

## Next Phase of FORA ESCA Work to Begin in Parker Flats



the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery, Monterey Peninsula College Training area, and Horse Park; 3) recreational trails and paths; and 4) Habitat Reserve.

Once FORA begins this work local citizens and recreational users will notice vegetation cutting and trail closures. FORA and its cleanup team (LFR Inc, Weston Solutions, and Westcliffe Engineers) are communicating and coordinating with the local community to minimize these impacts. A description of these activities follows.

### Vegetation Cutting

The habitat within the Parker Flats MRA is predominately coast woodlands consisting of coastal scrub oaks, brush, grasses and poison oak. There are a few small pockets of maritime chaparral which include Manzanita and other brush. This dense vegetation makes it nearly prohibitive for Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) technicians to use any form of equipment to detect munitions. Overgrowth in these areas also makes it very difficult to see munitions that may be lying on the surface potentially compromising worker safety. Therefore, vegetation removal is required in order for munitions remediation to proceed safely and effectively.



- Reviewing previously collected Army data
- Identifying information gaps
- Select building demolition
- Debris removal
- Habitat monitoring
- Vegetation cutting
- Sub-surface investigation
- Munitions identification and removal
- Invasive weed monitoring and abatement
- Erosion control
- Third party quality control monitoring

All of these activities are essential to support the scheduled or approved reuse of this land. Parker Flats reuse includes, 1) residential development; 2) nonresidential development including

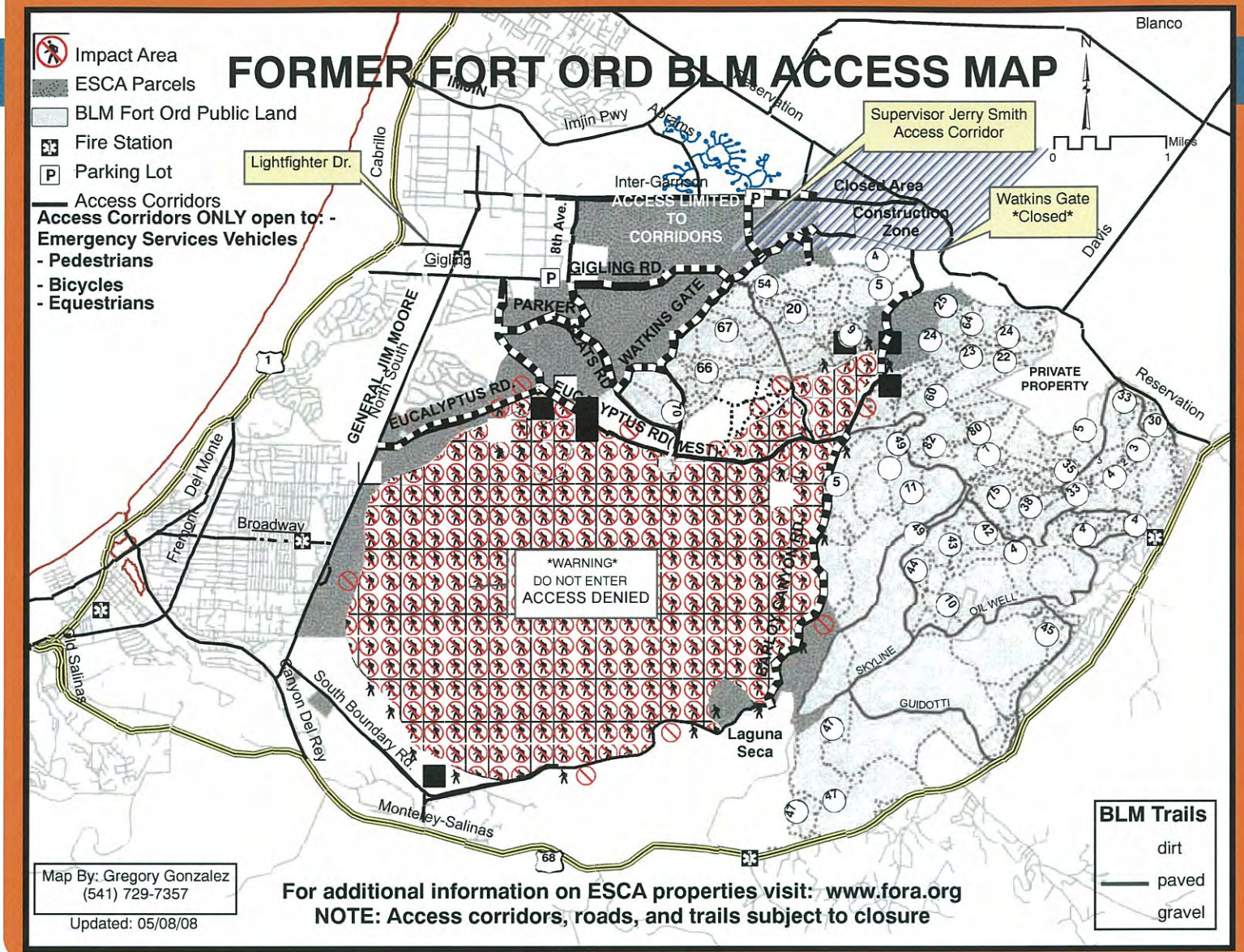
On Fort Ord vegetation removal is performed by either cutting or through a controlled burn. The FORA Team has worked with the Army to identify that cutting is the appropriate removal method for Parker Flats and controlled burns will *not* be required. Parker Flats vegetation removal will consist of:

