

**Workshop Summary Notes  
U.S. Army Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup  
Technical Review Committee (TRC)**

July 26, 2022

Fort Ord Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Office  
Via Conference Call

The below listed material was provided to participants in the conference call meeting:

- An agenda
- Presentation Slides – Fort Ord Military Munitions Response Program Update
- Presentation Slides – Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement (ESCA) Update

**Agenda Topics**

1. Presentation: Fort Ord Military Munitions Response Program Update
2. Presentation: ESCA Update

**Participants**

- Bill Collins, US Army Fort Ord BRAC
- Amber Sellinger, California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
- Bridget Floyd, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
- Melissa Broadston, City of Seaside ESCA
- Ben Havens-Stokes, City of Seaside
- Dan Waligora, California Fish & Wildlife
- Irene Miranda, Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD)
- Chieko Nozaki, Chenega
- Hudson Facchini, Chenega
- Jason No, Chenega

**Opening Remarks**

Mr. Collins opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the call. Mr. Collins updated everyone that the Community Involvement Workshop (CIW) on July 23<sup>rd</sup> was canceled. He explained Monterey County currently has a CDC COVID 19 Community level of “High” and in order to minimize spread, the decision was made to cancel the CIW. Email notifications, mailers, and newspaper ads were deployed announcing the cancellation. Staff members were on site the morning of July 23<sup>rd</sup> in case community members did visit despite the notifications. Mr. Collins then introduced Hudson Facchini as the new Munitions Response Site Security Manager and handed the meeting over to Jason No, the Public Outreach Specialist.

**Fort Ord Military Munitions Response Program Update**

Ms. Chieko Nozaki presented an update on the Army’s Military Munitions Response Program. She provided a list of acronyms frequently used in the munitions cleanup project then provided a timeline of key events. From 1917 – 1994 Fort Ord was used as a military training base in which many different types of munitions were used. Since the closure of Fort Ord as a military base, the Fort Ord Military Munitions Response

Program has cleaned and transferred nearly two-thirds of the property. In 2007, the Army and Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) signed the ESCA agreement. Under the ESCA, about 3,300-acre portion of the munitions cleanup was completed by the reuse authority. In 2020, the City of Seaside became the successor of the ESCA program.

Using a map, Ms. Nozaki then provided an overview of the Military Munitions Response Program status of the Former Fort Ord. The map highlighted the two sites of ongoing Army munitions cleanup. A gray area known as the Impact Area Munitions Response Area (MRA), is closed to the public with 4 strand barbed wire fence. Ms. Nozaki then highlighted an area on the map outlined in purple, known as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Area B. BLM Area B is a 1,600-acre habitat reserve area and approximately half of the area required additional munitions cleanup.

Ms. Nozaki continued the presentation with a second map showing portions of the munitions cleanup areas where surface removal of munitions and explosives of concern have been conducted and have yet to be conducted. The map also highlighted areas where vegetation burning as a component of the cleanup program had occurred. The munitions cleanup is expected to take 8-10 more years. Ms. Nozaki noted that Unit 5 inside the Impact Area MRA is about 130 acres, and surface cleanup had started on July 18, 2022 and is expected to last several more weeks.

Next were descriptions of the general work flow of the munitions and explosives of concern removal process. The general work flow consists of a work plan, site security (temporary signs and fencing), vegetation clearance via prescribed burn or cutting, munitions surface removal, digital geophysical mapping, subsurface removal in selected areas, removal of temporary signs and fencing, and issuing a final report. Ms. Nozaki noted Quality Control / Quality Assurance is continuously implemented during the field operations.

Vegetation must be removed to facilitate munitions cleanup. Ms. Nozaki proceeded to show pictures of both mechanical and manual cutting. Manual cutting is used in areas where it is difficult for large equipment to access and in sensitive areas such as wetlands. The Army conducts habitat monitoring before vegetation removal and for several years after munitions cleanup to monitor the recovery of the habitat. Ms. Nozaki noted that a prescribed burn can sometimes be used for vegetation removal. She also mentioned that Unit 5 will eventually have a prescribed burn but because it contains large projectiles and is located close to a community, a prescribed burn will only take place after surface removal is completed.

