



Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Afternoon Update on KMA Complex Wildland Fire at Pōhakuloa Training Area

Pōhakuloa Training Area, Hilo, Hawaii (February 13, 2022) —

Firefighting crews from Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA), Hawaii County, and Volunteers, along with bulldozer operators and military helicopter crews from Oahu made good progress throughout the day today in fighting the Keamuku Maneuver Area (KMA) Complex Fire, which was caused by lightning strikes yesterday. There remains no community threat at this time. There is a one-thousand-meter buffer of agricultural grazing area that the U.S. Army has in place between the KMA and Waiki'i Ranch, and the larger of the two fires is approximately one mile from Waiki'i Ranch.

The fires consist of a small fire by Hawaii Belt Road (Highway 190) and a larger fire in the interior hills of KMA. As of 1430, the small fire is approximately 90 percent contained and there is an emergency fire break around the entire fire area. The larger fire is approximately 70 percent contained, and there is an entire emergency fire break around that fire. Five dozers are actively deployed in that are to expand the emergency dozer lines. Ground firefighting crews are also engaged with this fire. There is no change to the approximately 1,500 acres total burned between both fires.

Three Army helicopters from the 25th Infantry Division, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, Oahu, flew in this morning (two UH-60 Blackhawks and one CH-47 Chinook) and assisted with water bucket drops throughout the day. These are in addition to one MEDEVAC helicopter (HH-60) conducting water bucket drops that was already positioned at PTA, making a total of four military helicopters in support of firefighting efforts. These helicopters will continue their efforts tomorrow as well. A Hawaii County helicopter has also been assisting with bucket drops.

"We truly appreciate the tremendous team effort in fighting this fire - hunters and local residents calling emergency services on Sunday when they saw the lightning strikes and the fire; the Army flight helicopter crews from Oahu; and the firefighters and dozer operators from PTA, County, Volunteers, and Division of Forestry and Wildlife for working throughout the day and night to try and keep the fires contained," said PTA Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Cronin. "We truly are a team of teams."

PTA continues to coordinate with Hawaii County Civil Defense to ensure the public is kept informed.