

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20, 2010 NATURAL AREA RESERVES
SYSTEM COMMISSION (NARSC) MEETING, HONOLULU.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

DRAFT Subject to approval

Dr. Dale Bonar, Chair
Dr. John Sinton
Mr. Ronald Rapanot, Sr.
Mr. Trae Menard
Ms. Rebecca Alakai
Dr. Arlene Buchholz
Dr. R. Flint Hughes
Mr. Patrick Conant, for Director, Department of Agriculture (DOA)
Ms. Marnie Meyer, for Office of Planning (OP)
Dr. Sheila Conant, for President, University of Hawai'i

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Dr. James Jacobi
Mr. Ken Kawahara, for Director, Department of Land and Natural Resources
Ms. Colleen Murakami, for Superintendent, Department of Education

STAFF:

Ms. Linda Chow, Deputy Attorney General (AG)
Ms. Betsy Gagné, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)
Mr. Randy Kennedy, DOFAW
Ms. Emma Yuen, DOFAW
Ms. Brianna McDowell, DOFAW
Ms. Lisa Ferentinos, DOFAW
Mr. Ron Cannarella, DOFAW
Mr. Mike Wysong, DOFAW
Mr. Bill Evanson, DOFAW
Mr. Matt Ramsey, DOFAW
Mr. Alan Hanaïke, Information Communication Services Division (ICSD), Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS)

VISTORS:

Mr. Scott Derrickson, Land Use Commission (LUC)
Dr. Jody Bolyard, National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON)
Mr. Josh Strickland, Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
Ms. Malama Minn, DBEDT
Mr. Allen Kam, DBEDT

ITEM 1. Call to order. Chair Bonar called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m., followed by introduction of members.

Action Item: Selection of Vice Chair from appointed members. Chair Bonar asked members who would be willing to serve as Vice Chair to take over if Chair cannot make a meeting, and opened the floor to nominations. Member Sinton said he was willing to step into that breach.

MOTION: S. CONANT/ALAKAI moved that Member John Sinton be nominated as Vice Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Gagné presented a framed original photograph of a Maui Parrotbill to Scott Derrickson on behalf of the Commission and Department, in recognition and appreciation for his many of dedicated service on the NARSC as representative for the Office of Planning. These endangered

birds are hall marks of the best native habitat remaining on Maui, and Hanawi Natural Area Reserve is at the heart of its' range.

ITEM 2. Approval of Minutes of the August 25, 2009 NARSC Meeting.

MOTION: RAPANOT /S. CONANT moved that the minutes of August 25, 2009 be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 3. Updates from Randy Kennedy: Legislative Agenda for 2010, Status of Native Ecosystem Protection and Enhancement Section personnel, NAR Fund Status, and NARS Budget Update for FY 10. Staff Kennedy reported that the Legislative Agenda for 2010 as for NARS is fairly thin as far as actual action; there is a minor bill for Legacy Land. Budget: requesting to transfer 3 positions from general funds to federal funds; have special fund account to move positions from temporary to permanent status. Item 3b is to stick with financial plan for the legislature to adopt on spreadsheet; have \$72,000 for general funds. If all positions were moved from general to special fund, would be a major move and would reduce general funds by about \$1million. A lot of programs are provided for by the Natural Area Reserve Fund (NARF) and some would have to be dropped if this happens. Requesting \$6.8mil for total funds and budget lists in detail what would happen if kept in special fund. Watershed Partnership 1.175million, NARS Management about \$1.1million. Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) had its match requirement waived but will not have next year, so will request \$200,000; have 69 interns currently working on conservation projects. Personnel costs are \$1.4 million, but have gone down because of furloughs; have roughly 5 vacancies that are washed away with furlough savings; Central Services transfers will stay the same. The Division has 600,000 acres with \$950,000 dollars to manage. Because it is an election year, will do a lot at the writing level rather than the legislative level. We are fortunate that public trust was put as the priority of the budget testimony; the Department has gone out of its way to attract other funding (note graphs in budget testimony); funding from Watershed Partnerships was not included at this time.

Staff Kennedy went over other details in the attached hand-out, with the bottom line need of \$6.7 million needed to maintain goals and objectives; carryover balance is to be paid by July 1st 2010, need a certain balance going into fiscal year 2011. Chair Bonar remarked that there was a significant drop in the budget; Staff Kennedy said he needed to keep writing grants; we were given a 14% restriction of personnel; it is really difficult to encumber funds; as far as actual restrictions, will probably never get back as general funding; DLNR Director Thielen's priority is to restrict special funds from going to special funds; 200 people are funded through NARF, not including interns. Chair Bonar remarked that special funds will get raided next year and from the year after. Staff Kennedy said that salaries will be up for grabs year after year; the legislature needs to make up \$1.2 billion minimum. Chair Bonar felt we need to walk in with a budget that takes a hit to show that we have taken things into consideration and are willing for compromise; the legislature will not accept a budget that is the same as last year; he asked AG Chow what role or voice the NARSC could assume. AG Chow replied that you can come in to represent the Commission if you come in as something such as a task force.

