



Garrison Commander's Notes

I want to extend my appreciation to the residents of the City of Seaside and those who commute using General Jim Moore Blvd. for their cooperation during the recent road closure. During the two weeks that General Jim Moore Blvd. was closed, we were able to safely remove the old concertina wire and cut the vegetation to a point where our ordnance specialists can do a thorough removal action on the ranges near Seaside and Del Rey Oaks.

In the next few months, we will be using detection equipment to locate and identify buried ordnance in the area recently cut. Once we have mapped the possible ordnance locations, we may close General Jim Moore Blvd. for a day or two while we safely detonate or remove unexploded ordnance in the area.

This summer will see a considerable increase in people using former Fort Ord land. While we have made considerable progress in removing ordnance and explosives from former Fort Ord property, much remains to be done. If you plan to hike, bike or participate with the organizations working to reestablish local habitat on the former Fort Ord, I ask that you remain vigilant for unexploded ordnance, avoid those areas posted as dangerous and familiarize yourself with our Ordnance Safety Alert. The Safety Alert is available at the Bureau of Land Management office on the former Fort Ord or from our community relations office at Building 4463 Gigling Road.

I look forward to more opportunities to talk with fellow community members concerning the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord. My staff and I are interested in the ideas and concerns of our neighbors. Please consider attending one of our workshops or a cleanup open house at the Post Chapel. Much of what was Fort Ord will soon be part of the surrounding communities. I encourage you to get involved and contribute your ideas for the cleanup process. Contact our community relations office (831) 393-9691 for more information.

— Col. Mike Dietrick
Garrison Commander

Drinking water wells remain safe Presidio of Monterey expands search for source of groundwater contamination

The Presidio of Monterey (POM) plans to expand an on-going investigation to determine the extent of the groundwater contamination and a possible source of carbon tetrachloride (CT), a formerly common solvent used in industry. The nearby Fort Ord landfill has recently been eliminated as a suspect source for the CT contamination. Early samples of soil gas and groundwater under the base in the 1990s found very low concentrations of the chemical but the presence of CT remained too intermittent to justify a more extensive investigation. Building on previous investigations, the Presidio of Monterey is now planning to use additional monitoring wells and soil gas testing as part of an intensified effort to define the extent of CT contamination under the former base and portions of the City of Marina. This action is necessary before the best method of remedial action to clean up the contamination can be identified.



A crew member takes a soil gas sample in the Preston Park area of the former Fort Ord.

and adjacent property. **No Marina or Fort Ord drinking water wells have been affected by the CT groundwater contamination.**

Likely suspect found innocent

In 1998 a remedial investigation/feasibility study of the former Fort Ord landfill, part of the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord, did not find CT in the landfill material or a CT plume in groundwater under the landfill. With the Fort Ord landfill eliminated as the likely (continued on page 2)

Drinking water is safe

The Marina Coast Water District (MCWD) has not detected CT in City of Marina drinking water wells through their monitoring program. The POM environmental staff has detected CT in the soil and groundwater intermittently in more shallow aquifers under Fort Ord

Have a question?
For more information about the topics presented in this newsletter or to ask a question or express a concern about the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord call (831) 393-9691 or visit our website at: www.fortordcleanup.com.

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Postal Customer

Two public forums address burning issue

Proposed plan for Fort Ord vegetation removal presented

The Presidio of Monterey (POM) recently held two public meetings on a proposal to burn vegetation as part of the environmental cleanup of unexploded ordnance (UXO) on inactive weapon ranges on the former Fort Ord. The meetings were held in the City of Seaside, which adjoins several of the ranges of the former base, and in Spreckels, a community that has been impacted by smoke from previous fires on the base.

The POM's proposal is to conduct prescribed burning of vegetation in areas where UXO is known to exist, then remove the UXO and detonate it controlling the detonation by covering the UXO with sandbags and/or soil. Once the vegetation is burned away, specialists would go in, locate the UXO in the area and either remove or detonate it in order to make the property safe for intended reuse. If conducted, the burning would involve a total of three sites—but only one burn of approximately 500 acres in the first year. The burns would be conducted one or two days per year until UXO removal was completed. Downwind residents would be provided an opportunity to relocate during the burns with some compensation from the Army.

