

Proposed Actions in the Context of the Mt. Spokane Landscape

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Mt. Spokane State Park (MSSP) occupies a unique position on the landscape in Spokane County. It is the highest point in the county and has high elevation habitat that is found nowhere else in the local area (Figure 1). Many of the proposed actions are found in the upper elevations of the park (Figure 1). However, the western-most part of Trail 180 and the Trail 180 trailhead facility are located in lower elevation areas (below 1000-meters).

Largely due to its isolation and high elevation in relation to the surrounding landscape, MSSP receives a much greater amount of precipitation than the surrounding landscape (Figure 2). The Proposed Actions occur within an elevation range of 31 to 45 inches of annual precipitation. Most of this precipitation falls as snow, particularly at the higher elevations.

Due to the fairly deep soils of the area and the relatively high precipitation, most of MSSP is covered by coniferous forests, with a few scattered meadows, talus fields, shrub fields and riparian deciduous forests (Figure 3). The higher elevations are dominated by subalpine forests while the mid and lower elevations are dominated by montane forests. Nearly all of the Proposed Actions occur in the forested parts of the park (Figure 3). The Proposed Actions were designed in part to avoid unique habitats in the park such as the dry meadow areas.

The proposed actions were also designed in part to avoid stream crossings and riparian areas (Figure 4). Only Trail 260 crosses the upper portion of an intermittent stream. This trail is aligned along an old logging road, so the impacts to the stream and associated riparian area are minimized.

