



# U.S. Army North (Fifth Army)

"Strength of the Nation"

## Press Release

Headquarters, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army)  
Office of Public Affairs  
2250 Liscum Road, Building 258  
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 8, 2020

Release No. 20-10-001

### **ARNORTH adjusts military wildland fire ground response operations in California**

**SAN ANTONIO, Texas** – At the request of the National Interagency Fire Center and in support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, U.S. Army North, U.S. Northern Command's Joint Force Land Component Command, recently adjusted its joint wildland fire ground response operations in California.

Approximately 250 Soldiers from the 14th Brigade Engineer Battalion from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, who assisted with response operations at the August Complex in the Mendocino National Forest since Sept. 3, returned home Sept. 27. In addition, a similar number of Marines and Sailors from the 7th Engineer Support Battalion from Camp Pendleton, California, relocated today from the Creek Fire in the Sierra National Forest to the August Complex.

"We routinely shift personnel from one wildland fire response to another," said Frank Guzman, USDA Forest Service Washington Office deputy assistant director. "At the National Interagency Fire Center, we are constantly making decisions to place resources where they are needed most and can have the greatest impact."

Before shifting its focus to the largest wildland fire complex in California history, the Marine engineer unit had assisted with response operations at the Creek Fire in Central California since Sept. 21.

"I have worked with the Soldiers, Marines and Sailors supporting these response operations for the last two months," said U.S. Army Col. Luke Donohue, Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX defense coordinating officer. "They have learned how to safely carry out this mission, including within a COVID-19 environment, and have worked tirelessly each day alongside the professional wildland firefighters to bring relief to Americans in need."

"Our local, state, and federal partners have responded to the August Complex, which is now more than a million acres in size, since mid-August," said Lt. Gen Laura J. Richardson, ARNORTH and JFLCC commander, during a site visit with the troops, Sept. 14-16. "Our thoughts remain with communities affected here and elsewhere by the fires, while our actions, part of a joint effort, provide much-needed relief."

USNORTHCOM is the primary Department of Defense organization for coordinating defense support of civil authorities to help federal partners, like NIFC, respond to natural disasters. ARNORTH serves as USNORTHCOM's operational lead for this DSCA ground support effort.

For additional information, contact ARNORTH Public Affairs office at [usarmy.jbsa.amorth.mbx.pao-media-operations@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.jbsa.amorth.mbx.pao-media-operations@mail.mil) or 210-428-9835.