Fort Ord Prescribed Burn Review

Fort Ord BRAC Office **May 2004**

COMMUNITY BULLETIN #7

Army Evaluates 'Lessons Learned' From 2003 Prescribed Burn

On October 24, 2003, the Army ignited a prescribed burn designed to burn off the vegetation on approximately 500 acres at the former Fort Ord. Instead, before the fire was out, the fire had burned 1,470 acres and many residents of Seaside, Monterey, Carmel, and Pacific Grove were complaining about smoke and ash from the fire.

For several months the Army has been conducting a number of studies to determine exactly what happened, including what went wrong and what went right. This Community bulletin is a report to the community on what the Army has found out, and what actions the Army will take before any future fires.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 10 Prescribed burn announced for October 13. Notice sent to people who applied for relocation and crews were mobilized.

OCTOBER 11 Weather prediction changed, resulting in postponement of fire planned for Oct. 13.

OCTOBER 21 Prescribed burn announced for October 24. Crews mobilized. Press release issued announcing the scheduled burn. Families who registered for relocation, local elected officials, nearby schools and others received notices via phone or e-mail. Pre-treatment of fuel-breaks began.

OCTOBER 23 National Weather Service upgraded the county fire weather watch to a Red Flag Warning for the region except for the immediate coast. Additional firefighting equipment brought to the site to help in case of an escaped fire. At 6 PM, high-level officials of the Army consulted with officials of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the California Air Resources Board. Army officials determined that the weather conditions for the next day appeared to be appropriate, and all staff and equipment needed to conduct the fire were on site. Based on this, the Army decided to proceed with the fire, assuming that the weather conditions in the morning were as predicted. Designated roads were closed at 7pm to establish an exclusion zone.

OCTOBER 24 After determining that weather conditions met requirements, securing the burn perimeter and verifying the readiness of fire operations, the Army made a decision to ignite the prescribed burn.

9 AM: Fire ignited. Air monitoring began.
11 AM: Escape declared
Late afternoon: Fire considered contained
8 PM: Major flare-ups occurred several hundred feet east of General Jim Moore Boulevard

OCTOBER 25 Fire personnel ignited unburned vegetation within containment lines, for fire safety purposes.

OCTOBER 26 Additional patches of vegetation within containment lines were burned for fire safety purposes. Due to additional days of active ignition the relocation period was extended until Tuesday (October 28) noon.

OCTOBER 27 Mop-up and patrol of the fire area.

OCTOBER 28 Relocation period ends. Mop-up and patrol of the fire area continued.

OCTOBER 29 Mop-up and patrol of the fire area continued.

OCTOBER 30 Mop-up and patrol of the fire area continued.

OCTOBER 31 Fire operation declared complete.

Why Was the Fire Lit in the First Place?

The Army uses prescribed burns to burn off brush so the Army can safely remove unexploded ordnance and explosives. This unexploded ordnance and explosives was left over from when the Army used Fort Ord to train soldiers to fire artillery and use explosives. Hundreds of thousands of rounds of artillery and rockets were fired while Fort Ord was a training center. Some of the shells and ordnance didn't explode. So they still remain on the ground, particularly in former firing ranges. They can be detonated if bumped or even by walking over them.

The Army wants to clean up this land as soon as possible. Otherwise, anyone who trespasses on the land could be killed or seriously injured. Children or teenagers are the most likely to trespass. No other uses of the land are possible until the unexploded ordnance and explosives have been removed.

But the land is covered with dense brush. Before it is safe for cleanup workers to enter the land, the Army has to burn off the brush. Cleanup workers will then be able see the ground and can avoid stepping upon or kicking something explosive.

Prescribed burns are the only safe way to remove the vegetation. In addition, prescribed burns are the only means of vegetation clearance permitted under a Habitat Management Plan, a multi-agency agreement with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The habitat in these areas includes several rare or endangered plant and animal species. If the vegetation is burned off, it is actually rejuvenated. If it is cut down, it does not fully recover.

Once the vegetation has been cleared, the Army will use sophisticated detection equipment to find the unexploded ordnance and explosives. Then the Army will detonate any unexploded materials, and will remove remaining metal from the land. When the cleanup is over, some of the land will be developed, but more than 85% will remain as open space. These lands will become part of the largest park in Monterey County.

How Was the Decision Made to Proceed With the Fire?

