

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

August 20, 2015

Endangered Species Recovery Committee
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

Committee Members:

SUBJECT: BRIEFING AND UPDATE FROM DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE (DOFAW) STAFF ON THE DRAFT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN AND INCIDENTAL TAKE LICENSE: NORTH KONA GAME MANAGEMENT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN, ISLAND OF HAWAI'I.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) has been developing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) since 2002 for land managed primarily for maintenance of non-native game mammal populations for hunting, in addition to conservation of native habitat in the Pu'u Wa'awa'a Forest Reserve and the Pu'u Anahulu Game Management Area in North Kona, on the island of Hawai'i.

The HCP is intended to consider and mitigate for the potential impacts to endangered species from DOFAW's game mammal management activities within the Pu'u Wa'awa'a and Pu'u Anahulu areas. Potential negative impacts on covered plant species are primarily due to grazing and traffic associated with the hunting program, road and fire break maintenance, as well as indirect take from competition with invasive plant species and from fire. The plan provides for avoidance and minimization measures, as well as compensatory mitigation which will provide net benefits to the species and environment, above and beyond any incidental take of protected species which may occur due to project actions.

The development of this HCP will provide for the incidental take of the following fifteen threatened and endangered plants and one endangered insect: *Asplenium peruvianum* var. *insulare*, Uhiuhi (*Caesalpinia kavaiensis*), Kauila (*Colubrina oppositifolia*), Honohono (*Haplostachys haplostachya*), Ma'o hau hele (*Hibiscus brackenridgei* ssp. *brackenridgei*), Koki'o (*Kokia drynarioides*), *Neraudia ovata*, 'Aiea (*Nothocestrum breviflorum*), Hala pepe (*Pleomele hawaiiensis*), Po'e (*Portulaca sclerocarpa*), Hawaiian Catchfly (*Silene lanceolata*), Pōpolo kū mai (*Solanum incompletum*), *Stenogyne*

angustifolia, A'e (*Zanthoxylum dipetalum* var. *tomentosum*), and A'e (*Zanthoxylum hawaiiense*) and the Blackburn's sphinx moth (*Manduca blackburni*).

In March 2015, DOFAW received comments from the ESRC on the draft HCP. At that meeting, the ESRC conditionally approved the release of the draft HCP for public review pending DOFAW/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) consensus on Biological Opinion actions. DOFAW is continuing to move forward with a State HCP and is exploring the most appropriate avenues for this project with the USFWS.

HCP staff has updated take estimates and mitigation values based on species needs and the plant modeling, incorporating comments received by the ESRC at the March 2015 meeting. DOFAW is seeking input on the updated values.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the ESRC provide comments on updated information on the Draft North Kona Game Management Habitat Conservation Plan.

Respectfully Submitted,



David G. Smith, Acting Administrator
Division of Forestry and Wildlife