion issues.
- Unregulated pond building/no engineering
- Limited review of Licensed Timber Operations
- Statute of limitations reduces ability of CalFire to act, limited penalties for violations

How many conversions are illegal?

Greater than 88% of the 681 conversions identified by Calfire staff on satellite imagery over the last three years.

What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- Cumulative Effects
- Forest Fragmentation



What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- New Species Listings

What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- Water Quality Degradation

What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- Water Diversions

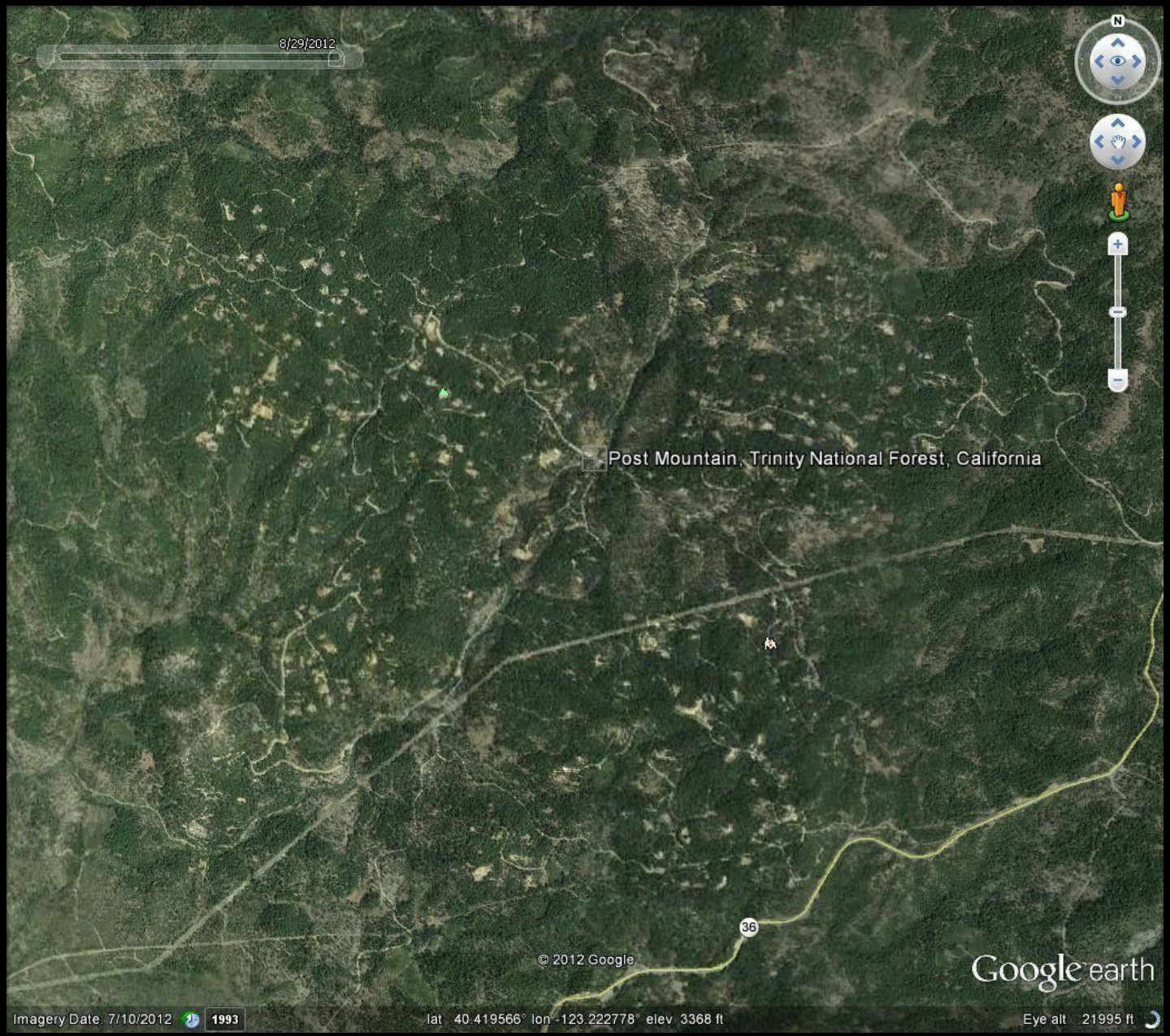
What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- Wildfire

What issues arise from both legal and illegal conversions?

