

## Section 4.0 Affected Environment

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### SETTING

Fort Ord is a Department of the Army (Army) installation located along the Pacific Ocean in northern Monterey County in central California. Fort Ord occupies approximately 28,000 acres adjacent to Monterey Bay, a national marine sanctuary.

In addition to the county, surrounding local jurisdictions include the Cities of Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Sand City, and Seaside. Most of Fort Ord (73% or 20,194 acres) is unincorporated, and 15% (4,122 acres) and 12% (3,361 acres) of the installation are in the Cities of Seaside and Marina, respectively. Although 27% is in incorporated areas, the two cities have no jurisdictional authority over and provide no services to the installation.

Fort Ord has a generally mild climate because of the Pacific Ocean's effect on the coastal area. Temperatures near the coast are uniform throughout the year, with an average annual temperature of 55°F. Precipitation amounts vary greatly as a result of the maritime influence and terrain. The average annual precipitation is 14.2 inches and is concentrated from November through April. The maritime influence also results in foggy weather during the summer.

The topography of Fort Ord is dome like; the center of the installation has the greatest elevation, while the boundaries are low-lying areas. The most notable topographical features are the coastal dunes and the steep slopes in the eastern portion of the installation, both of which have high erosion potential.

The baseline conditions described in this section are the 1991 conditions, when the installation was in full and active operation. This baseline allows a realistic evaluation of impacts on Fort Ord resources as a result of the change from a military installation to a combination of military and community uses.

## 4.1 LAND USE

This section incorporates by reference information from the Land Use Baseline Study of Fort Ord, California, which is available at the public information repository established at the Seaside Branch Library (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District 1992b).

### 4.1.1 Installation Land Uses

Most of the approximately 28,000-acre installation is undeveloped training and open space areas, with approximately 82% (23,000 acres) undeveloped and 18% (5,000 acres) developed. The developed area can be divided into seven different types of land uses. Figure 4.1-1 illustrates existing land uses on and immediately adjacent to the installation, and Table 4.1-1 presents a brief description and division of the land uses on the installation. The Main Garrison and East Garrison are described in the Land Use Baseline Study of Fort Ord, California.

Fritzsche Field and its immediate environs consist of approximately 1,700 acres on a plateau overlooking the Salinas Valley at an elevation of 134 feet above mean sea level. The airfield consists of a single 3,000-foot-long, 75-foot-wide asphalt runway with a 500-foot-long overrun at either end. The airfield also has eight helicopter landing pads.

The buildings and facilities at Fritzsche Field include five aircraft hangars with approximately 100,000 total square feet of usable floor space and 70,000 square feet of office, shop, and storage space. Approximately 36 other buildings of various sizes and functions are located within the airfield environs. About half these buildings are the small "temporary" World War II-vintage wood frame buildings that have little to no reuse value.

Several reports prepared on the airfield provide information on the average number of daily operations for both fixed-wing and rotary aircraft. The 1987 AICUZ report states that there were 123,239 operations (both fixed-wing and rotary) or 338 daily operations at the airfield. A 1990 expansion feasibility study on the airfield prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reported a total of approximately 219,000 aircraft operations annually, or approximately 600 a day. Approximately 90% of all operations at the airfield are conducted by rotary aircraft.

#### 4.1.1.1 Developed

The three major developed areas within Fort Ord are the Main Garrison, East Garrison, and Fritzsche Army Airfield. The East Garrison and Fritzsche Army Airfield are relatively small areas, primarily classified as military/industrial support. Most of the development is concentrated in the Main Garrison (Figures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2).

#### 4.1.1.2 Undeveloped

The undeveloped areas include the coastal zone and inland area. The coastal zone includes 4 miles of unincorporated beachfront land west of State Route (SR) 1, and is used for weapons-firing activities and open space. The inland area consists of infantry training areas; the ammunition storage point; and open space areas used for livestock grazing and recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, and camping. The training portion of the inland area is divided into 18 training areas, the largest of which is the 8,000-acre inland range area, an impact zone for artillery and other types of ordnance.

### 4.1.2 Adjacent Land Uses

The types of land uses surrounding Fort Ord are described briefly below and are illustrated in Figure 4.1-1.

