

## **Appendix E. Correspondence between the Army and USFWS Concerning the Draft SEIS and HMP**

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October 19, 1995 U.S. Army letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

November 21, 1995 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service letter to U.S. Army.



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, SACRAMENTO  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
1325 J STREET  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814-2922

October 19, 1995

CESPK - PM - M

Ms. Katherine McCalvin  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist  
Ventura Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, CA 93003

SUBJECT: Revision of the Fort Ord Multispecies Habitat Management Plan

Dear Ms. McCalvin:

The Army is preparing a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) to support the disposal of lands at the former Fort Ord. Some newly excessed lands are potentially available because of the downsizing of the Presidio of Monterey annex and special legislation, which if passed, will provide for the disposal of the two existing golf courses to the city of Seaside. The approximately 625 acres of new lands being considered for disposal were described in the Fort Ord Multispecies Habitat Management Plan (HMP). They were described as having no preservation requirements.

The SEIS includes an analysis of reuse from the final Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan adopted by the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) on December 12, 1994 (FORA Plan) and other potential changes in reuse that have occurred since the HMP was finalized. The SEIS also addresses changes in conveyance requests, modifications to the boundary of the Natural Resource Management Area, (NRMA) requested by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and new information received on proposed land uses. Several agencies provided input and approved these modifications. Figure 1 represents a potential revised Habitat Management Plan that accommodates these changes. Figure 2 compares the original HMP and the proposed revised HMP.

The FORA Plan includes proposed revisions in development polygons and additions and deletions to some of the HMP habitat reserves. The FORA plan identifies two land uses within the proposed agricenter parcel (Figure 2); the roughly 200 acre agricenter described in the original HMP and a 250 acre safety training center. In preparing an impact analysis, we analyzed a combined 450 acres of development in the agricenter parcel. Subsequent discussions resulted in the determination that development in the agricenter parcel will not exceed the 200 acres described in the original HMP (although both safety training and agricenter uses may occur in the 200 acre area). The FORA plan also includes a Phased Transportation System which includes a proposed transportation network. During development of the SEIS, mitigation measures were developed for the FORA Plan to avoid and mitigate impacts to biological resources. Representatives from Monterey County and FORA agreed to this development scenario during the September 14, 1995 meeting at the former Fort Ord. The road alignment and development polygon changes agreed to by FORA as mitigation are described in the July 23, 1995 letter and are shown on figures one and two.

The areas marked T1 and T2 in Figure 2 contain approximately 70 acres of lands that are separated by major roads (outside the Highway 68 corridor) from the main management area. These would have been transferred to BLM for the NRMA in the present HMP. I propose these areas be deleted from the habitat reserves in the revised HMP. Area T1 occurs between South Boundary Road (an existing paved road) and the installation boundary. Area T2 consists of a steep slope below an existing paved road. BLM requested that these parcels not be included in the lands they receive from the Army. These areas are separated from the main habitat area of the NRMA by roads and would require a relatively high management effort for a relatively low benefit to biological resources.

The mitigated FORA plan proposals, combined with changes in boundaries proposed for the lands being transferred to BLM and the minor modifications in boundaries that resulted from more detailed definition and mapping of Fort Ord lands, would result in a reduction of between 290 and 312 acres of reserve areas as shown in table 1.

The former Fort Ord landfill (Figure 2) is identified as a University of California (U.C.) Research Area in the existing HMP. Approximately 227 acres of habitat is available for management in this area once the FORA road network and landfill cap are in place. However, the Memorandum Of Agreement for phased transfer of lands to the University of California (U.C.) states that the parties intend to explore whether they can develop programmatic agreements and relationships related to the cleanup of the landfill parcel and whether it would be appropriate for the Army to transfer title to U.C. There is not an obligation to transfer or to accept this parcel. Efforts to complete the cleanup of the parcel are underway.

Use of the landfill will likely be restricted to non-irrigated open space or other uses compatible with the capped landfill. This will not allow for some of the research activities desired by U.C. Consequently, we propose to delete this area as a habitat reserve for the purpose of the modified HMP. However, we will continue to explore possibilities for this area to be managed as a habitat area. Any possibilities must fall within the requirements of the landfill cleanup requirements and have an appropriate management agency. Table 2 describes the biological resources within the landfill parcel.

With the deletion of the landfill parcel and the other HMP changes described, the reserve areas would be reduced by approximately 517 acres. The most important habitat areas for each of the target species would remain within the revised reserve areas. All of the important management areas would be transferred to appropriate management agencies with the capabilities to promote long term enhancement of the HMP target species.