- Public Safety

Post Mountain –South Fork Trinity



2012
Basin Gulch
Road Gulch
Post Creek
Google earth
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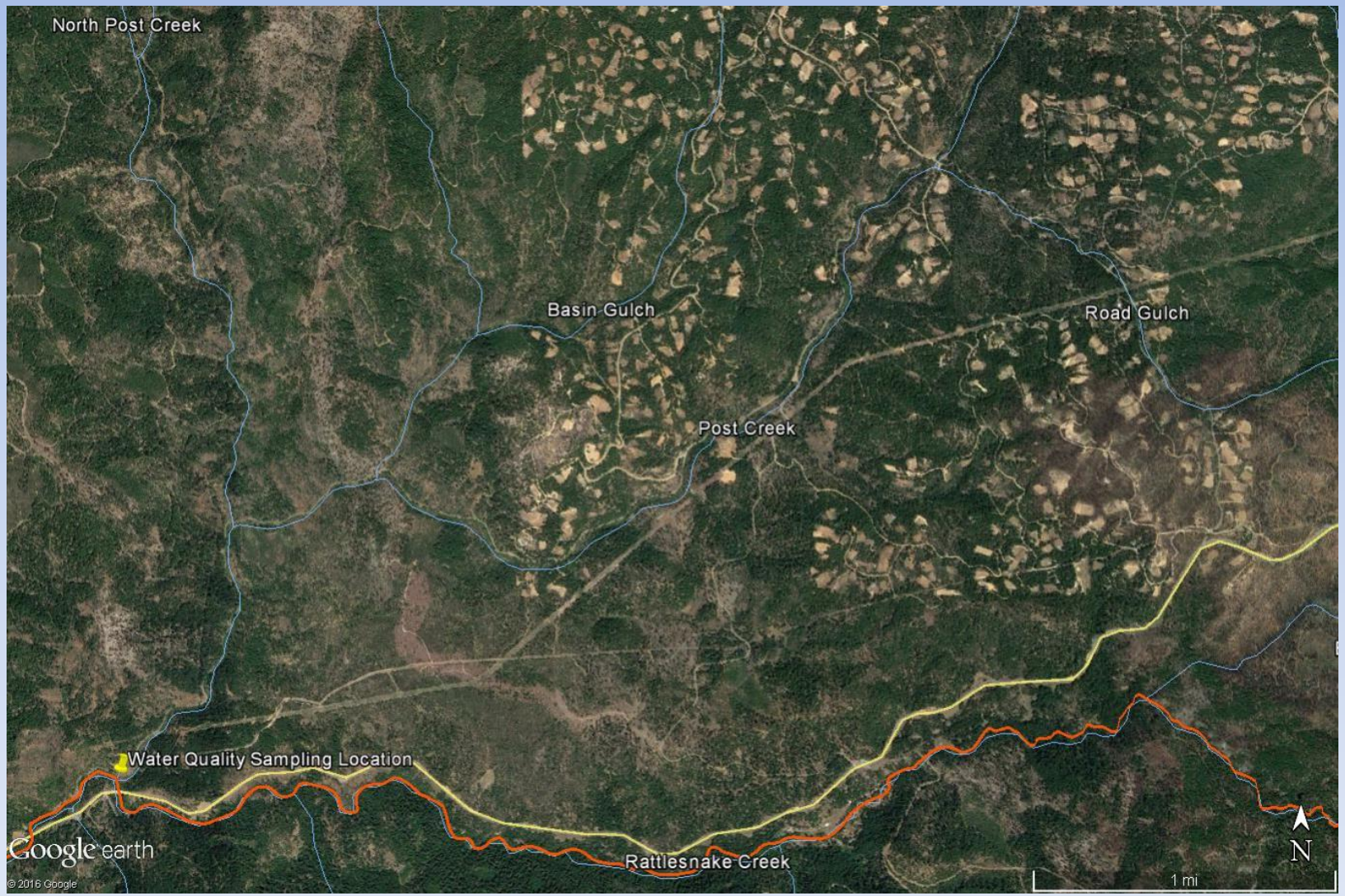
4000 ft

2016
Basin Gulch
Road Gulch
Post Creek
Google earth
© 2016 Google
N
4000 ft

Post Mountain Water Quality Sampling



Sampling Location

A California Stream Condition Index (CSCI) score of 1.00 indicates a healthy stream

