Army makes war on ground squirrels A yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1793 killed an estimated 5,000 persons.

TT. ORD, Calif. — The Army is laring war on millions of Califorground squirrels because of con-n that the animals may spread

bonic plague. The problem involves two ilities near Ft. Ord: the 166,000e Hunter Leggitt reservation and ,000-acre Camp Roberts.

Both posts are overpopulated by Beechey ground squirrel, one of species of ground squirrels, which k like chipmunks.

Army officials claim they have an

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emergency on their hands because the population of squirrels, which may harbor fleas that carry bubonic

10 million since 1972.

No cases of the plague have been reported, but the Army said the ground squirrels still are a problem because they have undermined the land so seriously that an earthen dam collapsed. Army officials say farmers also complain that the ground squirrels eat their crops.

They have even burrowed into a

pavement," Maj. Dan O'Brien, public information officer at Ft. Ord, may harbor fleas that carry bubonic plague, has jumped from 1 million to startle to see their heads sticking up in the middle of the road."

Army officials originally said they wanted to use sodium fluoroacetate, also known as Compound 1080, in the obliteration campaign, which cannot be launched until spring because the animals are about to go into hibernation.

The Army had announced it would "They have even burrowed into a road junction, through asphalt order issued in 1971 which bans use

on federal land of poisons, such as Compound 1080, that could be passed from one animal to another. This plan drew opposition from

environmentalists and reached the halls of Congress. The chairman of the wildlife committee for the Sierra Club's local chapter, Betty Davis, said Com-pound 1080 had been banned for the

good reason that it is not only highly effective in killing ground squirrels but is violently toxic to other wildlife as well, both directly and indirectly, both game and nongame.

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