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**For Immediate Release**

**Citizens Call on the Army to Better Protect the Parameter of the Munitions Sites on the Former Fort Ord**

Marina CA– Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network, Inc. (FOEJN) today criticized the Army's inability to protect the parameter of the impact area in order to keep citizens from the unexploded ordnance.

“There's no excuse for the Army to withhold information about trespassers in 2005, especially ones involving highly explosive rockets,” said LeVonne Stone, Executive Director of the Fort Ord Environmental Justice Network, Inc.

According to the Army Annual Report for 2005 “Fort Ord Munitions Response Site (MRS) Security Program” there were eight reported evidence of trespass incidents during the calender year. Up from the three reported in 2004. Two of which involved more serious action then just trespassing. On April 21<sup>st</sup> 2005, there was evidence of trespass and the disappearance of a MEC (munitions and explosive of concern) item (2.36 inch high explosive anti-tank rocket) that had been left over night (buried) for detonation for the next day . The MEC was taken and moved to an other location with in the MRS-BLM area. In spite of local police and federal investigators who responded, collected physical evidence, and interviewed associated personnel. No reports of any arrests were made.

Section 3.1 Documents one incident that involved the use of stolen heavy equipment, (a back hoe), to break down the Range Gate and damage contractors equipment in the impact area. Ranges 43-48 was the site of the controlled burn, that went out of control in 2003. There was no public notification of illegal use of the back hoe and destruction and vandalism of the site.

“They (the Army) needs to finish clearing all unexploded ordinance and munitions related debris in the 225.4 acres of Ranges 43-48 where removal was not completed prior to scheduling any future prescribed burns,” said Dr. Peter L. deFur of Environmental Stewardship Concepts.

“The Army simply has to do a better job of site security to prevent the sort of breaches that occurred during 2005,” continued Dr. Peter L. deFur.

Because of such a clear inability by the Army to protect the site security, Stepped up security is necessary to protect public health and safety. These steps would range from increased patrolling of the site to public education.

According to section 5.1.1 of the Twenty -six local schools invited to participate in the Fort Ord Munitions Safety Program during the 2005-2006 school year, only three schools participated. Pubic notification of such incident of trespass and vandalism and the dangers of such action would encourage grater public participation in the safety program. All this points to a lack of site security that is detrimental to peoples health and well being and there is much room for improvement by the Army in this area.