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**FEDS RECOGNIZE FORMER FORT ORD ARMY BASE
FOR NATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN SITE REUSE**

MARINA, CA — Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the winners of the third annual “National Federal Facility Excellence in Site Reuse” awards. These awards recognize the innovative thinking and cooperation among federal agencies, states, tribes, local partners and developers that have led to noteworthy restoration and reuse of federal facility sites. Fort Ord was honored for its Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program, managed by the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) in collaboration with United States Army.

“I would like to congratulate the Fort Ord Reuse Authority, and everyone who worked to make this vision a reality, for earning this National Federal Facility Excellence in Site Reuse Award,” said Congressman Jimmy Panetta who represents the area. “This accomplishment would not have been possible without the longstanding partnerships between federal, state, and local governments and the dedication of community members who have worked for decades to not only protect public health and our environment, but also invest in our economic growth and community revitalization.”

The former Army Base, which had been a training facility since WWI, closed in 1994 under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program. The closure created an opportunity to repurpose the 28,000-acre base, the largest transition of Army property in United States history. New uses developed at the former Fort Ord include:

- California State University Monterey Bay campus,
- Fort Ord National Monument and Dunes State Park,
- California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery,
- Retail center, residential developments, and
- Veterans Administration outpatient clinic.

“This national recognition is thanks to many professionals who have worked tirelessly to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment and supports the reuse identified by the local communities,” said Bill Collins, Fort Ord BRAC Environmental Coordinator, U.S. Army. “The Army appreciates the continued collaboration and cooperation among the EPA, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Fort Ord Reuse Authority which have made the successful redevelopment and reuse of the former Fort Ord possible.”

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“The progress at Fort Ord has allowed new institutions and community benefitting assets to take shape and set the stage for a bright future on the Monterey Bay,” said Fort Ord Reuse Authority Executive Officer Josh Metz. “We are honored by this recognition, and hope lessons learned here can benefit other environmental cleanup and base reuse efforts.”

The diverse utilization of the large site has spurred new jobs, housing opportunities, and an overall regional economic recovery that has benefited more than 17,000 residents and 6,000 employees in the Monterey Bay region. From start to finish, the redevelopment at Fort Ord has been a model that will benefit other large redevelopment projects in the future.

The Army BRAC Office has been the Fort Ord environmental remediation leader, passing 3,340 acres of land and resources to FORA, who in turn passed those resources to the local jurisdictions who have joined in partnerships with public sector interests to reuse these valuable resources for community needs. FORA completed the Army’s Munitions Remediation responsibility under an Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement through its contractors Arcadis, Westcliffe Engineers and Weston Solutions. Working with the Army, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Toxic Substances, FORA successfully received certificates of remedial completion from EPA in 2020.

“For the past three years, we’ve shown how federal facility Superfund sites can be transformed into community assets,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “I’m proud of the work to address and redevelop these sites, which provides economic development and investment, and creates jobs in these communities.”

FORA has also provided the leadership, technical expertise and funding to remediate lead and asbestos through building removal in Marina and the County as well as Seaside’s Korean War era concrete buildings making way for development in those portions of the former Fort Ord.

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