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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The U.S. Navy and NASA jointly prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for continued use of State lands through proposed real estate agreements with the State of Hawai‘i.

The Navy and NASA invite and encourage the public to participate in the environmental planning process.

The U.S. Department of the Navy and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and welcome the community’s input in the environmental planning process. The public’s participation in this initial phase of the environmental planning process is important to ensuring community concerns are identified and addressed in the environmental analysis.

In the EIS, the Navy and NASA will evaluate the potential environmental consequences of the Navy’s and NASA’s proposal to retain the use of 8,348 acres and 23 acres, respectively, of State lands presently utilized pursuant to leases and easements on Kaua‘i, Hawai‘i, for operational continuity and sustainment at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), and NASA’s continued operations, including measurements of the Earth’s rotation and local land motion, at Kōke‘e Park Geophysical Observatory (KPGO). The Proposed Action is needed because the existing real estate agreements for these State lands are set to expire between 2027 and 2030. Preserving the long-term Department of Defense and NASA use of these State lands is critical for military readiness, continuation of ongoing military training and testing, and maintaining data collection efforts of global and local significance. It also ensures the continued conservation management by the Navy and NASA of natural and cultural resources on these lands.

By ensuring continued Navy and NASA operations on Kaua‘i, the real estate action would also preserve local jobs and income for the residents of Kaua‘i, financially contribute to the overall economic well-being of Kaua‘i, and maintain continued conservation management of natural and cultural resources on State lands at no cost to the State of Hawai‘i.

For portions of PMRF, the Navy has lease agreements with the State of Hawai‘i for 8,348 acres, comprised of 684 acres of leaseholds and 7,664 acres of easements. The Navy operates on 410 acres of the total acres leased from the State of Hawai‘i. The majority of the leased and easement areas remain intentionally undeveloped as they are used as an encroachment buffer and security for the range’s mission. The Navy’s current leases and easements support mission operations, access, and utilities at five general locations: Main Base, Kamokalā Ridge, Mānā Water Well, Miloli‘i Ridge, and Mākaha Ridge.

NASA operates 23 acres across five parcels along a one mile stretch of road in Kōke‘e State Park. NASA has issued a Use Permit to the Navy for use of portions of KPGO for mission support for PMRF.

For the Department of Land and Natural Resources, in addition to its role as the lessor of State lands, the

proposed real estate action presents an opportunity for the agency to secure a revenue source to support its management of public lands and associated environmental and conservation programs. Fees from leases and easements are put into a State fund as required by law.

The EIS will evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, including the No Action Alternative. The EIS will satisfy both federal and State of Hawai‘i requirements and provide the necessary analyses to allow the Navy, NASA, and the Department of Land and Natural Resources to consider the environmental effects of the Proposed Action as part of their decision making.

IMPORTANT DATES: The Navy and NASA are initiating a public scoping period to receive comments on the scope of the EIS. This public scoping effort is being conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343. The scoping meetings will also serve as an opportunity to obtain public input concerning potential effects to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and HRS Section 6E-42.

Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the environmental planning process by providing input on the proposed real estate action, including potential alternatives, environmental or cultural concerns, information the public would like the Navy and NASA to know, and any other information the public would like to see addressed in the EIS.

The public scoping period begins May 8, 2024, and ends June 17, 2024. The public is encouraged to submit written comments by June 17, 2024, and may submit oral comments at the public scoping meetings.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: The Navy and NASA will host public scoping meetings at three locations on Kaua‘i. The public is encouraged to attend any of the public scoping meetings to talk story, learn more, and submit written or oral comments. All meetings will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. HST at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

Kaua‘i Veterans Center
3215 Kaua‘i Veterans Memorial Hwy, Līhu‘e

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

Kekaha Neighborhood Center
8130 Elepaio Rd, Kekaha

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Sheraton Kaua‘i Coconut Beach Resort
650 Aleka Loop, Kapa‘a

Meeting Times: 5 to 8 p.m. HST

Agenda:

- **5 to 8 p.m.** Information stations – meet the project team, talk story, and ask questions. Visit the comments station to provide a written or oral comment.
- **6 to 6:30 p.m.** Project presentation by Navy and NASA.

HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS:

Submit Comments in Person, Online, or by Mail

Submit comments by June 17, 2024. The Navy and NASA encourage the public to attend a public scoping meeting and to visit the project website to learn more. The public may submit comments in any of the following ways:

- In person at a public scoping meeting
- Through the project website at **PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com**
- By email to info@PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com
- By mail, postmarked by June 17, 2024, to the following address:
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Hawai‘i
Environmental OPHEV2
Attn: PMRF and KPGO RE EIS Project Manager, Ms. Kerry Wells
400 Marshall Road, Building X-11
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860

For language assistance or special accommodations, the public should contact the PMRF Public Affairs Officer at **(808) 335-4740** or PMRFPublicAffairs@us.navy.mil. Requests for language assistance or special accommodations should be made at least seven days prior to the public meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TO BE STUDIED

The Navy and NASA propose to evaluate potential environmental impacts for each of the alternatives on the following resource areas identified below. The public is invited to provide input on these and other resources that should potentially be considered in the EIS.

Social Environment

- Archaeological and historic resources
- Cultural practices
- Visual resources
- Public health and safety
- Land use
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental justice

Physical Environment

- Air quality and greenhouse gases
- Water resources

Biological Environment

- Biological resources

Built Environment

- Utilities
- Transportation
- Hazardous materials and solid wastes

ABOUT THE PACIFIC MISSILE RANGE FACILITY AND KŌKE‘E PARK GEOPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY: The U.S. Navy’s PMRF is the world’s largest instrumented, multi-domain training and testing facility. PMRF is an essential part of Department of Defense training, research, development, testing, and evaluation. PMRF is unique because of its simultaneous capability to support subsurface, surface, air, and space operations.

On Kaua‘i, the Navy is the largest high-tech employer and third largest overall employer. Most of the 900 personnel at PMRF are civilians, including many from the local community. PMRF contributes approximately \$150 million annually in salaries, contract goods, and services to the local economy. PMRF supports operations from single-unit exercises to large-scale, multiple-unit training events. PMRF is located on the southwest coast of the Hawaiian island of Kaua‘i.

NASA operates KPGO to collect geodetic data about the Earth’s shape, orientation in space, and gravity. This data supports modern navigation technology such as the Global Positioning System (GPS) that is used every day in a wide variety of devices, from handheld smartphones to satellites. In addition, this data is used for scientific studies, spacecraft navigation, and the geolocation of Earth observations. Continued operation of KPGO is needed to ensure these data-related operations of global and local significance can continue, allowing multiple agencies’ missions to persist without interruption. KPGO is located on a remote ridge within Kōke‘e State Park in the western portion of Kaua‘i. For more information, visit <https://space-geodesy.nasa.gov/NSGN/sites/KPGO/KPGO.html>. For more information about PMRF, visit <https://cnrh.cnrc.navy.mil/Installations/PMRF-Barking-Sands/>.

NASA has issued a Use Permit to the Navy for use of portions of KPGO for mission support with radar, telemetry, and communications services.

Preserving the long-term Department of Defense and NASA use of these State lands is critical for military readiness, continuation of ongoing military training and testing, and maintaining data collection efforts of global and local significance. It also ensures the continued conservation management by the Navy and NASA of natural and cultural resources on these lands.