

SUMMARY OF JULY 11, 2013 MEETING
FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT SUPPORT GROUP
Prepared by Henrietta Stern, July 24, 2013

I. **Welcome** – Henrietta welcomed new faces. About 14 people attended including guest speaker.

II. **Group announcements** -- Events and actions to be aware of include: Army fire season (July through December); “Get Lost in Fort Ord” orienteering race August 3; July 16 action by County Board of Supervisors re opening Intergarrison Road at Jerry Smith Access entrance.

III. **BLM announcements** –BLM reps did not attend, but the Public Lands Day/Make a Difference Day for FONM is October 26, 2013; Henri received an e-mail about the possibility of a \$3000 grant that involves children and veterans.

IV. **Presentation by Louise Ramirez, Tribal Chairwoman for Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation** – Ms. Ramirez set up a display of Esselen musical instruments and other arts and crafts, booklets on language and history, and people in her family who are also veterans. She provided a history of her people, and all 700 tribal members are documented descendants of original Native Americans described in early texts. She explained why a cultural center is important, and that land had been previously promised. She described a 55-acre site near the intersection of Watkins Gate and Barloy Canyon (East Garrison area) that would be about 20 acres of buildings and 35 acres for natural camping, and showed a layout of the site. The cultural center would be funded by a 4-story, 80-room hotel designed in harmony with the land and sustainable technology. She emphasized there would not be a casino, and the tribe has resisted offers of that nature. Planned components include: training for hospitality/culinary careers, including an organic garden; support for veterans and low-income minorities; wellness center with focus on diabetes; interpretive and education center; camping; sweat lodges; amphitheater for pow-wows and other cultural presentations; artist guest residences. She described how this property may now be sold to the highest bidder and eloquently asked for support for her people to have a place they can call their own.

Questions and answers followed her presentation.

There is an Esselen Gathering open to the public on August 10 at the Presidio with camping etc. Booth spaces are available.

More information on Esselen Nation is available at:

<http://www.ohlonecostanoanesselenation.org/>

We took a break to peruse her display materials.

V. **Where Do We Go From Here?** Henrietta noted a variety of tasks that interested folks could volunteer to do and that any group needs an adequate core of motivated folks. Kudos to Eric Palmer who volunteered to address website and social media needs (he is a media professional for City of Monterey). Jane Haines (retired attorney) volunteered to assist in legal type issues or deep research, document review etc.

A. What Can You Do to Create a Viable FONM Support Group? Everyone reading this e-mail, please think about what you are willing to do.

Examples: serve on executive committee (extra meetings), fundraising, financial skills, community outreach, marketing, organizational skills, public speaking, help at special events, photography/video, maps, office skills, youth/education; hike-bike leader, trailwork, art and history, veterans, driving, writing, artist, etc etc

B. Identify common interests with other groups to engage support for FONM, including service clubs, business groups, churches etc; identify mutual benefits

C. How best achieve goals as a group?

D. Coordinate brainstorming session among existing FONM-related groups to answer basic questions.

For B/C/D above, Henri asked each person in attendance to express their ideas. They included the following (sorry if my notes aren't perfect):

- Our group should not be as fancy as Point Lobos Foundation, which focuses more on fundraising than hands-on action.
- We should be an affiliation of groups that come together to support BLM.
- We need more input from BLM on what their vision is before this group creates a vision concept—think 20+ years out—structurally FORT Friends is set up to work with BLM.
- BLM does not have adequate resources. What are their priorities? What projects would be best in their view? We can help with things like education, marketing, docents, interpretation etc. What do they need?
- We need more work on visioning—what do we want? Interest in salvaging historical buildings to function as a magnet on Fort Ord like the Presidio in SF – we should have a concrete, specific vision like the Esselen Nation has.
- We worked well together on a specific project—we should start small and work incrementally toward larger projects. There is no need to be a 501-c-3 group at this time—let it organically evolve.
- Come up with a project that we like and see if BLM will come on board.
- BLM is looking to us for long-term vision. BLM is not into the National Park model.
- Think about the Presidential Proclamation (military legacy and unique natural habitat). Tie into Native American heritage and veterans.
- Think of economic benefit of Esselen Center.
- How pull in more veterans and history. Note there is a Fort Ord Alumni Group of former soldiers.
- Everyone wants some sort of center—visitor center, warhorse museum, Esselen Center—these could all coordinate together.
- Think about music—there is an opera in Esselen language underway. A Fort Ord soldier wrote a classical composition to honor the FONM.
- Get people together to solve specific problems.
- Ask other groups what their interests in FONM/Ft. Ord.. Expand outreach to other groups and see where common interests are. Send e-mails to other groups and the e-mail list.

- **We should poll the e-mail list. What makes sense to you? If you are reading this e-mail, please let me know! Henri.stern@ymail.com**

An idea that evolved from this brainstorming is the need for better signage on the FONM. We could raise money for these signs on trails and trailheads, such as natural habitat features, soldier training sites, Native American culture etc. or just bigger signs so public can know the Monument exists. Adopt-a-sign was another idea. Jane Haines volunteered to check into BLM rules about signage. This could be expanded to Apps with sights and sounds, wildflower lists etc. We will discuss this in more detail at the August 8 meeting. [BLM staff confirmed they will attend.]

VI. **Basic Questions** –we agreed to hold off on the detailed logistics until September, when more people are back from vacation and we have more information. For the record, the questions are:

- A. What is our primary focus (basic purpose; how distinguish from other groups)?
- B. Create specific Mission Statement
- C. Group name?
- D. Framework (affiliation ... 501-c-3 non-profit... part of another group..)
- E. Conservation Lands Foundation (member of Friends Network?)
- F. Legal or other requirements to achieve the type of group desired?

VII. **Specific Follow-up Tasks** Henri to write up summary and contact other groups about common interests. Jane to research signage issue.

VIII. **Next meeting Thu August 8 at 6 pm at Oldemeyer Center**— always the second Thursday of the month – Hope to see you!

C:\Users\tom\Desktop\Word Henri\FONM_summary_20130711.docx