



NEWS RELEASE



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OHA and Army resolve lawsuit

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Army today announce the resolution of OHA's 2006 federal lawsuit relating to activities undertaken by the Army in connection with its Stryker Brigade Combat Team transformation in Hawai'i and its impact on Native Hawaiian cultural resources.

By agreement, OHA representatives, together with a neutral archaeologist and accompanied by Army representatives, will survey certain Army training areas. Through these and past surveys, OHA and Army representatives aim to ensure the appropriate identification and treatment of cultural and historic resources located in Līhu'e, the traditional name for the Schofield Barracks region, and other parts of Hawai'i.

“This agreement will afford OHA the opportunity to have a first-hand look at important cultural resources that would not otherwise be accessible to the general public, and to determine whether they were fully addressed in the Army's prior surveys of areas affected by Stryker activities,” said OHA Chairperson Haunani Apoliona. “We believe that this is a very significant undertaking for the preservation of Native Hawaiian culture and history, and we appreciate the Army's giving us access to verify the completeness and accuracy of prior efforts to identify and protect Native Hawaiian sites and other historic resources.”

“We value this spirit of cooperation and communication with OHA,” said Col. Matthew T. Margotta, commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii. “We believe this agreement will build upon our existing robust programs to identify and care for these cultural and historical resources, while balancing the need for Soldier training which is so vital to ensuring that America’s sons and daughters in our military are prepared for combat.”

Also as part of the agreement, both parties have agreed to negotiate potential revisions to the 2004 Programmatic Agreement between the Army, State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, which detailed processes to insure compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with regard to the identification, evaluation, treatment and management of historic properties in connection with the transformation of 2/25 Infantry Division (Light) to a Stryker Brigade Combat Team.