



**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

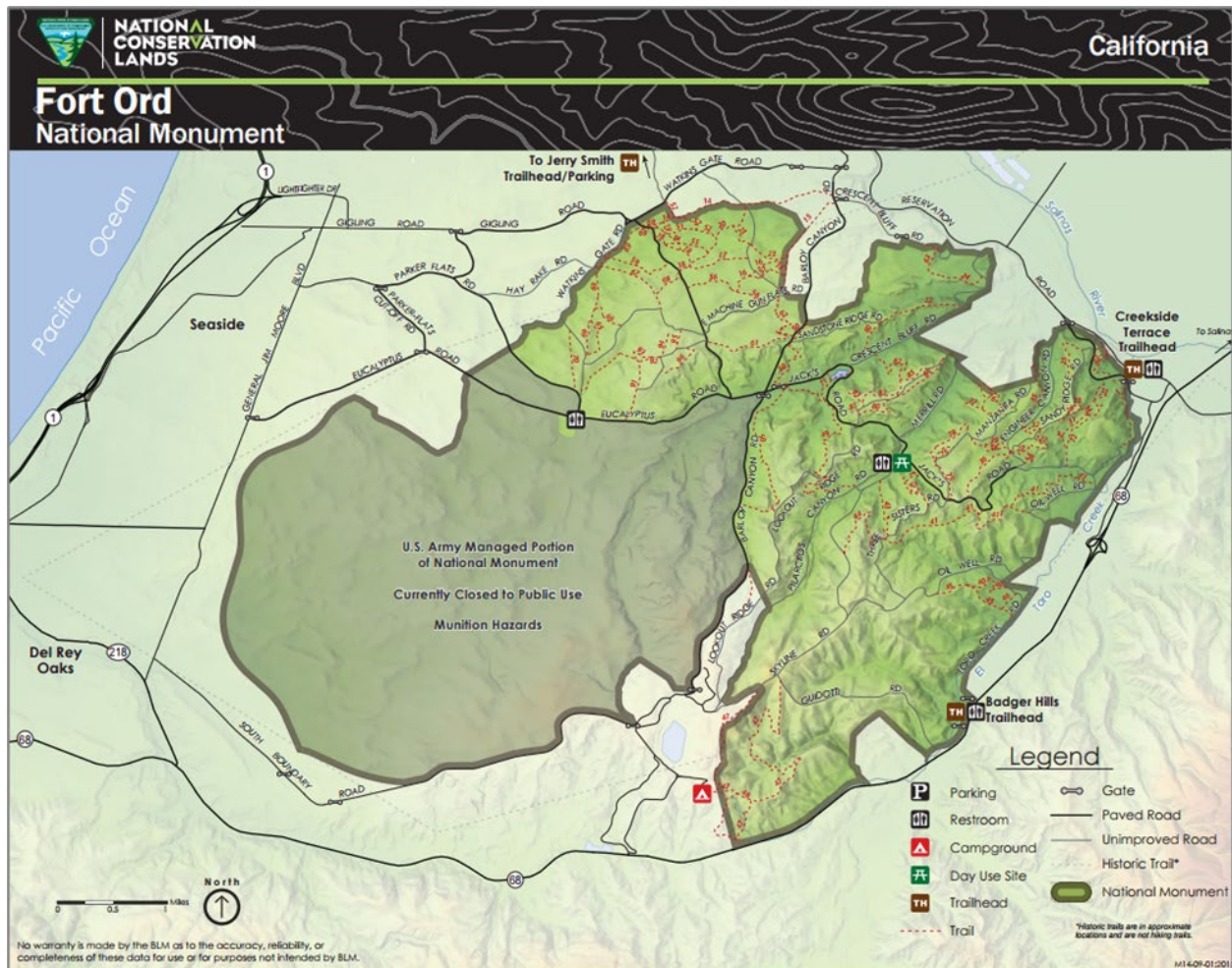
**California**  
2022: Annual Manager's Report

# Fort Ord

## National Monument







# Accomplishments

---

The Fort Ord National Monument (Monument) turned ten years old in 2022, and the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) monumental team and partners celebrated this milestone by hosting celebratory events, repairing recreation trails, restoring native habitats, reducing fire hazards, providing quality visitor services, and improving connections with visitors from far and near. Eight miles of trail were maintained in partnership with the Monterey Off Road Cycling Association (MORCA). Three acres of degraded habitat were restored in partnership with the CSU Monterey Bay's Habitat Stewardship Project. The Safe PASSAGES trail manners program in partnership with MORCA, Fort Ord Recreation Trails (FORT) Friends, and REI continued to be a success. Thousands of acres of fire hazards were treated by a carefully monitored goat grazing operation. Hundreds of acres of invasive weed treatments were skillfully implemented by the Monument weed crew in partnership with the U.S. Army. Dozens of elementary schools continued their partnership with BLM, which hosted over 400 enrichment programs in local schools for students.