Once vegetation is removed, the cleanup area is organized into grids and trained technicians look for munitions on the surface. The presentation included a photo of technicians in a grid looking for munitions. Objects identified as an explosive hazard are detonated. A photo of a detonation was provided. Completed units are monitored for several years to check for erosion and changes in site conditions.

Once the surface munitions removal is complete, the area is mapped using digital geophysical equipment (“EM-61” electromagnetic sensors). The data provides information about how much metal remains in the ground and is used to produce a map showing the density of subsurface anomalies. These maps provide information that can be used as a general guide for reuse and safety support for future ground-disturbing activities. Subsurface removal is usually conducted in designated areas such as roads and trails. Photos of teams using the digital geophysical equipment were presented. The photos showed that the equipment can be pulled using a vehicle or by a person.

Ms. Nozaki shared photos of rare, threatened, and endangered species specific to the former Fort Ord. She explained how periodic burning helps promote the health and diversity of the rare Central Maritime Chaparral habitat that thrive in the area.

A map of the former Fort Ord was presented next, showing future munitions cleanup and prescribed burn locations. There are no prescribed burns scheduled for 2022, with a possibility in 2023. Unit 5 was highlighted on the map as it will require a prescribed burn after surface removal is complete. Units A and 31 are next for prescribed burns and munitions cleanup. Units 13, 17, and 20 were highlighted on the map as future munitions cleanup but will not be required to be burned due to the difficult terrain. Habitat monitoring will be conducted after the munitions cleanup is completed.

Prescribed burning is the primary method of vegetation clearance in habitat reserves with chaparral plant community, however, when burning is not feasible, the vegetation is cut. The goals of the Army’s prescribed burning are: to complete burn operations with no injuries; to hold the burn within the established containment lines; to minimize smoke impacts; to clear vegetation to facilitate safe munitions cleanup operations; and to minimize damage to and to promote conservation of rare, threatened and endangered species. In planning and conducting the burns the Army works with several agencies such as the local health department and air district, as well as community organizations, on different aspects of the prescribed burn. The Army will not burn under extremely dry and windy conditions, when sufficient resources are not available, or when there are large public events in the area. The Army also provides notices to the community before, during and after the burns. Ms. Nozaki showed photos of a past burn.

Ms. Nozaki continued the presentation with a map indicating areas where munitions-related land use controls are required. The Impact Area MRA, BLM Area B and most ESCA MRAs are among such areas.

Remedies for some munitions cleanup sites include safety measures to be observed during reuse. Ground-disturbing activities must be planned and coordinated in advance so appropriate munitions safety support is provided. Munitions recognition & safety training is required for people who will conduct these activities. The Army provides free in-person munitions recognition and safety training. Munitions safety training is also available online at [fortordsafety.com](http://fortordsafety.com). If a suspected munition is found during construction or digging, the 3R’s of explosives safety should be followed, and work cannot resume until the object is dealt with. Some properties have other restrictions. The

Impact Area MRA's perimeter fence is a part of the selected remedy, and will continue to be used during reuse.

Lastly, Ms. Nozaki shared resources that are available on the FortOrdCleanup.com website and how to access them. First was the current property transfer status map located on the "Factsheets" page in the "Community" tab. Next was locating parcel information using the "Interactive Parcel Map" and the "Parcel Database Search Tool" under the "Property" tab. Ms. Nozaki then pointed out the "National Priorities List: Partial Deletion of Superfund Site" article in the "Cleanup Background" page under the "About" tab. Next was information about the "5<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Review for Fort Ord" under the "News" tab. Then Ms. Nozaki showed the "Document Search" function and how to search for documents related to the Fort Ord Cleanup. Last, Ms. Nozaki shared the "Reference Documents" page under the "Documents" tab to show a list of documents that are the most frequently accessed.

The presentation concluded with Ms. Nozaki providing the Fort Ord Cleanup website and toll-free phone number for more information.

Two questions were asked by Mr. Dan Waligora from California Fish & Wildlife:

- On slide 12, some plants and species that are pictured rare, threatened, and endangered do not have a code (Federally, California, Threatened, etc.) why is that?
  - Mr. Collins replied that there is a Habitat Management Plan that includes species of special concern that are unique to the Fort Ord area as well as species listed as threatened or endangered.
- Before a prescribed burn, are there any attempts to collect seeds or to salvage and recover any species?
  - Mr. Collins replied that there are no attempts to salvage or recover prior to a prescribed burn. Generally, the habitat is suited for burns and will have the ability to return on its own. Habitat monitoring is conducted for several years after to ensure the habitat returns. Salvaging species has been implemented as part of habitat restoration in soil remediation areas, where the soil is excavated and removed.

