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DLNR NEWS RELEASE-DOD AWARDS \$7.1 MILLION FOR INVASIVE SPECIES BATTLE AND NATIVE PLANTS/WILDLIFE RECOVERY

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(HONOLULU) – The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Readiness and Environmental Integration Program (REPI) is awarding Hawai'i \$7,123,851 for restoration and recovery projects on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island.

Awarded under the REPI Challenge Program, the funding will be dedicated to protecting and restoring rare species of plants and animals found only in Hawai'i. The support also will significantly bolster efforts to remove invasive species that threaten Hawai'i's quality of life, the economy, and native ecosystems, as well as wildfire prevention. These actions will be conducted on lands near military training installations and have been developed by working closely with the DoD.

DLNR Chair Dawn Chang said, "We appreciate the REPI program's support for numerous projects and initiatives underway and others that are planned. Hawai'i has the sad distinction of having the highest number of endangered species on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) endangered species list. With large areas of State-managed lands adjacent to DoD facilities and installations we are excited to partner with REPI to get more of our rare plants and animals protected."

“The DoD is committed good stewardship of the environment and these projects, in partnership with the DLNR, are a demonstration of that commitment,” said Marine Corps Major General Mark Hashimoto, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. “The military in Hawai‘i will always play a key role in the defense of our nation, the region, and the world, and as we perform this no-fail mission it is imperative we also protect the land and water for future generations.”

The collaborative efforts will also provide some resiliency in the face of climate change, especially when it comes to rare and endangered plants and animals.

Projects awarded REPI funding:

- Hawai‘i Island: U.S. Army Garrison-Hawai‘i, Pōhakuloa Training Area – Nāpu‘u Natural Resource Protection: Mitigating Rare Plant Impacts; \$1.3 million
- O‘ahu: U.S. Army Garrison-Hawai‘i, Makua Military Reservation, Schofield Barracks, Kahuku Training Area, Poamoho Training Area – Ecosystem restoration and rare plant and animal preservation; \$2.7 million
- Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i Island: Pacific Missile Range Facility Barking Sands, Marine Corps Base Hawai‘i, Pōhakuloa Training Area – Detection and management of high-impact aquatic and terrestrial invasive species; \$3.1 million

“State funds provided to the DLNR supplement the critical partner contribution needed to apply for these Federal funds. With the Legislature’s support of DLNR, we can multiply the federal grant investment,” Chang commented.

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