# Challenges

---

Loss of key personnel, safety measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission, and increased wear and tear of recreation facilities due to heavy use were among the challenges experienced at Fort Ord National Monument this year. Undoubtedly, the largest challenge was the passing of the BLM's Implementation Team Manager, David Slipsager, who led construction and maintenance crews on the Monument and across the field office for over two decades. Dave oversaw constructing the Creekside Terrace Trailhead (2006), Badger Hills Trailhead (2012), Monument Work Center (2010) and countless roads and trails on the Monument that millions of visitors use and enjoy each year. In addition to the heartbreaking loss of Dave, the BLM also lost a law enforcement ranger and maintenance worker to retirement and transfer, respectively. Accordingly, filling vacancies and training new personnel was a priority in 2022.



# Visitors

---

Visitation continued strong and steady in 2022 as COVID-19 restrictions slowly lifted. About 1.1 million cyclists, hikers, joggers, and equestrians hit the trails and packed trailhead facilities beyond their design capacity. Heavy use caused erosional issues to trail treads, and small gullies began to form. In response, the BLM staff and MORCA partners stepped up efforts to harden and stabilize trail tread surfaces. This trail stabilization effort is expected to continue for the next several years and is one of the projects identified under the Great American Outdoor Act.





# Partnerships

---

The BLM enjoys so many monumental partners at Fort Ord that it is difficult to imagine managing this spectacular area without them. In addition to continued work with long-time partners at the U.S. Army, MORCA, FORT Friends and Conservation Lands Foundation, the BLM recognized monumental partners at CSU Monterey Bay with a National Make A Difference Award. Through this University partnership, over 250 landscape scars have been restored into beautiful natural habitat on the Monument and countless service learning college students have volunteered their time in various capacities. The 10-year anniversary celebration was a great opportunity to thank and recognize all the key Monument partners.



# Science

---

Near the end of the year, a remarkable new partnership formed with CSU Monterey Bay that we are very excited about. The University was awarded a grant from the BLM to establish an eight-person crew of graduate and undergraduate students to perform important research and monitoring on the Monument for up to three years. Each crew is led by a graduate student pursuing a master's degree. One crew is studying the effectiveness of various grazing and manual treatments of grasslands. Another crew is studying the effectiveness of previous habitat restoration treatments since 1996, and the other two crews are inventorying, monitoring, and studying rare plant and oak woodland health. We look forward to working with this dynamic crew through 2023.





# Climate Impacts

---

The Fort Ord National Monument and surrounding areas are increasingly showing impacts of elevated annual temperatures, including vegetation changes, and more frequent wildfires. These climate impacts also effect the hydroperiod of vernal pools that can stress wildlife, especially breeding opportunities for the Federally listed, California tiger salamander. This rare creature lives in upland burrows but breeds once or twice per life cycle in vernal pools once they begin to fill.





# Climate Resilience

---

Changes in the climate and the associated increase in the number and size of wildfires across the region and state creates heightened concern regarding wildfire risk. The Fort Ord National Monument is surrounded by a residential population of around 100,000 within five miles. The BLM continues to use goat grazing to reduce fire hazards and has an ongoing monitoring program to gauge the effects this grazing regime, coupled with sustained drought, is having on the fire risk and species composition.



# Social and Environmental Justice

In 2022, the Monument demographics continued to shift significantly with the influx of new visitors. Many new Spanish-speaking visitors from the Salinas Valley have fallen in love with the trails on the Monument. In response, the BLM made improvements to information delivery with modifying popular brochures and maps into Spanish versions. The BLM continues to visit schools from around the region, including schools of traditionally underserved populations in the Salinas area in order to enhance their understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. In 2022, the Monument Interpretive Specialist provided over 400 lessons at area Elementary Schools.

### Para su Diversión

- Obedezca todas las señales de peligro/prohibición de paso y barricadas. No tocar objetos que puedan ser municiones militares desechadas.
- Manténgase en los caminos y senderos abiertos y señalizados.
- Está prohibido el uso motorizado (vehículos, motocicletas, etc.)
- Está prohibido disparar, cazar y poseer de armas.
- Fort Ord está abierto desde 1/2 hora antes del amanecer hasta 1/2 hora después de la puesta de sol.
- Están prohibidas las hogueras y los fuegos artificiales.
- Controle y limpie los restos de los perros.
- Respete las restricciones de correa publicadas.

### Los Senderos Son de Acceso Compartido

Algunos senderos pueden ser muy utilizados.

¡Por favor, sea considerado con los demás visitantes!



**NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS**  
**Fort Ord**  
National Monument

### Conozca los Señales

**Sendero de Un Sentido**  
popular entre excursionistas y ciclistas. Mire su velocidad y evitar cuando está mojado.

**Vías Administrativas**  
la mayoría son de grava; unos pocos están pavimentados. Más durable para uso húmedo. Estos están abiertos al público, uso no motorizado.

