



# PŌHAKULOA TRAINING AREA RECEIVES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE 2023 REPI CHALLENGE FUNDING



Photo By Amy Phillips | Hawaiian prickly leaf or popolo... [read more](#)

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Story by Amy Phillips

U.S. Army Garrison Pohakuloa Training Area

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The Department of Defense (DOD)'s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program facilitates long-term, collaborative partnerships that improve resilience to climate change, preserve essential habitats and natural resources, and promote sustainable land uses near installations and ranges. For the 12th consecutive year, the REPI Program hosted the annual REPI Challenge, a competition with dedicated funding to advance REPI project outcomes through large-scale innovation and conservation.

"We're thrilled to announce that Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA) has been selected as one of the 13 military installations across the entire Department of Defense for the 2023 REPI Challenge," said PTA Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Cronin. "Our stewardship mission and partnerships with community partners is incredibly important to us here at PTA. These REPI Challenge awards are just one example of our enduring partnership efforts."

The \$2.6 million project is for the Nāpu'u Natural Resource Protection: Mitigating Rare Plant Impacts Project at PTA. This includes \$1.3 million in DOD funds and \$1.3 million in partner contributions. Partnering organizations include PTA; University of Hawaii, Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU); Nāpu'u Natural Resource Management (NNRM) and Plant Extinction Prevention Program (PEPP); Akaka Foundation for Tropical Forests (AFTF); Three Mountain Alliance (TMA); and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry (USFS IPIF).

The project will improve habitat quality within the historic range of the species on state lands that currently occur solely or primarily at PTA through fencing and restoration actions. The protection and management of species at-risk (SAR) and endangered species on adjacent ecologically similar state lands will help stabilize and increase the state-wide population for multiple species thereby distributing the extinction risk to the species across non-federal managed lands.

Overall, Hawai'i is getting \$10 million in DOD funds through the DOD REPI Program. This \$10 million in federal funds coupled with \$18.5 million in partner contributions, provides for a total of \$28.5 million for Hawai'i for REPI projects. These awards are all part of the DOD's commitment to cultural and environmental stewardship. Hawai'i Island and PTA will directly benefit from three of these projects:

1. Increasing Resilience of Endangered Wildlife Found on Critical Landscapes (REPI Funds: \$2.9M, Partner Contributions: \$4.8M, Total: \$7.7M);
2. Nāpu'u Natural Resource Protection: Mitigating Rare Plant Impacts (REPI Funds: \$1.3M, Partner Contributions: \$1.3M, Total: \$2.6M); and,
3. Detection and Management of High-Impact Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species (REPI Funds: \$3.1M, Partner Contributions: \$5.6M, Total: \$8.7M).

Partners across the country will undertake 13 projects benefitting 26 installations and their neighboring communities.

These FY23 REPI projects are in addition to REPI awards for Hawai'i Island and PTA that DOD awarded in FY21 and FY22. In the last two years, PTA, in partnership with other agencies, worked on climate resilience and habitat preservation projects to mitigate increased wildfire risk. More frequent droughts due to climate change is a major and direct threat to the infrastructure of PTA, the road corridors used to access the area,

critical habitat, as well as the safety of the military and civilian personnel that serve the area. A total of \$2,532,328 was awarded in 2021 for PTA, and Makua Military Reservation and Schofield Barracks on Oahu for wildfire management projects. In 2022, a total of \$4.8 million was awarded to implement wildfire management projects at PTA, and almost \$30 million for projects at Pacific Missile Range Facility Barking Sands and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on Oahu.

The REPI Program has continued to increase efforts to preserve and protect cultural, natural, and land resources that benefit Hawai'i residents and the DOD mission. The 2023 REPI Challenge in Hawai'i has contributed \$10 million in REPI Program funds, to be coupled with \$18.5 million in partner contributions. These funds will help implement four projects focusing on shared challenges on the islands of O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i. All four projects will strategically work towards improving coastal, forest, and watershed resilience, which benefits long-term sustainability and climate resilience for local communities and the DOD mission.

In Hawai'i and across the country, REPI Challenge projects advance multiple resource management objectives through collaboration with conservation partners and state and local governments. The 2023 REPI Challenge projects in Hawai'i will preserve and protect cultural, natural, and land resources across the state near four Hawai'i-based installations—Pacific Missile Range Facility Barking Sands, Pōhakuloa Training Area, Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, and U.S. Army Garrison—Hawai'i.

Since 2021, REPI Challenge in Hawai'i has supported habitat protection, watershed improvement, and installation resilience by:

- Investing \$30.2 million in protecting vital natural resources and critical military installations;
- Leveraging another \$35.2 million in partner contributions toward achieving collective goals; and
- Enhancing eight locations with projects that restore critical habitats and native forests, protecting island aquifers, amplifying climate adaptation efforts, and promoting compatible land uses.

To learn more about this year's Hawai'i REPI Challenge funding recipients, visit [www.repi.mil/Buffer-Projects/REPI-Challenge](http://www.repi.mil/Buffer-Projects/REPI-Challenge). The REPI Office will be hosting a 2023 REPI Challenge Project Spotlight on Wednesday, February 15, at 1:00 PM Eastern Time (EST). For detailed webinar descriptions and connection instructions, please visit [www.REPI.mil/Resources/Webinars/](http://www.REPI.mil/Resources/Webinars/).

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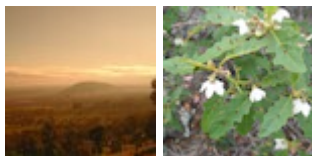
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