



3.2 Existing Setting and Character of Fort Ord

3.2.1 Regional Character

The former Fort Ord is part of the gentle crescent that frames Monterey Bay, situated between the great Salinas River Valley and the dramatic coastal range that juts into the Pacific to form the Peninsula (see Figure 3.2-1). The historic “cantonment area” within the former Fort Ord visible from State Highway 1 is bounded by the freeway to the west and the native landscapes of the upper elevations to the east. West of State Highway 1 are the remnant firing ranges and tall sand dunes continuously modeled by the winds off the Pacific. Figure 3.2-2 illustrates the topographic relief at the former Fort Ord in a perspective view.

Salinas River Valley

The Salinas River Valley to the north of the former Fort Ord is in continuous cultivation. The broad, flat expanse created by the flood plain is a green and fertile contrast to the subdued colors of the native grasslands, coastal chaparral and oak wood landscape that dominate the upper elevations of the former Fort Ord and stretch beyond to the rugged back-country of the Los Padres Mountains.

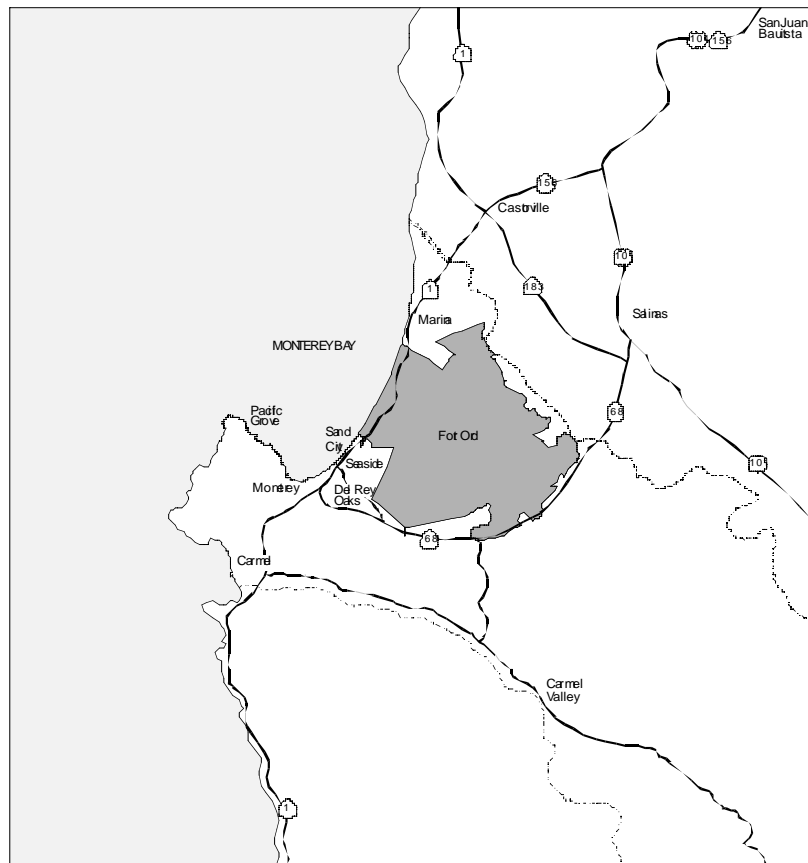


Figure 3.2-1 Regional Vicinity