

Frequently Asked Questions

Munitions Cleanup: Fort Ord National Monument (Northern Portion)



Introduction

This fact sheet addresses frequently asked questions about roads and trail access while the Army conducts a munitions cleanup in the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument. The Army calls this munitions cleanup area “Bureau of Land Management Area B” or “BLM Area B”, for short. The munitions cleanup area is about 800 acres and is located north of the former Impact Area.

The Army and the Bureau of Land Management are committed to providing a safe use for visitors, workers, and wildlife on the former Fort Ord. Munitions investigations in the northern portion of the National Monument have prompted additional cleanup work which began in May 2017. This work is expected to take several years to complete. The cleanup could temporarily affect access to the road and trail systems that were previously open for public recreation. Visitors who comply with posted restrictions and remain on designated trails are safe from munitions hazards. We ask that you **Mind the Signs**.

This is an important area for many recreational users. Key cleanup goals include:

- Keep the community safe during cleanup work
- Comply with the Superfund Record of Decision
- Complete cleanup safely and quickly
- Minimize public access impacts
- Prepare land for safe management and use as the Fort Ord National Monument

SCHEDULE and ACCESS

NOTICE

**ROADS AND TRAILS
TEMPORARILY CLOSED AHEAD**

**Fort Ord National Monument
Munitions Cleanup**



For more information:
U.S. Army 1-800-852-9699
www.fortordcleanup.com/programs/blm-area-b/

HOW CAN I GET INFORMATION ABOUT ROAD AND TRAIL CLOSURES AND CLEANUP ACTIVITIES?

Current road and trail closures can be found at www.fortordcleanup.com/programs/blm-area-b/ and the Army's information line at 1-800-852-9699.

WHY DO THE ROADS AND TRAILS NEED TO BE CLOSED?

Army safety regulations require that public safety exclusion zones be maintained during munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) cleanup activities. The types of activities that require safety exclusion zones include vegetation cutting, prescribed burning, and MEC removal. The exclusion zones protect the public from flying debris from mechanical vegetation cutting and explosives operations.

WHEN AND HOW LONG WILL TRAIL CLOSURES BE IN EFFECT?

The time a particular trail may be closed is dependent upon the field activities that require an exclusion zone. The Army strives to avoid prolonged closures, and will reopen the roads and trails as soon as possible. For the latest information on access to areas in the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument, go to our website:

www.fortordcleanup.com/programs/blm-area-b/. For a brief verbal description of trail closures, please call 1-800-852-9699.

WILL THE ENTIRE AREA BE CLOSED OR CAN SOME AREAS BE LEFT OPEN AS THE CLEANUP IS CONDUCTED?

The Army has subdivided the munitions cleanup area into sub areas so that temporary trail closures can be limited to areas where work is occurring. Affected trails will be reopened for public use after the cleanup is complete in the work area.

CAN THE ROADS AND TRAILS BE USED ON WEEKENDS AND EVENINGS?

To further reduce impacts to recreational use and to facilitate transit to and from parts of the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument, the Army has identified "**Access Corridors**" that will be kept open during evenings and weekends. The access corridors are identified in maps on the project website www.fortordcleanup.com/programs/blm-area-b/.

WILL CLOSURES AFFECT THE SEA OTTER CLASSIC OR OTHER EVENTS HELD IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT?

The Army works closely with other property owners and event organizers when its environmental cleanup actions could affect them. The Army is coordinating with Bureau of Land Management to adjust trail closures, when possible, to accommodate Bureau of Land Management events.

HOW LONG WILL THE PROJECT TAKE?

The munitions cleanup in the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument began in May 2017. A rough estimate for project completion is 3 or more years. Completion is dependent on many variables including the ability to conduct prescribed burns. In 2017, the Army completed prescribed burns in two units. One more prescribed burn is planned for 2018 in Unit A. The Army's goal is to complete the cleanup in the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument as quickly as possible and to reopen the land to recreational use.

WILL SOME POPULAR TRAILS BE CLOSED FOR MANY YEARS?

The sooner the Army can finish the cleanup the sooner the closures will end. If we are able to complete the work as planned, including prescribed burning which is weather dependent, work should be complete in several years. In the interim, please **Mind the Signs**.

HOW CAN WE ENJOY THE FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT DURING THE MUNITIONS CLEANUP?

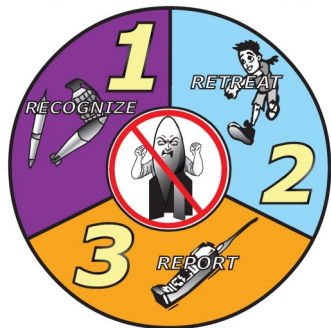
We ask that you **Mind the Signs**. When you are planning a trip into this area, please check the Army's website www.fortordcleanup.com/programs/blm-area-b/ or call 1-800-852-9699 to see if there are any road or trail closures related to cleanup work.

VISITOR SAFETY

WHAT IF I FIND A POSSIBLE MUNITIONS ITEM?

Please follow the 3 R's of explosives safety: Recognize, Retreat, and Report. Call 911.

REMEMBER the 3 Rs



of UXO Safety!

THE MONTEREY OFF ROAD CYCLING ASSOCIATION (MORCA) CONDUCTS TRAIL MAINTENANCE WORK ON A VOLUNTEER BASIS. WORK MAY INVOLVE SHALLOW GROUND DISTURBANCE SUCH AS 3 INCHES. DOES THAT COUNT AS A SUBSURFACE ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES CONSTRUCTION SUPPORT?

