

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

October 23, 2009

Chairperson and Members
Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawaii

Board Members:

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN AHAHUI MALAMA I KA LOKAHI AND THE STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

SUMMARY:

This board submittal requests approval of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi (AML) and the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to establish a cooperative working relationship at Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes in Kailua, Oahu.

BACKGROUND:

Kawainui Marsh is one of the largest remaining wetlands in Hawaii, encompassing an area greater than 830 acres, and serves as a critical flood control basin to protect the developed lower-lying areas of urban Kailua as well as the water quality of Kailua Bay. Moreover, the marsh's aesthetic open space is of high value to both the Windward community and the State; providing a variety of recreational and educational opportunities. Hamakua Marsh is a 22 acre wetland historically connected to and immediately downstream of Kawainui Marsh, which possesses many of the same flood control, water quality, open space, recreational and educational opportunities afforded at Kawainui. Together, Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes have been designated a RAMSAR site of international importance due to their important natural and cultural resources, referred to collectively as the *Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh Complex*.

Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes support a variety of introduced and indigenous aquatic wildlife as well as providing important habitat for migratory bird species and four endangered species of native Hawaiian waterbirds. In addition, because three prominent heiau (Ulupo, Pahukini, and Holomakani) and numerous significant archaeological sites are located in Kawainui, the entire Kawainui Marsh has been determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Approximately 80 acres of Kawainui Marsh were acquired with federal funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, and these lands are now designated 6(f), which requires that outdoor recreation opportunities be provided.

The State of Hawaii is the landowner for Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife is the land manager for the

marshes. DLNR is restoring habitat for endangered endemic water birds such as the Hawaiian stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus knudseni*), Hawaiian gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus sandvicensis*) and Hawaiian coot (*Fulica alai*) within both marshes.

AML is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to develop, promote, and practice a native Hawaiian conservation ethic, relevant to our times, that is responsible to both Hawaiian culture and science. This ethic is protective of native cultural and natural heritage and is expressed through research, education, and active stewardship. AML conducts educational tours for adult community groups and learning activities for school groups from elementary through college, of the natural and cultural history of Kawainui Marsh and the Kailua Ahupuaa, and leads service learning projects involving various community members and student classes from elementary through college in the restoration and conservation of the ecological and cultural sites in Kawainui Marsh,

DISCUSSION:

The goal of the MOA is to establish a cooperative partnership that will benefit various species of wildlife, specifically native Hawaiian waterbirds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and the Hawaii Revised Statutes, and assist with education programs for schools and the general public.

Under the terms of the MOA, the Board will support the efforts of AML to continue to develop educational and interpretive programs in Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes, especially with wetland bird habitat restoration. The parties agree to engage as partners in a cooperative effort to inform the public about the natural and cultural resources of Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes. Both parties deem it mutually advantageous and desirable to cooperate in providing educational, interpretive, and passive recreation opportunities of Kawainui and Hamakua Marshes.

RECOMMENDATION:


That the Board authorize the Chairperson to execute a Memorandum of Agreement between Aha Hui Malama I Ka Lokahi and the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources as described above, subject to approval as to form of the Memorandum of Agreement by the Attorney General's office.

Respectfully submitted,



PAUL J. CONRY, Administrator

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



LAURA H. THIELEN, CHAIRPERSON
Board of Land and Natural Resources