

PMRF Kaua'i

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



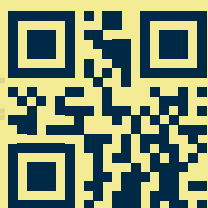
Aloha from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, Barking Sands!

Mahalo for your interest in PMRF Barking Sands and for your support of our newsletter! As we move into spring, growing our dialogue and engagement with the community remains top of mind for PMRF's leaders.

This edition focuses on how PMRF welcomes the community to the base and how our programs, staff 'ohana, and resources contribute to events throughout the island. Whether it's assisting at a charter school conference, partnering with environmental nonprofit groups, or interacting with our neighbors at school events, our team continues to be a community leader on Kaua'i.

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

PMRFKauai.com



PMRF and Waimea Canyon Middle School Partner for Workforce Awareness

PMRF is leading the way toward shaping its future workforce by hosting the 2nd Annual Workforce Awareness field trip with the Waimea Canyon Middle School. Designed for middle school students who are selecting their career academy classes soon, this field trip introduces young learners to occupational paths they may not realize exist.

On March 6, PMRF staff coordinated a career fair and field tours where students experienced a behind the scenes look at careers at PMRF and gained firsthand insight into the skills and education needed for these professions.

PMRF has a wide array of careers for all skill levels and is an ideal setting for students who dream of technology-focused positions and want to stay on Kaua'i. Jobs on the base include engineers supporting advanced tests, logistical specialists facilitating operations, environmental biologists protecting native wildlife, administrative support, recreation specialists, fire fighters, active-duty positions, and more.



Students observe interactive presentations from PMRF personnel. (Koa Lani Photography, Meighan Parubrub)



Wildlife biologist Daniella Casillas gives a presentation on sea life at PMRF.

The goal of PMRF's workforce awareness field trip is simple yet powerful: to inspire students to dream big and pursue careers aligned with their interests and talents. With a diversity of opportunities, employment at PMRF plants the seeds of possibility, and we hope that young minds will see that their future career is closer to home than they imagined.

By opening its doors to local schools, PMRF strengthens ties with families and educators

while investing in the next generation. These events highlight career pathways within the military, civil service, and contractor sectors while also demonstrating to students how these roles support national defense, innovation, and community well-being.

Big Impacts:

How the Military Bolsters Hawai'i's Economy

The armed forces have been a mainstay of economic activity in Hawai'i for decades, yet quantifying their contribution can be difficult. How important are they to the state's economy? How much money do they spend? Where is it spent? Does the money stay local?

The Military and Community Relations Office (MACRO), a state-run, federally funded office based in Honolulu, provides some answers. Its 2025 Economic Impact Factbook was developed to give the public a clear, accessible view of the U.S. military's spending in our state, grounded in data, context, and transparency.

State-level view

The factbook lays out the scale of military spending in Hawai'i: More than \$10 billion in total defense spending entered the Hawai'i economy in 2023, translating to nearly \$7,000 per resident. Nine percent of the state's gross domestic product (GDP), or total economic output, came from direct Department of War (DoW) spending. Direct spending refers to purchases of goods, materials, and services and service member and civilian pay. An additional 7% of the state's GDP came from indirect military spending and induced GDP, such as suppliers hired by DoW contractors or household spending. This adds up to \$17.4 billion, the second largest contributor to the state's GDP, after tourism.

Compensation for more than 73,000 military and civilian personnel in Hawai'i accounted for 57% of all DoW spending in Hawai'i, followed by contracts (32%), and grants and Veterans Administration (VA) assistance (11%). Contract dollars are not concentrated among a few corporations: The department spent \$1.3 billion in 2023 on small business contracts, including over \$230 million on Native Hawaiian-owned business.

The report also highlights several grant and community partnership programs. For example, robust research funding for the University of Hawai'i (\$72.8 million in 2023) spans from disaster recovery to advanced applied science to infrastructure research. The department also contributes to on-base public school construction and environmental restoration programs.

Overall, MACRO makes the case that the DoW is tied to several key sectors in the state, such as construction, transportation, and housing, and provides skilled, high-paying jobs representing a significant and stable source of year-round income that maintains and spurs growth. Access the full report [here](#).

