

11.0 COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM

The Fort Ord Community Relations Program was developed in accordance with CERCLA requirements to establish procedures for (1) disseminating accurate and timely information to the community about the environmental restoration program at Fort Ord, (2) developing ongoing two-way communication with the community, (3) encouraging community involvement, and (4) monitoring and responding to community concerns. The community includes residents of the area, public interest groups, public agencies, and elected officials.

In June 1991, the Army prepared a Community Relations Plan for Fort Ord (HLA, 1991a). To develop the plan, the Army conducted interviews with various community members to identify effective ways to communicate with the public. On the basis of the interviews, the program was developed and the plan outlines numerous methods for communicating with the public. The plan also identifies an initial mailing list of people wishing to receive Army literature on the environmental restoration program at Fort Ord. The mailing list is updated regularly as requests to be added to the list are received by the Army.

The Army has conducted numerous community relations activities since publishing the Community Relations Plan. These activities are listed and summarized below:

- "Kick-off" meetings: In late 1991, the Army held a series of kick-off meetings in several local communities, including Monterey, Seaside, Marina, and Salinas. The Superfund process and activities conducted at Fort Ord to date were described at the meetings.
- Media tours: In conjunction with the kick-off meetings, local media representatives were invited to tour Fort Ord and attend a press briefing on the Superfund Program.
- Brochures: A four-page brochure describing the Army's environmental cleanup at Fort Ord was published in September 1991. An additional brochure describing the Fort Ord Soil Treatment System (FOSTA) was published in October 1992. These brochures were mailed to people on the mailing list and have been distributed at public meetings.
- Information papers: Two-page information papers have been published and mailed to people on the mailing list and have been made available at public meetings. The papers included the following:
 - Information Paper #1 - The Underground Storage Tank Management Program at Fort Ord
 - Information Paper #2 - The Groundwater at Fort Ord
 - Information Paper #3 - Fort Ord's Hazardous Waste Management Program
 - Information Paper #4 - Ordnance and Explosive Waste at Fort Ord.
- Quarterly newsletters: The Army has prepared and distributed quarterly newsletters to people on the mailing list. The newsletter, titled *The Advance*, a periodic newsletter, provides updates on the cleanup process and other pertinent information relating to investigation and cleanup. The first *Advance* was published in summer 1992.
- Display boards: Two large display boards illustrating the Army's environmental strategy were prepared and have been exhibited at numerous public meetings and in public buildings (e.g., public libraries and post offices).
- Two information repositories have been established for the public to review documents produced as part of the CERCLA program. The repositories are located at the Fort Ord Post Library and Seaside Branch of the Public Library.

- **Additional public meetings:** Public meetings are held when milestones in the cleanup process are reached (e.g., after publication of a Proposed Plan) and when other information needs to be disseminated to the public. Notices advertising the meetings are placed in the local newspapers, and the local media are informed that a meeting is to be held. Public meetings held in 1993 included a meeting on the Fort Ord Environmental Restoration on September 21, the OU 2 Proposed Plan public meeting held on October 19, and the Interim Action Proposed Plan public meeting held on November 30.
- **Technical Review Committee:** A technical review committee (TRC) was developed to include local agencies and a community representative in the Fort Ord environmental restoration program. The TRC reviewed published documents and met quarterly to discuss the cleanup program. The TRC was recently converted into the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), which is described below.
- **Restoration Advisory Board:** To better inform the public and encourage more public involvement in the environmental restoration program, Fort Ord has converted the TRC into the RAB. The RAB includes local citizens, in addition to the former members of the TRC. A public meeting to discuss formation of the RAB was held on February 7, 1994. The RAB is a forum for discussion and exchange of information about Fort Ord's environmental restoration program and provides an opportunity for the community to review progress, review published documents, and voice opinions. Workshops to introduce the citizen RAB members to environmental programs at Fort Ord began in May 1994 and are ongoing. To date, workshop topics included NPL field trip, environmental regulations, Fort Ord geology, investigation techniques, risk assessment, and base realignment and closure.