



## E-Bike Tours Make Fort Ord's Backcountry More Accessible

BY RENEE BRINCKS

**Jeff Lindenthal and Melissa Smedley of VineCycle Tours have created an E-Bike Tour that brings cyclists into the backcountry of the beautiful Fort Ord National Monument.**

**S**pringtime in Fort Ord National Monument typically means colorful blankets of California poppies, lupine, Indian paintbrush and other wildflowers. Guided e-bike tours by Jeff Lindenthal and Melissa Smedley of VineCycle Tours showcase those native plants, plus the natural habitats and military history of this 14,658-acre park.

During the pandemic, the pair worked with the Bureau of Land Management and Monterey County to secure permits for a two-hour, 12-mile tour. Guests pass former military structures, cross oak woodlands, and take in views stretching from the Salinas Valley to the Pacific coast.

The tour loop includes about 1,100 feet of elevation gain. With adjustable pedal-assist

bikes, participants can pedal as much or as little as they'd like. That flexibility makes the outing especially popular with multigenerational groups. It also draws residents showing the area to visitors.

"We've been struck by the fact that a lot of locals haven't really ventured in and seen a lot of Fort Ord," Lindenthal says.

He sees guests light up at the scenery and wide-open spaces, and they also experience a sense of accomplishment from covering so much ground.

"I just love looking at people's smiles," Smedley adds. "They get to this place where they feel like 11-year-olds again. There's something freeing about that."

For more information, visit [www.vinecycletours.com](http://www.vinecycletours.com).