APPENDIX J

WILDFIRES

This page intentionally left blank

APPENDIX J-1

IWFMP CHAPTER 1

1.1. OVERVIEW.

1.1.1. Existing Conditions. The juxtaposition of military training on locations of high ecologic and historic value in Hawaii presents a situation in which the utmost care must be taken to ensure the continued viability of these unique natural and cultural resources. Wildfire is a threat to these as well as to the ability of military trainers to complete their mission. The realities of military training, the prevalence of flammable wildfire fuel types on U.S. Army Hawaii (USARHAW) installations, the extreme topography, and the year round fire season together represent a nearly unique fire management scenario.

1.1.2. Purpose. In the past, military activities on Army lands have resulted in the loss of native vegetation and threatened the habitat of federally protected species of plants and animals. This Integrated Wildland Fire Management Plan (IWFMP) has been developed to help meet the land stewardship responsibilities of USARHAW and comply with applicable federal and state environmental statutes, while at the same time allowing the 25th ID(L) and other military units to accomplish their mission of maintaining a high level of combat readiness. It lays out specific guidance, procedures, and protocols in the prevention and suppression of wildfires on Army training lands in Hawaii.

1.1.3. Scope. This IWFMP covers all lands administered or leased by USARHAW in the State of Hawaii (Figure 1). USARHAW land is found on the islands of Oahu and Hawaii (the Big Island). Training areas on Oahu are Dillingham Military Reservation (DMR), Kawailoa Training Area (KLOA), Kahuku Training Area (KTA), Makua Military Reservation (MMR), Schofield Barracks East Range (SBER), and Schofield Barracks Military Reservation (SBMR). Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) is on the island of Hawaii. This plan also covers lands that may be acquired as part of the Stryker Brigade Combat Training (SBCT) Transformation. These additional lands include the South Range Acquisition Area (SRAA) on Oahu, the Keamuku Parcel on the Big Island, which will be treated as part of PTA, and three military vehicle trails, two on Oahu and one on the Big Island.

1.2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

1.2.1. Goal. Lay out the methods and protocols necessary to control fire frequency, intensity, and size on USARHAW lands in order to comply with federal and state laws and meet USARHAW's land stewardship responsibilities. At the same time, provide for firefighter and public safety and allow continuation of military training necessary for the 25th Infantry Division (Light) (25th ID(L)) and other military units to maintain a high level of combat readiness.

1.2.2. General Objectives.

(a) Provide, first and foremost, for firefighter and public safety. All other objectives are secondary.

(b) Protect all natural and cultural resources, to the extent feasible, through a program of prevention, pre-suppression, and suppression. Support the goals and objectives of existing USARHAW land management plans.

US Army Hawaii Fire Management Areas

Fire Management Areas

Figure 1

N

1:500,000

0 10,000 20,000 Meters

0 10 20 Mile

Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands 2003

Legend

Installation Boundary

Roads

Primary

(c) Base all fire management activities on the best available science.

(d) Incorporate public health and environmental quality considerations into fire management planning and execution.

(e) Coordinate and cooperate where possible and beneficial with other federal, state, and local agencies.

(f) examine and identify resource requirement and availability at each organizational level, to provide needed suppression and support. Establish suppression measures and determine the confine, contain, and control strategies.

(g) Base fire management activities on the evaluation of economic factors that consider resource and social values.

(h) Continually evaluate and improve upon fire management policies and procedures with the goal of constantly improving the level of fire protection on USARHAW lands.

1.2.3. Specific Objectives

(a) Maintain or improve the quality of training lands represented within the installations of USARHAW.

(b) Allow military training to occur at the tempo required to maintain a high level of combat readiness.

(c) Prioritize installations and locations within installations for funding and implementation of fire management improvements.

(d) Establish a series of firebreaks and/or fuelbreaks at high fire risk installations to reduce the probability of a fire moving into high value areas or off installation. Establish monitoring protocols and minimum specifications for these breaks.

(e) Control the timing of ignitions such that fires that occur do so when conditions are such that there is a high probability of controlling the fire and protecting all valued resources.