### **ESCA Update**

Ms. Melissa Broadston with the City of Seaside provided presentation updates on the ESCA program. The presentation began with a list of the most commonly used acronyms and then went on to a brief description of "What is ESCA?"

The Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement (ESCA) is a grant from the Army. The original grant was issued to the Fort Ord Reuse Authority to complete the munitions cleanup in approximately 3,300 acres of the former Fort Ord property. The reuse authority was dissolved in June 2020 and succeeded by the City of Seaside. The current purposes of the program are to address residual munitions safety issues associated with former munitions training conducted in Fort Ord and the responsibility for the long-term

implementation of the land use controls until June 30, 2028. After June 2028, this responsibility will return to the Army.

A timeline of the status and history of the agencies related to ESCA was shown. Ms. Broadston noted that 3,300 acres have completed all munitions cleanup activity and transferred to the intended recipients. In 2007, when ESCA first started, these areas were consolidated into 4 groups and the Interim Action Ranges, according to similar cleanup and closure characteristics. This was a way to organize the properties located within different jurisdictions and future property re-uses. Ms. Broadston showed a color-coded map, displaying the groups. The County North Munitions Response Area (MRA) is a part of a Record of Decision that requires no munitions cleanup and does not have land use control requirements. All other groups have completed munitions cleanup as outlined in their Records of Decision. Each of these Records of Decision includes land use control remedies, which are further described in the land use control implementation plan. The presentation then continued into the cleanup status and proposed reuses for each group.

- Group 1: Seaside and Parker Flats MRAs: removals complete, land use control requirements are described in Group 1 Land Use Control Implementation Plan/Operation and Maintenance Plan (LUCIP/OMP) (ESCA-0361E), land transferred. Maps of proposed future reuses were shown: residential, non-residential, habitat reserve, and Veteran's cemetery.
- Group 2: California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) Off-Campus MRA: removals complete, land use control requirements are described in Group 2 LUCIP/OMP (ESCA-0305B), land transferred. A map of proposed future reuses was shown: Residential and non-residential development.
- Group 3: Del Rey Oaks/Monterey, Laguna Seca Parking, Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Site MRAs: removals complete, land use control requirements are described in Group 3 LUCIP/OMP (ESCA-0301B), land transferred. Maps of proposed future reuses were shown: Habitat management, non-residential development, continued use as overflow parking for Laguna Seca, and continued use as MOUT training area by Monterey Peninsula College (MPC).
- Group 4 Future East Garrison MRA: removals complete, land use control requirements are described in Group 4 LUCIP/OMP (ESCA-0364B), land transferred. A map of proposed future reuses was shown: residential, non-residential development, and habitat reserve.
- Interim Action Ranges MRA: removals complete, land use control requirements are described in the Interim Action Ranges MRA LUCIP/OMP (ESCA 0337B), land transferred to MPC. A map of proposed future reuses was shown: non-residential development, and habitat reserve.

Ms. Broadston continued the presentation with a review of the land use controls which include (1) safety recognition training, (2) construction support, (3) residential use restrictions and (4) habitat reserve restrictions.

The presentation continued with a discussion of instruments that are used to enforce the land use controls, which include: local digging and excavation ordinances, memorandum

of agreement with California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) regarding monitoring and reporting of land use controls, covenants to restrict the use of property, and deed restriction. Safety training is available at FortOrdSafety.com and a review of the 3R's were given: Recognize, Retreat, Report.

The presentation concluded with recent activities that included the installation of new signs, refresher trainings for jurisdictions, and coordination with utility entities for access to various properties.

There were no questions.

**Closing Remarks**

The next outreach event will take place at the Monterey County Fair on September 1, 2022. Fort Ord Cleanup will host an information booth.

The next Technical Review Committee will be held in February 2023. The topics will include groundwater cleanup and the status of the Operable Unit 2 landfill. Email notifications will be sent a month in advance to participants.