



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

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**DLNR TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE MAUNA KEA FOREST RESERVE FOR
ACTIONS TO PROTECT PALILA HABITAT**

HILO -- The Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife, will close the Mauna Kea Forest Reserve and Kaohe Game Management Area on Tuesday, August 4 and Wednesday, August 5, 2009 to conduct animal control activities, specifically aerial shooting from helicopters for feral goats, feral sheep, mouflon and mouflon/feral sheep hybrids. These grazing animals cause soil erosion and degraded habitat, and reduce the density and productivity of mamane trees in the primary habitat of the endemic Palila, a finch-billed Hawaiian honeycreeper

“We are required to comply with a federal court order to conduct aerial shooting to remove sheep and goats from the critical habitat of the Palila, an endangered endemic forest bird of Hawaii which relies on mamane seeds, flowers, buds and leaves for 90 percent of its diet,” said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson. “The temporary closure is needed to minimize the dangers to people in the forest area, and safely allow completion of the animal control activities.”

For public safety reasons, DLNR will restrict public access to the Mauna Kea Forest Reserve, the Kaohe Game Management Area, and Mauna Kea Hunter Access Road during these dates. Copies of the map illustrating the area subject to aerial shooting on these dates are available for inspection at Division of Forestry and Wildlife offices. The Mauna Kea Observatory Road will remain open.

To implement the closure, gates at the Kilohana Hunter Checking Station and the Hale Pohaku entrance to Unit A will be locked at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 3, 2009.

Carcasses taken during the shoot will be available to the public for salvage at the following locations (4-wheel drive vehicle required and access permits will be issued).

Access for salvage will be allowed BY PERMIT ONLY, from 7:00 a.m. August 4, 2009 until 7:00 p.m. August 5, 2009 as follows:

- 1) August 4, 2009, at Ahumoa. Permit holders must meet at the Kilohana Checking Station at 7:00 a.m. sharp.
- 2) August 4, 2009, at Pu'u Ko'ohi. Permit holders must meet at the Mauna Kea State Park at 7:00 a.m. sharp.
- 3) August 5, 2009, at Kaluamakani. Permit holders must meet at the Hawaiian Homes Hall in Waimea at 6:30 a.m. sharp. Due to access across private property, there will be a limit of 10 vehicles.

Contact the Division of Forestry and Wildlife in Hilo at (808) 974-4221 or in Kamuela at (808) 887-6063 for additional details regarding meat salvage or access permits.

For information about the Palila go to the website of the DOFAW Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) at <http://www.state.hi.us/dlnr/dofaw/cwcs/index.html>

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For more information news media may contact:
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