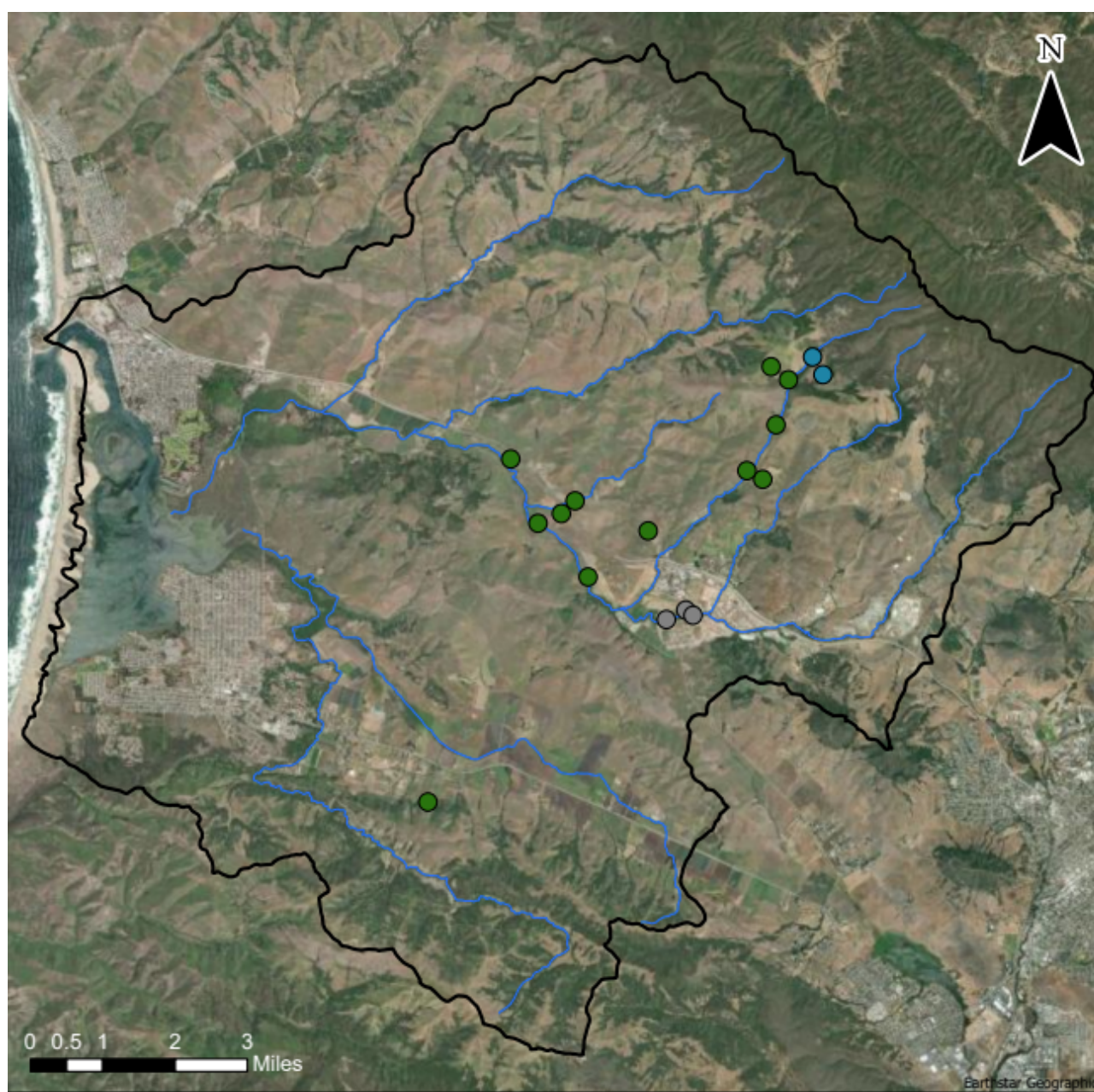


WILDLIFE IN THE MORRO BAY WATERSHED

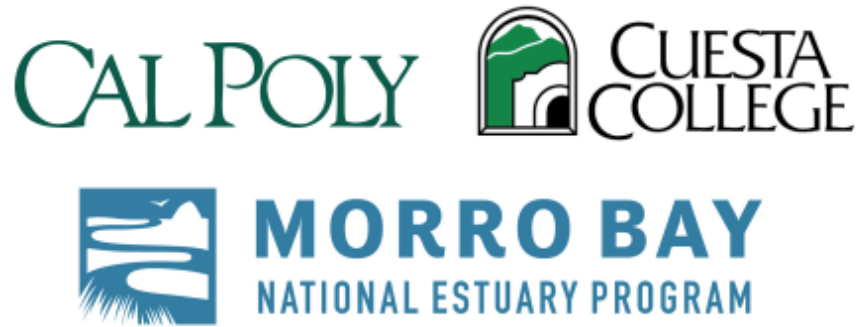
We are fortunate to live in a place where wildlife is a common sight. As many of the animals that inhabit the watershed are elusive, motion-activated cameras allow us a glimpse into the secret lives of local wildlife. These images were captured by cameras deployed by Cal Poly, Cuesta, and the Estuary Program over the past few years.