The Army, in consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the California Air Resources Control Board developed a "prescription" for weather conditions that would minimize smoke impacts on the community. The plan was to start the fire on a day when the wind was blowing towards the ocean, or gently onshore from the ocean, so that smoke would rise in a column where it would disperse at high altitudes before the afternoon sea breezes began. There are relatively few days when these weather conditions occur, and they occur mostly in the late fall.

Days when these weather conditions occur in the Monterey area often coincide with weather conditions that are considered high fire risk days for much of California. The Santa Ana wind conditions that whipped up the Southern California fires in October occur under similar weather conditions.

On October 23, the day before the 2003 prescribed burn, the Army verified that all the key required conditions were met – appropriate weather conditions were forecast, the fuel moisture level in the vegetation was sufficient, and fuel breaks had been sprayed with fire retardant. The Army also verified that all needed equipment and personnel (including backup fire resources) were available. On October 23rd the National Weather Service announced a Red Flag Warning (high fire risk) for the region. However, this warning did not include coastal areas.

At 6 PM on October 23, senior officials of the Army consulted with the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control, and Air Resources Board, and those parties agreed to proceed with the prescribed burn, pending a final decision the next morning that appropriate conditions existed. The prescribed burn was opposed by the Ord Military Community Fire Chief based on the Red Flag Warning and a concern that some Northern California fire-fighting equipment would need to be sent to Southern California where devastating fires were burning. However, taking into consideration that the Red Flag Warning did not apply to coastal areas, the decision was made to proceed with the fire. The Army did agree to bring in additional fire-fighting crews and equipment, in case some of the normal backup would not be available.

COMPARISON OF PRESCRIBED AND ACTUAL WEATHER CONDITIONS

(Source of information is Draft MRS-Ranges 43-48 Prescribed Burn After- Action Report, April 2004)

Weather Conditions		Prescription		October 24
Sky		Acceptable	Preferred	(9:06 AM – 11:00 AM)
		Clear or clear to scattered cumulous	—	Clear
Wind Direction and Speed	Morning	Direction 40-140^0, Wind speed: 0-15 mph	Direction: 70-120^0, Wind speed: 5-10 mph	Direction: 68-78^0 (Southwest-west) Wind speed 6-15 mph
	Afternoon	Direction 240-40^0, Wind speed: 0-15 mph	Direction 270-40^0, with periods of calm to light winds with variable directions	NA
Temperature		55-85^0 F	65-80^0 F	68-76^0 F
Relative Humidity		10-60%	14-40%	23-30%
Late morning mixing level		A mixing depth of 1,500 ft. within 2 hours of ignition		10:00 AM = 1,000 feet 12:00 PM = 1,500 ft 1:00 PM = 2,500 ft

How Did the Fire Escape the Primary Containment Line?

Fire fighters cannot fight fires on the former firing ranges from the ground because the fire will detonate some of the unexploded ordnance and explosives on the ground. Fragments from these explosions could hit firefighters working from containment lines around the fire.

The Army had to fight the fire from the air. Fire fighting equipment included a number of helicopters and air tankers. The fire was also ignited from the air. Because of the potential for flying fragments, aircraft had to remain at higher altitudes than they would during a typical fire.

The Army created containment lines around the area to be burned prior to the fire. The day before the fire, using fixed-wing aircraft, the Army sprayed the containment lines and a buffer zone outside these containment lines with fire retardant. Water tenders (trucks) also sprayed water and foam on brush outside along firebreaks.

There is actually no way to know for sure how the fire escaped the containment lines. There are two theories for the escape. Videotapes show the actual escape. However, either theory could explain what is seen in the video.

Most of the people involved in managing the fire believe that fire-brands (embers or burning vegetation) blew over the containment lines and landed in brush across the containment line. This brush had been treated with fire retardant, foam, and water. Since the fire retardant was applied from the air, the retardant may not have reached all the sticks and leaves beneath the lower branches. This debris may have been set afire by the fire brands, with the fire spreading to other nearby vegetation.

The second theory is that sparks from the igniter were accidentally thrown across the containment line, starting the fire. At the time the first spot fire started, the helicopter dropping the igniting material was flying along the containment line just across from where the spot fire started. The material that starts the fire is dispensed from a container that hangs below the helicopter (see photo). Because of the danger from exploded ordnance and explosives, this dispenser was on longer cables than normal so the helicopter could maintain the needed distance from the dangerous explosives. This meant that the dispenser could swing from side to side a greater distance than normal. It is possible that on one of those swings, some of the ignition sparks could have been thrown across the containment line.