The answer is **yes**. Construction safety support is a requirement for any ground disturbing or intrusive activities within the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument. The Army will continue coordination with the Bureau of Land Management for the safe care of the monument. All volunteer work on trails must be coordinated with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure public safety.

MUNITIONS CLEANUP

WHAT DOES "SURFACE REMOVAL" MEAN?

Surface removal means that all visible suspected munitions and munitions debris will be removed from the ground surface. Vegetation must be cut or burned to make the ground visible for MEC removal teams to conduct this work. Explosive items will be destroyed by detonation.

WILL THE ARMY CUT TREES? WILL BURNING DAMAGE TREES?

In munitions cleanup areas, vegetation will be cut or burned to expose the ground for munitions removal. In oak woodland areas, trees greater than four inches in diameter will be limbed up to eight feet to allow access for surface removal. Though trees are not targeted for burning, if they are burned they usually survive. Chaparral will be cleared by prescribed burning when feasible.

WHY MUST THE ARMY BURN IN THE FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT?

Prescribed burning is the primary method for clearing chaparral vegetation to conduct munitions cleanup. Burning is also needed to sustain and enhance the chaparral plant community and is consistent with both the Fort Ord Habitat Management Plan and the Biological Opinion issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Prescribed burns will be conducted in a manner similar to those in the former Impact Area. They are conducted under strict burning conditions including very specific meteorological conditions. The Army will provide public notification of planned prescribed burns. There is just one more burn scheduled for the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument: Unit A.

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO ENSURE THE PROJECT IS COMPLETED WITHIN THE PROPOSED TIMEFRAME?

Familiarize yourself with the currently open trails and routes. Trespassing and vandalism in restricted areas will only slow down the cleanup progress. Be sure to **Mind the Signs**—and only use trails that are open.

WHAT WILL THE ARMY DO TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE TRAILS? The Army recognizes the temporary loss of trail access as well as the change to the character of trails as concerns. This will be taken into consideration as part of the work planning process. The Army is working closely with the Bureau of Land Management who will maintain the trail network for public enjoyment.



HASN'T THE ARMY ALREADY INVESTIGATED AND EVALUATED THIS AREA A LONG TIME AGO?

The current Bureau of Land Management properties were transferred in 1996. Army investigations were conducted at that time. Subsequent studies concluded additional cleanup is warranted in portions of the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument to support long-term use of the land as a habitat reserve. Visitors who comply with the posted restrictions and remain on designated trails are safe from munitions hazards.

The Army's goal is to minimize access impacts to recreational users during the cleanup, to complete the cleanup as quickly as possible, and to reopen roads and trails for recreational use under the Bureau of Land Management.

WILL THE ARMY PRIORITIZE CLEANUP IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE MONUMENT OVER CLEANUP IN THE IMPACT AREA, SINCE THE NORTHERN PART OF THE MONUMENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC?

The Army has prioritized cleanup of the northern portion of the Fort Ord National Monument, including prioritizing prescribed burns in this area. The Army strives to avoid prolonged closures and will reopen roads and trails as soon as possible. Munitions cleanup work will also continue in the Impact Area.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER AREAS OF THE FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT THAT THE ARMY NEEDS TO CLEAN UP?

Within the Fort Ord National Monument, the Army is conducting munitions cleanup on the former Impact Area. While the Impact Area is part of the Fort Ord National Monument, it is not currently accessible to the public.

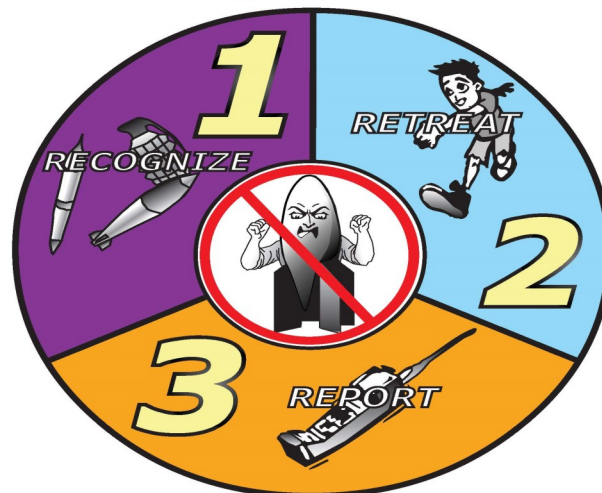
WILL THIS CLEANUP MAKE THE AREA 100% SAFE?

It should be remembered that even after these cleanup projects are completed, it does not mean zero risk -- there is always a potential for something to be found because of Fort Ord's history as an Army base. Maintaining safe public use of the Fort Ord National Monument is an ongoing effort. The Army will continue to work with the Bureau of Land Management to provide a safe parkland for visitors, workers, and wildlife.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FORT ORD MILITARY MUNITIONS RESPONSE PROGRAM:?

- www.FortOrdCleanup.com
- U.S. Army Fort Ord Base Realignment and Closure Office; William Collins, BRAC Environmental Coordinator, 1-831-393-1284, melissa.m.broadston.ctr@mail.mil
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9; Maeve Clancy 1-415-947-4105, Clancy.Maeve@epa.gov
- California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control; Vlado Arsov, 1-916-255-4988, Vlado.Arsov@dtsc.ca.gov

REMEMBER the 3 Rs



of UXO Safety!

Note:

Access corridors may be closed within the exclusion zones during work, but will remain open the rest of the time to allow for passage through the Monument.