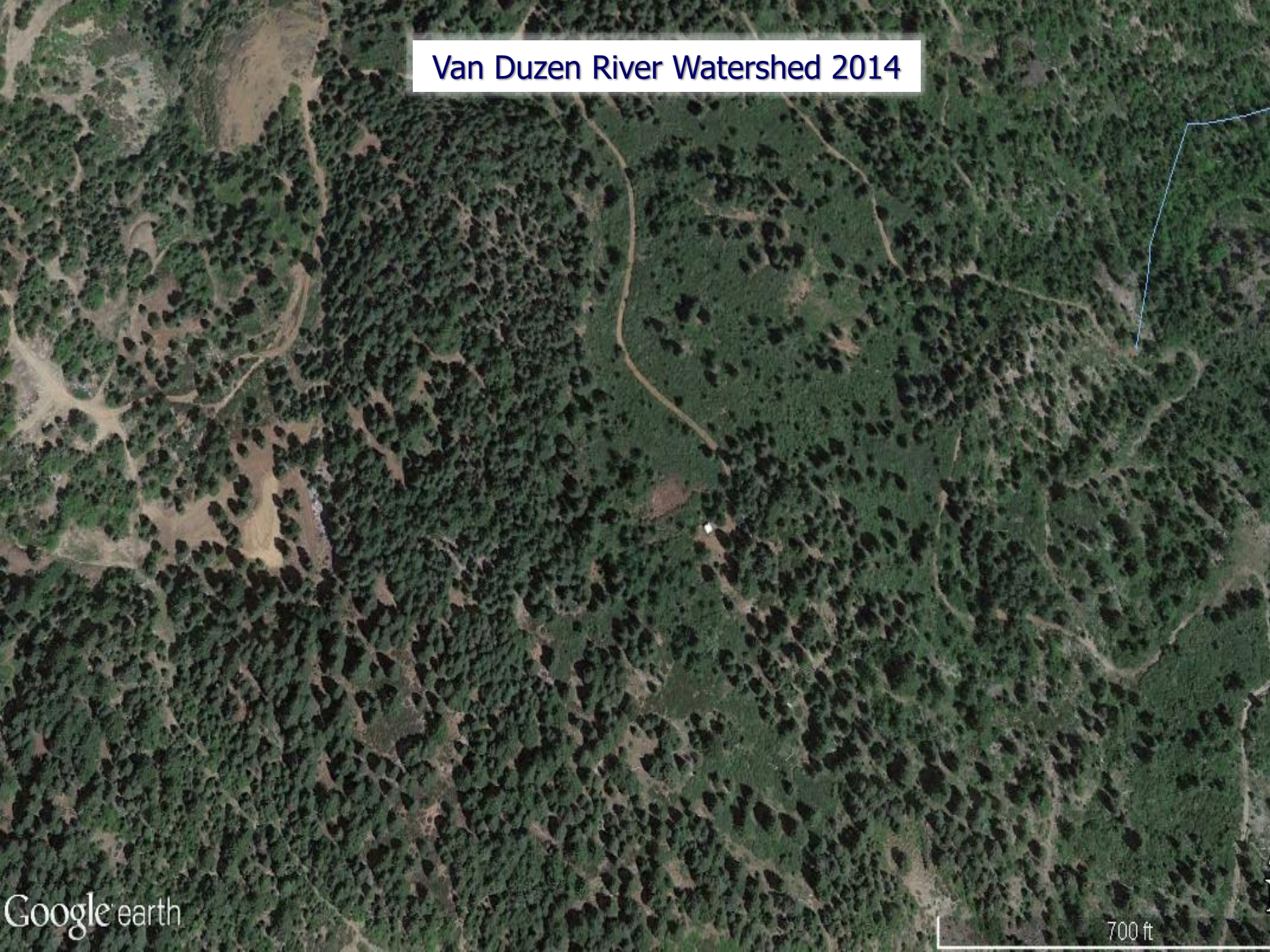
Post Creek had a CSCI of 0.37, the worst score of twelve streams sampled