CESPK-PM-M 28 September 1995

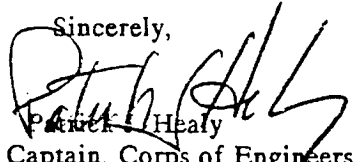
SUBJECT: Revision of the Fort Ord Multispecies Habitat Management Plan

A total of approximately 17,000 acres of important habitat are in the reserve and corridor areas within the revised HMP. Deed reservations or a Memorandum Of Agreement would be used to ensure the reserve and corridor areas are managed in accordance with the HMP. In the case of non-federal agencies, lands not properly managed, would revert back to the Federal Government. This revision to the HMP is required to allow the Army to continue disposing lands, facilitate the FORA reuse plan, and ensure proper management of the target species.

I respectfully request that USFWS provide a determination, in a letter, whether these actions are consistent with the goals and intent of the existing HMP. This letter will be included in the SEIS.

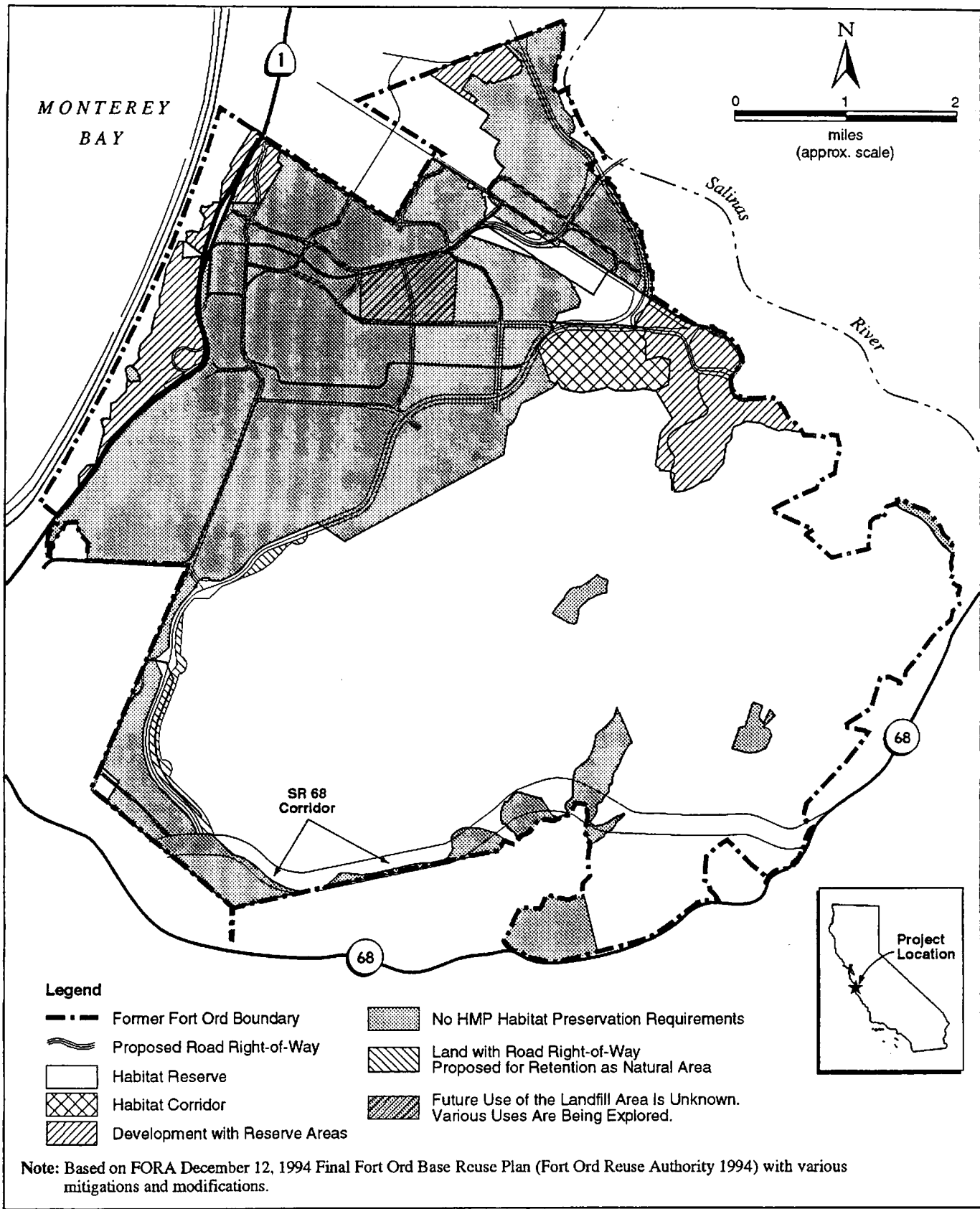
Please direct further questions on this issue to Bob Verkade at 916/557-7423.

