

SUMMARY OF AUGUST 8, 2013
FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT SUPPORT GROUP
6:00 PM-7:30 PM, Oldemeyer Center, Seaside
Prepared by Henrietta Stern 8/25/2013

I. **Welcome** – Henrietta Stern welcomed the group—an estimated 18 folks attended, including Dave Pacheco (Seaside City Council), Eric Morgan (FONM Manager) and BLM Ranger Tammy Jakl

II. **Group announcements**

- A. **Esselen Nation**—Tribal Gathering August 9-11 open to public
- B. **MORCA**-- Trail Work 3rd Saturday (8/17); Take-a-Kid Mountain Biking Day at Toro Park October 5
- C. **MCSARD**—CERT disaster training 9/13-15
- D. **Youth Camp**—Art McLoughlin gave an update on the Youth Camp and answered questions about access. This property is not owned by FORA—it is now owned by the County. Historical uses can continue, including the Sierra Club service trip. The camp needs old buildings removed—November award of bid, Jan-Feb work with goal to open in March 2014—likely no during work. Eric Morgan noted that he has been exploring FONM parking via Reservation Road and access via south side of Youth Camp. Bikes can use parcel east of Youth Camp on existing trails.
- E. **Other announcements**—(1) August 25 Half marathon on Fort Ord Trails (from Laguna Seca); (2) October 13 Carmel River Festival and Trail and Saddle Club.

III. **BLM announcements and presentation**

- A. **Public Lands Day/Make a Difference Day is October 26** – Eric Morgan reviewed the BLM plans for the day, which include several volunteer projects such as weed removal, seed gathering and planting, restoration, trailwork. They also plan a superstar volunteer award. BLM is working with CLF/PG&E/FORTF to obtain a grant for refreshments and entertainment (in progress). They will need some help with parking. Details next month.
- B. **Other events and activities on FONM** – Eric noted that there are only 15 days of race-type events allowed each year; not a goal to have large events every weekend.
- C. **BLM Presentation on signage**—There was a computer glitch so we were not able to see the powerpoint presentation, but Eric reviewed the key points and answered questions. He also passed out maps which we reviewed. He first distinguished BLM and National Parks Service, with BLM properties more rustic and vehicles not going into the interior. BLM wishes to have a similar “look and feel” for all their properties. He described the history of signage and trail maps, which have gotten more sophisticated over time. Importantly, use is restricted to signed trails on FONM (no sign means no access to the trail). There are also some info boards and courtesy yield signs (bikes yield to all,

and everyone yields to horses). Eric would like better signage for Badger Hills and Creekside correctly designating as a national monument. He does not plan signage on Highway 1 until there is a stable, welcoming parking situation. He suggested we look at 8th and Gigling and Jerry Smith from the perspective of a visitor; he believes these areas “look like a locals hangout” and the FORA “no trespassing” signage is confusing and unfriendly. He has discussed this issue with FOR A, MST and met with Seaside Mayor Rubio and Councilmember Ogelsby. He has advised Monterey Downs that he wants access if that project goes through. For now, he believes East Garrison has the most potential for a new access point. Eric noted that trailheads take 6-8 years to plan and there is no federal funding—thus he needs partners.

- D. **Important Announcement re Additional Munitions Cleanup**— Eric advised the group that there is a possible 1.5-year closure of FONM trails (59 plus 60s) west of Henickson Ranch Road due to discovery of munitions in sample transects— stay tuned for more info on this
- E. Q&A and Discussion occurred throughout his presentation

IV. **Presentation by Jane Haines on her report on FONM potential for tourism and related economic development**

- A. **FORA committee and future colloquium** -- Jane Haines gave a brief history on original Base Reuse Plan, Sierra Club suit and need for FORA to assess compliance (done Dec 2012). Now there is a FORA committee called the PRAC= Post Reassessment Advisory Committee, which is developing recommendations on policy changes and possible revisions to the Base Reuse Plan. They plan a fall 2013 (date TBA) Colloquium on several topics, including how the FONM can be used to promote economic development – both directly via tourism and also as a means to attract high-tech employers and employees. .
- B. **Review of report, including marketing and signage**— Jane has doubts about FONM as an economic driver in its current state—Pinnacles has 1 mil visitors per year where FONM is closer to 150,000. She had negative experiences with signage at Badger Hills and Creekside. She feels there needs to be a signage plan connected to other documents and is interested in submitting a draft document as well as grant applications and funding ideas, including coordinating with local Foundations. She also noted there are several actions that FORA never has implemented, including the Recreation Component of the Base Reuse Plan (this should be done).
- C. **Q&A and Discussion** – A variety of ideas and discussion stemmed from Jane’s presentation. Highlights include:
 - BLM idea—stone fascia with military unit insignias around them
 - Michael—Have a visitor center at the abandoned thrift shop just south of Lightfighter, just off the freeway. The Vet Alumni Association/FOCA plans a museum there. Blakeview Development might incorporate such a building. This central location could be great entryway for

CSUMB, Vet Center (VA), Vet Cemetery and FONM. Retail, cultural, educational and other aspects are possible.

- Idea—have 3-D contour maps at visitor center or other 2-D contour maps with suggested routes
- Idea—once a day shuttle to interior so folks could walk or ride out
- Eric—Chico State students are doing a study on public transportation to FONM; Henri pitched her “Fort Ord” express perimeter bus idea from Cannery Row to trailheads.
- Eric noted his two major goals are (1) Transportation Plan and (2) Interpretative Plan—but these need funding to be done right. Also BLM staff is limited due to fracking issues on BLM land, EIS etc.

V. Specific Follow-up Tasks- no specific tasks were assigned

VI. Next meeting Thu September 12 at 6 pm at Oldemeyer Center— always the second Thursday of the month.

We will renew our efforts regarding group logistics (name, mission, structure, etc.)