Chair Bonar asked Staff Kennedy for information on contingency planning to address budget restrictions and loss of staff, to be prepared in response to how budgetary things turn out. Staff Kennedy: wants to promote the idea that we already are down to bare bones; with furloughs, state positions may not be as attractive as federal or private positions so people may leave, and then can have chance to re-describe positions: have used Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) in past to replace existing positions. He announced that NARS Planner Christen Mitchell has chosen to stay home to care for her new son; have different ways to fill this position, possibly via PCSU or AmeriCorps interns; we are also going after federal, and for the first time,

private grants. Chair Bonar said the program currently has approximately 22 people supported by PCSU and asked how many of those are in jeopardy. Staff Kennedy replied that some of the PCSU contracts are still in place for about a year and half; funding has been spread out as long as we can go for most of the PCSU people; we do a contract with PCSU, whose Principal Investigator is Dr. David Duffy; PCSU seems to still be going along strong; Tri-Isle serves the same function as PCSU and is also doing well. Chair Bonar remarked that part of the challenge is to have NARS grow but not expand positions; he also asked what the target date was for Staff Hadway's return from leave; Staff Gagné said that it could be March or sooner. Item 3.b. tabled until next meeting.

ITEM 4. Permitting.

ITEM 4.c. Action item: Delegate authority to recommend approval of special use permits, in closed areas of Natural Area Reserves, to the NARSC Executive Secretary, with review and input from staff. Staff Gagné said that this particular delegation had been left out of previous authority; this would not preclude items coming to the full Commission if deemed necessary.

MOTION: S. CONANT/RAPANOT moved that the NARS Commission delegate authority to recommend approval of special use permits, in closed areas of natural Area reserves, to the NARSC Executive Secretary, with review and input form staff. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 4.a. Ka`ena Point Ecosystem Restoration Project Update: In the absence of Staff Liesemeyer, Staff Kennedy gave a brief history of the process, from US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) grant to The Wildlife Society (TWS), through all of the outreach and permitting processes to construct a predator proof fence, including an Environmental Assessment that was over 100 pages, all City and County permits, and a Right Of Entry permit just this week was granted by the Land Board. One potential problem is two groups that do not like this project and have asked for a contested case; they have not discussed a compromise. Fence Contractor will be ready to go within the next few months unless a contested case is approved. This has been a good outline on how to run a project from start to finish and should be referred to in the future.

ITEM 4.b. `Ahihi-Kina`u Update. Chair Bonar said that `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve has been closed for one and a half years, and that staff members would be presenting updates. Staff Evanson (Maui NARS Manager) said that he and Staff Ramsey (Lead A-K Ranger) are a tag team, dealing with an area that receives more visitors than any other Reserve, he summarized the main points: most popular hike and snorkel point on the island, which precipitated a closure of maintaining resources as was proposed in mgmt plan; continue to work closely with an advisory group that strongly recommended closure; under a lot of pressure to show what good the closure has done; coming up on the end of a two-year window of closure to decide next steps; need data to show impacts to anchialine pools, geological sites, cultural sites, etc; set out with experts to devise a monitoring plan. Staff now at a point where we need to decide whether to ask for another two years of closure which, looks like what they would like to do as a result of management planning that has yet to occur; teaming up with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to do revise and update the Management Plan, as well as focus on outreach. Just about everyone directly involved has noted that closure has been good for the Reserve and would like closure to continue. Want to initiate radio service in the area; have been working on this for about two years now, since the radio site facility is under control of Police Department; it would be a rent free facility on a secured site. There are concerns for personnel and visitor safety; have been told that there is a radio repeater available for use; may need to pay about \$30,000 in future, but

necessary for safety. Six months mentioned as time period goal; however repeater needs to go through a secure site and that is why this is taking so long.

Chair Bonar said he was very upset with the lack of communications, and recommended another possible carrier or site; there is already a repeater on Ulupalakua Ranch. He suggested a motion that DLNR be given strongest possible response for immediate service at least in the interim until issues can be resolved with the police site.