Sincerely,



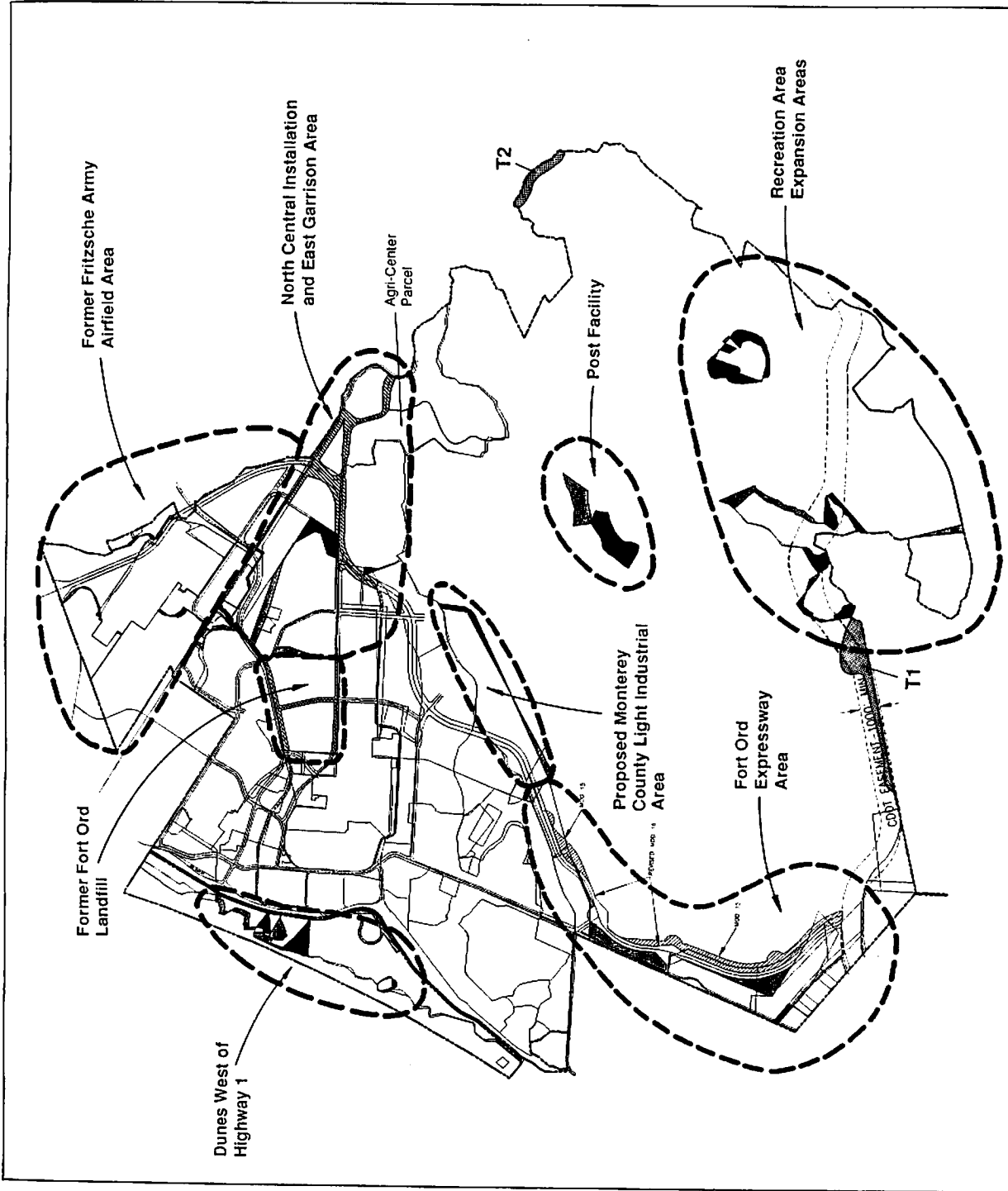
Patrick Healy  
Captain, Corps of Engineers  
Program Manager