Table 4.1-1 Existing Land Uses on Fort Ord

Land Use Category	Definition	Approximate Acreage	Percentage of Total Acreage
<b>UNDEVELOPED</b>			
Open Space/Training	Undeveloped areas in primarily a natural state (inland range area, firing range, hunting/fishing/camping areas, grazing)	23,000	70
<b>DEVELOPED</b>		5,000	15
Residential	Family and military housing	1,300	4
Commercial	Retail and other commercial services, such as gas stations and mini-markets	30	<1
Industrial	Industrial operations such as motor pools, machine shops, Fritzsche Army Airfield	1,400	4
Mixed	Combination of residential, commercial, and industrial (military support operations)	1,200	3
Institutional	Silas B. Hays Army Community Hospital, medical and dental facilities, and helipad; five elementary schools and one middle school	230	<1
Parks and Recreation	Developed open space including golf course and club house, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and playgrounds	600	2
Training Areas	Central track and field, stadium, and recreation complex	<u>240</u>	<u>&lt;1</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		28,000	100

#### 4.1.2.1 Residential

Fort Ord is surrounded by various densities of residential development. Adjacent land uses in Marina, Seaside, and Del Rey Oaks (to the north and east) are primarily residential subdivisions. Additionally, numerous residential developments are immediately southeast and south of the installation. Most residential units to the northeast are rural residential, except for the residential development north of

Pilarcitos Canyon, west of Reservation Road. Some rural residential use is also located to the south, immediately west of Laguna Seca Recreation Area.

#### **4.1.2.2 Commercial**

The limited commercial development adjacent to Fort Ord includes a variety of commercial development east of SR 1 and along Reservation Road (west of Fritzsche Army Airfield) in Marina, a retail shopping center east of SR 1 in Seaside, and numerous neighborhood commercial centers scattered throughout the residential areas southeast of Fort Ord.

#### **4.1.2.3 Industrial**

The limited industrial development adjacent to Fort Ord includes construction yards southwest of the Main Garrison between the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and SR 1 in Sand City, corporation and transportation yards south of the installation in Monterey, and the regional wastewater treatment plant north of Fort Ord.

#### **4.1.2.4 Office/Business Park**

The only office/business parks adjacent to Fort Ord are the Ryan Ranch industrial park in Monterey and an office park in the county, both located at the southern tip of the installation.

#### **4.1.2.5 Institutional**

**Schools.** Two schools are adjacent to Fort Ord. York School, a nonprofit secondary day school, is located at the southern tip of the installation just east of the Monterey city limits. Seaside High School, which serves students in Seaside as well as on Fort Ord, is located at the southwest corner of the installation just outside the Monterey Road gate.

**Monterey Peninsula Airport.** Monterey Peninsula Airport is located southwest of Fort Ord, just south of SR 218.

#### **4.1.2.6 Agriculture**

Agriculture is the primary land use adjacent to Fort Ord on the northeast, between the installation and the Salinas River. The most productive agricultural lands in the vicinity are extremely fertile lands along the Salinas River. The primary type of agricultural production in this area is irrigated row crops.

#### **4.1.2.7 Grazing/Rangelands**

Grazing or rangelands are located to the north, adjacent to Fritzsche Army Airfield, and to the east and southeast, south of SR 68 and near Laguna Seca Recreation Area. Cattle are the primary grazing animals around Fort Ord.

#### **4.1.2.8 Parks and Recreation**

Two major recreational areas border Fort Ord: the 500-acre Laguna Seca Recreation Area to the south and a small part of the 4,789-acre Toro Regional Park to the southeast. Additionally, several golf courses and smaller parks are located around Fort Ord, primarily to the south.

#### **4.1.2.9 Undeveloped Open Space**

Other than agriculture, grazing/rangelands, and parks, undeveloped open space adjacent to Fort Ord includes the Marina State Beach north of the Fort Ord coastal zone in Marina; vacant coastal land south

of the Fort Ord coastal zone in Sand City; the Frog Pond Natural Area, an undeveloped nature park to the southwest in Del Rey Oaks; vacant land to the south in Del Rey Oaks and Monterey; and a horse ranch area to the south, west of Laguna Seca Recreation Area.

#### 4.1.3 Relevant Plans and Policies

The following documents were reviewed to determine project consistency with relevant plans and policies:

- California Coastal Act of 1976, Chapter 3;
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Final Environmental Impact Statement;
- Monterey County General Plan;
- Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan;
- Monterey County Local Coastal Program, North County Land Use Plan;
- Monterey County Growth Management Policy;
- City of Marina General Plan Land Use Element;
- City of Seaside General Plan Update Program - Issues, Goals, and Policies Report;
- Sand City Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan;
- City of Del Rey Oaks General Plan Land Use Element;
- City of Monterey Land Use Element Policies;
- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments Regional Land Use Element; and
- Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Spheres of Influence Policies and Criteria.

The documents and relevant policies are described briefly in Volume II, Section II.1, Table II.1-1. The entire text of these policies is contained in the appendices of the land use baseline study. It is important to note that the plans and policies were developed before it was known that Fort Ord would be closed.