

Fort Ord National Monument

Manager's Annual Report
FY 2013

2013

Manager's Annual Report



NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS

California



Table of Contents

- 1 Fort Ord Profile 1
- 2 Planning and NEPA4
- 3 Year’s Projects and Accomplishments..... 6
- 4 Science 10
- 5 Resources, Objects, Values, and Stressors11
- 6 Summary of Performance Measures..... 16
- 7 Manager’s Letter 17

1

Fort Ord Profile

Designating Authority

Designating Authority: Presidential Proclamation, Antiquities Act
(34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. 431)

Date of Designation: April 20, 2012

The former Fort Ord was closed pursuant to the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-510).

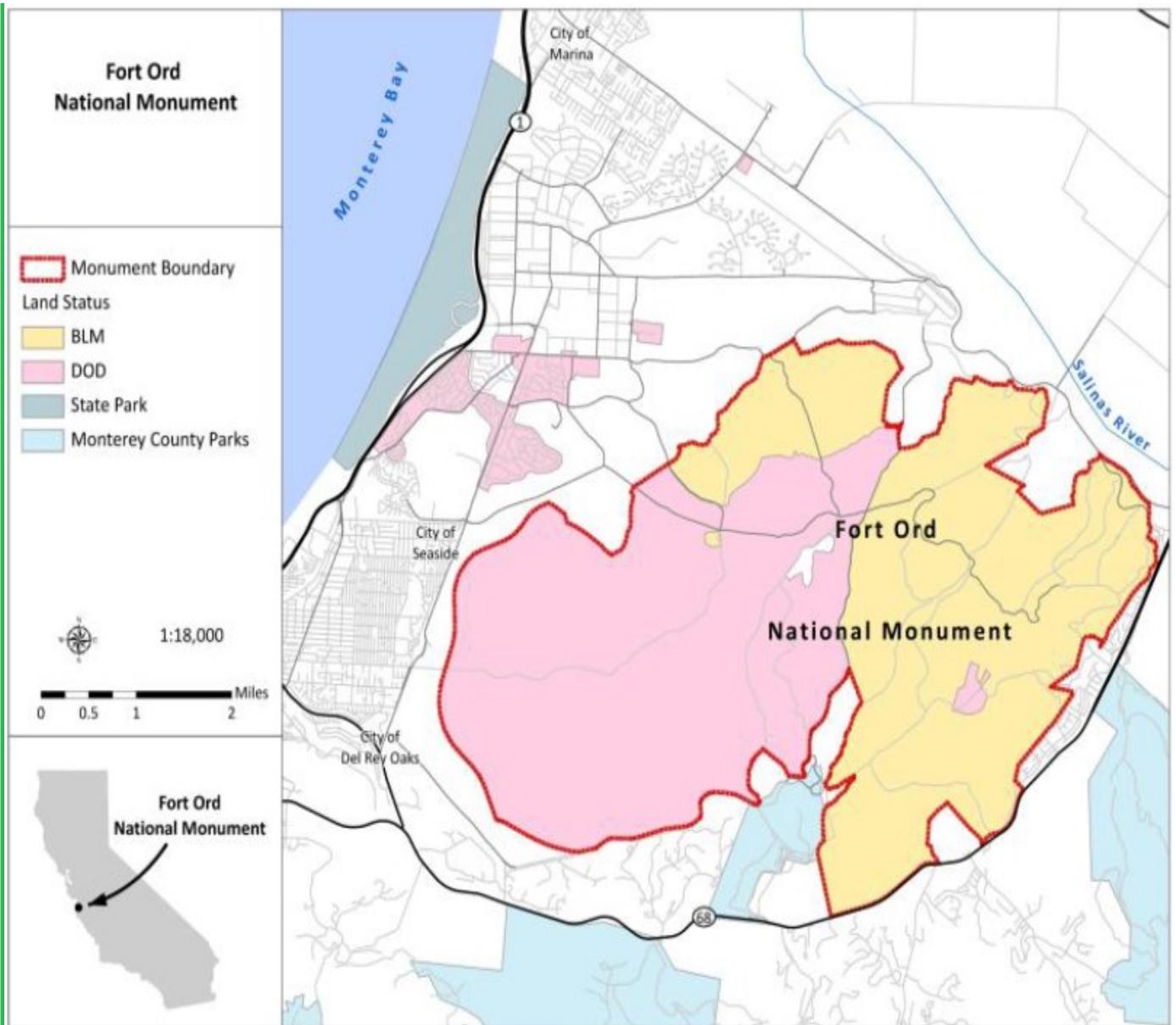
Location and Acreage

The National Monument encompasses 14, 658 acres of lands located in Monterey County, California. At the time of this report, 7,212 acres is currently administered by the BLM, and 7,446 acres is administered by the U.S. Army.

