



Press Release

**U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii
Public Affairs Office
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Prescribed burn planned for Schofield to help prevent wildfires

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii (April 11, 2024)—The Army is taking action in its ongoing effort to prevent brushfires and their potential threat to more than 30 species of endangered plants and animals by conducting a prescribed burn of the Schofield Barracks training range complex.

The Army's specialized Wildland Fire Division is scheduled to begin the prescribed burn the week of April 15-19, provided environmental conditions such as wind, temperature and fuel moisture are within the regulatory parameters for such burns.

The Army has received burn approval from the Hawaii State Department of Health's Clean Air Branch after extensive preparations which have included coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure all state, federal and Army requirements are met.

The prescribed burn is a critical piece of the Army's management of threatened and endangered species. Highly flammable guinea grass and other vegetation can become large fuel sources for brushfires that threaten natural resources, such as the O'ahu 'Elepaio, the endangered flycatcher bird that resides in habitat above the range.

"Prescribed burns help prevent brushfire outbreaks on our training ranges, and can reduce the number of brushfires by upwards of 70% annually," said Justin Turnbo, Wildland Fire Program Manager U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii.

"We anticipate completing the burn in approximately three days," Turnbo said. "There's a short time period following the wet winter months when all prescribed burn parameters are right, prior to the dry summer months."



Army staff will closely monitor humidity, wind and the level of concentration of natural fuel in the burn areas in an effort to minimize smoke and ash.

“Controls on the smoke duration and amounts are very important and we will be monitoring weather data, smoke production and fire behavior to make informed decisions and adjustments as needed,” said Turnbo, “we will be taking all feasible precautions to lessen potential impacts on our neighbors.”

Throughout the burn, Army staff will use smoke modeling software to detect direction and amount of smoke produced and make all necessary adjustments.

Multiple personnel and assets from the Army are supporting the prescribed burn. These include: firefighters, aviators, engineers, range and safety officers, natural and cultural resources specialists, explosive ordnance disposal personnel, and law enforcement personnel.

Operations will only take place during daylight hours, and Army Wildland firefighters will remain on site each night to monitor the area. The Federal Fire Department will also be on standby for the duration of the burn.

For questions, community members can call the Army’s Public Affairs office at 808-824-1345 or email usarmy.hawaii.pao@army.mil.