**Senderos de una sola vía**  
en proceso restauración  
Senderos No Señalizados son senderos de una sola vía también.



### Contáctenos

Bureau of Land Management  
940 2nd Avenue  
Marina, CA 93933  
(831) 582-2200  
[www.blm.gov/fort-ord](http://www.blm.gov/fort-ord)


Suscribase a News.bytes,  
nuestro boletín electrónico  
semanal



BLM/CA-GPOB-2-076-6240-REV2017



Guía de Senderos

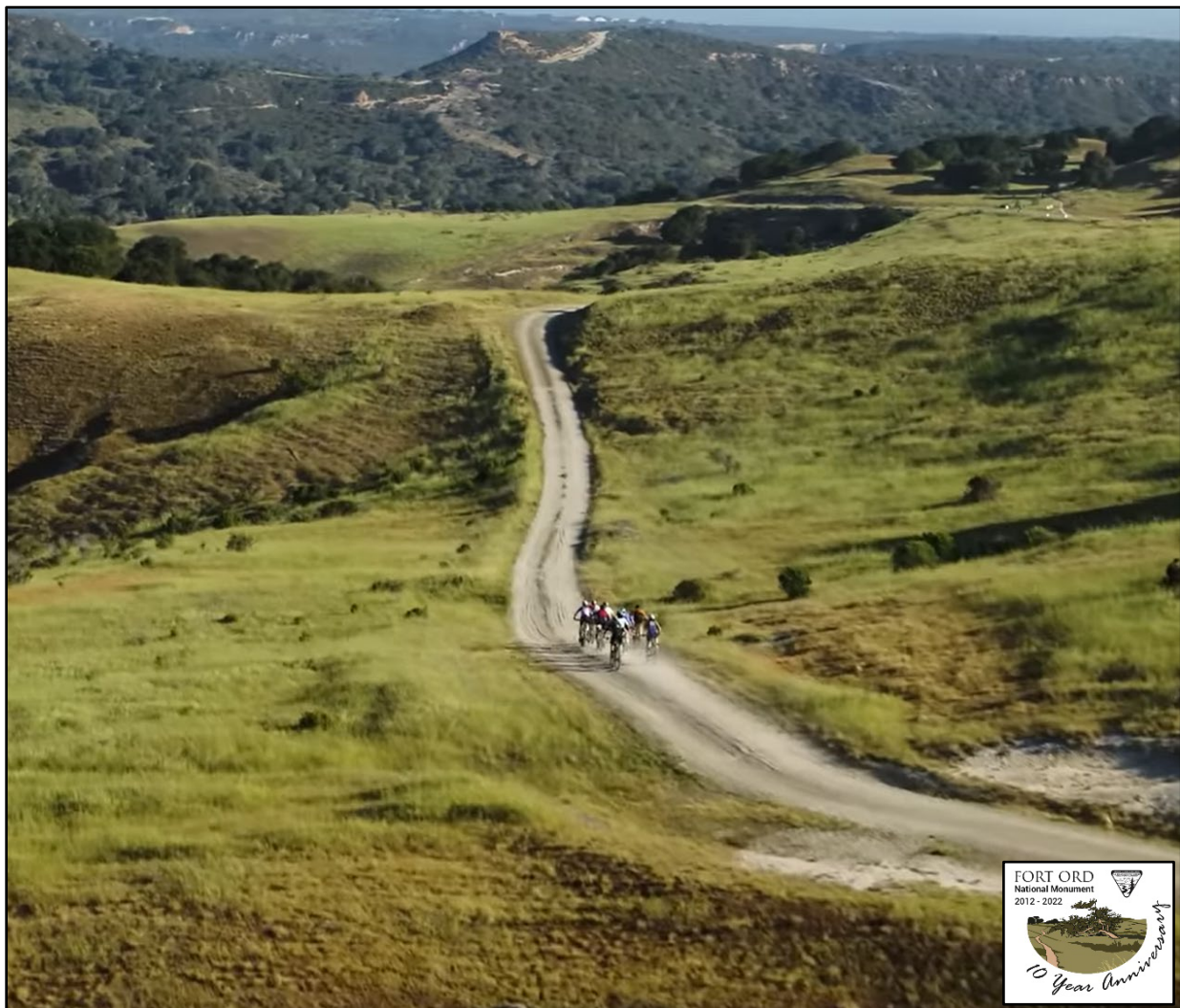




# Events

---

Although COVID-19 restricted some of the events and activities that traditionally happened on the Monument, several competitive events resumed in 2022. The Sea Otter Classic cycling event brought 2,500 mountain bike and road bike racers and tour participants to the world-class trails of Fort Ord. Inside Trail held two running races across 100k, 50k, 25k and 10k courses on the Monument and 600 runners laced up their sneakers for the challenge. In addition to these competitive events, the BLM partnered with MORCA, FORT Friends and the U.S. Army on several 10-year anniversary celebratory hikes and rides.



# Words from the staff

---

We are proud 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 to make this happen, and that team includes the communities of the Monterey region, and the many recreation, and conservation partners we work with.

We have been managing this monumental place for a decade now and feel so blessed to be part of a wonderful community. We know that we have a special responsibility to have a positive impact. We will continue to work collaboratively with our neighbors and partners and give back to the communities where we live. We do this through our inspired work and our mission of serving the American family.







**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

## **Fort Ord**

### **National Monument**

Central California District Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
Central Coast Field Office  
940 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Marina, CA 93933  
Phone: 831-582-2200

**Report compiled by:** Eric Morgan, National Monument Manager

The mention of company names, trade names, or commercial products does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use by the federal government.