During the public meetings, the Army described the threat of existing UXO to the safety of those who trespass on the fenced and posted ranges. Residents of adjoining communities are at risk and children or others may be injured by UXO they collect. Army Corps of Engineers ordnance safety specialists described the UXO on the former ranges as very dangerous and capable of maiming or killing those who handle it. Army officials described the alternatives such as herbicides and manual cutting considered in the development of their proposal for removing vegetation from former range areas. They also explained the likely content of the smoke from incidental



Community members address questions to representatives from the Presidio of Monterey, United States Environmental Protection Agency, and California Department of Toxic Substances Control, toxicologists and fire management experts.

detonation of UXO during burning and the requirements for protecting the habitat in the range areas.

Community members spoke at each meeting. Some objected to the proposal because the smoke from vegetation fires could impact downwind communities and may adversely affect the health of those with respiratory illnesses. Other local community members expressed support for the proposal citing the need to protect local children and those living close to the range areas from the danger of UXO. Some local natural resource group members described the positive effects of fire on the

Central Maritime Chaparral plant community of the former base and the reduced threat of wildfires that controlled burning provides.

The Army and other members of the Fort Ord BRAC Cleanup Team, the U.S. EPA, California Department of Toxic Substances Control will consider the input from those who spoke at the meetings as well as others who provide written comments either by mail or via the cleanup web site at www.fortordcleanup.com before the May deadline in deciding whether to proceed with the Army's proposal.

Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup Interim Action Ordnance and Explosives Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan



Presidio of Monterey expands search for source of groundwater contamination (continued from page 1)

suspect for the CT contamination the Presidio of Monterey environmental managers concluded that CT plume was from another source. That information combined with the continued erratic detection of CT in existing monitoring wells surrounding the former Fritzsche Army Airfield was considered by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Team (BCT) as justification to renew and expand a search for the limits and possible source(s) of the CT contamination.

Contamination boundaries found but source remains a mystery

An extensive array of groundwater monitoring wells was installed by the Presidio of Monterey environmental staff between 1998 and 2001 in an effort to deduce where and how CT is entering the groundwater of the former base. This effort has yielded an outline of the boundary of the CT contamination

plume and some information about how the contamination may have moved between otherwise exclusive layers of groundwater but has failed to identify the source of the contamination.

New clues sought in search for groundwater contamination source

The investigation of the CT groundwater contamination has been renewed with the Presidio of Monterey environmental staff planning to expand their current system of monitoring wells in search of a residual source. Additionally, a soil gas survey is planned that will test up to 25 locations in the vicinity of Preston Park for CT at depths of six to 20 feet and even deeper below the ground surface.

Former MCWD well to become part of renewed investigation

Part of the intensified search for a source of the CT groundwater contamination will include converting an abandoned Marina Coast Water District well, to a monitoring well for the Lower 180-foot Aquifer. The well, which is currently unused, will become part of the monitoring well system currently extending from northern Fort Ord and along Reservation Road in the City of Marina. The well (designated MCWD-8a) is at the corner of Salinas Avenue and Reservation Road and has been abandoned for more than a decade. A work plan describing the next step in the search for the source of the CT groundwater contamination under the former Fort Ord is due to be published soon. The soil gas survey could begin as early as July.



Mike Coon (right), Parsons, helps some young visitors try out ordnance detection equipment at a recent cleanup open house

Community Outreach Calendar

July – October 2002

July 10

Community Involvement Workshop, 6:30 p.m.
Fort Ord Post Chapel, Bldg. 4280, General Jim Moore Blvd.

Topic: *Groundwater Update*

August 13-18

Cleanup Information Booth at the Monterey County Fair

August 14

Community Involvement Workshop, 6:30 p.m.
Fort Ord Post Chapel, Bldg. 4280, General Jim Moore Blvd.

Topic: *To Be Announced*

September 18

Community Involvement Workshop, 6:30 p.m.
Fort Ord Post Chapel, Bldg. 4280, General Jim Moore Blvd.

Topic: *To Be Announced*

September 19

Quarterly Technical Review Committee Meeting (open to the public)
Fort Ord Post Chapel, Bldg. 4280, General Jim Moore Blvd.

Topic: *Cleanup Update*

October 9

Community Involvement Workshop, 6:30 p.m.
Fort Ord Post Chapel, Bldg. 4280, General Jim Moore Blvd.

Topic: *To Be Announced*

For workshop topics, agendas, information about outreach events, or background information on cleanup topics, please contact the Community Relations Office, (831) 393-9691 or visit our web site at: www.fortordcleanup.com

Many ways to submit your ideas

Your participation can make the difference

There are many ways for community members to get involved in the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord. To advise the Presidio of Monterey environmental staff on cleanup priorities or participate in the consideration of cleanup alternatives, ask a question about the cleanup, or express a concern, contact the community relations office at (831) 393-9691 or email at cqc@redshift.com.