MOTION: BUCHHOLZ/MENARD moved that the NARSC strongly recommends that the Department be given the strongest possible directive to get immediate service for the Reserve in the interim (a request made one and one half years ago). Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Evanson: Service would also serve for Kanaio NAR and serve as an application in wild land fire fighting in the area. Chair Bonar recommended staff obtain interim service by whatever manner is possible and appropriate as an emergency measure; all were in favor.

Chair Bonar once again brought up the need for a volunteer program. Staff Evanson replied he was asked to organize one, but previous one got a bit difficult to manage at a time when they were trying to close the Reserve. They asked volunteers for time and how they can be brought into organization for accountability, but the two groups ran out of funding, so staff wanted to structure a volunteer program under DOFAW, to insure that our message is accurately conveyed; however, there were concerns about maintaining reliable communication, which is a current obstacle to setting up a volunteer program in the reserve again, and cannot happen until this is resolved; staff has all of the makings of a program in the works, including a volunteer handbook created by ranger staff, and are hoping to start out small; volunteers take lots of time and energy, and want regular volunteers there at least 6 hours a day, 7 days per week since area has long visiting hours. Also need volunteers to help maintain closed areas, such as stopping people from entering. The volunteer program has not moved forward as fast as they would have liked. Over the next two years will be working on limited access through ranger guided hikes for school kids. A ranger station has been put on site; still hoping to get power so that it can be fully operational; have had trailer without power for 6 months.

Funding is a big issue; it is okay for now, but to keep the Reserve going is a concern. The Reserve offers a big opportunity to educate people because the area is so heavily visited; one option is an entry fee; need a series of meetings to take place before the July 31, 2010 deadline: would like an Advisory Group meeting in April, followed by a public meeting in May; have been receiving overwhelming support from public; about 1,000 people were given fliers and only 3 of them complained; many people seemed thankful that there was some attempt to manage the area. Would also like to have a NARS Commission meeting in May or June and BLNR meeting in June or July for recommendation to open or keep the Reserve closed for another two years; also hoping to have a draft management plan by April for Advisory Group review, before wider review.

Staff Evanson reiterated that at the moment: 1) a volunteer program cannot start because of lack of reliable radio communications; 2) Need to finish the volunteer handbook (already have a draft but need to reorganize like Hanauma Bay); 3) purchase an information table for a passive approach; 4) buy volunteer t-shirts, banner, table, and chair for parking lot site; 5) formulate job descriptions that are being modeled on the National Park volunteer program; and 6) recruit volunteers.

Chair Bonar once again expressed to Alan Hanaïke, ICSD communications staff, that he was greatly disturbed that there was still no reliable communication for the Reserve, both for staff and to develop a volunteer program. Mr. Hanaïke said they would look at options. Chair Bonar voiced enormous concern that this has taken over two years and there will be repercussions if other options are not started now to address this issue. Mr. Hanaïke said that they cannot go faster with the process. Chair Bonar again reiterated that an immediate fix needs to be done now until a longer fix is in place. Mr. Hanaïke said that they would meet regarding other options; Chair Bonar thanked him for attending.

Staff Ramsey then gave an illustrated overview on progress of monitoring 3 ecosystem types over the past two years: geological, marine, and anchialine; with marine monitoring contracted to staff from Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB), and now have baselines on fish and coral cover near and offshore; last survey was just last week. From walking along the Reserve now, it is apparent that there are more fish. Another good change is that turtles are coming up to bask in the remote coves; about 5 have come up recently. NOAA continues responding to calls about diseased turtles, likely from tumors. Staff have been able to get into water more and have noticed a lot of disease on kole (goldring surgeonfish) that has just been noticed since closure. An enclosed bay noted for coral was monitored because of damage from human entry; from monitoring, it has been noticed that there is a coral disease that was previously only found in Kaneohe Bay; unsure if isolated from poor circulation or if it will spread around Reserve; not sure how the disease was introduced to the area or when. Anchialine pools: have doubled the amount of surveying; may have found a new species of crab, and three Candidate species for listing as Endangered will likely be. Now finding a lot less toilet paper in ponds; algal mats used to be damaged, but are now in good condition; more endangered stilts are starting to appear in pools; this had only been seen rarely prior to closure. The occurrence of rats and mice has decreased; have not seen any; likely do to less trash and food scraps. The pools are now appearing to serve as a refuge and breeding site for birds and fish; endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals are also coming to the remote coves currently under closure.