Fire ignited from a helicopter

Why Weren't Spot Fires Put Out Right Away?

The first helicopter arrived to drop water on the spot fire four minutes after the first spot fire started. This first spot fire was contained. Unfortunately, two other spot fires started soon after the first. The video shows that by this time the area where the spot fires were located was covered with smoke from the main fire. It became unsafe for helicopters to work in the air directly over the spot fires. Water was dropped on the flanks of the fires, but not directly on the fires themselves. As a result, the water dropped from the air did not put out the spot fires. The second set of spot fires then burned to the second line of containment.

Why Was There So Much Smoke?

There are several reasons why the smoke was as dense as it was: the fire was larger; the fire smoldered as it was extinguished; smoke did not disperse into the upper atmospheres; and an unanticipated inversion layer was present.

First, the fire burned an area three times larger than planned. This meant that three times as much vegetation was burned than planned, putting much more smoke into the air.

Almost immediately after the fire was declared an escaped fire, all firefighting resources were re-targeted at putting out the escaped fire. A smoldering fire, produced when a fire is being put out, always produces more smoke than a fire that is burning freely. When a fire is burning very intensely, it creates a column of smoke that rises vertically in the air to a high altitude. This column began to develop early in the fire. As efforts were refocused on controlling the blaze, the column stopped rising vertically and began to blow more horizontally.

Another factor was that winds at higher elevations were higher than on the ground, where winds were measured. On the morning of October 24, the winds at ground level were blowing at speeds of 4-8 mph, well within the required range. Subsequent studies show that strong winds of up to 23 mph were present within the first 1,000 feet. This prevented the smoke from rising in a verticle plume into the upper atmosphere. Instead the smoke blew horizontally towards populated areas.

Finally, the inversion layer – the atmospheric conditions that hold smoke close to the ground – normally rises as temperatures climb during the day, permitting the smoke to rise into the upper atmosphere. On the morning of October 24th, the inversion layer rose slower than predicted, which also contributed to keeping the column of smoke from rising vertically.

What Harm Was Done to the Unplanned 1,000 Acres?

The primary damage caused by the escaped fire was that the fire created much more smoke and ash than it would have if the fire had proceeded as planned. The nearly 1,000 acres that burned unexpectedly is land that would eventually have been burned to clear vegetation and permit cleanup of unexploded ordnance and explosives. No private property was burned.

The Army found many more ordnance and explosive items on this land than was expected (see photo). Because of the proximity of this area to Seaside, and because the ordnance items were exposed, the Army provided 24-hour security around the area until it was able to remove the ordnance on the surface. This surface cleanup has now been completed. This cleanup was considered to be a "time-critical" cleanup, which can be conducted in an expedited manner.

Why Were There Fires on Subsequent Days?

Once the fire was declared an escaped fire, all the equipment was mobilized for fire-fighting. This meant that some areas inside the containment lines did not get burned off, because fire-fighters were concentrating on stopping the fire rather than systematically burning off all the vegetation. With some areas not burned off, and some nearby areas still smoldering, there was considerable danger of a new fire occurring under uncontrolled conditions. In the days after the fire, firefighters burned off those areas inside the containment lines that had not been burned during the initial fire. This was done entirely for fire safety purposes.

Where Did the Smoke Blow?

On October 24, the smoke plume blew towards the ocean, as planned. Smoke blew more to the southwest than expected, rather than due west. The smoke remained at lower altitudes than expected.

On October 24, both the Army and the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (Air District) received a number of air quality-related complaints by phone. These calls confirm that the areas that were hardest hit were Seaside, Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel, as indicated in the accompanying chart.

