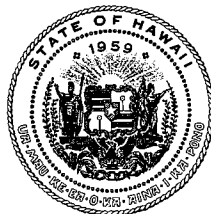
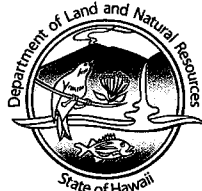


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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

October 12, 2015

TO: INTERESTED AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS and INDIVIDUALS

Re: Pre-Consultation on Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Laupāhoehoe Forest Management Plan (Hawai'i)

The Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the USDA Forest Service (USFS) Pacific Southwest (PSW) Research Station's Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry (IPIF) are preparing an EA in compliance with Chapter 343, HRS for a Draft Management Plan for Laupāhoehoe Forest (map attached). The purpose of this letter is to share information about the project, request your assistance in identifying historic sites or cultural practices that might be impacted by the project, and invite you to share any issues that you wish to be addressed in the EA or any other concerns you may have.

The 12,343 acre (ac) (5,134 hectare (ha)) Laupāhoehoe Forest area consists of two state-managed parcels of land: 4,449 ac of state land designated as Forest Reserve (FR), and 7,894 ac of land designated as a Natural Area Reserve (NAR) (see attached map). Both of these programs are under DLNR-DOFAW and were established to protect native Hawaiian forest for current and future generations. In addition, the Laupāhoehoe Forest is designated as part of the Hawai'i Experimental Tropical Forest (HETF).

In 1992, the Hawai'i Tropical Forest Recovery Act authorized the establishment of the HETF to serve as a center for long-term research and a focal point for developing and transferring knowledge and expertise for the management of tropical forests. USFS-IPIF, based in Hilo, works cooperatively with the DLNR-DOFAW to coordinate research, management, and educational activities and to jointly develop and implement research and education, and management plans for the experimental forest.

The Draft Management Plan will be a guiding document for DLNR-DOFAW and the USFS-IPIF, outlining planned management actions over the next fifteen years and providing background information for why those actions were chosen. The overall goal is to protect, maintain, and enhance Laupāhoehoe Forest's unique natural, cultural, and geological resources while also enhancing compatible human uses. The proposed management actions include fence construction and pig removal to protect biological and water resources, invasive weed control, planting of rare native plants, wildfire prevention and response, public access and the development of interpretive trails for the public, continued research relevant to management and restoration of tropical forest

ecosystems, and encouragement of educational and outreach programs on tropical forests, conservation biology and natural resource management. The Draft Management Plan can be viewed at

http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/ecosystems/files/2013/07/DRAFT_Laupahoehoe_mngt_plan_04162015_small.pdf.

The Draft Management Plan was jointly developed by DOFAW, the USFS, and the Laupāhoehoe Advisory Council (LAC) through a collaborative planning process. Formed in December 2010, the LAC is a community-based advisory council that provides guidance and consultation to DOFAW and USFS on issues of management, research, and education in Laupāhoehoe Forest.

The EA will address topics including but not limited to: native plants and animals; invasive species; cultural resources; socioeconomic impacts; and public access. We invite your comments on any of these topics. We would especially appreciate your input on the following issues in the project area:

1. History, land use and cultural sites e.g., historic or archaeological sites, burials;
2. Traditional gathering practices in the project area – both past and present;
3. Cultural associations through traditions, legends, traditional use, or otherwise; and
4. Referrals of kūpuna who might be willing to share their cultural knowledge of the area.

This information will help us determine if there will be any impacts to cultural resources by proposed management actions, ensure that all potential cultural impacts are appropriately considered, and to prevent to the greatest extent possible any negative impact.

Please send comments on the project by November 30, 2015 and indicate whether you wish to receive a copy of the Draft EA. If you have any questions, contact me at 808-587-0027 or email: Tanya.Rubenstein@hawaii.gov or contact the HETF Manager, Mel Dean at 808-854-2651 or mkdean@hawaii.edu. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for sharing your knowledge!

Sincerely,



Tanya Rubenstein, Natural Area Reserves Project Coordinator

Laupāhoehoe Forest Landowner Designation

