



COMMANDER, NAVY REGION HAWAII
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
850 TICONDEROGA STREET, SUITE 110
JBPHH, HAWAII 96860
www.cnrc.navy.mil/hawaii



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PA Cell: 808-473-2898

Duty Cell: 808-371-5189

August 21, 2026

Release #25-07

U.S. NAVY AND NASA RELEASE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) FOR PROPOSED CONTINUED USE OF STATE LANDS ON KAUA'I FOR THE NAVY'S PACIFIC MISSILE RANGE FACILITY AND NASA'S KŌKE'E PARK GEOPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY.

The Navy and NASA encourage the public to view the NEPA version of the Final EIS and HEPA version (showing changes from Draft to Final) of the Final EIS.

The U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), as applicants and joint lead agencies, prepared the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and encourage the public to view the Final EIS.

The Navy and NASA analyzed the potential environmental consequences of the Navy's proposal to maintain the use of 8,172 acres of State lands on Kaua'i for operational continuity and sustainment in support of continued and ongoing military training, testing, and facility operations at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), and NASA's proposal to maintain the use of 23 acres of State lands on Kaua'i in support of continued operations including measurements of the Earth's rotation and local land motion at Kōke'e Park Geophysical Observatory (KPGO). The Navy and NASA utilize these lands on Kaua'i pursuant to leases and easements granted by the State of Hawai'i.

The Proposed Action is needed because the existing real estate agreements for these State lands are set to expire between 2027 and 2030. The Navy use of these State lands is required to maintain technological and safety capabilities supporting PMRF training and testing. Navy

training and testing operations do not occur on these State lands. The environmental effects of PMRF training and testing operations are fully analyzed in previous, focused environmental documents referenced in Section 1.5 of the Final EIS. For NASA, these State lands are critical to maintain data collection efforts of global significance. It also ensures the continued conservation management by the Navy and NASA of natural and cultural resources on these lands.

For the Board of Land and Natural Resources, in addition to its role as the lessor of State lands, the proposed real estate action presents an opportunity to secure a revenue source to support its management of public lands and associated environmental and conservation programs. Fees from leases and easements would be put into a State fund as required by law. Twenty percent of ceded lands¹ revenue (fees from the leases and easements) would go to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), and the rest to the Special Land Development Fund as required by law.

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

For portions of PMRF, the Navy has real estate agreements with the State of Hawaiʻi for 8,172 acres, comprised of 684 acres of leaseholds and 7,488 acres of easement lands. The majority of the leasehold and easement areas remain intentionally undeveloped as they are passively used as encroachment buffers and security for the range's mission. The Navy's current leases and easements support mission readiness, access, and utilities at five general locations: Main Base², Kamokalā Ridge, Mānā Water Well, Miloliʻi Ridge, and Mākaha Ridge.

NASA operates on 23 acres, comprised of 16 acres of leaseholds and 7 acres of easement lands, across five parcels along a 1 mile stretch of road in Kōkeʻe State Park. NASA issued the Navy a Use Permit in 2016 for portions of KPGO to conduct radar, telemetry, and communications services in support of PMRF operations.

The Final EIS analyzed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, including the No Action Alternative. The Final EIS satisfies both federal and State of Hawaiʻi requirements and provides the necessary analyses to allow the Navy, NASA, and the Board of Land and Natural Resources to consider the environmental effects of the Proposed Action as part of their decision making.

¹ The term "ceded lands" is used to refer to the government lands of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi and the Crown lands that were the property of the Hawaiian monarch, which the Republic of Hawaii transferred or "ceded" to the United States government in the Joint Resolution of Annexation approved by President William McKinley on July 7, 1898 (30 Stat. 750). Upon statehood in 1959, the federal government returned to the State of Hawaiʻi all ceded lands not set aside for its own use in Section 5(f) of the Admission Act. The use of the term "ceded land" is consistent with usage by other State agencies (e.g., <https://www.oha.org/about/abouthistory/>).

² Note that "Main Base" is a common naming convention for Navy fee simple, leasehold, and easement lands on the Mānā Plain. This EIS only analyzes potential effects from the Proposed Action on the leasehold and easement lands in the Project Area.

Public Involvement

The Navy and NASA held a public comment period on the Draft EIS from June 20, 2025, to August 7, 2025. During the public comment period, the Navy and NASA held three public meetings in July 2025 at three locations on Kauaʻi (Līhuʻe, Kekaha, and Kapaʻa) to provide project information to the public and to receive public comments on the Draft EIS. The meetings were also available online. The Final EIS includes responses to comments received on the Draft EIS. The Final EIS also includes updates in response to substantive comments received.

Additionally, the Navy and NASA propose to implement Enhanced Engagement under the alternatives. These enhancements were developed in response to feedback received from the public during the scoping and public comment periods. Comments indicated that increased communication with the public and regulatory agencies regarding several ongoing programs could improve mutual understanding and cooperation. Additionally, comments also pointed to programs that, moving forward, could bridge the gap between the military and the community. This Enhanced Engagement is meant to be this bridge. Enhanced Engagement-4, PMRF Kauaʻi, is a quarterly newsletter distributed to over 300 individuals and organizations that was created as part of this EIS process and public feedback.

Next Steps

The Notice of Availability of the Final EIS will be published in the Federal Register on August 21, 2026. Following publication of the Final EIS in *The Environmental Notice* on August 23, 2026, the Board of Land and Natural Resources will determine acceptability of the Final EIS in accordance with the Hawaiʻi Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) and publish their determination in *The Environmental Notice*. The Board of Land and Natural Resources meeting will be held on September 11, 2026. A 60-day HEPA wait period follows the Board of Land and Natural Resources' publication of determination. The Navy and NASA will publish their own Record of Decision following a 30-day wait period. The Record of Decision is a concise public record that will address the Navy and NASA decisions, respectively.

Final EIS Availability

The Navy and NASA encourage the public to view the NEPA version of the Final EIS and HEPA version (showing changes from Draft to Final) of the Final EIS. Both the NEPA and HEPA versions of the Final EIS are available on the project website at PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com. A copy of the HEPA Final EIS will be available on the Environmental Review Program's website at <https://planning.hawaii.gov/erp/> and at the Waimea Public Library (Kauaʻi) and the Hawaiʻi Documents Center (Hawaiʻi State Library, Oʻahu).

For more information visit: PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com

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 surface, subsurface, 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 salary, 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. NASA issued the Navy a Use Permit in 2016 for portions of KPGO to conduct radar, telemetry, and communications services in support of PMRF operations.

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 about KPGO, visit

<https://earth.gsfc.nasa.gov/geo/networks/sgp/sites/kokee-park>

For more information about PMRF, visit <https://cnrh.cnmc.navy.mil/Installations/PMRF-Barking-Sands/>.