

PMRF Kaua'i

E Pane Mai Ka Nonoi O Nohili
Answering the Requests of Nohili



Hau'oli ke kau wela from PMRF!

As we enter the summer season, Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) leadership and staff are proud to continue strengthening the connection between the communities we serve alongside every day. This season presents valuable opportunities to support one another and showcase PMRF's role as a leader in service, collaboration, and mission success.

This edition of the newsletter highlights the balance between military readiness and community involvement. You'll read about how PMRF continues to welcome visiting military units, the public, and school groups to the base, as well as our efforts to engage with and be of service to the people of West Kaua'i and beyond.

We invite you to stay informed and follow along as we share, inspire, and support partnerships that strengthen both our base personnel and our island community. Thank you for your continued support!

For the latest news from PMRF, please visit our [PMRF Kaua'i website](https://www.pmrfa.kauai.mil). You can also subscribe to the e-version of our newsletter [here](#).

PMRFKauai.com



Mālama 'Āina Day at PMRF: Empowering Students Through Hands-On Conservation

On Friday, April 24, 2026, PMRF hosted its annual Mālama 'Āina Day, an environmental awareness event that brought together fourth grade students from West Kaua'i. The event recognized PMRF's shared responsibility to protect our island resources, while demonstrating the U.S. Navy's commitment to environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation programs that directly support ongoing mission readiness.

Staff and young learners transformed the Shenanigans parking lot and lawn into a vibrant outdoor classroom. There, PMRF staff biologists and partnering agencies provided interactive learning experiences for more than 190 students in attendance.

"Planet vs. Plastics"

Aligned with this year's theme, "Planet vs. Plastics," the hands-on presentations covered various topics such as plastic waste recycling, meteorology, wildlife protection, energy conservation, and more. The activities were designed to support the students' science, energy, and ecology curriculum.

"Seeing the enthusiasm from the students today gives me great confidence in the future of our island's conservation efforts," said Brooke McFarland, PMRF natural resources manager. "Our work is often behind the scenes, so it was great to pull back the curtain and share this team effort between the Navy and our community partners."

A Mission Beyond the Fence Line

Mālama 'Āina Day at PMRF helps set the foundation for developing connections that support critical efforts for environmental protection and compliance throughout the year.

Capt. Robert Prince, PMRF commanding officer, emphasized that environmental stewardship is integral to military operations. "Environmental protection is an everyday mission for us," Prince said. "It is more than meeting a requirement; it ensures sustainable training environments for our personnel while providing ecological and historical value to the land we share."



Students attempt to lift a ball of plastic waste collected from several debris clean-up efforts in order to guess its weight.



Students visiting PMRF answer questions about sea life in the waters surrounding Kaua'i.

He noted that the goal of Mālama 'Āina Day is to show students that protecting natural resources is a "vital, specialized mission that requires all of us working together."

Environmental protection does not stop at the fence line. Whether it involves protecting local watersheds and farmlands, supporting environmental agencies with data collection, installing West Kaua'i's largest solar farm, or managing native wildlife programs, the health of the environment is a shared community effort. PMRF remains committed to being a leader in island conservation and a dedicated partner to its surrounding community.

The PMRF Natural Resources Department would like to thank the following agencies for their participation

in Mālama 'Āina Day 2026: Aloun Farms, Applied Energy Services, County of Kaua'i Division of Solid Waste, Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatics Resources, Kaua'i Forest Bird Restoration Project, Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative, Koa Lani, Pacific Birds, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, PMRF Fire Department, and PMRF Morale, Welfare, and Recreation.

Right: Teachers and staff prepare Kawaikini students for a team-building beach cleanup activity at Waiapua'a Bay.

Below: Students from KANAKA PCS stand alongside their kumu (teacher) as they prepare to place their pohaku (rock) on the Lua Kupapa'u O Nohili crypt.