(f) Establish guidelines and implement a prescribed burn program that includes the use of wildland fires for resource benefit in predetermined areas and under predetermined conditions.

(g) Communicate within the fire management hierarchy to improve practices and policies. Communicate and educate other departments to facilitate a reduction in fire starts.

(h) Update interagency agreements as necessary to ensure prompt and complete cooperation during wildfire incidents both on USARHAW lands and those of other agreeing agencies.

(i) Establish fire management qualifications for all firefighters and fire managers and insure all personnel assigned to those positions are trained to a level appropriate for their expected duties.

(j) Fires will be suppressed at minimum cost while still considering firefighter and public safety and resources to be protected.

1.2.4. Policy. All policies in this document are in accordance with the 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, to which the Department of Defense is a signature, the Army Wildland Fire Policy Guidance dated September 2003, and the USARHAW Commanding General's Policy Memorandum regarding the Wildfire Management Program. Accomplishment of the goals and objectives of this IWFMP depends on ensuring that policies are actively implemented and enforced. This will be the responsibility of fire managers at all levels. Fuel modification, soldier education, ignition control, and a quick wildfire response by appropriate resources will help to prevent the loss of sensitive habitat and the degradation of training lands.

1.3. WILDLAND FIRE ORGANIZATION AND REVIEW.

1.3.1. Fire Management Areas. The IWFMP is an overarching document based on a strategy linking all six (6) Oahu training areas, Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) on the Island of Hawaii, and future purchases on both islands. Each installation has its own Wildfire Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) which have been developed specifically for resources, risks, and training that occur there and are published in Appendix 1. Each of these installations is referred to as a Fire management Area (FMA) Each FMA SOP provides specific guidance that delineate the responsibilities of the fire managers, Range Control staff, using training units, fire department personnel, and other agency cooperators in the prevention and suppression of fires.

1.3.2. Wildland Fire Managers. Wildland fire managers within USARHAW are:

a. Director of Installation Fire and Safety, as the Command Fire Marshal.

b. Installation Fire and Safety Office, Wildland Fire Program Manager.

c. Installation Fire and Emergency Services, Fire Chief.

d. Pohakuloa Training Area, Deputy Fire Chief.

e. Installation Fire and Safety Office, PTA Wildland Fire Coordinator.

f. Federal Fire Department, Fire Chief.

1.3.3. IWFMP Review Process. This IWFMP is a living document that allows flexibility to incorporate new data as it develops. This IWFMP will be reviewed biannually from the date of signature to ensure compliance with the standards, policies, and management goals outlined in this plan. The Installation Fire and Safety Office (IFSO) Wildland Fire Program Manager will convene an ad hoc evaluation team to review fire activity during the two years. The review team will analyze fire reports, evaluate the program, and develop a report to determine what, if any, policy or operational changes should be initiated. This review will include an audit of expenditures and an analysis of how well the allocated funding resources meet program management needs. It will also include a Fire Protection Operational Readiness Inspections and Environmental Compliance Assessment Screenings. Until superseded, the IWFMP will remain in effect. If changes are made to this IWFMP, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall review the amended IWFMP for compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA).

1.4. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.

1.4.1. Environmental Issues. USARHAW lands contain many federal and state listed threatened and endangered species of plants and animals. These lands also contain areas that are culturally significant. The federal and State of Hawaii environmental laws and regulations with which USARHAW must comply protect both natural and cultural resources. This document provides USARHAW with a proactive approach to protecting its land resources.

1.4.2. Fire Threats to the Environment. The Hawaiian ecosystem is not resistant to, nor dependent on, fire. In addition to the statewide expansion of towns and suburban communities, military training can pose a threat to the natural habitats found on Army land. Military forces stationed in Hawaii are of the "light" force structure, meaning that the forces are made up of "light", or dismounted infantry or tactical units. Since light forces only move by foot, light wheeled vehicle, or helicopter, impact to the environment by movement is minimal. Wildfire is the single largest impact made of military activities on the Hawaiian ecosystem. The use of Army lands must include fire avoidance efforts. By following the guidelines in this IWFMP, the Wildland Fire SOPs, and the Range and Training Area SOPs, USARHAW can reduce wildfires and preserve its training assets.