



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 20, 2016**

Alaska National Guard

Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawk crews help fight McHugh Creek 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 began performing water bucket operations in support of wildfire suppression efforts for the McHugh Creek fire yesterday and continue to support today.

1-207th AVN crews flew a total of six sorties yesterday, dropping a total of nearly 73,000 gallons of water.

Aircrews for water bucket drops typically include two pilots and one or sometimes two crew chiefs in each helicopter.

Video B-roll from today's efforts is available to download from DVIDS: <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/2016alaskawildfires>, tag word: 2016 Alaska Wildfires. Media who do not have a DVIDS account need to call 907-727-1972 for assistance with another download option, which will require an AMRDEC account, <https://safe.amrdec.army.mil/safe/>. Photos will be uploaded shortly.

Additional information below from the Alaska Interagency Type 2 Incident Management team requests widest dissemination:

Every pullout between McHugh Creek and Rainbow Valley have been coned off for no access. Safety is of great concern due to rollout from higher elevations above the Seward Highway. Rollout debris, such as logs, stumps, grasses and moss roll downhill and carry the fire. Traffic must continue to flow. Travelers slowing down to view the situation are adding to the concern of slow-moving traffic. The public may not stop anywhere along the roadway, and people are asked to stay away from the area as much as possible.

There is a community meeting tonight at South High School, 7 p.m.

Media representatives may access the Beluga Point pullout. The public will not have access.

The Alaska Interagency Coordination Center is posting updates on their website at <https://akfireinfo.com/>. The Alaska Division of Forestry is posting updates on their Facebook page, "Alaska DNR- Division of Forestry."

Media calls not relating directly to Alaska National Guard support should go to Sarah Saarloos, Public Information Officer for the Alaska Incident Management Team at 907-301-0971.

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