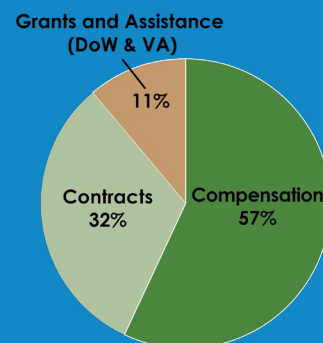


Workers and officials participate in a blessing ceremony for the construction of Dry Dock 5 (DD5) at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Facility at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

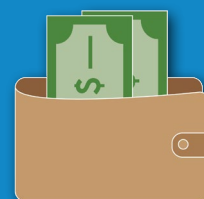
By the Numbers

Military spending accounts for
9% of direct GDP

DoW Spending in Hawai'i

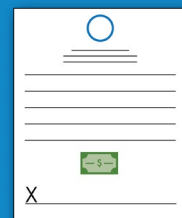


Military spending per state
resident is **\$6,942***



*#4 in country

Personnel spending
(incl. military and civilian payroll)
is
\$6.2B



Kaua'i in focus

While most military personnel and investment is concentrated on O'ahu, PMRF delivers a significant boost to Kaua'i's economy. Between compensation for service members and civilian employees, contracts, and grants, the Navy spent over \$120 million on the island in 2023. Only about 80 of the 1,000 PMRF employees are Sailors, meaning that most wages go to civilian employees and contractors, many of whom are local residents.

Over the past several years, tens of millions of additional funding has come via the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Challenge program. This partnership program with state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private landowners promotes cooperative land management and environmental stewardship that also boosts military readiness. Recent projects with PMRF include:

- **Reducing Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard (2025):** A new project to protect endangered seabirds and reduce hazards to aircraft from bird strikes at PMRF. (See next article for more details.)
- **Forest/Watershed Protection Project Above Mānā Plain (2024):** An ongoing project with Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources to control invasive plant species and promote forest health and reforestation; endangered seabird monitoring; and community wildland fire response.
- **Flood Management and Habitat Protection Project (2024):** An ongoing partnership with the Kekaha Agriculture Association aiming to restore open floodable areas on the Mānā Plain as protected seabird habitat, while also mitigating flooding and improving water quality.

PMRF is Kaua'i's third largest employer, and the top job creator for technical careers.



PMRF Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince pauses for a group photo after speaking at the Kaua'i Economic Development Board's (KEDB) annual meeting on Dec. 18, 2025. KEDB is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to broaden and strengthen Kaua'i's economy.

What is MACRO?

Established in 2024, the Military and Community Relations Office, housed within Hawai'i's Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, works to strengthen communication, transparency, and collaboration between the state, military partners, and communities. MACRO supports data-driven policy development, community engagement initiatives, and statewide coordination on issues related to military presence, economic impact, and shared stewardship of Hawai'i's lands and natural resources.

For more information, visit MACRO.Hawaii.gov.



Saving Seabirds, Securing the Runway: PMRF Partners with Local Conservation Group

In August 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. As part of a multi-year, Navy-funded partnership under the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, this collaboration blends mission readiness and environmental protection, and work is well underway.

"Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges is honored to serve as fiscal sponsor for this grant, which will directly serve the wildlife management programs of the Kaua'i National Wildlife Refuge Complex," shared Thomas Daubert, Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges' Executive Director.

At Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge, funding provided by the REPI grant will support a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service team in their work to manage crucial bird habitat within the new predator exclusion fence and develop operational processes that will support this work into the future.



A Laysan albatross sits on an egg. Staff transfer birds and eggs from PMRF to more hospitable locations.

The REPI funding will:

- Reduce bird/aircraft strike hazards on the airfield at PMRF.
- Expand PMRF's mōlī (Laysan albatross) egg swap program to improve fledgling survival and reduce nesting in unsafe locations.
- Implement enhanced control of invasive predators to protect endangered seabirds.
- Strengthen biosecurity protocols to keep invasive species out of nesting sites.
- Remove invasive plants and restore native vegetation to create higher-quality nesting habitat.
- Monitor and repair fence lines at the Kaua'i National Wildlife Refuge Complex to help protect native birds' habitat.