- Mowing grasses
- Machine cutting of dense brush, Manzanita and poison oak
- Removing low hanging tree branches
- Young tree removal (larger, mature trees will not be removed)

FORA is working hard to minimize the impact of these activities to the natural environment by coordinating closely with the Army and following the requirements of the Habitat Management Plan and Biological Opinions for Fort Ord. Although this activity may seem severe, archival photographs demonstrate that vegetation levels return. Additionally, vegetation cutting or thinning removes old and dead growth greatly reducing fire hazards and increasing plant health.

### Habitat Reserve Areas

Qualified biologists on the ESCA RP Team have conducted baseline surveys to monitor the existing habitat within the Habitat Reserve Areas. Additionally, the ESCA RP Team has GIS mapping technology which identifies critical species, such as California Tiger Salamanders, for which special field management practices, consistent with the Biological Opinions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Habitat Management Plan, will be implemented. Prior to habitat removal, field crews will receive environmental awareness training and qualified field biologists will periodically monitor operations for compliance with applicable mitigation measures.



### Trail Access and Closures

FORA remains acutely sensitive to the fact that local recreational users have had virtually unlimited access to the trails within Parker Flats. With valuable input from users, local citizens, and emergency service providers, FORA has been working since September 2007 to minimize impacts and develop alternative routes, signage, and provide general education regarding access and cleanup activities in these areas.

While access and use is an important FORA concern, safety is FORA's primary obligation. **Once work begins in the Parker Flats MRA, citizens and recreational users must respect the necessary access restrictions required**

for the removal of remnant munitions. Adhering to these restrictions will help to ensure worker and citizen safety and help munitions removal activities to move forward as efficiently and effectively - **potentially reducing down time.**

The map above identifies all alternate access routes and trail closures. FORA has worked collaboratively with local Emergency Service Providers and the Users Working Group to identify alternate access corridors for recreational use. The black and white dotted lines indicate access corridors which are only open to emergency service vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and equestrians. Signage for these areas will be posted in the near future. In developing these access routes FORA has

tried to address all concerns, however, there are some areas that will remain inaccessible while munitions remediation work is occurring in Parker Flats.

For further details on activities surrounding the Parker Flats Phase II munitions remediation work and current access restrictions, please contact the FORA ESCA Hotline at 831-883-3506 or by email: [esca@fora.org](mailto:esca@fora.org)



# Landmark Early Transfer Agreement is Official

This past August, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger concurred with the early transfer of former Fort Ord property recommended by the U.S. Army (Army) and Environmental Agency (EPA). A signing ceremony was held in Monterey, CA on August 12, 2008 formally recognizing the 3,337 acre transfer. The ceremony marked the completion of a multi-year effort between the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA), Army, EPA, and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to move the remaining Economic Development Conveyance parcels from the Army to FORA and enable cleanup of those same parcels.

This land transfer marks the first time munitions contaminated land on a Superfund site has been transferred to a private entity for cleanup. The landmark transfer will heighten regulator oversight on the property. Specifically, a companion agreement between FORA, EPA, and DTSC confirms Superfund enforcement authority, affirming regulatory recourse over the FORA-led cleanup.

This is good news for the citizens of the Monterey Bay Region as this combined effort provides assurance that the cleanup of this transferred land will be to the level that is protective of human

health and under the regulatory control of the state and nation's environmental laws.

