



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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DLNR HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED KAHAUALE‘A NATURAL AREA RESERVE EXTENSION

VOLCANO – The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) will hold a public hearing at 6 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, to receive public testimony on a proposed extension of the state Natural Area Reserve System.

The meeting will take place at the Volcano Cooper Center at 19-4030 Wright Road, Volcano, HI 96785.

The proposed extension of Kahauale‘a Natural Area Reserve (NAR) would encompass 5,795 acres of state-owned land that is between and adjacent to the existing Kahauale‘a Natural Area Reserve and the Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park in the Puna district of Hawai‘i. The proposed extension is sometimes referred to as “Tract 22.” Inclusion of this area into the Natural Area Reserve System would facilitate management of the native ecosystems found in that region, and strengthen the protection of the areas already protected in the Kahauale‘a NAR.

The proposed Kahauale‘a NAR Extension contains a sampling of native ‘ohi‘a-dominated open and closed-canopy plant communities, as well as pioneer vegetation from recent lava flows.

The State of Hawai‘i created the Natural Area Reserves System, or NARS, to preserve and protect representative samples of Hawaiian biological ecosystems and geological formations.

Three rare and endangered plant species, as well as eight species of native birds are known from the vicinity of the proposed extension of the Kahauale‘a Natural Area Reserve.

“Many of these are only found in the wet, mauka forests of Hawai‘i and are perilously close to extinction from the impacts of invasive plants and animals. Because the biological wealth of

Hawai‘i is being depleted so rapidly, the Natural Area Reserves System seeks to protect the best remaining samples of its unique ecosystems,” said Thielen.

Designation of a Natural Area Reserve brings activities in that area under the oversight of the NARS Commission.

Additionally, the redesignation would recognize the area’s extraordinary natural resources, and direct that the area should thus be primarily managed to protect its natural resources.

Any person may testify or present information at the public hearing. Copies of the nomination and a map of the area are available for inspection by contacting Emma Yuen at the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife office, Room 325, 1151 Punchbowl St., Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813 or via e-mail at Emma.Yuen@hawaii.gov or online at: <http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dofaw/nars/Kahaualea1.doc>.

Persons unable to attend or wishing to present additional comments, may mail written testimony received no later than November 20, 2009, to the Chairperson, attn: Emma Yuen, P.O. Box 621 Honolulu, Hawaii 96809, or via e-mail at dlnr@hawaii.gov.

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For more information news media may contact:
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