"Together, we will be enhancing, supporting and managing key habitats for seabirds that need our kōkua (help), including the mōlī (Laysan albatross) and nēnē (Hawaiian goose)," Daubert added. At Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, funding will also support work to manage native Hawaiian water birds.

"This partnership demonstrates one of the many efforts integrated at PMRF to protect mission readiness while restoring critical habitats and supporting Kaua'i's unique biodiversity," said PMRF Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince.

"Environmental stewardship is not separate from our mission – it's essential to sustaining the training and operations that keep our nation secure."

By combining habitat restoration, species management, and infrastructure improvements, the project will help ensure that federally listed threatened, endangered, or protected seabirds and water birds can successfully breed and fledge in secure, predator-free environments while reducing risks to aircraft operating from PMRF. Together, PMRF and Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges are advancing conservation through science-based management and strong community partnerships while balancing environmental protection with mission success.



The predator exclusion fence at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge. The new grant will further bird habitat management in this area.

What is the REPI Program?

Established in 2002 as part of the Fiscal Year 2003 National Defense Authorization Act, the REPI Program preserves military missions by supporting cost-sharing agreements between the military services, other Federal agencies, state and local governments, and nonprofit organizations to avoid land use conflicts near military installations, address environmental restrictions that limit military activities, and increase installation resilience.

In Hawai'i, from 2006-2024, over \$180 million was spent on REPI projects, with two-thirds of the funding coming from partners. From 2019-2024, DoW and its partners spent \$7.6 million of REPI funds on Kaua'i-based projects.

For more information, visit [REPI.mil](https://repi.mil).

PMRF and Kōke'e Park Geophysical Observatory Real Estate Final Environmental Impact Statement Anticipated for Release in Summer 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 anticipated release of the Final EIS to the public is this summer. 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.

The Notice of Availability for the public release of the Final EIS will be published in the summer edition of both the Federal Register and The Environmental Notice (TEN), a State of Hawai'i publication.

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

Criteria for selecting the interviewees for the assessment included:

- Individual had (has) a past or current pilina (connection) to the study area or vicinity.
- Individual is a known Hawaiian cultural or natural resource specialist or traditional practitioner.
- Individual was referred by another reputable person.

The updated Cultural Impact Assessment that incorporates these additional interviews will be included in the Final EIS.

Further updates on the EIS will be available on [PMRFKauai.com](https://www.pmrk.kauai.mil) and in the next PMRF newsletter (expected for release in mid-June).



A hybrid meeting with PMRF, Navy Region Hawaii, and Aha Moku Council on July 8, 2025.

Cleaning Up Near Base: Adopt-a-Highway

Service extends beyond the uniform and the base, and Sailors and staff demonstrated this by volunteering for a highway cleanup on Feb. 6. The quarterly cleanup is part of PMRF's partnership with the State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation's Adopt-a-Highway program.

PMRF personnel take pride in their community and share in the responsibility for its continued care. Through teamwork and shared purpose, we strengthen our PMRF 'ohana (family), reinforce Navy core values, and leave our environment better for those who come after us.

Special thanks to the volunteers who picked up trash along a two-mile stretch of highway, demonstrating teamwork and commitment to community service! Your efforts helped to beautify the land and create a safer space for the native wildlife nesting nearby. Mahalo!

To see more photos and updates from PMRF, follow us on Facebook [@PacificMissileRangeFacility](https://www.facebook.com/PacificMissileRangeFacility).



PMRF Sailors and staff pose for a photo after the volunteer highway cleanup.

Paying Tribute to Jeffrey Diaz

On Jan. 23, PMRF personnel and families gathered at the base to honor the life and service of Master-at-Arms 1st Class Jeffrey Diaz, who passed away in November while rescuing his children from high surf. The ceremony included Hawaiian blessings and prayers, messages from Sailors close to Diaz, and remarks from his family and PMRF leadership. Speakers praised Diaz's devotion to his family, perseverance and humility, and dedication to self-improvement.

"I am proud to have served alongside MA1 Diaz and I will always remember him as a hero," said Capt. Robert Prince.