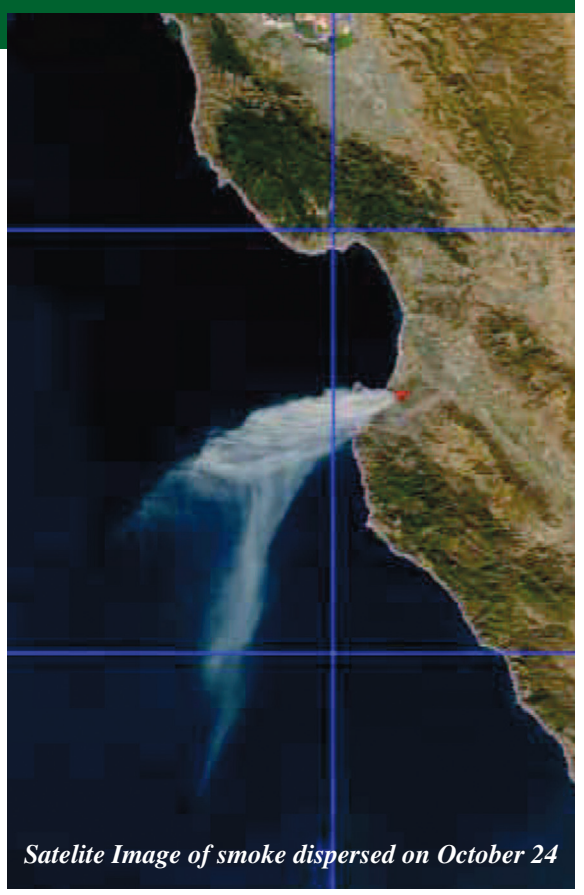
The mop-up fires on October 25 and 26 were ignited later in the day, under atmospheric conditions that would permit the smoke to rise into the upper atmosphere. Because the fires were lit later in the day, the winds were blowing in from the ocean.

On these days, winds pushed the smoke more towards the east [Highway 68, Toro Park, Spreckels].

Air Quality Complaints Oct. 24, 2004

Calls Received by Army	*Calls Received by Air District*	*Locations*
27	7	Carmel
22	9	Monterey
14	5	Seaside
9	2	Pacific Grove
2	2	Pebble Beach
2	0	Salinas
2	0	Del Rey Oaks
1	2	Marina
0	3	Carmel Valley
10	0	Other*

** Outside Monterey County or Unidentified*



Satelite Image of smoke dispersed on October 24

Were There Munitions-Related Contaminants in the Air?

No. The Army conducted extensive air monitoring during the 2003 prescribed burn. No contaminants associated with detonation of unexploded ordnance and explosives were detected. This means that smoke, ash or debris from this fire at Fort Ord was no different than it would have been from a fire anywhere with similar vegetation.

Prior to the fire, some community members raised concerns that a fire at Fort Ord would put toxins in the air. The Army conducted computer modeling studies that showed that the amount of contaminants put into the air by incidental detonation of explosives would be extremely small, and well below health-protective screening levels established by the environmental regulators.

Measurements taken during the actual prescribed burn confirmed the computer modeling. Air monitoring did not detect any munitions-related contaminants. The Army used state-of-the-art monitoring equipment designed to test for all munitions constituents. All tests were conducted by an independent laboratory.

Did Smoke Itself Create Health Risks?

The Army set up air monitoring sites throughout the area and measured contaminants in the air during the fire. On October 24, the concentrations of inhalable particulate matter (PM10) were significantly above the 24-hour California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) at nearly every monitoring site. On October 25th, elevated PM10 concentrations were even more widespread, with every monitoring site showing readings at or above the 24-hour CAAQS.

At some sites two other compounds, aldehyde and acrolein were also observed at levels above acceptable regulatory levels. Aldehyde and acrolein are released whenever vegetation burns; they are not associated with detonation of ordnance or explosives. Acrolein is one of the primary sources of eye irritation from smoke.

The acrolein readings are questionable. The Army and the Air District established a baseline by conducting readings of contaminants in the air on days not affected by fire. The baseline allows agencies to compare air without the smoke from the fire, and air during the fire. Acrolein was detected in five of the 15 background samples. This suggests that the acrolein detected during the fire may have been caused by air contamination from sources other than the fire, and may be present on a regular basis in the air in the Monterey Bay Area. Acrolein is found in auto exhaust, in cooking using animal fats, and has some industrial uses.

Inhaling smoke does create some health risks. For healthy people these health impacts are believed to be temporary. The Army and the environmental regulatory agencies believe these health risks need to be balanced with health and safety risks to cleanup workers and nearby homes.

Cleanup workers are at risk of accidentally triggering unexploded ordnance and explosives if they cannot see where they are walking. Children from nearby residents could trigger explosives if they trespass on the land. In addition, fire safety experts predict that the brush on the former Fort Ord will burn at some point. A naturally occurring or accidental fire would be uncontrolled, because fire fighters would be mobilized after the fire began. A fire of this type would probably have greater smoke impacts. The fire itself could be a threat to homes and property.