Mad River Watershed 2014

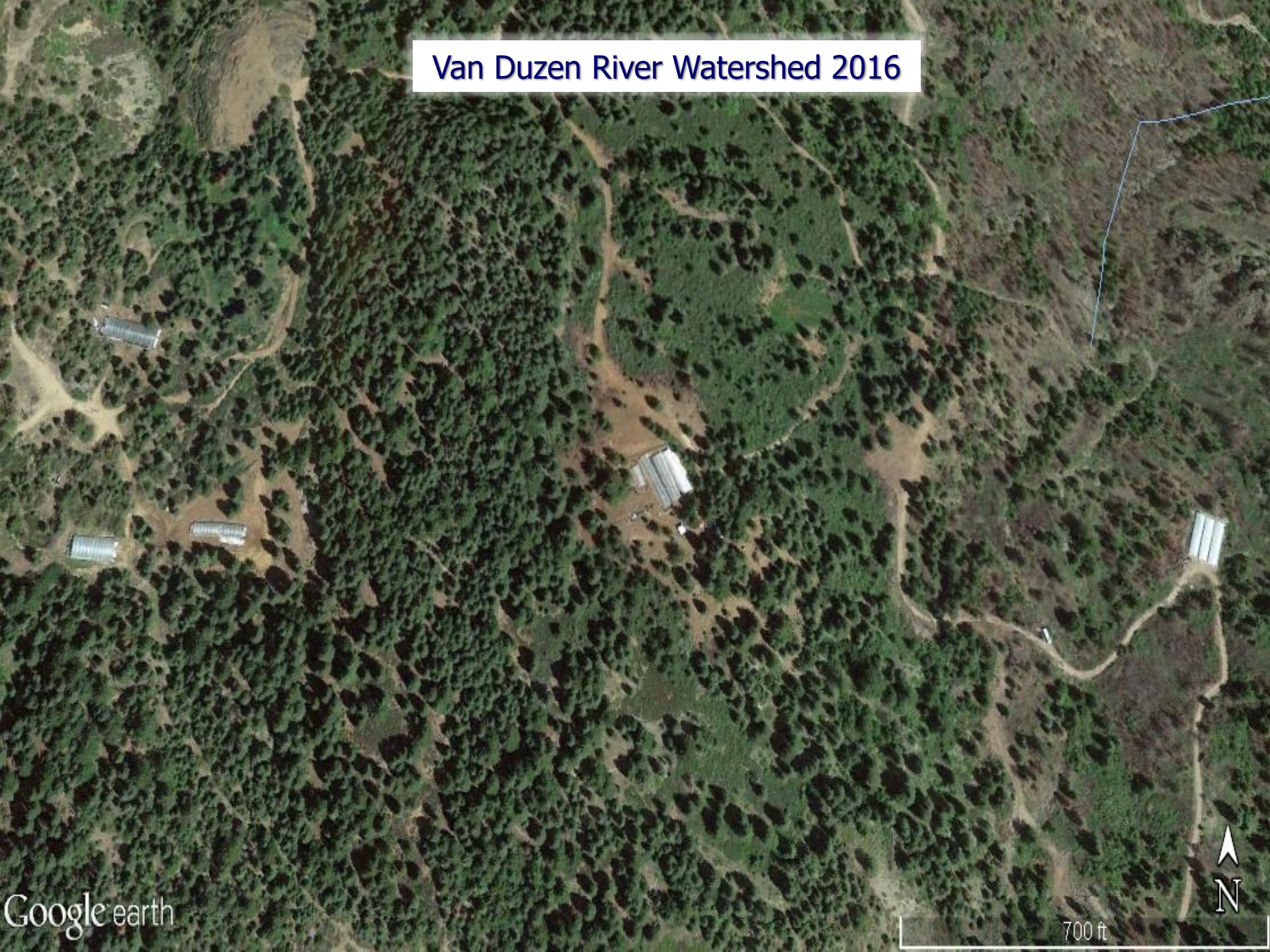
Mad River Watershed 2016
Google earth
N
1000 ft

Trinity River Watershed 2014
Google earth
700 ft

Trinity River Watershed 2016
Google earth
© 2016 Google
700 ft


Van Duzen River Watershed 2014
Google earth
700 ft

Van Duzen River Watershed 2016



Little Van Duzen River Watershed 2014

Little Van Duzen River Watershed 2016

Butte Creek Watershed 2014

Butte Creek Watershed 2016

Conclusion

1. Increase Calfire law enforcement capacity
2. Improve coordination/communication between agencies
3. Monitor conversions post operations
4. Determine safe threshold for number of conversions/watershed
5. CEQA issues abound
6. Change/Expand existing laws

10/4/2012
Google earth
Imagery Date: 8/23/2012 1998 40° 8.812' N 123° 38.326' W elev 1960 ft Eye alt 2983 ft

Thank you!

Questions?

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