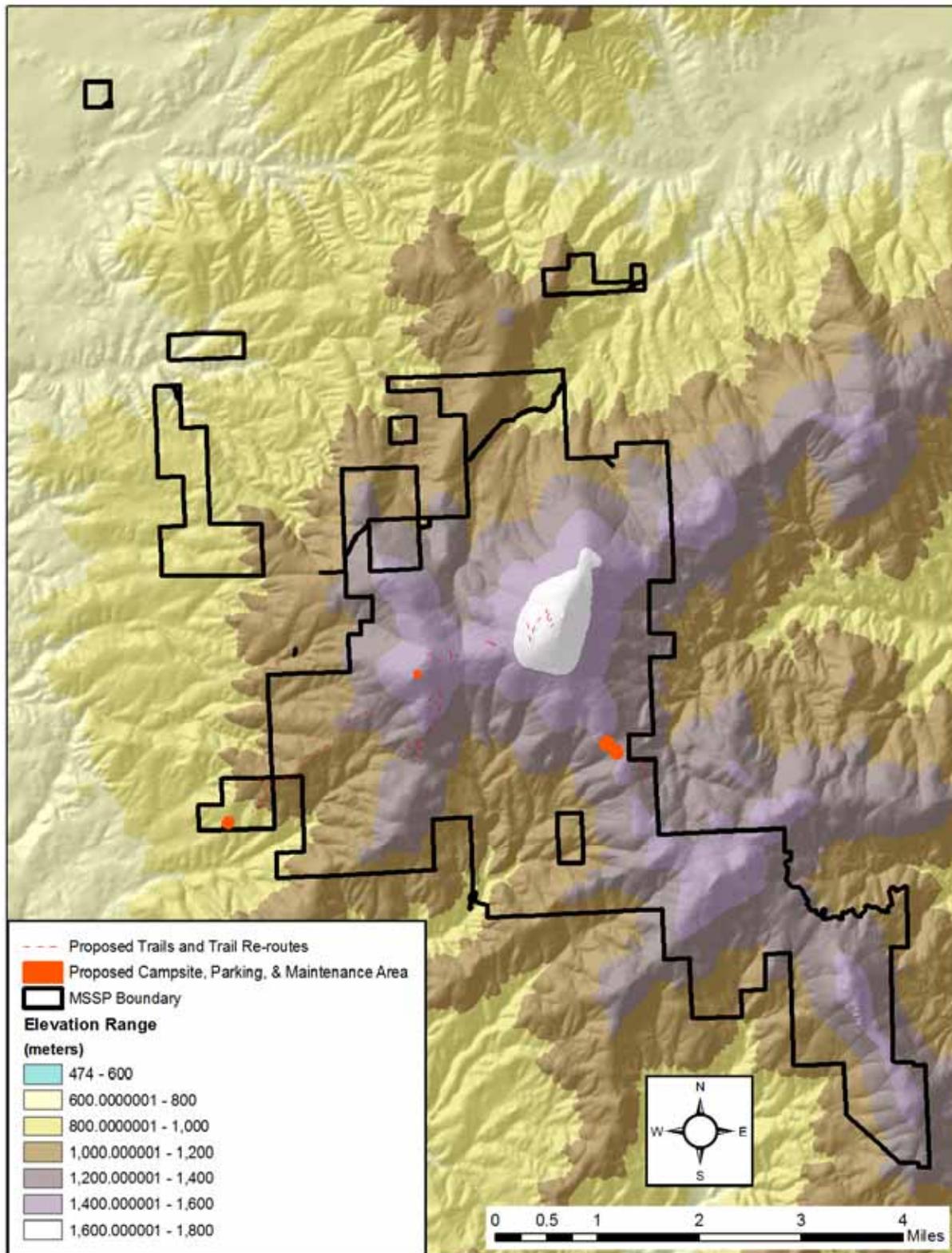


Figure 1. Proposed Actions in relationship to elevation zones at Mt. Spokane State Park.

