



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: 14-766, **Version:** 1

- a. Receive a follow up report as directed during Budget Hearings on June 10, 2014 regarding remaining Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15 funding requirements for activities necessary to manage County properties in the former Fort Ord area;
- b. Consider and approve a transfer of \$150,000 from General Fund Contingencies to the RMA budget to fund increased FY 2014-15 costs for managing County properties in the former Fort Ord area (4/5th vote required).; and
- c. Approve and authorize the Auditor-Controller to decrease appropriations by \$150,000 in General Fund Contingencies 001-1050-8034-CAO020 and increase appropriations by \$150,000 in RMA Admin 001-3000-8222-RMA013 to fund FY 2014-15 expenditures for managing County properties in the former Fort Ord area (4/5th vote required). (Budget for RMA FY 14-15)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a follow up report as directed during Budget Hearings on June 10, 2014 regarding remaining Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15 funding requirements for activities necessary to manage County properties in the former Fort Ord area;
- b. Consider and approve a transfer of \$150,000 from General Fund Contingencies to the RMA budget to fund increased FY 2014-15 costs for managing County properties in the former Fort Ord area (4/5th vote required); and
- c. Approve and Authorize the Auditor-Controller to decrease appropriations by \$150,000 in General Fund Contingencies 001-1050-8034-CAO020 and increase appropriations by \$150,000 in RMA Admin 001-3000-8222-RMA013 to fund FY 2014-15 expenditures for managing County properties in the former Fort Ord area (4/5th vote required).

SUMMARY:

On June 10, 2014, the Board of Supervisors considered the County Recommended Budget for FY 2014-15 and directed that RMA staff return with a report and recommendations of funding needs and priorities for activities necessary to properly manage properties that have transferred to the County or may transfer to the County during this Fiscal Year. Staff presented this information to the Board's Fort Ord Committee on July 28, 2014 to consider recommendations for the Board of Supervisors.

Priorities identified by staff include a funding request totaling \$150,000 as follows:

- *Management Strategy.* BFS Landscape Architects of Monterey is currently under contract with Monterey County to prepare a management strategy to help guide implementation and budget decisions for the former Fort Ord area. An additional \$40,000 is needed to complete the scope of work outlined in the contract.
- *Maintenance.* When the County accepts additional land, history would indicate a need for an additional \$60,000 in FY 2014-15 to address debris and litter removal.
- *Enforcement.* Currently there is no routine enforcement program being implemented on County owned properties and the RMA does not have personnel for enforcement. Staff estimates that an initial funding request in the amount of \$50,000 could fund a very basic part-time ranger presence from either County Parks or the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Funding for implementation actions such as developing trails heads is not recommended at this time; however, the BFS contract includes efforts to complete a trail plan (aka FORHA) that would include locations of trail heads. Recommendations from the Management Strategy would likely require additional funding that can be considered at the time that report is completed.

In addition, the Board may consider additional funding in the amount of \$50,000 to hire a Management Specialist or consultant to work with the potential partners (such as the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District and/or Bureau of Land Management), County Parks and RMA staff to develop a sustainable property management program for all County open space lands, in addition to Fort Ord.

This matter is on the agenda of the Board of Supervisors' Fort Ord Committee (FOC) on July 28, 2014 for report and recommendation. Staff will present orally to the Board the Committee's recommendation.

DISCUSSION:

To date, the County has accepted ownership of approximately 655 acres of property on the former Fort Ord. Pursuant to the 2001 Implementation Agreement, the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) has transmitted grant deeds to the County for about another 844 acres, and other grant deeds totaling nearly 980 acres are expected over the next two years. Some of this land is designated for habitat management and some is not restricted. The Implementation Agreement requires that the County accept these properties. In addition, the Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency has submitted a Long Range Property Management Plan that proposes the State Department of Finance approve the transfer of about 329 acres of land to the County. In all, the County may ultimately own and be responsible for management of over 2,800 acres in the former Fort Ord.

There are many existing trails through lands located in the former Fort Ord, some of which are to be maintained as trails and some that are to be restored as habitat under the Fort Ord Habitat Management/Conservation Plans. Identified properties/trails require appropriate management to ensure that requirements and restrictions related to the Habitat Management Plan (HMP), the future Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Base Clean Up are adhered to while achieving safe public access to open space and trails. When the Base Reuse Plan (BRP) was adopted, the expectation was that the County Redevelopment Agency would receive developable lands from which tax increment would be derived to fund the cost related to managing the habitat and open space areas. In February 2012, pursuant to state law, redevelopment agencies were eliminated, along with that funding source, but the County is still obligated to manage these lands.

