



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

**Public Affairs Office  
Honolulu District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Fort Shafter, Hawaii 96858-5440**

**Contact: Dino Buchanan  
or Joe Bonfiglio  
Telephone: (808) 438-9862**

**For Immediate Release**

**August 31, 2007**

## **Moanalua Valley Residents Sleeping Well Again Following District Rockfall Mitigation Project**

**By Dino W. Buchanan, Honolulu District Public Affairs**

**(FORT SHAFTER, HI – NR 028-07)** Several Moanalua Valley residents are now sleeping well at night after boulders that could have fallen on their homes were removed by a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District rockfall mitigation project in August.

Moanalua Valley resident Lisa Hall watched and smiled as a helicopter lifted more than 35 bags of boulder fragments from a hillside behind her home.

"It's a relief," Hall said.

The airlift concluded the \$309,000 rockfall mitigation project to remove five boulders - boulders that were up to five feet in diameter and weighing approximately three to 20 tons - above homes near 1615 Ala Mahina Place in Moanalua Valley.

**-MORE-**

## **2-2-2 ROCKFALL**

The boulder that had sat precariously on the slope about 275 feet above street level and behind the home Hall rents, was about the size of a Volkswagen Beetle and weighed an estimated 20 tons. Since she moved into the house earlier in 2007, Hall worried that it could roll down the hill into her bedroom.

"It concerned us because the geologist had mentioned to me that particular big boulder could have come down and landed inside my home at any time," Hall said. "We've were sleeping in the living room because we were afraid it would land in my bedroom. When we first noticed the boulder it was kind of scary because it looked like it would come down any moment."

"That boulder in particular looked really unstable," said Cliff Tillotson, vice president of Prometheus Construction, the Corps' contractor for the project. "I have kind of a gut rating system on boulders and that one was a seven or eight. It was just sitting on two little rocks and if they were to move or give way, then the boulder could roll down."

Removing the boulders involved placing temporary secure cable net drapery (fences) over the boulders and then breaking them into pieces using a pneumatic splitter. The drapery netting secured the boulders while crews split them into manageable pieces and placed them into heavy-duty bags.

"We built fences in front of the boulders and then broke them into small pieces and put them into heavy lifting bags," said Tillotson.

**-MORE-**

### **3-3-3 ROCKFALL**

The project was initiated by concerns from the Moanalua Valley residents to State Rep. Glenn Wakai, 31<sup>st</sup> District (Moanalua Valley, Moanalua, Salt Lake) and then an inquiry from U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye's office in February.

Honolulu District awarded the current rockfall mitigation contract on July 5, 2007 to Prometheus Construction for \$308,850 to remove five boulders located mainly in the area above 1615 Ala Mahina Place.

"This action was not us as a community crying that the sky is falling," Rep. Wakai said. "Boulders actually fell and they continue to pose a danger to the residents."

Rep. Wakai said he and Sen. Inouye worked together to secure funding for this project and according to a recent press release issued by Wakai's office, \$6.5 million more to remove boulders on the Red Hill side of Moanalua Valley where the U.S. Navy has identified 49 sites as having dangerous boulders.

Prometheus began the project Aug. 14 and finished the job in about two weeks – weeks ahead of the contract's October deadline. All of the boulders removed were just inside Tripler Army Medical Center's property line at or above 260 feet.

Residents in homes near the five boulder sites were evacuated during the airlift, which took about 40 minutes, Tillotson said. Pacific Helicopters lifted the bags of chipped stone from the hillside to a field area at Tripler where they were later trucked away to a Mililani stone dealer for reuse.

**-MORE-**

#### **4-4-4 ROCKFALL**

In late 1995 Prometheus Construction completed a \$1.4 million Corps rockfall mitigation project along the Tripler AMC property line uphill of the Moanalua Valley residences on Ala Aolani Street and Ala Mahina Place, removing 50 boulders from 15 sites. That project followed heavy rains and landslides that had damaged properties near Tripler AMC in late 2003.

Watching the boulder chunks being flown away from the hillside in August was much more than a weight lifted off the minds of the Ala Mahina Place residents.

"Now we can move back into our bedroom and have a good night's sleep," Hall said.

"The whole hillside has been swept really thoroughly now," said Tillotson. "I feel this hillside is very safe."

For Lisa Hall knowing that means a good night's sleep.

**-HED-**