

WILDLIFE ALERT

Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup

Fact Sheet

Considerations for visiting or living near undeveloped open space areas of the former Fort Ord Multi Range Area

The former Fort Ord contains nearly 28,000 acres of land, many ponds, and intermittent streams. Most of the undeveloped land was used for maneuver and weapons training by soldiers. When it was an active base, more than 15,000 soldiers and 5,000 civilian employees lived and/or worked on Fort Ord. For more than 50 years, soldiers trained in the vast training areas in the eastern part of the base and practiced with their weapons on the many ranges circling the Multi Range Area. Gen. Jim Moore Boulevard (formerly North South Road) and South Boundary Roads were frequently traveled, and weapons fire could be heard from several ranges almost daily as soldiers sustained their military readiness.

The activities on Fort Ord had an impact on the wildlife that inhabited the area. The population of native animals was reduced by the pressures of human occupation and activity. With the closure of Fort Ord in 1994, human activity in most areas of the base has been dramatically reduced. Many native animals have begun to reinhabit areas of the former base. As small animals repopulate former Fort Ord training areas, ranges and roadways, predatory animals which use them for food follow.

Open areas of the former Fort Ord are experiencing an increase in sightings of wildlife such as squirrels, skunks, coyotes, snakes, bobcats, and mountain lions. While this is an exciting development for wildlife managers and those who enjoy observing native wildlife while hiking and biking in the unrestricted open areas, the resurgence of wildlife has also resulted in more contact between wildlife and nearby residents.

Wild animals do not recognize property lines while foraging for food, or seeking new territory. Often wildlife from open areas will be drawn to nearby residences by pet food, gardens, water, or opportunities for warmth and shelter. Eliminating these things around a residence will reduce the attraction for wildlife. Visitors and nearby residents are cautioned to consider the potential for contact with wildlife when planning for pet accommodations, gardens, fences, and activities.

For more information concerning the wildlife of the former Fort Ord area, contact Bill Collins at (831) 242-7920 or the Bureau of Land Management (831) 394-8314.