Management Strategy:

The County Resource Management Agency (RMA), in collaboration with the County Parks Department, is in the process of formulating a feasible property management strategy in regard to the County's obligations for habitat management, non-habitat open space management, and trail development and maintenance. The local firm of BFS Landscape Architects has been retained to assist with this effort.

On June 23, 2014 an overview of the issues was presented to the Fort Ord Committee (FOC). This overview included the concept of focusing resources on an 800-acre "Phase I" area that would provide the most logical initial trail connections to the BLM National Monument and that requires immediate property management attention. Activities to be performed by the RMA and the associated costs (for FY 2014-15) that relate to this Phase 1 management strategy include basic property maintenance and minimal enforcement.

In order to proceed with developing and funding this program, including pursuing partnerships with local community groups and entities such as BLM, CSUMB and the Regional Parks District, specific technical

expertise is required. Staff requests \$40,000 to complete the above-described strategy and:

- Finalize and approve a coordinated trail alignment plan;
- Develop plans and specifications for permanent trail support facilities;
- Implement habitat management activities that the County is obligated to perform; and
- Address management of open space areas that are not habitat, including enforcement activities.

Basic Property Maintenance (Debris Removal):

Currently the RMA allocates approximately \$60,000 per year for debris and litter removal. This has allowed the RMA to address immediate health and safety issues that result from illegal dumping and general litter. When the County accepts ownership of additional properties, including Gigling Road, history would indicate that this funding will not be sufficient for even those basic activities. Therefore, staff requests an additional \$60,000 for FY 2014-15 to address debris and litter removal.

Enforcement: FORA has agreements with local agencies, including the Monterey County Sheriff's Department, to assist with emergency services on lands held by FORA. However, there is currently no routine enforcement program being implemented on County-owned properties, and the RMA does not have personnel for enforcement. Either County Parks Rangers or BLM Rangers could perform these functions under a funding agreement or contract. While County Parks Department has rangers, resources are very limited. An initial funding request in the amount of \$50,000 is made to fund a very basic part-time ranger presence.

Trail Head Facilities:

Supervisor Parker and members of the public have expressed interest in seeing the County open up trails and create at least minimal trail head facilities, such as parking areas and signage. The "Phase 1" area could include interim trail heads at Inter-Garrison Rd/Schoonover Rd (Jerry Smith Trail) and 8th Ave/Gigling Road. Initial minimal improvements are estimated to cost approximately \$200,000 above and beyond the current funding request.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following agencies have participated in the preparation of this report:

Resource Management Agency
RMA - Public Works
County Parks

FINANCING:

There is an impact on the general fund as a result of the above actions. Approval of the recommended actions would reduce General Fund Contingencies 001-1050-8034-CAO020 by \$150,000 and increase appropriations in RMA-Admin 001-3000-8222-RMA013 by \$150,000.

If funding is not allocated at this time, RMA will work closely with its assigned CAO Budget & Analysis Analyst to determine a possible budget modification request to be presented through the Board's Budget Committee, following completion of the Management Strategy. If funding for maintenance and enforcement is not approved, staff recommends that County lands in the former Fort Ord area remain closed to the public until funding is available. (However, closing these lands to the public will also involve a cost for signage, fencing, and enforcement.)

Prepared by: Carl P. Holm, AICP, Deputy Director Resource Management Agency

Approved by: Benny J. Young, Director Resource Management Agency

cc: Board of Supervisors, County Counsel (W. Strimling), N. Chilous, N. Nichols, C Urrutia, Economic Development (S Spaur), County Parks (J Akeman), County Sheriff, BSF (M Bellinger, J Long), FORA (M. Houlemard, S. Endsley, J. Garcia, J Metz, S Cook), BLM (E. Morgan), CSUMB (A Spear, K Saunders), MPC (V Nakamura), UC (G Bice), City of Marina (L Long), City of Seaside (D Ingersol), City of Del Rey Oaks (D Dawson), City of Monterey (E Caraker), Doug Yount, MORCA (H Stern), LandWatch (A White), Keep Fort Ord Wild (M. Erickson)