

ESCA REMEDIATION AT THE FORMER FORT ORD

The U.S. Army and the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) have recently entered an agreement for munitions remediation of the remaining 3,500 acres of land set for reuse under the Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) process.

After years of waiting for remediation of the final EDC reuse areas contaminated with Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC), the schedule has now been accelerated thanks to the Early Transfer (ET) and Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement (ESCA) process. Under the ESCA agreement, the Army provides FORA with funds to conduct the remediation work, purchase environmental insurance to cover remedial activities, and pay for ongoing regulatory oversight by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The first \$40 million in funds for the planning and implementation process was received in March. The total estimated cost for the identified remediation work to be performed under FORA is \$100 million. While FORA conducts remediation on the EDC parcels, the Army will complete Inland Range work.

FORA hired the firm of LFR Inc. to conduct the remedial work, who has joined with Weston Solutions, Inc. to perform the remediation component of the program, and with Westcliffe Engineers, Inc. to provide regulatory liaison and community involvement expertise for the program. All three businesses are industry leaders in military base closure, munitions and explosives cleanup, regulatory oversight, and community involvement.

Fort Ord is one of several former installations deploying the ESCA process to spur remedial activities connected to base reuse. Others using the ESCA process include Fort McClellan in Alabama, and Mare Island Naval Shipyard and McClellan Air Force Base, both in California.

Lands covered by the cleanup agreement include the veterans cemetery site; a portion of East Garrison for mixed-used housing and community-centered commercial development project; future housing areas adjacent to General Jim Moore Boulevard within the City of Seaside; the Monterey Horse Park equestrian area within the County of Monterey; expanded parking facilities at Laguna Seca Raceways; and an area scheduled for development of a police training academy by Monterey Peninsula College. Other lands involved in the cleanup also include wildlife habitat areas, approximately 300 acres for future CSUMB housing, and open space.

The FORA environmental work related to the cleanup must comply with the same state and federal regulations that are required of the Army. Cleanup methods to be used will depend upon the location of the sites and the type of MEC contamination that has been identified in each area. Burning will still be needed to access some areas contaminated with MEC; however, the amount of burning required will occur in small increments and on fewer land areas than has been required in the past.

The first activity will begin on approximately 850 acres along General Jim Moore Boulevard (GJMB) between Coe Avenue in Seaside. Activity along GJMB will not require burning and will ultimately provide approximately 500 acres of land for future development in Seaside, and allow for installation of water lines to serve approximately 340 acres of land already transferred to Del Rey Oaks for development of a proposed resort hotel, golf and residential project in that city.

Public input during the munitions remediation process is important. There will be multiple opportunities for public input on formal studies, remedial decisions, and remedy selections. More specific information about the Community Involvement and Outreach Program (CIOP) and future meetings will be available in the coming months. Regular updates will be posted on the FORA website at www.fora.org.