Diaz was a 19-year Navy veteran and is survived by his wife, five children, and granddaughter.

The event included a ceremonial planting of a Ti plant to live and grow in Diaz's honor. From all of us at PMRF, fair winds and following seas, shipmate. We have the watch.



A Navy chaplain addresses attendees of Master-at-Arms 1st Class Jeffrey Diaz's memorial service.

Honoring Excellence: PMRF Awards Naval Science Awards at Regional Science Fair

On Feb. 7, the 30th Annual Kaua'i Regional Science and Engineering Fair was held at the Kaua'i War Memorial Convention Hall. Students in grades 6-12 from eight schools across the island presented projects, and PMRF personnel, including Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Prince and Technical Director Denise Chun, volunteered as judges.

PMRF's Senior Chief Eddie Ko presented four Naval Science Awards to Kaua'i students. He told the gathering, "In an ever-changing world, our greatest resources are the bright men and women working diligently to find solutions and create new pathways forward. I encourage you to continue on with your education, continue creating innovative solutions, and return to put your talents to good use here at home."

The Naval Science Awards Program is a joint U.S. Navy and Marine Corps program that recognizes students for excellence in science and engineering. By highlighting outstanding projects at regional, state, and international fairs, the program celebrates the next generation of innovators and their commitment to technical rigor.

Congratulations to the awardees and finalists. We look forward to seeing how your ideas continue to shape the future of science and technology!



PMRF Sailors and staff volunteered their time as judges at the 30th Annual Kaua'i Regional Science and Engineering Fair.

Navy Week Comes to Hawai'i

From March 9-15, service, history, and community connection were on full display during Hawai'i's inaugural Navy Week, which was led by Rear Adm. Ryan Mahelona, a Kāne'ōhe native and Deputy Commander of the U.S. Tenth Fleet. More than 70 Sailors — many of them from Hawai'i — connected with residents in Hilo and Honolulu through performances, educational events, and community service projects. Hawai'i Navy Week is the second of 12 Navy Weeks taking place this year as part of the Navy Office of Community Outreach's "Road Trip to 250," a nationwide effort supporting America's 250th birthday, Freedom 250.



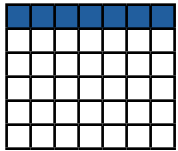
Chief Musician Matthew Kinnaman, a member of the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band, fist bumps an audience member after a performance at Ala Moana Center.



Sailors from the Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Hawai'i (SSN 776) clear mud buildup at Lili'uokalani Gardens in Hilo.



Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Holly Cox helps a patron with groceries at The Pantry by Feeding Hawai'i Together, a grocery store-style food bank on O'ahu.



Upcoming Events

As a community partner and educational resource on the west side of Kaua'i, PMRF is host to an increasing number of school field trips as well as historical and cultural site studies and tours. Our personnel also participate in various science, technology, and engineering presentations across the island. Below you will find the upcoming events PMRF will host or participate in this spring and summer. Check our website for updates!

March 16

Kaua'i Native Plant Society Site Visit

Location: PMRF – Native plant nursery and restoration site

April 20

The Nuevo School (San Francisco Bay Area) Site Visit

Location: PMRF

April 20

Command Beach Cleanup

Location: PMRF

April 24

Annual Natural Resources Field Trip – PMRF invites 4th graders from public and private schools

Location: PMRF – Shenanigans

May 1

Kawaikini Charter School Cultural Site Visit

Location: PMRF

July 2

America's Most West Freedom Fest – Visit PMRFKauai.com for event details (coming soon!)

Location: PMRF – Shenanigans

Kaua'i Native Plant Society Visit

On March 16, PMRF hosted the Kaua'i Native Plant Society for a series of site visits and discussions. Topics spanned environmental restoration, cultural preservation, and team coordination efforts.



Kaua'i Native Plant Society members and Hawaiian cultural educators visit PMRF's plant nursery to observe native plant growth progress and learn more about PMRF's historical site preservation and restoration projects.



PMRF Archaeologist and Cultural Resources Manager Tara Del Fierro (right) talks to members of the Kaua'i Native Plant Society about the historical restoration program at Nohili Dunes conducted by PMRF.