Since 1999 more than 1,200 people have participated in the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord through the community outreach program. Community members provide advise on priorities, plans and participated in performance reviews.

Community members with technical opinions, leaders and community representatives, and others with a stake or interest in the outcome of the cleanup are welcome to participate in the decision process. If you have a question or suggestion, a call, email, or note will get a prompt response. The Presidio of Monterey wants to hear from concerned and interested community members.

Environmental Cleanup Open House

Community learns about the cleanup

Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup

The Presidio of Monterey held its fifth Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup Open House on June 15 at the Ord Military Community Post Chapel. Many members of the community visited the displays and demonstrations of technology being used in the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord. Some visitors took a tour or visited with program managers. Every major type of cleanup activity used on the former Army base was on display. The open house provided an opportunity for community members to learn more about the plans, programs and activities involved in the cleanup of the base by talking directly with the responsible managers.

The open house included opportunities for kids to apply the principles of environmental cleanup by constructing their own landfill models, trying out the technology used to locate unexploded ordnance and learning more about ordnance and explosives safety. Presidio of Monterey and contractor staff demonstrated cleanup equipment, provided refreshments, conducted tours of cleanup areas and hosted other activities.

The information available at the open house covered almost every cleanup subject including the investigation, treatment and monitoring of groundwater contamination, the excavation and disposal of contaminated soil, ordnance and explosives removal, as well as habitat management projects and techniques. Local environmental groups, community environmental health and environmental justice organizations were invited to share information about their activities.



Mike Taraszki, Harding ESE, (right) explains efforts to locate groundwater contamination to visitors at the Presidio of Monterey's Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup Open House held on June 15.

The cleanup open house functions as a one-stop opportunity for community members with questions or ideas about cleanup actions and proposed plans. Scientists, engineers, technical specialists, managers, as well as regulatory, resource and service agency representatives are on hand to provide visitors with

the opportunity to talk one-on-one with representatives from the Presidio of Monterey, US Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, California Regional Water Quality Control Board and others.

Landfill project hits the gas

Gas collection and treatment system moved and restarted

Fort Ord Landfill History

During its years of operation, Fort Ord maintained a landfill (many people referred to it as "the dump") similar to those maintained by most municipalities. Like many other landfills, Fort Ord's landfill was later found to be leaking hazardous chemicals into the ground beneath the landfill waste and had to be cleaned up. This cleanup has been substantially completed, and the landfill is closed (except for one cell that is being used for the final cleanup at Fort Ord) and is covered so that water cannot reach the waste and move additional chemicals into the groundwater beneath. Groundwater under the landfill area was contaminated in previous years, and a treatment facility has been put in place to cleanup the groundwater. All this work was done under the direction of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. This landfill cleanup project is often referred to as Operable Unit 2 or OU2.

Decay of waste produces common gasses

Landfill gas testing and monitoring at the Fort Ord landfill has been conducted since its closure. As with all landfills, the decay of the waste produces gasses (primarily methane, an odorless and colorless gas, and carbon dioxide) that must be monitored. While methane gas has practically no toxic effects at levels of five to 15 percent, methane can be ignited. This would be hazardous for workers and nearby residents. The Army has installed underground probes and conducts surface air monitoring to determine the levels of methane in and around the landfill.

Action taken to reduce landfill gasses in surrounding soil

Recent measurements indicate that the amount of methane deep in the soil around the landfill is higher than allowed by California Integrated Waste Management Board standards. In response, the Presidio of Monterey has installed a landfill gas collection and treatment



The Operable Unit 2 landfill gas collection and removal system designed and maintained by Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc.

system. The system draws methane and other gases from the soil surrounding the landfill through extraction wells. The gases are then transported through a pipe to a treatment facility where potentially-toxic chemicals are removed and the remainder released.

The system consists of two granulated activated carbon units and five drums containing potassium permanganate. These units remove potentially-toxic trace gases from the landfill gas. The Presidio of Monterey is operating the system to maintain the methane concentra-

tions in the soil at the landfill perimeter at acceptable levels.

Collection system moved

The treatment system has been moved to a more central location and the Presidio of Monterey has restarted the operation of the system. Evaluation of the technical operations and costs are underway to determine how the treatment system should be operated over the longer term.