Contact Information

Unit Manager	Phone	E-mail	Mailing Address
Eric Morgan	(831)394-8314	emorgan@blm.gov	20 Hamilton Court Hollister, CA 95023

Field Office	District Office	State Office
Hollister	Cen Cal	California



Fort Ord National Monument in Monterey County, California

Managing Partners

The U.S. Army cooperatively co-manages 7,446 acres of the National Monument as it completes a cleanup of lands under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Following cleanup, the Army will transfer these lands to the BLM for administration.

The BLM also cooperates with the Fort Ord Reuse Authority with implementation of the Installation-wide Habitat Management Plan under the Fort Ord Reuse Plan.

Staffing

At Fort Ord is a Monument Work Center that houses staff that are dedicated to the National Monument. The Work Center is located in the center of the National Monument, but is currently unavailable for over the counter, drive-up business due to road restrictions.

Here is the current staffing table of organization for the Fort Ord National Monument:

JAC09400 - FT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT STAFF (10)			
(Vacant) NEW (Selected: KENDRICK, Kenneth, pending EOD)	PARK RANGER		GS 0025-07
(Vacant) Vice:GALLAGHER, BRENDAN PATRICK	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECH (PLANTS)		GS 0404-05
BOUGHER, KELLY MARIE	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECH (PLANTS)		GS 0404-05
CHMIELEWSKI, SARAH ELIZABETH	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECH (PLANTS)		GS 0404-05
COLLEY, RYAN KEVIN	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECH (PLANT)		GS 0404-05
DELGADO, BRUCE C.	BOTANIST		GS 0430-11
HUBBARD, SUSAN R	SUPV BIO SCIENCE TECH (PLANTS)		GS 0404-09
JAKL, TAMMY JO	PARK RANGER (INTERPRETATION)		GS 0025-09
KENDRICK, KENNETH ALFORD	PARK RANGER		GS 0025-05
MORGAN, ERIC A	MONUMENT MANAGER		GS 0340-13

There are other staff stationed at the Work Center that are shared by other functional areas of the Hollister Field Office and/or Cen Cal District . There is a maintenance worker, equipment operator and law enforcement ranger that are shared with the Field Office in Hollister that are stationed at the Fort Ord Work Center. There is also a forestry technician and fire/range technician that are shared with the Cen Cal District that are stationed at the Work Center. Other key Monument support staff are located within the Hollister Field Office.

The U.S. Army provides annual funding through an Interagency Services Agreement (ISA) to perform work of mutual benefit on the National Monument. This funding is targeted for specific activities that primarily include habitat enhancement (weed abatement), perimeter range fence security, road and fuel break maintenance, and pig abatement. This ISA cooperative funding (normally between \$500,000—\$800,00 / year) is crucial to supporting staff assigned to the National Monument.

The Work Center and Hollister Field Office plan to relocate together under one-roof at Fort Ord during FY 2015 or FY 2016.

2

Planning and NEPA

Status of RMP

The National Monument is part of the Southern Diablo Range and Central Coast of California RMP (i.e. Hollister RMP, 2007) which designated Fort Ord as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). The National Monument is also guided by the Installation-Wide Multispecies Habitat Management Plan (i.e. Fort Ord HMP, 1997 as amended). The BLM is currently participating with local agencies and the Fort Ord Reuse Authority in the development of a base-wide Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that is expected to be completed in 2015. The HCP will further help guide management of the National Monument and will be the basis for non-Federal agencies to receive take authorization when redeveloping portions of Fort Ord outside the National Monument.

Status of Activity Plans

The Monument Proclamation called for the development of a Transportation Plan with no identified date of completion. Each year, the BLM prepares Interdisciplinary Implementation Plans and accompanying NEPA analyses that prescribe work that traditionally can be completed within 1 or 2 years. The BLM has a programmatic consultation package with the USFWS that was approved in 2005. Furthermore, the BLM has prepared and updated periodic plans that have delineated fuel break locations, trailhead locations, noxious weed abatement programs, and recreation site development. Some supplemental rules have been supported by issue specific plans (i.e. Fort Ord Geocache Policy, 2007).