WILDLIFE CAMERA DEPLOYMENTS



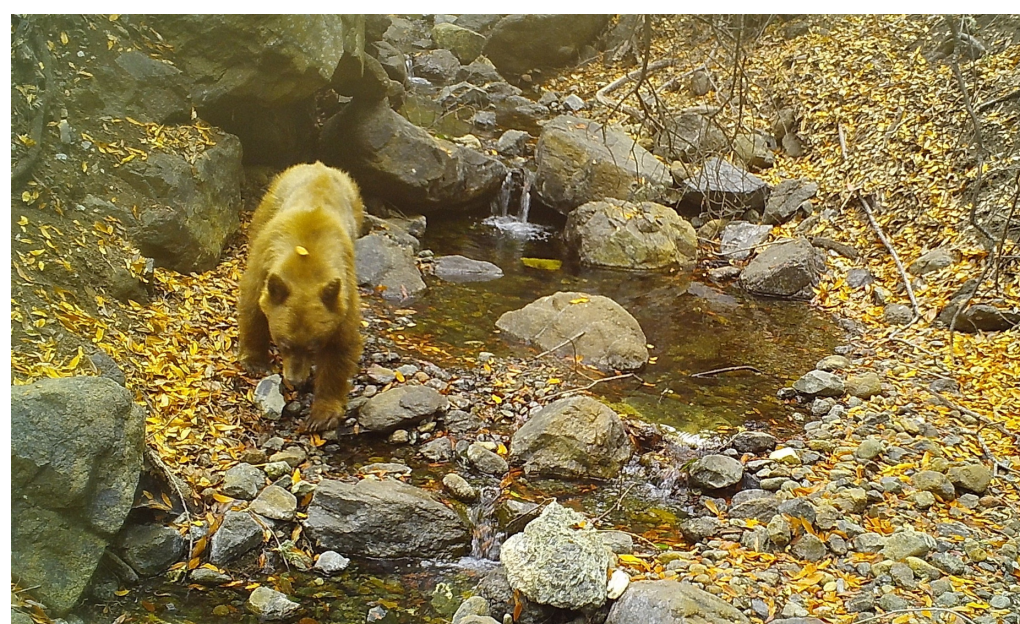
Legend

- Mainstem Creeks
- Watershed Boundary
- Approximate Camera Deployment Locations
- Cal Poly
- Cuesta College
- MBNEP



This map illustrates the locations of wildlife camera deployments by Cal Poly, Cuesta College, and the Estuary Program.

BLACK BEAR



The cameras captured two black bear cubs following their mother along Pennington Creek, a rare wildlife sighting with our cameras. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) estimates that California's black bear population has increased in recent decades to around 30,000 to 40,000 individuals. Black bears are found throughout the local Santa Lucia Mountain range and can vary in color between tan, brown, and black.

MOUNTAIN LION



Above, a close-up of an adult mountain lion captured on camera by Cuesta College in 2021. Below, images of an adult mountain lion and cub captured by Cal Poly cameras in the Los Osos Creek watershed in 2018. CDFW estimates that there are 2,000 to 6,000 mountain lions in California. While their overall population is considered stable, the species is impacted by a lack of connected habitat in Southern California and along the central coast. The mountain lion population in this region is currently being evaluated for listing under the California Endangered Species Act.



THE "HUNT" CONTINUES



As wildlife cameras are relatively inexpensive and easy to operate, the Estuary Program plans to continue collecting data throughout the watershed. Knowing what types of animals are present and what areas they access helps guide our efforts to protect and restore habitat and wildlife corridors. As stewards of this special place, it is important to know that these creatures are here, coexisting with our community, whether we see them or not.

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY



This collage of images captured by Cal Poly, Cuesta College and Estuary Program cameras illustrates the diversity of species that inhabit the watershed. Pictured here, from left to right. First row: red-tailed hawk, gray fox, gray fox, mountain lion, great blue heron, raccoon. Second row: red fox, great egret and mallard ducks, bobcat, black bear, juvenile red-tailed hawk. Third row: wild boar, wild turkey, raccoons, long-tailed weasel, bobcat. Fourth row: opossum, bobcat, coyote, black-tailed deer, striped skunks.

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