So the question is not really, “Should we have smoke or not” but rather, “Under what conditions – controlled or uncontrolled – should we have smoke?” If anything, the 2003 fire convinced fire safety experts that there is an even greater need to periodically burn off excess brush.

What Were the Lessons Learned From the Fire?

Here are some of the lessons learned from the 2003 fire:

- Fighting fires from the air is more challenging than originally believed. Aircraft must operate further above the fire than normal due to the danger of flying fragments from ordnance and explosives detonated by the fire.
- Attempting to reduce smoke impacts by waiting for days when winds were blowing towards the ocean may have backfired. The result was that the prescribed burn was ignited under conditions that contributed to a larger fire than planned.
- The danger of flying fragments may have been overemphasized in comparison to other risks, making fire-fighting more difficult.
- The fire risk from vegetation on the former Fort Ord is greater than previously realized. Some actions must be taken to reduce the fuel load to prevent uncontrolled accidental or naturally-occurring fires.
- There were no detectable contaminants in the air from incidental detonation of ordnance and explosives. Smoke and ash from this fire at Fort Ord was no different than smoke or ash from a fire anywhere else with similar vegetation.
- The ability to make reliable weather predictions even 48 hours before a fire is very limited.
- Wind should be measured at higher elevations, not just on the ground, to more accurately predict where smoke will go.

The agencies will be revising the requirements for future prescribed burns to incorporate these lessons-learned.

How Did the Army Inform the Community Before the Fire?

Here is a brief summary of how the Army informed the community about the decision to conduct a prescribed burn and the availability of the relocation program. The Army:

- Mailed two community bulletins announcing the prescribed burn and relocation program to more than 50,000 Monterey Bay Area households
- Conducted briefings at two monthly Community Involvement Workshops and two quarterly Technical Review Committee meetings
- Sent a letter to all local elected officials informing them that "burn season" was beginning
- Contacted numerous community organizations and informed them of the prescribed burn and the opportunity for relocation
- Held relocation program sign-up workshops (announced in one of the community bulletins) in Spreckels and Seaside
- Placed half or full-page advertisements in local newspapers announcing the beginning of "burn season" and the availability of the relocation program
- Issued press releases that resulted in numerous front-page stories and radio and television announcements of the fire and
- Conducted a symposium for CSUMB students, and CSUMB put a fact sheet up on the CSUMB website

How Many People Relocated During the Fire?

The Army offered to pay temporary relocation costs for people who wanted to be out of the area during the fire. Any resident of Monterey County was eligible. Relocation had to be to some place outside of Monterey County.

A total of 768 families registered for relocation. Of these, 219 registrations were carried over from prior registration in 2002. 332 families registered between October 22 (the day after the prescribed burn was announced) and October 28 (the day the relocation period ended).The relocation was originally intended to last three nights, but was extended two additional nights when the Army conducted additional mop-up burns on October 25 and 26.

Not all of the people who registered for relocation actually did relocate. The Army received 493 reimbursement requests. The Army has processed all requests, at a cost of $291,309. Total relocation expenses – including motel rooms and meal vouchers paid for directly by the Army — were $364,579.

How Will Future Fires Be Kept From Escaping?

The Army is conducting a reappraisal of its entire plan for conducting prescribed burns. The Army has already conducted workshops with local fire chiefs and weather experts to re-visit the weather "prescription" and fire management plan. Some of the issues being considered include the followiong:

What are the maximum distances that firefighters have to maintain to avoid the risk of flying fragments from explosives?

For the Range 43-48 prescribed burn the Army determined that 1,701 feet – about 1/3 of a mile — was the distance that should be maintained from the area where explosives were located. This distance changes for each prescribed burn based on the terrain and the type of munitions found on the ground at the site of each burn. The 1,701-foot distance in effect for the Range 43-48 fire meant that the fire had to be fought from the air. It would be much easier to manage fires from the ground. In addition, firefighting from the air would be more effective if firefighters were able to get as close to the fire as firefighters do in other locations. The Army is re-visiting the distances that have to be maintained for future fires to see whether it is possible to respond to these concerns.

Is it possible to fight fires from the ground?