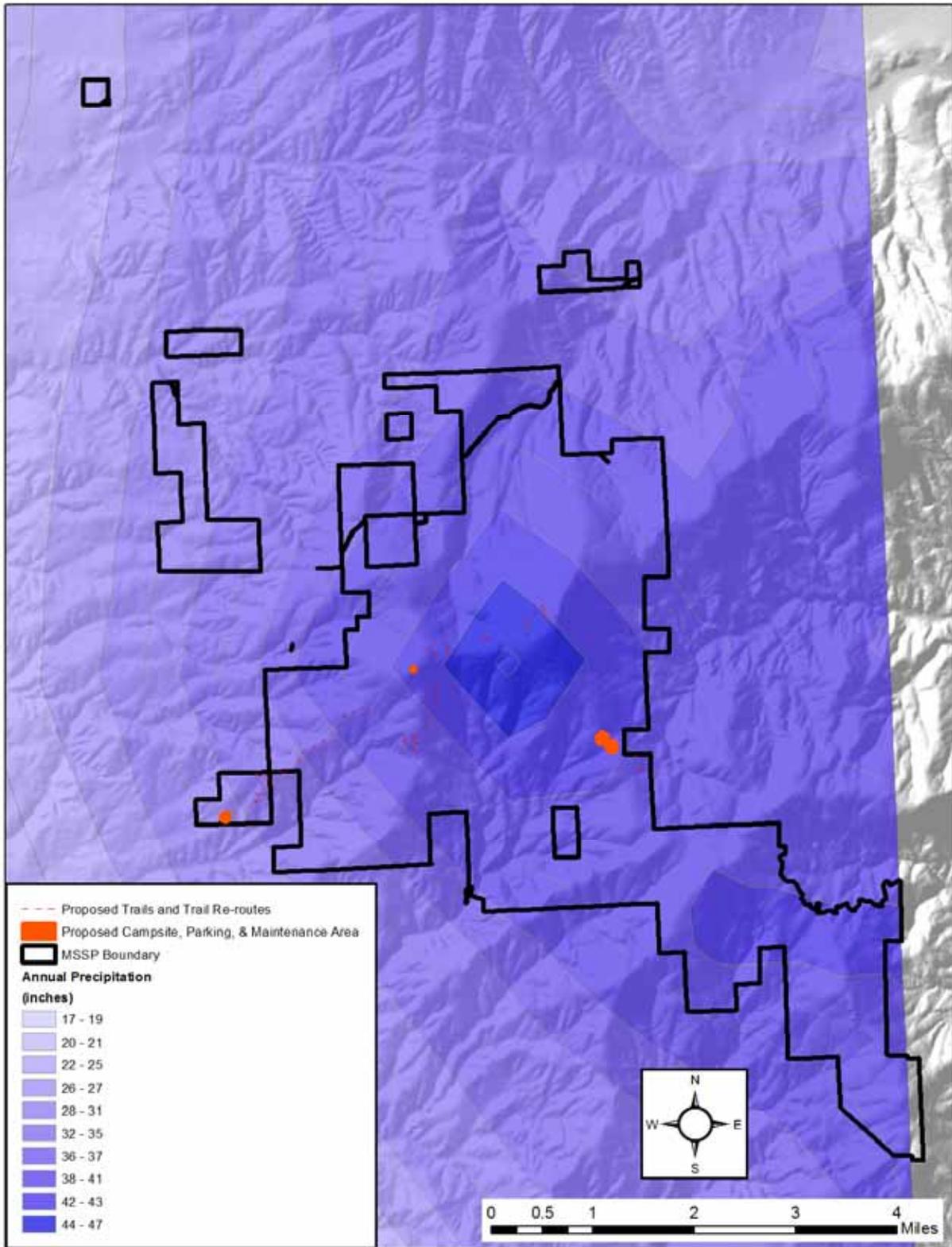


Figure 2. Proposed Actions in relationship to precipitation zones at Mt. Spokane State Park.

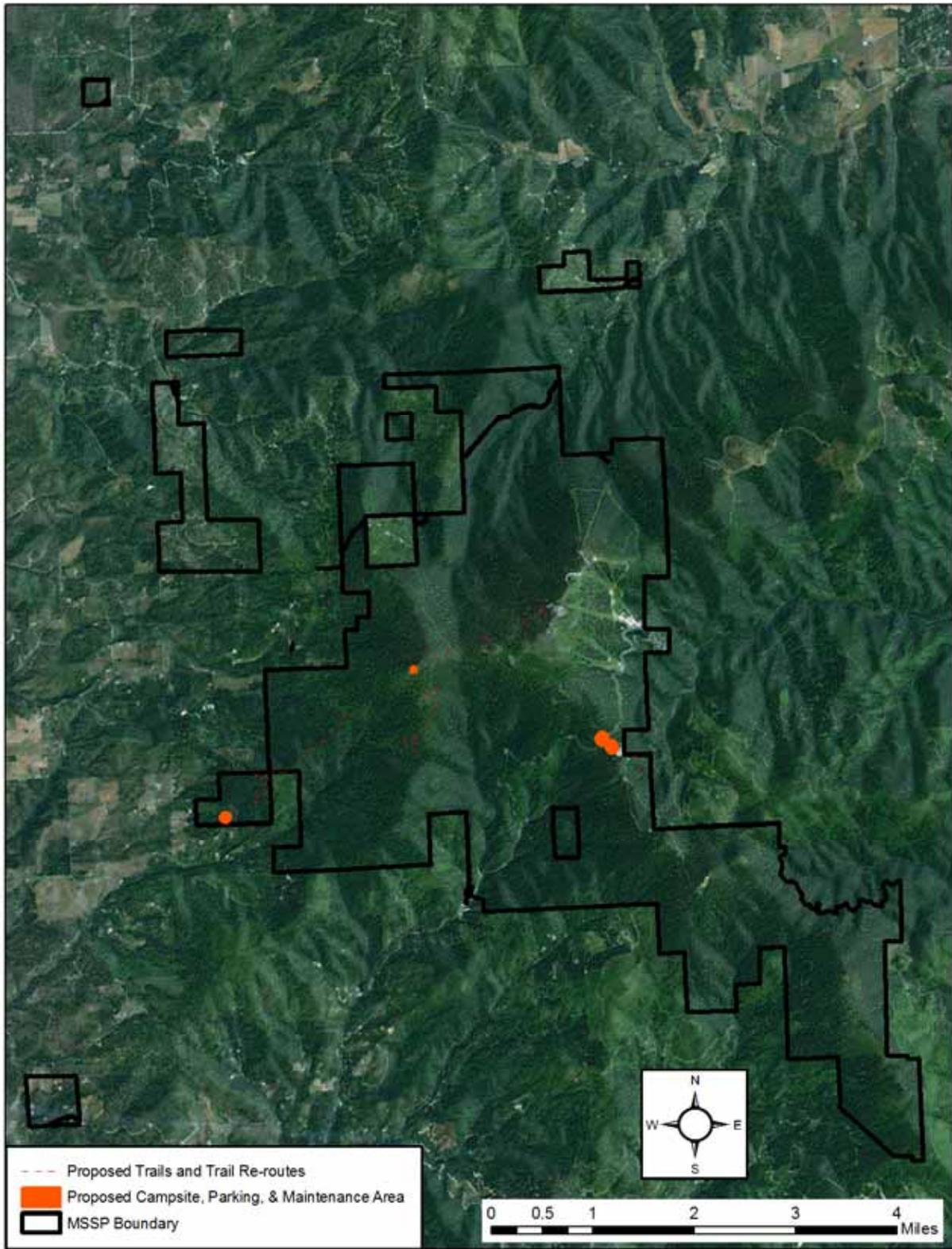


Figure 3. Proposed Actions in relationship to forests and other land cover types at Mt. Spokane State Park.

