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Maj. Kimberly Holman at 805-340-7301 Release # 04-02

**California Air National Guard’s 146th Airlift Wing
to Host Aerial Wildfire Training Media Day**

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| **PORT HUENEME, Calif**.— Military units from across the U.S. have joined the California Air National Guard’s 146th Airlift Wing for its annual MAFFS (Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems) aerial wildfire training and certification this week at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station in Port Hueneme, located adjacent to Point Mugu Naval Air Weapons Station. Credentialed media are invited to observe training on Wednesday, May 4, beginning at 12 noon. Wing personnel will conduct a C-130 water drop at 2 p.m. in close proximity to media to provide a photo and video opportunity.“We look forward to the coming week and the joint training event offered to both our military and civilian counterparts. This is a unique and special opportunity to get all four military MAFFS Wings together as we join our U.S. Forest Service and CAL FIRE partners in preparing for another challenging wildfire season,” said Col. David Bakos, 146th Airlift Wing Commander. “Training together as a large group is vitally important; it enhances overall safety and effectiveness while continuing to build working relationships with the key players in the wildland firefighting community. We are able to battle wildfires as one seamless interagency team because of the training we do together. It is rewarding as Guardsmen and Reservists to stand alongside our civilian emergency response agencies knowing that we help make a difference protecting our citizens and their property.”The California Air National Guard’s C-130J aircraft are equipped with the MAFFS II which is capable of dropping up to 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in a matter of seconds. The system slides into the back of the aircraft, and water or retardant is released through a nozzle on the rear left side. MAFFS aircraft are activated to supplement the U.S. Forest Service and the civilian air tanker program during periods of high wildfire activity throughout the nation.Participating Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units include the 153rd Airlift Wing from Cheyenne, Wyoming, the 145th Airlift Wing from Charlotte, N.C., the 302nd Airlift Wing from Colorado Springs, and the 152nd Airlift Wing from Reno, Nevada. More than 400 personnel have convened to accomplish the weeklong training sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service. The certification training includes classroom sessions and flight operations for military flight crews, civilian lead plane pilots, and support personnel from the U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Bureau of Land Management. "As we experience trends of longer wildfire seasons and more large wildfires, we expect the Air Guard and Reserve MAFFS program to continue to play a vital role in wildfire suppression across the country, by providing surge capability when commercial airtankers are fully committed or not readily available as they have for more than 40 years,” said Jennifer Jones, Public Affairs Specialist for the U.S. Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management Program. "Annual training is critical to ensure that MAFFS fly safely and effectively and that they can be seamlessly integrated into wildfire management operations. Having all of the participating agencies train together, as we are this year, ensures standard training and operating procedures among military units, leadplanes, and ramp and airtanker base personnel." Water drops will be executed in the nearby Angeles National Forest and the Kern County. Rural residents in those areas may see low-flying C-130 aircraft and U.S. Forest Service lead planes throughout the week. Media interested in attending Wednesday’s media day should contact Maj. Kimberly Holman, 146th Airlift Wing public affairs officer at (805) 340-7301 to arrange base access. Bureau of Land ManagementSDA Forest ServiceUS Fish and WildlifeNational Park ServiceBureau of Indian AffairsCalifornia Department of Forestry and Fire Protection logo with link to their websiteDescription: nasf_transDescription: fire_admin copyC:\Documents and Settings\cwolfe\2012_MAFFS\Air_Wing_Agency_Logos_MAFFS\146th%20AW%20Logo[1].BMP |
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