



# Media Release

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*“Malama na Koa”*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Army Seeks Native Hawaiian Input for Remains Disposition**

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii** — Army officials invited representatives from the State Historic Preservation Division, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Oahu Burial Council, Ahu Kukaniloko and Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei, today, to visit a Schofield Barracks construction site where human remains were discovered May 14.

"Now that the remains have been found, the decision must be made whether the remains should stay where they were found, or whether they should be relocated to a more appropriate site where they would not be disturbed again, said Dr. Laurie Lucking, Cultural Resource manager for U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii. "The remains were found in an Army training area where military vehicles will be operating and performing exercises and we are seeking recommendations from the representatives on this matter."

Once a decision on whether the remains will be moved from their present location, the Army will publish a general notice in order to allow claimants an opportunity to come forward and consult with the Army on the final disposition of the remains.

An Army-contracted cultural monitor from Garcia and Associates (GANDA) was on site when a single bone fragment was discovered in a mound of earth that had recently been excavated. All work was immediately halted. The initial determination made by a GANDA archeologist was that the bone fragment was not human and work could resume.

When additional bone fragments were uncovered a short time later, the GANDA cultural monitors and archaeologist stopped work and collected the fragments in order to allow the mechanical excavators to vacate the area. Together, the cultural monitors and archaeologist determined that there was a possibility that the fragments were human.

The fragments were returned to their original location, and covered up until Dr. James Pokines, forensic anthropologist with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, was able to confirm, the following day, that the remains were indeed human.

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"It is often very difficult to visually determine from a single bone fragment, or even from a few bone fragments, whether they are of human or animal in origin, especially when they are very old and in poor condition," said Lucking. "We have previously found many animal remains at Schofield Barracks, but never any of human origin."

Additional examination of the surrounding area is being done by the cultural monitors and archaeologists to determine if there are any further human remains.

The Army will continue to work closely with the State Historic Preservation Division, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Oahu Burial Council, Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei and other Native Hawaiian organizations and individuals, to ensure compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and to ensure that the remains are treated with utmost respect.

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**MEDIA NOTE:** Media who would like should contact Loran Doane, Media Relations chief, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs at (808) 656-3157 or cell (317)-847-2222.