



County of Monterey

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

Board Report

File #: 21-229, **Version:** 1

Receive a report on the status of the Habitat Resource Management Plan and Fort Ord Recreational Habitat Area Trail Master Plan on the former Fort Ord lands.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Parks Commission receive a report on the status of the Habitat Resource Management Plan and Fort Ord Recreational Habitat Area Trail Master Plan on the former Fort Ord lands.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Housing and Community Development staff is requesting the Parks Commission receive a report on the status of the Habitat Resource Management Plan and Fort Ord Recreational Habitat Area Trail Master Plan on the former Fort Ord lands.

Habitat Resource Management Plan:

Certain properties on the former Fort Ord are subject to the conditions and requirements laid out in the Installation-Wide Habitat Management Plan for the former Fort Ord, which requires the preparation and completion of a site-specific Habitat Resource Management Plan. Prior to the dissolution of the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA), they were developing a Fort Ord Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan that would serve this purpose for all parcels with habitat restrictions on Fort Ord. However, this comprehensive Habitat Conservation Plan was never adopted prior to FORA's dissolution. The County owns 2,300 acres of open space in the Fort Ord area with approximately 1,500 acres subject to habitat management requirements, the last of which transferred to the County from FORA on June 30, 2020.

To comply with the Installation-Wide Habitat Management Plan for the former Fort Ord and regulatory timelines provided in the property deeds, the County is moving forward to develop its Habitat Resource Management Plan.

The County is processing a Professional Services Agreement, anticipated to go to the Board on March 23, 2021 for approval, for a consultant to develop the County's Habitat Resource Management Plan. If approved, the Professional Services Agreement includes the preparation and completion of the Resource Management Plan and permit acquisition from applicable State/Federal agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service.

Preparing the Habitat Resource Management Plan includes public outreach, stakeholder meetings, and presentations before several County hearing bodies. The anticipated timeline for completion is one year beginning from the approval date of the Professional Services Agreement. Housing and Community Development staff is set for a kick-off meeting with the consultant to refine the timeline for each of these tasks at the end of March.

Fort Ord Recreational Habitat Area Trail Master Plan and Open Space Management Strategy:

Staff recently met with Public Works, Facilities and Parks staff to discuss the process in moving the Draft Fort Ord Recreational Habitat Area Trail Master Plan and Open Space Management Strategy (FORHA Plan) to a

final phase. The draft plan was completed in May 2015, however, the plan was not finalized at that time as staff anticipated being able to tier off of the Environmental Impact Report for the Fort Ord Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan for the environmental analysis of this plan, once certified. Additionally, at the time when the draft FORHA Plan was being discussed in 2015, certain user groups had raised concerns in regards to which trails were being closed and those remaining open by associated user groups.

Staff is developing a workplan to determine the extent of updates and next steps needed to finalize the FORHA Plan. At a minimum, updates are needed to reflect current organizational changes that resulted in the dissolution of the Resource Management Agency into two distinct departments, transfer of certain Fort Ord parcels to the City of Marina, consistency with a completed trail signage and mapping, and any other necessary updates. It is likely that a consultant will be needed to update the cost estimates as provided in the draft FORHA Plan, and staff is exploring the availability of the prior consultant that completed the draft FORHA Plan. Staff will also conduct public outreach with respective user groups. As a more refined timeline is drafted, milestones for each of these task will be established. The draft FORHA Plan will need to be reviewed for consistency with the Habitat Resource Management Plan, and staff anticipates bringing the two documents forward concurrently for consideration and approval.

FINANCING:

Funding for staff time and outside Professional Services associated with the Habitat Management Plan and FORHA Plan are included in the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Adopted Budget under Fund 029, Habitat Management Program, Appropriation Unit RMA111.

Prepared by: Jacquelyn M. Nickerson, Management Analyst II, (831) 755-5240
Reviewed by: Shandy Carroll, Management Analyst III
Approved by: Melanie Beretti, HCD Housing and Special Programs Services Manager
Approved by: Mike Novo, AICP, Interim HCD Director