Status of RMP Implementation Strategy

There is no singular RMP Implementation Strategy that governs Fort Ord National Monument. Each year, the BLM prepares and implements Interdisciplinary Plans that achieve various RMP and Monument goals and objectives.

Key NEPA Actions and/or Authorizations

During fiscal year 2013, the following NEPA actions/authorizations were approved:

Twelve(12) categorical exclusions (CX's) were approved for special recreation events and/or races. Five (5) of these CX's were for bicycle events, two (2) were for equestrian events, four (4) were for running events, and one (1) was for a dog event.

Two (2) CX's was approved for temporary right-of-ways for emergency storm water discharge repair projects (Monterey County Public Works Department, Monterey County Parks and Recreation Department).

One (1) CX was approved for signing OPEN an existing use trail and incorporating that trail into the authorized route network.

One (1) DNA was approved for the pending transfer from the Army of a 66 acre parcel within the National Monument boundary.

One (1) Interdisciplinary EA was approved for the FY 2013 restoration and transportation system program. The FY 2013 interdisciplinary-plan and NEPA analysis prescribed the restoration of around 5 acres, and reroutes of trails 22, 35 and 49.

One (1) EA was approved for a coyote brush removal project in Pilarcitos Canyon for the purposes of enhancing native bunch grasses and studying the effects of different brush removal techniques.



The morning haze at Fort Ord National Monument

3

Year's Projects and Accomplishments

General Accomplishments

The Fort Ord National Monument enjoyed a very productive and rewarding FY 2013 which was the first entire fiscal year since being designated as a National Monument midyear during FY 2012. The BLM constructed the [Badger Hills Trailhead](#) that was opened in March of 2013, and completed a [Monument Work Center](#) makeover in June of 2013. The BLM also hosted several great celebrations including: [One-Year Anniversary Celebration](#), [Sheep Appreciation Day](#) and [National Public Lands Day / Make a Difference Day](#) that was attended by many. The [community-based habitat restoration program](#) and trail-reroute program was in full swing with the restoration of nearly 7 acres of degraded habitat, and creation of two super trails (trail 35 and trail 49). Furthermore, in addition to overseeing and hosting a suite of recreation events such as the [nation's largest mountain bike race](#), the Fort National Monument enjoyed another productive year of native plant protection treating over 2,500 acres of [noxious weeds](#).



Badger Hills Trailhead was opened March 2013



Work Center completed in June of 2013



Visitors loved Sheep Appreciation Day

Current Areas of Focus

With the development of a new trailhead and added notoriety of becoming a National Monument, the BLM has experienced a significant increase in public visitation. Annual visitation to the National Monument exceeded 300,000 in FY 2013 with a significant number of new hikers and joggers. This is double the amount that was previously estimated in FY 2012.

The increased visitation requires more attention to public demands and maintenance of wear and tear to recreation facilities and trails. Current management focus has shifted somewhat to maintaining existing recreation facilities and reducing impacts to sensitive natural resources from public use. There has also been a renewed effort in coordinating with adjoining jurisdictions on the provisions of public access and trail linkages.



Mountain bike riders enjoying the trails on the Fort Ord National Monument

Education, Outreach, and Interpretation

Another productive and rewarding year with outreach to the community with education and interpretation programs designed to inspire youngsters and others to be good stewards of our natural resources and to enjoy the National Monument. Over 174 individual programs were presented to thousands of schoolchildren and adults. Many of the outreach and education programs included hands-on-learning opportunities with volunteers in programs such as the popular [Return of the Natives program](#), or with class visits by the Monument Interpretive Specialist.



Children from Toro Park Elementary School learning about California poppies

Partnerships

The primary partnership groups that BLM worked with during FY 2013 included the CSU Monterey Bay's Return of the Natives program ([RON](#)), Fort Ord Recreation Trails Friends ([FORT Friends](#)), Monterey Off-Road Cycling Association ([MORCA](#)), and Monterey Bay Bicycle Equestrian Trail Assistance Team ([BETA](#)). These groups helped in so many ways with management of the National Monument and some highlights included: RON



The Monument One-Year Anniversary celebration was a great success with the community

assisted with organizing and leading over 1,000 volunteers who helped restore nearly 7 acres of habitat; FORT Friends and BETA helped publicize and support a successful One-Year Anniversary celebration, National Public Lands Day event and Sheep Appreciation Day outreach event; and MORCA helped developed a new trail and maintain existing new trails. In addition to these groups, the Monument benefitted from

financial contributions from [PG&E](#) and [Conservation Lands Foundation](#) that assisted with the One-Year Anniversary ceremony and National Public Lands Day.