Local fire chiefs have said that they feel the Army must provide them a safe way to fight Fort Ord fires from the ground. This not only means much wider containment lines, but containment lines that are safe for fire fighters, who don't want to have to dodge fragments from detonation of ordnance and explosives during a fire.

What is the "best" weather prescription for a fire?

The Army is considering whether the weather prescription should be changed to allow more permissible days for igniting a prescribed burn. The 2003 fire was lit under conditions that were believed to be optimal for reducing smoke impacts. However, these weather conditions contributed to the fire escaping the containment lines and ultimately produced more smoke. Also, the number of days that the weather conditions in the current prescription occur is very limited, and very hard to predict. This increases the possibility of "false alarms," where the community is warned of an upcoming prescribed burn, only to have it cancelled at the last minute. The Army will re-evaluate the current prescription for ideal weather conditions, as well as consider other changes such as smaller, more frequent fires.

Who should manage the fire?

The Army is also considering who should manage future fires, including the possibility that fire management could be turned over to another organization.

The Army will be considering all these issues, and community comments addressing these issues, in planning for future prescribed burns. Changes in the prescribed burn program will be announced in the next community bulletin.

The post-burn reports referred to in this community bulletin will be posted on the Fort Ord website at www.FortOrdCleanup.com, as they are completed.

What Were the Comments from the Public After the Fire?

On November 13, 2003 the Army conducted a public meeting where community members could comment on the fire and the way it was managed by the Army. Senior officials from the Army, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and California Department of Toxic Substances Control were present to receive comments. The public also had an opportunity to participate in a simultaneous "poster board" open house. Participants were able to talk directly to experts from these agencies. People were also invited to submit comments by phone, in writing or through e-mail. The Army publicized the meetings by putting large advertisements in local papers and issuing press releases.

A total of 117 people submitted comments in some form. 47 people spoke at the November 13 meeting. An additional 10 people filled out comment cards that evening. 17 written comments and 34 e-mail comments were received. In October and November, local newspapers published 22 letters to the editor related to Fort Ord's prescribed burn.

Strong differences were expressed by the commenters. A number of people were either opposed to the prescribed burn, or were very upset at the manner in which this burn has been handled. Others expressed strong support for continuation of the burns, although they too would prefer less smoke.

Concerns expressed by people who were upset by the fires included the following:

• Several people wanted more information about "how and why" people were exposed to so much smoke
• Some people felt that innocent people should not have to deal with the inconvenience of exposure to smoke just to protect people who trespass in off-limits areas.
• Others objected to the weather conditions under which the fire was set, believing them to be unsafe
• Several commented that they believed that homes in Seaside were threatened by the fire
• Many people expressed opposition to the use of prescribed burns due to smoke-related health concerns, concerns that a fire could burn out of control, and concerns that cleanup of the base would lead to more development of Fort Ord
• Others reported that they or people they knew experienced health problems during the fire
• Several people were concerned about the survival of wildlife during the fire

Comments made by people supportive of prescribed burns included the following:

• Several people expressed concern about the danger of injury or death if unexploded ordnance was not cleaned up
• Others observed that the chaparral will burn sometime anyway, ignited by lightning, arsonists, or careless campers. They believe it is better to have a controlled burn than an uncontrolled wildfire. They referred to the catastrophic wildfires in Southern California as reminders that wildland fuel management is essential to protect our communities.
• Some people commended the fire fighters for conducting the fire without any loss of lives or property.
• Some commented that smoke and ashes were merely inconveniences, and the benefits of the ordnance cleanup far outweighed the inconveniences experienced.
• Some recognized the benefits of fire for chaparral vegetation, a habitat including threatened or endangered plant and animal species which is rejuvenated by fire.

Some Community Outreach Statistics:

• There were 4,667 calls to the Fort Ord hotline in October 2003—3,496 were made during the week of October 22-28. The vast majority of callers asked questions about the fire or the relocation program. The typical number of calls to the hotline is less than 100 per month.
• A total of 1,273 calls were answered on October 24, the day of the fire.
• There were 7,907 visits made to Fort Ord's website at www.fortordcleanup.com during the week of the burn. This compares with 2,666 to 4,144 "hits" per week during three weeks in December 2003.

Suggestions for future fires included the following:

• Have frequent small fires of fewer acres, so fires will be easier to control.
• Light the fire in the spring or early summer when it will be easier to control
• Have an independent panel make to Go/No Go decision for any future burns.
• Burn off the entire area in one large fire, then re-burn smaller areas in a rotation pattern

The Army's responses to public comments will be in a Summary Report that will be posted soon on the Fort Ord website at www.FortOrdCleanup.com.

