



**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**News Release**

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GOVERNOR

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LAURA H. THIELEN, CHAIRPERSON

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For Immediate Release: August 31, 2010

**DLNR EXTENDS CLOSURE OF MAUNA KEA FOREST RESERVE  
DUE TO EXTREME FIRE DANGER**

HILO -- The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife is extending the closure of portions of Mauna Kea Forest Reserve and Kaohe Game Management Area until October 31, 2010, due to continuing extreme fire hazard conditions. The area has received little rainfall over the past year and the vegetation is drier than normal.

The closed area includes portions of Mauna Kea Forest Reserve, below the 10,000 foot elevation, between Mauna Kea Access Road, west to 1.1 miles past Kemole.

The closure area includes all of Kaohe Game Management Area and all the roads in the Ahumoa and Skyline area. The expansion of the closure area is due to the recent wildland fire in the Waikahalulu Gulch area.

No public access will be allowed until sufficient rainfall reduces the fire risk in the area.

All public activities will be affected by the closure. These activities include, but are not limited, to game mammal hunting, hiking, bird watching, off road vehicle use (ATV, motorcycle, OHV, etc.) and commercial activities.

Use of Mauna Kea State Recreation Area remains unchanged. According to DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife Hawaii branch manager Roger Imoto, the closure is necessary to protect the sensitive and unique natural resources in the area.

“Watershed protection is our highest priority. Protecting the habitats of our rare and endangered plants and animals is critical. Although we recognize the inconvenience the closure may cause the public, it is an action we cannot avoid,” said Imoto.

(more)

For further information on the closure of Mauna Kea Forest Reserve and Kaohe GMA, please call the Hawaii District office of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife at 974-4221 for more information.

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Use of Mauna Kea State Recreation Area remains unchanged. For more information on the closure of Mauna Kea Forest Reserve and Kaohe GMA, call the Division of Forestry and Wildlife office in Hilo at 974-4221.

For more information, news media may contact:

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