Volunteers

Another productive year working with volunteers. Volunteers helped restore nearly 7 acres of habitat, construct and/or maintain miles of recreation trail, perform plant and targeted wildlife inventories on 7,212 of the National Monument, and remove invasive weeds.

Fort Ord National Monument 2013 Volunteer Summary		
Name / Group	Primary Benefitting Program Area	Volunteer or Hosted Worker Hours
David and Jane Styer	Flora / Fauna	1980
Return of the Natives volunteers	Flora / Hydrology	1940
Chicago Botanical gardens interns	All Program Areas	1800
BETA volunteers	Recreation	1628
MORCA volunteers	Recreation	406
Wednesday citizen volunteers	All Program Areas	352
California Conservation Corps (Hosted Workers)	All Program Areas	336
National Public Lands Day volunteers	All Program Areas	310
CSUMB Service Learners volunteers	Flora / Hydrology	210
Tues/Thursday citizen volunteers	Flora / Hydrology	210
Department of Corrections (Hosted Workers)	All Program Areas	180
Sierra Club volunteers	All Program Areas	104
	Sub Total	9456
	Estimated Value	\$189,120

Budget

There was no 1711 allocation to the Fort Ord National Monument in FY 2013. The following MLR accounts were directed base, or one-time only funds to the Fort Ord National Monument: L1020 (\$40,000), L1110 (\$90,000), L1220 (\$8,000), L1653 (\$1,277,000—Work Center Deferred Maintenance), L1660 (\$11,400), L1770 (\$5,000). The total directed MLR for FY 2013 was \$1,431,400.

The following non-MLR accounts were used for the National Monument: L1232 (\$47,690—recreation fee funds including FY 2112 carryover), L1920 (\$773,870—Army Interagency Services Agreement Work), L7122 (\$17,200), L3100 (\$10,000). The total non-MLR funding was \$848,760.

Including MLR and non-MLR funding, Fort Ord National Monument related funding totaled \$2,280,160.

Land or Easement Acquisitions

There was no land acquired during FY 2013. Due to a mapping error, the BLM believes that current BLM ownership of the National Monument is 7,212 acres as opposed to what is listed in the Proclamation as 7,205 acres.

Science

Science

Exciting research continues on the National Monument with cutting edge genetic studies being conducted on the Monument's federally-threatened, California Tiger Salamander.

Conservation Genomics of Endangered California Tiger Salamanders at Fort Ord

National Monument— This is an ongoing study led by H. Bradley Shaffer, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California at Los Angeles (lead); Ben Fitzpatrick, University of Tennessee; and Jarrett Johnson, Western Kentucky University. In FY 2013, BLM provided no funding for this research but coordinated with researchers.



The Monument benefits from research by faculty and students from CSU Monterey Bay

Effects of Landscape Covariates on the Distribution and Detection

Probabilities of 8 Mammalian

Carnivores—This was the Master's Thesis study and report prepared by Bart Kowalski of California State University Monterey Bay, Division of Science and Environmental Policy.

Grassland Monitoring to Assess the Effects of Grazing on Native Bunch

Grasses—This is an ongoing study led by Suzanne Worcester, Ph.D. of California State University Monterey Bay. In FY 2013, BLM provided no funding for this research but

coordinated with researchers.

Fort Ord National Monument Bobcat Survey and Study—This is an ongoing inventory/study led by volunteer Kathy Bell Frandeen.

Fort Ord National Monument Floral Survey and Study—This is an ongoing inventory/study led by volunteer David Styer, Ph.D. and Jane Styer.

Fort Ord National Monument Tricolored Blackbird Survey and Study—This is an ongoing inventory/study led by Chris Wilson and Christy Wyckoff of the Santa Lucia Conservancy.

5

Resources, Objects, Values, and Stressors

Resource, Object, or Value

“Military Heritage and History” - The Monument Proclamation made more references to the military tradition, heritage and history than any other topic or value – 19 references in all . It is quite clear that one of the primary attributes that the BLM is charged with safeguarding is the military heritage of this former military post. More than 2 million soldiers passed through the former Fort Ord on their way to military conflicts ranging from World War I to Operation Desert Storm. Inventorying and protecting military heritage resources is a bit different than the traditional cultural resources program because many of the associated resources are living people with stories and a strong connection to the former Fort Ord.

