



U.S. ARMY

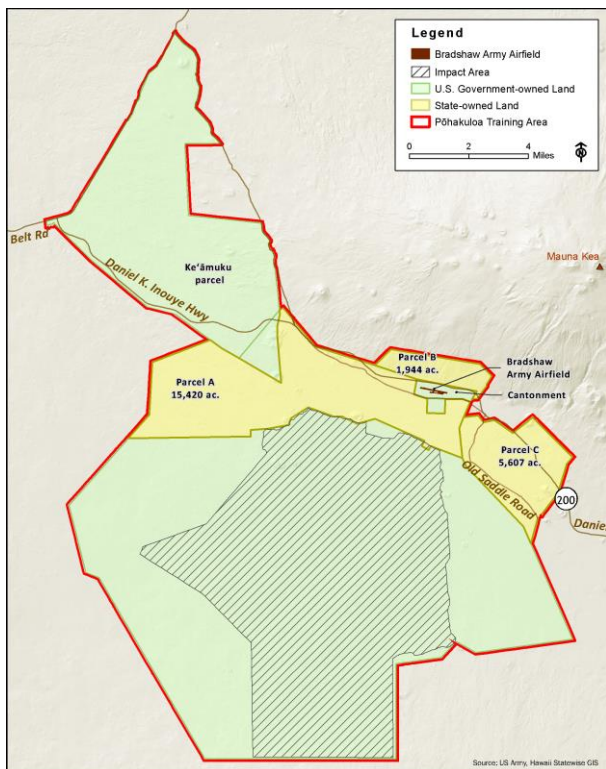
# ARMY TRAINING LAND RETENTION AT PŌHAKULOĀ TRAINING AREA

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Army is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Army Training Land Retention at Pōhakuloā Training Area (PTA) on the island of Hawai'i. The Army proposes to retain up to approximately 23,000 acres of State-owned land at PTA. Military training has taken place at PTA since 1956.

The Army is initiating the EIS process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), guided by the Council on Environmental Quality NEPA implementing regulations in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Parts 1500–1508, and Army NEPA implementing regulations in Title 32 C.F.R. Part 651. The EIS also will comply with Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 343 and Hawai'i Administrative Rules Chapter 11-200.1, collectively referred to as the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA). Like NEPA, HEPA ensures environmental concerns are given appropriate consideration in decision making, along with economic and technical considerations.

The first step in the NEPA and HEPA processes is to alert the public of the intention to prepare an EIS. This is done through publication of a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*, and publication of an EIS Preparation Notice (EISPN) in the State Office of Environmental Quality Control's publication, *The Environmental Notice*. The NOI was published on September 4, 2020, and the EISPN was published on September 8, 2020.



*Hawaii Army National Guard Soldiers react to a simulated ambush during annual training at PTA. These Soldiers conduct combat operations training for several weeks during their annual training at PTA.*

## BACKGROUND

PTA consists of approximately 132,000 acres between the volcanic mountains of Mauna Loa, Mauna Kea, and Hualālai on the island of Hawai'i. United States Army Hawaii (USARHAW) conducts training at PTA to meet its federally mandated mission of readiness. Training offered at installations such as PTA supports the Army's fulfillment of its role in the Nation's defense. Users of PTA, including the Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army Reserve, Hawaii Army National Guard, Hawaii Air National Guard, State and County of Hawai'i first responders and firefighters, Hawai'i Civil Defense Agency, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency, State Office of Homeland Security, Hawai'i Police Department, and others, rely on the installation to fulfill agency-specific mission and readiness requirements. PTA is the largest contiguous live-fire range and maneuver training area in Hawai'i and is considered the Pacific's Premier Training Center. It is the only U.S. training area in the Pacific region where training units can complete all mission essential tasks, and the only installation in Hawai'i that can accommodate larger than company-sized units (i.e., battalion and brigade) for live-fire and maneuver exercises.

