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April 9 Board Meeting - Agenda Item 8b

1 message

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To: Board@fora.org

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FORA Board Members:

I have been involved with Fort Ord development issues on behalf of MPC since 1992. I was there when the Agreement with FORA and the County regarding the East Garrison land swap was negotiated. The conflict between MPC and the County over two very different visions for the East Garrison was difficult, and reaching an agreement took several years. But in 2002, an agreement was reached. MPC gave up the East Garrison for land in the Parker Flats area for its future public safety training facility. Included was a 200-acre habitat reserve that surrounded a potential site for a firing range. MPC did not want to manage habitat, this was not something we do, or which we are funded for. But the habitat reserve was part of a regional approach to mitigating development across the base, forming the basis for both the habitat management and habitat conservation plan. MPC has been a partner with the other jurisdictions in this planning effort, which has finally come to fruition in FORA's final year. With FORA's imminent dissolution; however, commitment to this approach has also seemed to evaporate.

The habitat funding allocation decision before the FORA Board has been characterized at the Habitat Working Group meetings as a worst case scenario, in the event a replacement JPA is not formed before FORA sunsets. However, discussions regarding a JPA have ended for now. It seems likely this worst case scenario will go into effect. And, if you approve Alternative 5, with the premise that all land use jurisdictions should get a share, then the purpose of the funds, which was to manage habitat land set aside to mitigate basewide development will have been negated.

Alternative 5 does not acknowledge Monterey County's extensive habitat lands. Alternative 5 leaves out MPC and the other educational institutions. Alternative 5 does not recognize the mutual benefit of these habitat lands to all jurisdictions and their development interests over the long-term.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Vicki Nakamura