Military Heritage and History Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Stable. The Monument does not contain many structures that were used for military training, however, the overall condition and natural beauty of the former base on the National Monument is improving.

Military Heritage and History Status Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored
14, 658 acres	14,658 acres	14,658 acres	100% - Correlating training areas with significant events and people is an ongoing process.

Stressors Affecting this Resource, Object, or Value

As the U.S. Army proceeds with a cleanup of munitions and explosives of concern in the former range areas under CERCLA, some targets and associated range improvements are removed for safety purposes. In some instances, these facilities are the only remaining signs of former military training and use of the installation. The BLM has retained a few minor military structures to remind visitors of what the former place was used for.

Resource, Object, or Value

“Recreation and Tourism Values ” - The Monument Proclamation made 12 references to the Recreation and Tourism Values . One of the desired outcomes of the Monument Proclamation was to contribute to an increase in regional tourism and help with tourism related job-creation for the benefit of the local economy. In FY 2013, the BLM estimated around 300,000 annual visits to the National Monument for hiking, biking and equestrian use.

Recreation and Tourism Values Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Improving. The National Monument contains 86 miles of road and trail available for recreation use. Trails in poor condition are being replaced with more sustainable trails over time.

Recreation and Tourism Values Status Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored
14, 658 acres	7,212 acres	7,212 acres	50% - this is an ongoing monitoring effort. Army lands in range areas are currently closed to public recreation use.

Stressors Affecting this Resource, Object, or Value

Vandalism, heavy use and wear and tear of recreation facilities can reduce the quality of recreation values and create visitor conflict. Visitor use and vandalism is increasing, however, at this time the BLM is able to repair and improve the facilities to categorize the overall recreation value trend in a slightly improving condition. There is a concern that if visitation increases significantly more, there will be a degraded condition of recreation facilities and a need for more regulation and restriction of public use to help ensure a quality experience.

Resource, Object, or Value

“Plants, Flora, Grasslands and Oak Values” - The Monument Proclamation made 6 references to the Plants, Flora and Oak Values . The National Monument is home to 36 species of rare plants and animals and contains one of the best examples of central coast maritime chaparral. In some cases, 80-90% of the known global distribution of certain chaparral species are present on the National Monument.

Plants, Flora, Grasslands and Oak Values Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Improving. Since 1996, the BLM has re-stored 126 acres of degraded habitat including 69 acres of maritime chaparral, 17 acres of annual grassland, 13 acres of inland live oak woodland, and 9 acres of mixed riparian forest. Noxious weed abatement is also helping this resource.

Plants, Flora, Grasslands and Oak Values Status Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored
14, 658 acres	14, 658 acres	14, 658 acres	100% - Monitoring is an ongoing process. Detailed T&E inventories and mapping have not been completed.

Stressors Affecting this Resource, Object, or Value

Although the abatement of noxious weeds and restoration of degraded habitat allows us to currently categorize the overall health of vegetative values in an improving condition, there are a few factors that are causing stress and degradation. Off-trail public use and trampling causes some damage to vegetative resources, as does lower than normal precipitation that has occurred over the last several years. The Army’s ongoing munitions clean up program is generally contributing to an improved health of maritime chaparral because the Army is mostly using prescribed burning to remove brush to facilitate munitions removal. Where the Army has conducted some large-scale mechanical cutting to support the munitions clean up program, habitat diversity and quality has declined temporarily until future burns helps regenerate the chaparral.

Resource, Object, or Value

“Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Values ” - The National Park Service has identified a corridor path across the National Monument where Juan Bautista de Anza and his group of settlers/explorers are believed to have crossed in route to Monterey, then San Francisco during the spring of 1776. Some of this route is across land currently administered by the Army, some of the route is across BLM lands. The BLM has designated and signed 4.5 miles of the route on BLM administered lands.

Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Values Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good	Stable. A 4.5 mile long segment of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is delineated on the National Monument. The condition of the trail is fairly good and generally in a stable condition.

Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Values Status Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored
4.5 miles	4.5 miles	4.5 miles	100% - this is an ongoing monitoring effort.

Stressors Affecting this Resource, Object, or Value

Vandalism, heavy use and associated wear and tear of recreation facilities can reduce the quality of the historic trail and associated interpretive displays and create visitor conflict. Visitor use and vandalism is increasing, however, at this time the BLM is able to repair and improve the facilities to categorize the overall National Historic Trail trend in a stable condition. There is a concern that if visitation increases significantly more, there will be a degraded condition of interpretive facilities and a need for more regulation and restriction of public use to help ensure a quality experience. The National Historic Trail is a natural surfaced trail and road, and erosion is also a stressor to the feature. A portion of the trail is adjacent to El Toro Creek and the creek is threatening to undermine a short segment of the designated trail.