Kawaikini and KANAKA Visits

PMRF recently hosted students from Kawaikini, a Hawaiian-language public charter school from Puhi, Kaua'i, and Kula Aupuni Ni'ihau A Kahelelani Aloha (KANAKA), a public charter school from Kekaha, for a guided visit to the cultural and historic sites on the installation. Students visited the Lua Kupapa'u O Nohili Crypt, Waiapua'a Bay, and the Nohili Dunes, where they practiced song and dance, honored cultural protocol, and planted native kou and 'a'ali'i seedlings. Through visits like these, the Navy provides opportunities for students to engage with PMRF's history, mission, and cultural significance while fostering meaningful connections with our island communities.

Building Coastal Resilience: Native Plants Transform Nohili Dunes

Thousands of native and endemic Hawaiian plants are being planted in the Nohili Dunes as part of a project to restore and manage coastal dune habitats at PMRF. The project demonstrates a commitment to environmental conservation and historic preservation by balancing natural and cultural priorities.

Eight plots are being restored, totaling approximately 55,000 square feet. Efforts began with the eradication of invasive trees, scrub, and herbaceous vegetation using hand tools and herbicide. To protect the landscape, invasive trees like kiawe were cut to 6-12 inches above the ground and treated to prevent regrowth without pulling the roots. Active out-planting (or transplanting) efforts targeted at least 8,000 native flora from 10 local species. This process jumpstarts species recovery, compared to passive restoration, which allows species to repopulate from the natural seed bank.

"We used collective botanical knowledge to optimize the out-planting 'palette' based on the growth characteristics of the plants," said Brianna Kruse, University of Hawai'i botanist at PMRF. "Each individual plot has a unique assemblage of native plants based on the site's characteristics to create a biodiverse habitat."



Among other native vegetation, hundreds of naupaka plants were planted by the PMRF project team.



The PMRF project team also planted native pōhuehue.

Because the project area is situated in dunes known to contain iwi kūpuna (ancestral remains) and traditional cultural deposits, all work followed strict archaeological guidelines. "Restoration activities were conducted in a manner that minimized ground disturbance to the greatest extent possible," said Tara Del Fierro, PMRF archaeologist. "This included ensuring that no field work caused ground disturbance to a depth greater than six inches."

To further protect these resources, archaeological monitoring was required, and no wheeled or tracked vehicles were permitted within the project corridor.

The long-term goal of this work is to establish an erosion-mitigating network of native plants that protects infrastructure, improves biodiversity, and supports coastal resilience through strict adherence to conservation standards.

Training at PMRF for Military Readiness in the Indo-Pacific

PMRF may be most well-known for missile tests, yet the base is a vital training hub for a wide variety of military units. Whether on land, in the air, or at sea (or under it), our extensive instrumentation and unique terrain ensure service members exercise their skills in realistic settings and receive accurate feedback on their performance.

The 2026 Edition: “Easyriders”

In March and April 2026, the base welcomed Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM)-37 “Easyriders” for the Helicopter Advanced Readiness Program (HARP), a mandatory, high-level pre-deployment training exercise conducted by the Helicopter Maritime Strike Weapons School Pacific. HARP is a “graduate-level” course designed to certify squadrons in advanced warfighting tactics, ensuring aircrews are combat-ready before deployment.

Over four weeks, the unit vigorously trained using several methods:

- **Academic Instruction:** Classroom sessions covering the latest in tactical theory and intelligence.
- **Simulator Events:** High-fidelity flight simulators used to practice emergency procedures and tactical maneuvers.
- **Tactical Flights:** Real-world flight operations focused on anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface warfare.
- **Live-Fire Exercises:** The culmination of the program, where crews deploy actual weapons systems against simulated threats.

Using MH-60R Seahawk helicopters, the squadron conducted a series of complex missions and tactical maneuvers. In the context of anti-submarine warfare, the crews used sonar, radar, sonobuoys, and torpedoes to track practice targets placed at sea. With difficult weather conditions and vast distances around PMRF, HARP is a tough test for pilots and aircrews.

The “Easyriders” successfully completed HARP in April, furthering the readiness of another Navy squadron operating in the Indo-Pacific region.



PMRF Sailors assigned to the Seaborne Powered Target (SEPTAR) unit facilitate testing and training during HARP.



Two MH-60R Seahawks attached to the “Easyriders” of HSM-37 land on the PMRF airfield.

