

## UC accepts Fort Ord land

Staff and wire reports

SAN FRANCISCO — In another administrative step toward a UC Santa Cruz research center, the University of California on Friday accepted 962 acres of federal land at Fort Ord.

The UC Board of Regents' decision cleared the way for UC Santa Cruz to develop a new facility for science, technology, education and policy to be known as the STEP center.

STEP, envisioned as a collaborative effort between education and business, has attracted the attention of the Northern California business community, according to Michael Houlemard, director of physical planning for the Fort Ord extension.

Companies involved in areas such as biological research, toxic chemical cleanup, and weather prediction have expressed an interest in the center, he said. Its focus will be on economic redevelopment in the region, as well as coastal and environmental concerns, he said.

Unemployment in the region around Fort Ord, which housed 20,000 soldiers, rose to 13 percent after the base was slated for closure in 1991.

Fort Ord, an Army base since 1917, formally closes in October, but most of the 20,000 soldiers are gone. The base was home to the 7th Light Infantry Division, now based at Fort Lewis, Wash.

Fort Ord contributed at least \$500 million a year and more than 20,000 jobs to the Monterey Peninsula.

UC Santa Cruz Chancellor Karl Pister praised the lobbying efforts of U.S. Rep. Sam Farr, D-Carmel, in securing the land for the UC center and other uses.

"The university is indebted to the efforts of Congressman Sam Farr to make this opportunity a reality," he said.



The Associated Press

Commerce Secretary Ron Brown presents Cal State Chancellor Barry Munitz with a symbolic \$15 million check Friday.

ty," he said.

STEP will be built adjacent to land donated by the Defense Department for a California State University campus.

In that regard, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown gave a \$15 million check Friday to California State University to convert Fort Ord into the school system's 21st campus.

"This campus will represent the first, I repeat, the first post-Cold War conversion of a military base to a university," Brown said at a news conference.

The check will finance the conversion of 1,300 acres of Fort Ord and the renovation of 15 buildings into dormitories and classrooms, Brown said. The base, valued at up to \$1 billion, has resources including a medical clinic and an 8,000-seat stadium.

Conversion of Fort Ord to civilian use serves as a national model for creating jobs and boosting California's economic recovery, Brown said.

"... This was both an educational injection and an economic injection," said CSU Chancellor Barry Munitz. "We have had twenty-five hundred unsolicited applications for faculty positions at this campus."

Cal State is paying an estimated \$5 million for planning and \$20 million to \$25 million in start-up costs. Toxic cleanup — a hurdle in other conversion projects — is not an issue for CSU because the campus is in the base's residential areas.

Even so, Brown also announced a \$2.9 million grant Friday to review the environmental impact of base closures on California's coastal lands.

Another \$9.3 million dollars was earmarked for CSU at Monterey Bay in the state budget signed by Gov. Wilson last week, Munitz said.

Retired Army Col. Hank Hendrickson, the school's executive dean and a former garrison commander at Fort Ord, expects renovation to start this summer.

Hendrickson said 700 to 1,000 students will be enrolled when classes start in September 1995. Many will come from San Jose State University's satellite campus in Salinas, which will close. CSU expects 6,000 students by the end of the century and 20,000 to 25,000 by the year 2025.

The new campus will emphasize marine and environmental studies.