The U.S. Government leases approximately 23,000 acres at PTA from the State. The 65-year lease expires on August 16, 2029. Over the past six decades, the State-owned land has been the keystone of PTA, supporting numerous training facilities and capabilities essential to USARHAW and other military services and local agencies. The State-owned land contains maneuver land and key training facilities, some of which are not available elsewhere in Hawai'i, and provides access between major parcels of U.S. Government-owned land in PTA. Loss of this land would substantially impact the ability of USARHAW and other military services and local agencies to meet their training requirements and mission of readiness.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ACCESSIBILITY REQUESTS

Please contact Michael Donnelly, PTA Public Affairs Officer  
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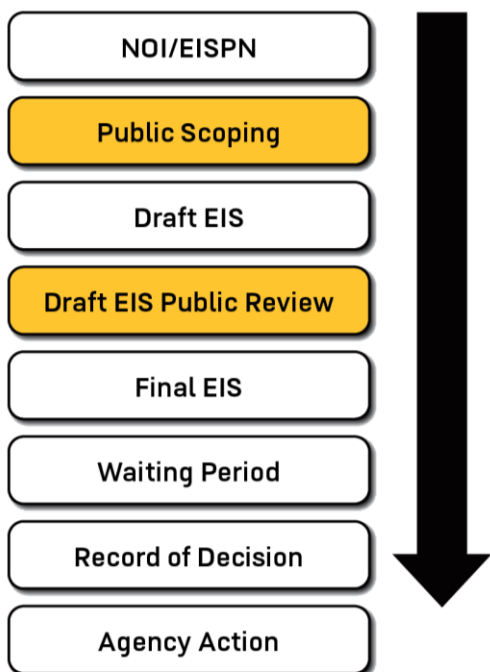
## PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The EIS will evaluate the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of a variety of reasonable alternatives that meet the purpose and need of the Proposed Action, which is to retain up to approximately 23,000 acres of State-owned land at PTA in support of continued military training to meet current and future training requirements. Alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS include: 1) Full Retention; 2) Modified Retention; and 3) Minimum Retention and Access. The No Action Alternative (no retention of State-owned land after 2029) also will be analyzed. Other reasonable alternatives raised during the scoping process and capable of meeting the purpose and need of the Proposed Action will be considered for evaluation in the EIS.

## NEPA/HEPA PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The NEPA/HEPA process graphic (below) shows opportunities for public input in gold. The EIS is currently in the Public Scoping period, which is a time when public comments are received to help shape development of the Draft EIS.

### NEPA/HEPA PROCESS



## PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

The intent of the scoping process is to reach out early and engage a broad range of stakeholders with the purpose of informing and eliciting input. The public scoping process will help identify reasonable alternatives, potential impacts, and key issues of concern to be evaluated in the EIS, as well as determine which stakeholders (e.g., individuals, organizations, and government agencies) are interested in commenting on the Draft EIS. Scoping serves as an opportunity to obtain input from the community regarding issues and resources to be addressed or analyzed through the EIS process. In this regard, it helps to define the “scope” of issues and analyses in the EIS.

The public scoping process began September 4, 2020, with publication of the NOI in the *Federal Register*, to be followed by publication of the EISPN. Federal, state, and local agencies, Native Hawaiian organizations, and the public are invited to participate in the scoping process. The 40-day public scoping period ends on October 14, 2020.

### OPTIONS TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS

Comment period is September 4 – October 14, 2020

- EIS Website: <https://home.army.mil/hawaii/index.php/PTAEIS>
- Email: [usarmy.hawaii.nepa@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.hawaii.nepa@mail.mil)
- Mail: ATLR PTA EIS Comments  
P.O. Box 3444  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3444

### EIS SCOPING VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 4 p.m.

During the Scoping Virtual Open House, you can:

- View online presentations and project documents at <https://home.army.mil/hawaii/index.php/PTAEIS>.
- Call (808) 300-0220 to submit oral comments from 4 – 9 p.m. (only on Wednesday, September 23).

**Note:** Comment submittal through the EIS website is preferred. All comments will be valued equally, regardless of how they are submitted. Please do not submit duplicate comments. Comments should be written clearly, as commenters will not be contacted to provide clarification. Personal contact information will not be published in the Draft or Final EIS. Personal contact information will be maintained for the project record and will not be released unless required by law.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ACCESSIBILITY REQUESTS

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