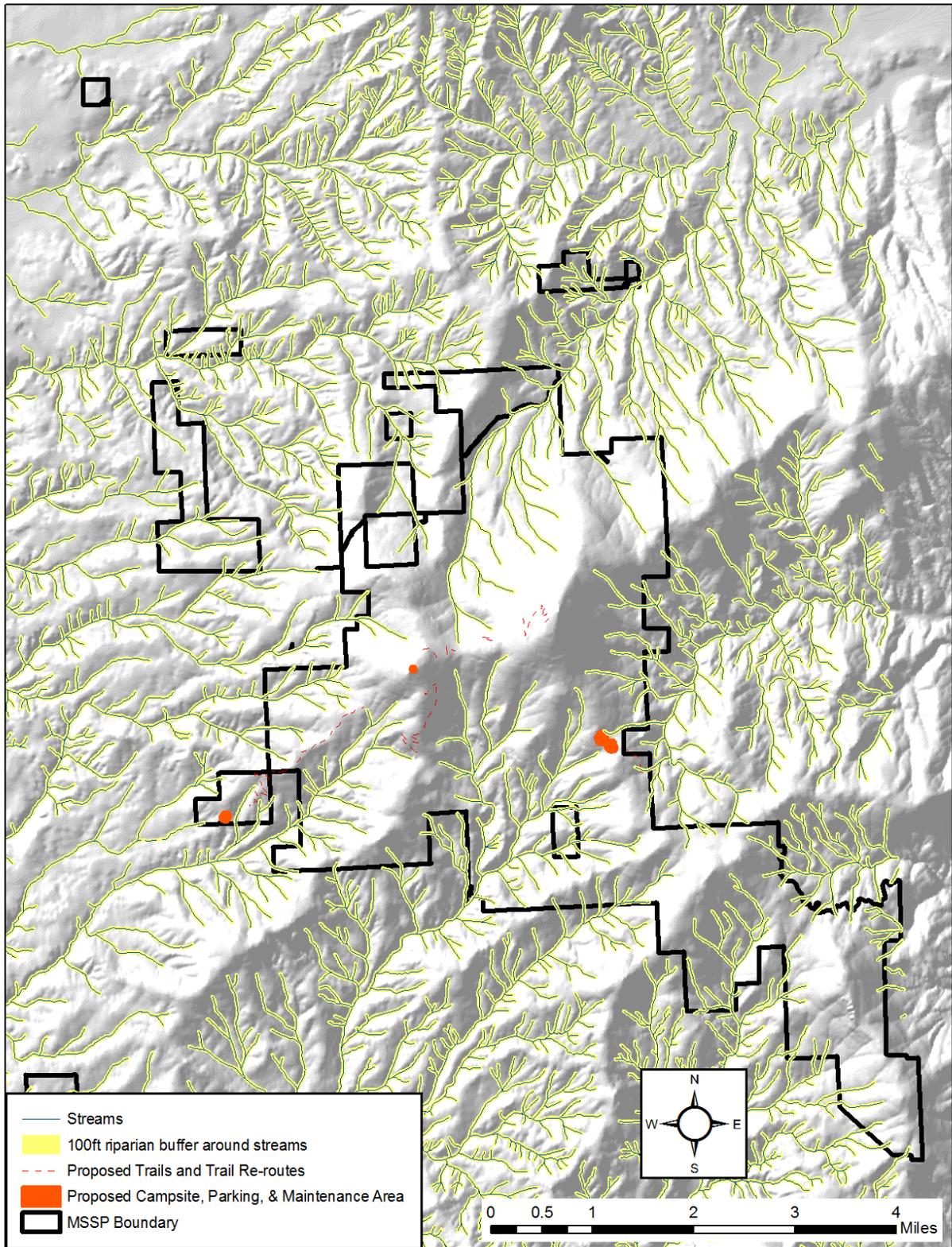


Figure 4. Proposed Actions in relationship to streams and riparian areas at Mt. Spokane State Park.