

Attachment A Habitat Conservation Plan Summary

In April 1997, the revised Installation-Wide Multispecies Habitat Management Plan for Former Fort Ord (HMP) was issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Army. The HMP established a comprehensive species and habitat conservation program as part of the closure, disposal, and reuse of former Fort Ord lands. While the Army's HMP provides a framework for species and habitat conservation on former Fort Ord, it does not meet U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) standards or requirements for an application soliciting the issuance of incidental take permits. "Incidental take" means the disturbance or destruction of a protected species or its habitat as a result of an otherwise permitted activity. Incidental take may occur as a result of development and other activities by humans.

A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is being developed for the former Fort Ord lands that will provide the framework for ensuring conservation and enhancement of 19 special status plant and animal species and the natural communities that support them on former Fort Ord that would contribute to species recovery. The HCP will serve as the basis for issuance of a base-wide Section 2081 (California Endangered Species Act) incidental take permit by the CDFW) and also as the basis for issuance of a base-wide Section 10(a)(1)(B) (federal Endangered Species Act) incidental take permit by the USFWS. The HCP will incorporate all relevant information from the HMP and will supersede the HMP as the primary conservation planning document for non-federal recipients of Fort Ord lands.

Some of the open space areas in Fort Ord are designated as Habitat Management Areas (HMAs) in the HCP and serve to mitigate the impact of development and other activities in the developable areas of Fort Ord. HMAs include large tracts of land that support biologically diverse natural communities and are contiguous or otherwise connected through established corridors. Each HMA will be managed to benefit HCP-covered species and natural communities through implementation of site-specific mitigation measures. Implementation of these HCP required actions will achieve both the habitat and species-level biological goals and objectives.

The County is anticipated to be responsible for the management of approximately 1200 acres of lands designated as HMAs. The public draft HCP is anticipated to be released by the end of 2015, and will include cost estimates and proposed finance structure to fund HCP activities.