What Are Fort Ord's Plans Regarding Future Prescribed Burns?

The decision document (known as the Interim Action Record of Decision) that authorized the Army to conduct the 2003 prescribed burn also authorized cleanup, including prescribed burns, on two other sites, known as Munitions Response Site (MRS) 30A and MRS 16. The three sites were judged to pose an imminent threat to public safety. The decision document not only authorizes prescribed burns on these three sites, it commits the Army to cleanup these three sites on an accelerated schedule.

The Army plans to proceed first with cleanup of MRS 16, an 80 acre site. This site is located across the street from the existing Bureau of Land Management headquarters.

Most of the unexploded ordnance and explosives is concentrated in a portion of the site.

The overall Army budget for base cleanup has been cut dramatically this year. Fort Ord will be impacted by these cuts as well. This MRS 16 prescribed burn will probably be delayed until 2005.

How Can You Contact Us?

The Army is responsible for conducting cleanup of the former Fort Ord, but it must do so in a manner that complies with federal and state laws and under the supervision of federal and state regulatory agencies. At Fort Ord, the cleanup is supervised by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Under an agreement between the agencies, each team assigns a representative to a Base Cleanup Team (BCT). This team makes day-to-day management decisions about the cleanup program. Contacts for each of the participating agencies in Fort Ord's cleanup are listed below:

Additional Information About the Cleanup of Fort Ord

The Army is responsible for ensuring cleanup of the former Fort Ord, in a manner that complies with federal and state laws under the supervision of federal and state regulatory agencies. At Fort Ord, the cleanup is supervised by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Under an agreement between the agencies, each entity assigns a representative to a Base Cleanup Team (BCT). This team makes day-to-day management decisions about the cleanup program. Contacts for each of the participating agencies in Fort Ord's cleanup team are listed below:

United States Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA, 94105
Claire Trombadore, Remedial Project Manager, Member of Base Closure Team
(800) 231-3075 and (415) 972-3013 trombadore.claire@epa.gov

California Department of Toxic Substances Control
8800 Cal Center Drive, Sacramento, CA, 95826
Roman Racca, Remedial Project Manager, Member of Base Closure Team
(916)-255-3610 RRacca@dtsc.ca.gov
Kris B. Escarda, Public Participation Specialist (916) 255-6683 kescarda@dtsc.ca.gov

California Regional Water Quality Control Board *Central Coast Region*
895 Aerovista Place, Ste 101, San Luis Obispo, California 93401-7906
Grant Himebaugh, Remedial Project Manager, Member of Base Closure Team
(805)-542-4636 ghimebau@rb3.swrcb.ca.gov

United States Army—Fort Ord Base Realignment and Closure
Fort Ord BRAC Office, Attn: ATZP-EP, P.O. Box 5004,
Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5004
Gail Youngblood, BRAC Environmental Coordinator, Member of Base Closure Team,
(831)-242-7924 gail.youngblood@monterey.army.mil
Lyle Shurtleff, Military Munitions Response Program Manager
(831)-242-7919 lyle.shurtleff@monterey.army.mil
Melissa Hlebasko, Community Relations Program Coordinator
(831)-393-1284 / (800)-852-9699, Melissa.Hlebasko@monterey.army.mil

Information Repositories

• Fort Ord Administrative Record, Building 4463, Gigling Road, former Fort Ord (9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:30-4:00 PM except Federal Holidays)
• Seaside Library
• California State University Monterey Bay Library

For assistance in finding information of interest to you please contact Mary Bakan at: (831)-393-9186 or write to Community Relations, Fort Ord BRAC Office, Attn: ATZP-EP, P.O. Box 5004, Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5004.

Fort Ord Cleanup Website

www.FortOrdCleanup.com

Land Use of the Former Fort Ord

Fort Ord Reuse Authority (831) 883-3672

Put Your Name on Our Mailing List

To receive future information about Fort Ord Cleanup plans and activities, please clip and return this coupon to Community Relations Office, Attn: APZP-EP, P.O. Box 5004, Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5004 or fax to (831) 393-9188.

Name:

Address:

City:

State/Zip:

E-mail:

Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup
Community Relations Office
Attn: APZP-EP
P.O. Box 5004
Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5004

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