

MONTEREY COUNTY



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KATHLEEN LEE
AIDE TO THE SUPERVISOR

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I am thrilled with the announcement today that President Obama has signed a declaration to designate Fort Ord as a National Monument. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, as Chair of the Fort Ord Reuse Authority, I was in Washington, D.C. with Michael Houlemard of FOR A and Debbie Hale of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, working on this important designation and on other base reuse and transportation issues. I am excited to see the results from talking to those officials happen so quickly and am deeply appreciative of all of the efforts from the community that culminated in President Obama's designation of the Fort Ord National Monument.

This designation of Fort Ord as a National Monument comes on fabulous weekend for our community as thousands of cyclists from around the country are enjoying the Sea Otter Classic and many of the participants will be biking on the former Fort Ord. Having the 14,650 acres permanently protected for hikers, mountain bikers, equestrian riders and outdoor enthusiasts will be a valuable asset to visitors and residents alike for generations to come and will serve as a prime example of how conservation can enhance economic development. For the 1.5 million soldiers who have come through Fort Ord, this designation will forever preserve the landscape that they trained on. I can think of no better complement to the Fort Ord National Monument than by continuing the tradition of honoring those who served our County by continuing our advocacy efforts towards establishing the California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery at the former Fort Ord.

It was with great honor and privilege that I am able to take part in this process of preserving an important piece of Monterey County's environment and history and I am pleased that this has received strong national support from President Obama, Secretary Salazar and Cong. Sam Farr. I am looking forward to Secretary Salazar and Bureau of Land Management Director Bob Abbey returning next month to have a more formal community celebration of this important White House designation of the Fort Ord National Monument.

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