Commemorating Memorial Day

PMRF joined in honoring our nation's fallen heroes at a ceremony held at Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery in Hanapēpē on May 25, 2026. As the keynote speaker of the ceremony, Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince underscored service, sacrifice, and reflection.

Capt. Prince, who arrived for duty on Kaua'i in June 2025, discussed the differences between Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

"Memorial Day and Veterans Day are often confused," he said. "While any day is a good day to be thankful, Memorial Day is specifically intended to honor and mourn the U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the Armed Forces.

"On Veterans Day, we celebrate and thank all military veterans, both living and deceased, for their service. I suspect one reason it is easy to confuse is that while Memorial Day recognizes those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, many of our veterans have made significant sacrifices and carry both physical and mental trauma with them."

The PMRF commander concluded his remarks with three thoughts he asked attendees to consider after the ceremony.

"First, the best way to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service is to make the most of the life that you've been given: Enjoy today, and every day, but do so with reverence and appreciation for those who have sacrificed for the freedom that we enjoy.

"Second, you can continue to honor their sacrifice with service of your own. Anything that helps others, from aloha, and the smallest acts of kindness, to committing to your own life of service. Let us strive to be the nation they believed was worth fighting and dying for. By making the most of our own lives and enriching the lives of others, we can honor the sacrifices they made.

"Lastly, I'd ask that you lift the families who carry the weight of their loved ones. I pray they find peace and comfort in knowing their loved ones, through how they lived, have made our nation great. If you can, ask them to tell you the stories of their loved ones so that we may share in their greatness and keep their memories alive."

The Kaua'i Veterans Council hosted the ceremony, which included a color guard presentation, guest speakers, a Hawaiian prayer blessing, and wreath and lei presentations. PMRF thanks the Kaua'i Veterans Council for helping to bring together veterans, community leaders, and other members of the public in solemn tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.



Capt. Prince speaks at the Memorial Day ceremony (top) and participates in a lei presentation (middle) at the Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery (bottom).

Staying Prepared for Hurricane Season

In late April and early May, Navy Region Hawai'i (NRH) conducted HURREX 2026, an eight-day exercise simulating a Category 4 hurricane approaching the Hawaiian Islands. The event incorporated scenarios for expected landfall, storm surge, destructive winds, and severe flooding. The exercise is designed to enhance destructive weather preparedness across the entire community, encompassing the region, installations, tenant commands, and military families, while rigorously evaluating their collective ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a major weather event.

As we train, it is also a good time for you at home to think about preparedness and how to be ready in the event of an emergency. As the Central Pacific hurricane season officially begins on June 1, PMRF urges Kaua'i residents to prioritize proactive preparation. Early action is the cornerstone of island resilience.

The [Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency](#) (HIEMA) recommends a 14-day emergency kit including two weeks of food, water (one gallon per person daily), and medications. Kits should also include flashlights, extra batteries, a manual can opener, and a first-aid kit. Visit the HIEMA website for a complete list of emergency preparation items and actions.

Homeowners are encouraged to inspect their home for compliance with building codes and install hurricane shutters or plywood. Families should develop formal communication plans and identify safe meeting places. Finally, stay informed by signing up for [Kaua'i's wireless emergency alerts](#) and monitoring local radio and television stations and official government channels for real-time storm tracks and shelter openings.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

- [Kauai.gov/Government/Departments-Agencies/Emergency-Management-Agency](https://kawaii.gov/Government/Departments-Agencies/Emergency-Management-Agency)
- DOD.Hawaii.gov/HIEMA
- Ready.gov
- Ready.Navy.mil
- Facebook.com/PacificMissileRangeFacility



PMRF personnel work in the Emergency Operations Center during HURREX 2026.

Partnership in Action at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge



A mōlī (Laysan albatross) chick seen during the visit.



A park ranger talks with Capt. Prince.

On May 6, PMRF leadership, including Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince, visited Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge to see the incredible work being done to support and maintain the Kaua'i National Wildlife Refuge Complex by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) team.

As discussed in the Spring 2026 newsletter, on Aug. 5, 2025, the Department of the Navy signed an \$800,000 Cooperative Agreement award with the Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges to support a multi-year project focused on expanding habitat for native seabirds and water birds, reducing the potential for aircraft at PMRF to unintentionally collide with birds, as well as advancing conservation efforts on Kaua'i.

At Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge, funding provided by the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) grant aids the USFWS team in their work to manage crucial bird habitat within the new predator exclusion fence and develop operational processes that support this work into the future.

PMRF and KPGO Real Estate Final EIS Anticipated for Release in August 2026

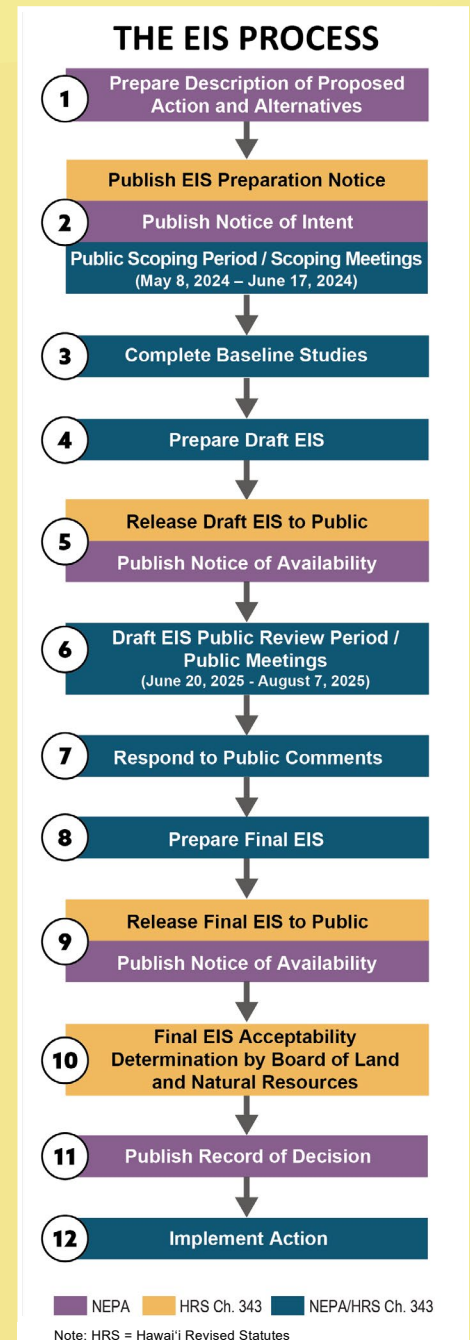
In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Navy and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are making progress toward finalizing the PMRF and Kōke'e Park Geophysical Observatory (KPGO) Real Estate Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Notice of Availability for the public release of the Final EIS is anticipated to be published in the Aug. 21 and Aug. 23 editions of the Federal Register and The Environmental Notice, respectively. The EIS will be used by the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources in deciding whether and what type of real estate agreement it may grant the Navy and NASA.

To ensure local voices are heard and cultural traditions are respected, the EIS team met with Aha Moku Council representatives from the Kaua'i and State councils in a series of discussions regarding the Draft EIS and Cultural Impact Assessment. After these discussions, a need was identified to enhance the assessment by including more interviews with Native Hawaiian practitioners. The updated Cultural Impact Assessment incorporates these additional interviews and will be included in the Final EIS.

Additionally, the Navy and NASA received 177 comments during the Draft EIS public comment period. Substantive public comments on the Draft EIS were considered, incorporated, and responded to as appropriate in the Final EIS. A detailed summary of public comments, revisions made to the Draft EIS in response to comments, and responses to substantive comments are provided in the Final EIS.

Once the Final EIS is released, the State of Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) will hold a public board meeting on O'ahu, anticipated for Sept. 11 (for more details, please visit dlnr.hawaii.gov/blnr-meetings). During the meeting, the BLNR will determine whether the EIS satisfies the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act. BLNR approval of the EIS is needed prior to considering the issuance of the leases and easements.

Further updates on the EIS will be available on PMRFKauai.com and on the project website at pmrf-kpgo-eis.com.



PMRF Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince speaks to members of the public during a meeting on the Draft EIS in Līhu'e on July 15, 2025.



An aerial view of PMRF and some of the leased and easement lands around the base.