Enclosures



**Figure 1**  
**Proposed Revised Habitat Management Plan**  
**for Former Fort Ord**  
**(September 1995)**

Figure 2  
 Comparison between the  
 Original HMP and the  
 Proposed Revised HMP  
 (September 1995)





# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services  
Ventura Field Office  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, California 93003

November 21, 1995

Captain Patrick J. Healy  
U.S. Army Engineer District, Sacramento  
Corps of Engineers  
1325 J Street  
Sacramento, California 95814-2922

Subject: Revision of the Fort Ord Multispecies Habitat Management Plan

Dear Captain Healy:

This letter is in response to your request, dated October 19, 1995 and received by us on October 23, 1995, for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to review the Army Corps of Engineer's (Corps) proposed revisions to the Fort Ord Multispecies Habitat Management Plan (HMP) and evaluate whether the revisions are consistent with the goals and intent of the current HMP. The Service has completed its review of the proposed revisions and has the following comments.

**Disposal of Golf Courses.** The proposed disposal of the two existing golf courses to the City of Seaside would be consistent with the current HMP because no management requirements were established for these sites in the HMP.

**Agricenter Parcel.** The proposed changes for the agricenter parcel would be consistent with the HMP as long as Monterey County abides by the development conditions and management requirements set forth in the HMP.

**Revisions to Bureau of Land Management Land Transfers.** The Service has no objections or concerns with the Bureau of Land Management's request.

**Fort Ord Landfill.** The HMP identifies the former Fort Ord landfill as a Research Area. However, the Corps and the University of California have not reached agreement on the final disposition of this site. The Corps has proposed to delete the requirement that it be managed as a habitat area, although its management as "non-irrigated open space or other uses compatible with the capped landfill" is likely. The Service believes that the deletion of the landfill area as a habitat

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area would not appreciably alter the HMP's goal of conserving the endangered sand gilia because of the disturbance associated with capping the landfill and its physical separation from other natural areas supporting sand gilia. However, these factors increase the value of the landfill as a research area where the ecology and management of sand gilia, particularly in relation to disturbance, could be studied. For this reason, the Service encourages the Corps to resolve the situation in a manner that would allow for research activities on sand gilia to be conducted within the landfill area.

**Phased Transportation System.** The road corridors and other losses to reserve areas proposed for the North Central Installation and East Garrison Area (Figure 2 from your October 19, 1995 letter) would exacerbate the habitat fragmentation that has already occurred within this area. The reserve areas in this portion of Fort Ord were intended to serve as habitat corridors. Management of these corridors would be more difficult as the potential for human-caused fires, litter, and unauthorized off-highway vehicle use increases with the loss of reserve area and the increase in roads.

The Service encourages the Corps to ensure that the roads are aligned and managed in a manner that would minimize the potential for these impacts. The Corps should also limit losses to reserve areas that would further reduce the ability of this area to serve as a viable biological link between the reserve areas. The Coordinated Resource Management Planning group, established by the HMP, should be involved in these planning efforts.

**Modifications to Reserve Areas within the Proposed Monterey County Light Industrial Areas.** The Service appreciates the Corps' effort to reduce the loss of reserve area through careful planning of the proposed Fort Ord Expressway and the parcels located to the west of the road. However, these parcels and the road are located in an area that supports many of the candidate and sensitive species which were addressed in the HMP.

The Service believes that development of habitat for HMP species in the proposed Monterey County Light Industrial Area west of and in the expressway alignment should be offset by including portions of the LM2 parcel within the reserve area. The LM2 parcel also supports numerous HMP species and could be efficiently managed as part of the Natural Resource Management Area by establishing a new boundary along an existing road.

Under the revisions proposed by the Corps, reserve areas would be decreased by approximately 517 acres as a result of the proposed changes in the HMP. Deletion of the landfill as a habitat area accounts for 227 acres. Approximately 17,000 acres of Fort Ord would remain available for management for wildlife resources. Consequently, the Service believes that the proposed changes would not significantly compromise the objectives for management of listed, proposed, and candidate species and other wildlife contained in the HMP. However, we believe the value of the HMP for wildlife could be improved through the recommendations we have expressed regarding road alignment and losses to habitat areas in the North Central Installation and East Garrison Area and management of the LM2 parcel.



Captain Patrick J. Healy

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Should the Corps contemplate any additional changes in the habitat or corridor areas, the Service would like to participate in any discussions at the earliest possible time to ensure that opportunities to enhance wildlife management are fully considered. If you have any questions about these comments, please contact Ms. Catherine McCalvin of my staff at (805) 644-1766.

Sincerely,



Diane K. Noda  
Field Supervisor