This property transfer also includes an Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement (ESCA) between the Army and FORA specifying grant terms between the Army and FORA for the muni-

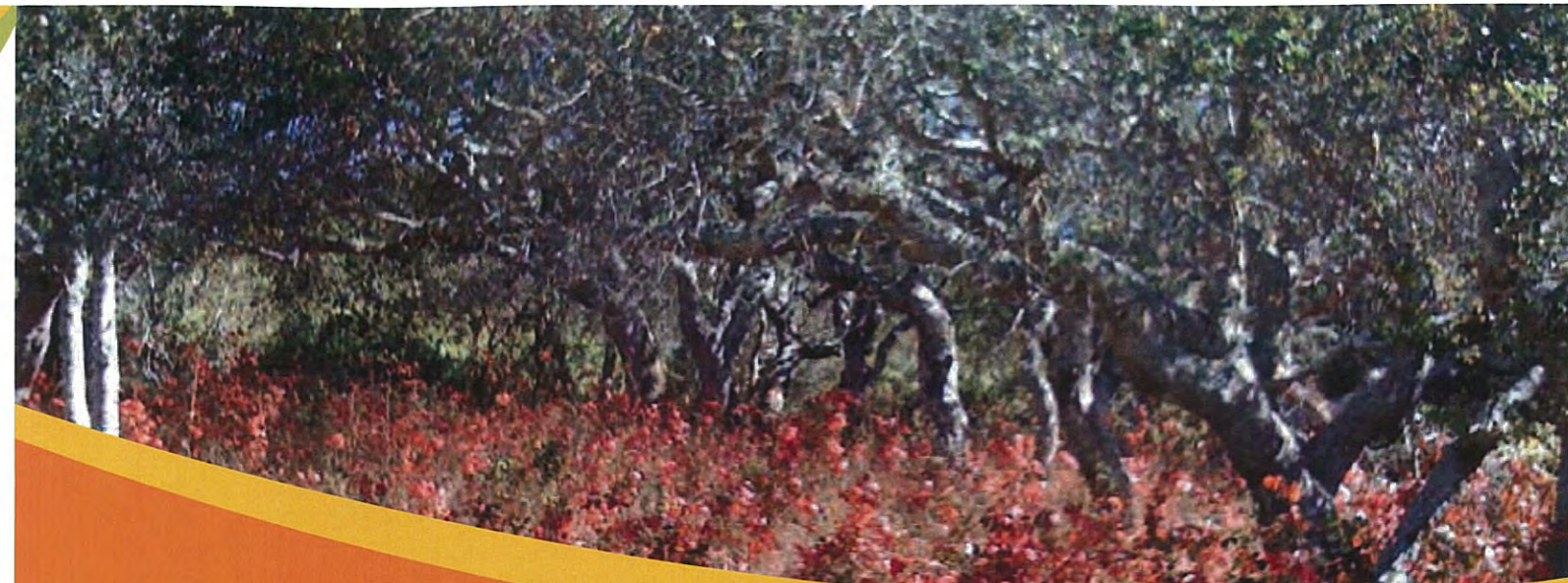


tions remediation. This \$100 million dollar agreement provides funds from the Army to FORA for cleanup costs of the munitions impacted 3,280 acres, state and federal regulatory oversight costs and an environmental insurance package that provides additional cleanup assurances and liability reduction.

Michael Houlemard, Executive Officer of FORA stated at the signing ceremony that "the cleanup of the ESCA properties will either meet or exceed, federal and state regulatory requirements, and all parties will be able to take advantage of efficiencies arising from up-front funding instead of being subject to the unpredictability of the annual federal budget process."

A key early transfer benefit is the shortened expected cleanup timeframe by about 7 years. Under the federal budget process, cleanup on these parcels would have taken another 15 years due to the phasing, mobilization, demobilization, and other inefficiencies of uncertain funding. Additionally, funding assurance allows cleanup work to be coordinated with the FORA Base Reuse Plan to advance productive local reuse, enhancing the economic base of surrounding communities

Planned reuse of these early transfer properties includes a Central Coast Veterans Cemetery, residential housing, enhanced educational facilities, a world class equestrian center, hiking and biking trails for recreational users, managed open space and habitat reserve areas.



October 2008 · Volume 2, No. 4

## THE FORA ESCA REMEDIATION PROGRAM

*the future of Fort Ord*

QUARTERLY UPDATE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

FORT ORD REUSE  
AUTHORITY  
100 12th Street, Bldg. 2880  
Marina, CA 93933

### Parker Flats Phase II Community Workshop

On October 29th FORA will hold an informal Community Workshop on the munitions cleanup activities for Parker Flats. The ESCA Remediation Team will be present to provide further details and answer questions about vegetation removal, cleanup activities and access issues. The meeting will begin at 6 PM in the FORA Conference Center.

### 2008 Project Document Schedule Upcoming Documents:

- Draft Final Group 1 RI/FS Work Plan  
Targeted comment period: early-October – early-November
- Draft Final Group 2 RI/FS Work Plan  
Targeted comment period: late-November – late-December
- Draft Group 1 Institutional Control/Operation & Maintenance Plan  
Targeted comment period: late-November – late-January 2009

\*The above document timeframes are based upon multiple agency work schedules and subject to change. For the most current information please contact FORA's ESCA hotline at (831) 883-3506 or send an email to [esca@fora.org](mailto:esca@fora.org).