



Ventana Wilderness Alliance

The mission of the Ventana Wilderness Alliance is to protect, preserve, and restore the wilderness qualities and biodiversity of the public lands within California's northern Santa Lucia Mountains and Big Sur coast.

April 19, 2010

Rick Cooper, Field Manager
Hollister Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
20 Hamilton Court
Hollister, CA 95023

Re: Monterey County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, January 2010

Dear Rick,

The January 2010 version of the Monterey County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (MCCWPP), which was signed by you, contains the following recommendation regarding former Fort Ord lands (Page 76, Paragraph 8.2.1):

Recommendation: Maintain existing Strategic Fuelbreaks and Defensible Polygons, as well as existing roads and trails in the former Fort Ord Fuelbreak System. Provide for a reduced fuel load at the BLM Borderland perimeter to include a 200-foot minimum fire break, and up to 800 additional feet of reduced fire fuel zone. Develop workforce and interagency prescribed fire skills at Fort Ord. Support firewise principles at Borderland development areas. Coordinate with local community.

The MCCWPP defines Firebreak (Glossary page 4) as:

Firebreak -- A natural or constructed barrier used to stop or check fires that may occur, or to provide a control line from which to work. A firebreak is at least 10 feet wide, frequently 20 to 30 feet wide, and contains no vegetation or other combustible matter.

Please identify the basis or source for this recommendation. In particular, what is the basis or source of the recommendation for a "200-foot minimum fire break" which, according to the MCCWPP Glossary, would contain no vegetation or other combustible matter. Please also identify the basis or source of the recommendation for, "up to 800 additional feet of reduced fire fuel zone" and a

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definition of "fire fuel zone." Neither the MCCWPP Glossary nor the Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology, published by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, includes a definition.

Please also explain how this recommendation would be accomplished in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

If the basis or source for this recommendation is a BLM planning document, please provide me with a copy of or electronic link to that document.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Hopkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "T" and "H".

Tom Hopkins, President