Resource, Object, or Value

“Wildlife Values” - The National Monument is home to the several BLM special status species such as California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, California legless lizard, California linderiella, and Monterey ornate shrew. The Monument also is home to badgers, mountain lions, golden eagles, black-tailed deer, turkeys, bobcats, coyotes, gopher snakes, red tailed hawks, Canada geese, coast horned lizards, California quail and numerous other species.

Wildlife Values Status and Trend Table

Status of Resource, Object, or Value	Trend
Good (overall)	Improving. Since 1996, the BLM has re-stored 126 acres of degraded wildlife habitat including 69 acres of maritime chaparral, 17 acres of annual grassland, 13 acres of inland live oak woodland, and 9 acres of mixed riparian forest.

Wildlife Values Status Inventory, Assessment, Monitoring Table

Acres in Unit	Acres Inventoried	Acres Possessing Object	Acres Monitored
14, 658 acres	7,212 acres	7,212 acres	50% - this is an ongoing monitoring effort.

Stressors Affecting this Resource, Object, or Value

Overall, habitat improvements and restoration has benefitted wildlife values and most wildlife habitat. Increased public use is a stressor to wildlife, however, public recreation use is likely less of an impact than was military training that occurred on the site since 1917. Because public use is restricted to non-motorized uses on designated trails, it is rare that public intrusion off-trail disturbs wildlife. Off-leash dogs have caused some disturbance to native mammals, amphibians and birds by roaming into sensitive habitat areas or chasing wildlife. This is generally a rare occurrence.

The one known exception to an overall improving trend with wildlife values is the California tiger salamander. Hybridization of the California tiger salamander with the introduced barred salamander is rapidly spreading super-invasive genes throughout the region and the long-term effect of this intrusion is unknown at this time.

6

Summary of Performance Measures



The resource, objects and values of the National Monument described above include Military Heritage and History; Recreation and Tourism Values; Plants, Flora, Grasslands and Oak Values; Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Values; and Wildlife Values.

Summary Table

Resource, Object, or Value	Status	Trend
Military Heritage and History	Good	Stable
Recreation and Tourism Values	Good	Improving
Plants, Flora, Grasslands and Oak Values	Good	Improving for most plant communities
Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Values	Good	Stable
Wildlife Values	Good	Improving for most species except California tiger salamander.

Manager's Letter



Hello Friends:

It is an honor to be managing the Fort Ord National Monument between the beautiful Monterey Bay and bountiful Salinas Valley in California. Our stewardship of this special place will honor all who have passed through the gates of the former Fort Ord, and those who were here prior to our nation's soldiers. We have a great team here to make this happen, and that team includes the communities of the Monterey region.

FY 2013 was our first full year of being a National Monument—and it was a great one. I am extremely pleased with the improvements we were able to accomplish. We constructed a new trailhead, new warehouse and several new trails. We restored degraded habitat, and treated thousands of acres to reduce invasive weeds that are threats to the native plants and animals. In accomplishing all of these things, we were assisted by a generous community of volunteer stewards who love this place just as much as we do. With their continued support, our future is bright.

FY 2014 and beyond, our progress will be tempered to some extent by federal budget sequestrations and the ongoing munitions cleanup efforts of the Army that will soon extend into currently open areas along the northern margins of the National Monument. With trailhead access now mostly in place along our southeastern margins, we will direct our efforts on providing northwestern access opportunities. This effort will likely be delayed due to munitions and redevelopment issues, but we are committed to providing better access to this special place along our coastal margins. This will require the cooperation of many jurisdictions, and I am confident that we can all work together because this is the collective desire of the community.

I am continually reminded just how special this place is when I drive to work each morning. I usually see a bobcat, several black-tailed deer and rabbits, and a coyote or two each week here on the Monument. For them, this is their home and we are their guests. So, let's get outside and enjoy this [extraORDinary National Monument](#) and remember to tread lightly on the land!

Sincerely,

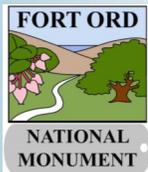
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric A. Morgan".

Eric A. Morgan



**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

Fort Ord National Monument



Monument Work Center

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July 18, 2014

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