



U.S. Army North (Fifth Army)

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Press Release

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ARNORTH concludes 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, concluded its wildland fire ground response operations in California today.

Approximately 250 Marines and Sailors from the 7th Engineer Support Battalion, who supported the Creek Fire in Central California and the August Complex in Northern California, returned to Camp Pendleton after a month-long mission that began Sept. 21.

The battalion was one of two active duty units who trained to become wildland firefighters this fire season.

The other battalion, comprised of approximately 250 Soldiers from Joint Base Lewis-McChord's 14th Brigade Engineer Battalion, supported the August Complex from Sept. 3-27.

"I am so very proud of the young men and women who supported our local, state, and federal partners during this record-breaking wildland fire season," said Lt. Gen Laura J. Richardson, ARNORTH and JFLCC commander. "The Soldiers, Sailors and Marines learned and adapted quickly to wildland firefighting while maintaining a focus on their own safety and their crew's safety in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Creek Fire, at more than 350,000 acres, is the largest single wildland fire, while the August Complex, at more than one million acres, is the largest complex of wildland fires in the state's history.

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.arnorth.mbx.pao-media-operations@mail.mil or 210-428-9835.