



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**June 16, 2015**

Alaska National Guard

**Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawk crews help fight Sockeye Fire**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — Two Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and aircrews from the 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment have helped fight the Sockeye Fire since Sunday, performing water bucket operations near Willow.

1-207th AVN accepted their first mission to support the firefight on June 14 around 5 p.m., and they were in the air within two hours.

Alaska Army National Guard crews flew one mission Sunday and two yesterday, dropping a total of 66,000 gallons of water so far. They are standing by for orders from incident command and are expected to tackle the fire again this evening.

Aircrews for water bucket drops typically include two pilots and one or sometimes two crew chiefs in each helicopter. The 1-207th currently has 11 qualified crews who must be swapped out every three to four days.

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**Cutlines for attached photos:**

(See below for links to full-res photos)

**20150615-ZZ999-001**

The Alaska Army National Guard supported fire suppression efforts in June 2015 in and near Willow, Alaska. UH-60 Black Hawks from the 1-207th Aviation Regiment flew multiple missions, dipping their orange water buckets into waters east of Willow Lake and dropping thousands of gallons of water over the east side of the fire, about five miles north of Willow Airport. (Photo courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Cody McKinney.)

**20150615-ZZ999-002**

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**For event Flickr album of the two full-resolution, free downloadable images, please visit:**

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/sets/72157654670624975>