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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# **‘Listening session’ set for April 30 at Fort Leonard Wood’s Abrams Theater**

WASHINGTON – The Army is holding listening sessions at installations throughout the U.S. in April to hear what communities think about the force reductions and restructuring that are likely to impact their areas.

Army officials have scheduled a community listening session at 5:30 p.m. April 30 at Fort Leonard Wood’s Abrams Theater to allow Central Missouri communities an opportunity to provide input to inform the Army about the impacts of potential force structure changes.

The meeting, which is open to the public, provides the opportunity for the Army to gather additional information regarding the Army 2020 Force Restructure decision. Army officials are asking for community input in order to make the best decisions about reorganization, and to mitigate – as much as possible – the impact on local communities.

These force structure changes are not related to sequestration.

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The Army must reduce and reorganize its force structure in order to achieve the fiscal reductions required by the Budget Control Act of 2011, and to remain consistent with Defense Strategy.

To accomplish this, Army officials are currently analyzing all available options. At this time, no decisions have been made, however, officials anticipate with an Active Component reduction of 80,000 Soldiers (from a 2010 high of 570,000 to 490,000 by the end of fiscal year 2017) that many Army installations will be impacted.

“These listening sessions are designed to enable community members to provide their concerns and unique perspectives on topics regarding their communities,” said Army spokesman Lt. Col. Peggy Kageleiry.

The listening sessions will aid the Army in its efforts to reduce its overall strength.

“The Army values community input to make the best decisions and to mitigate, as much as possible, the impact on local communities,” she said.

Kageleiry said Army leaders will consider the communities’ concerns before final decisions are made. She also said the Army will preserve quality of life for Soldiers and their Families, while sustaining relationships with the communities.

The Army could downsize its active component force structure from 45 brigade combat teams to potentially as few as 32, she said.

Kageleiry said the Army will ensure that it still is able to respond to future, unforeseen demands.

(more)

The force reductions began in Fiscal Year 2012 and focused initially on overseas formations. Significant force reductions in the U.S. will begin in 2014, Kageleiry said. She said additional reductions may be necessary after President Barack Obama's 2014 budget is released and the impacts of sequestration are assessed.

Besides the event on Fort Leonard Wood, listening sessions are also planned to be held or have been held at: Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.; Detroit Arsenal, Mich.; Fort Belvoir, Va.; Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Bliss; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Campbell, K.Y.; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Gordon, Ga.; Fort Huachuca, Ariz.; National Training Center and Fort Irwin, Calif.; Fort Jackson, S.C.; Fort Knox, Ky.; Fort Lee, Va.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Meade, Md.; Fort Polk, La.; Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.; Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.; Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.; Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston; Redstone Arsenal, Ala. and Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

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### *About Fort Leonard Wood*

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*Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains 80-90,000 military and civilians each year.*

*Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, one of only five reception stations in the Army, and the Army's largest Non Commissioned Officers Academy.*

*Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting the 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, a large Forces Command unit that is responsible for all deployable capabilities at Fort Leonard Wood. A colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.*

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