Findings with regard to cultural sites: many trail impacts are non-repairable; in general, downturn in economy is likely matching general decrease in visitors to the area; though packed during holidays, weekends, and good surf. Staff is working with TNC to complete a draft management plan for the Reserve; final product will come out with 3 different scenarios based on financial aspects. A team will be meeting on Friday to discuss a sustainable finance plan to determine how many people are needed to sustain different options; hope to have first draft product ready for internal staff review two weeks from this Friday.

Baseline monitoring started before the closure. Several studies are ongoing: 1) near shore snorkel; 2) offshore scuba dive; 3) specific site study where land entries are used; 4) photo plot in pools; 5) fish surveys have been going on approximately once a month, with scuba surveys two times a year, and coves have been surveyed twice a year.

Protocol for coral disease: need to use dedicated gear just for diseased area and gear needs to be properly sanitized. There is also concern over public coming in with gear; divers can come in by boat still. Disease can be controlled by cutting off diseased coral.

Roi roundups (spear fishing contests): this has been a good way to educate and involve divers in other areas on Maui where these introduced predatory fish have reduced the number of native fish: want to use in this the reserve, but are concern to open doors to spear fishers due to restrictive rules. The Nature Conservancy is paving the way to focus on removal being tied to resource management, and applied for grant a year ago to determine best methodology to

exterminate Roi. On the Big Island they 1) establish zones; 2) establish baseline; 3) establish Roi population number and size distribution; 4) compare across state; 5) remove 90% of biomass with fishermen in area and buffer zone; 6) maintain few or no Roi for 2 months; 7) propose to hire 3 spear fishers for 2 to 4 hours a day; 8) document status of Roi and population changes after fishing for 2 months; 9) Select spear fishermen who are experience, have won contests and have proven that they are good. Because our Administrative Rules say no fishing gear, this would have to be run through staff.

Chair Bonar called for a 10 minute break, but asked for a motion to move up an item to be taken up immediately after the break.

MOTION: S. CONANT/HUGHES moved that the NARSC move up item 7.b. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 7.b. `Ilio Natural Area Reserve: Status; presentation, discussion, and recommendations for placement of an AC/DC converter station and transmission cable at `Ilio, as part of a proposed wind energy project on Moloka`i. Josh Strickland, Facilitator Renewable Energy Programs, Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) explained they are trying to determine options on where this cable would enter the water on Moloka`i; `Ilio Point is state land so it would be ideal to use. There is not enough wind power on O`ahu to satisfy demand so are looking to station energy projects on Moloka`i and Lana`i. The area was chosen because winds are going 40% of the time. Converter stations will have an impact: 1-4 acres in size and 1-3 stories tall (use coast guard buildings and jeep trail at `Ilio). The cable itself is 3 to 4 inches in diameter. Expecting 3 wires of this diameter bundled together with fiber optics under the ocean. DBEDT has hired UH School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology (SOEST) to survey routes, and chose areas that would have the least impact on the ocean floor. Because of the geography, it makes sense to come into `Ilio Point and wind farms are proposed for central Moloka`i. Have 3 options: two are along the southern side where healthy reef habitat exists which is an area they do not want to disturb; but found an area in `Ilio Point that would be a great place for the cable to enter. In addition, want to avoid the whale sanctuary, which could be done by this route. The area is along the south side of `Ilio which is a little bit in the whale sanctuary. The question is, if designated as a NAR, could this area be used; would need to bury a cable from the wind farms out to `Ilio Point, with the possibility of cable running down through the existing jeep trail, but would need to use a trenching machine or drill. This is one of the options being considered for wind farms to make Moloka`i self sufficient.

Member Alakai said that it is a proposed NAR, but could we cut out an easement rather than going to the land board? Staff Yuen replied that it is up to the board. Chair Bonar mentioned the conservation values of Ilio Point, and asked if these values would be affected. Mr. Strickland replied that the structure for drilling in ocean is temporary. Staff Yuen added: a lot of the area that would be impacted is a heavily infested by kiawe; along the cliffs and sand dunes are where most potential threats to native wildlife could occur (rare plants, wedge-tailed shearwaters, etc.); the entire parcel is 261 acres; buildings are surrounded by kiawe; building footprint is probably around 2 acres.

Member S. Conant: November is the month for albatross arrival; April albatross adults leave and shearwaters arrive; albatross chicks fledge in June and July; end of October would be best time period for any construction activities. Mr. Strickland: can go 1000 meters; talking about low lying area, and putting converter station on buildings already there; drilling and laying cable would be a matter of days.

Member Rapanot: before can do any drilling need to take care of any unexploded ordinance; there is also a concern of wind farms going on Moloka`i homestead lands and energy going to Oahu but collected from there Moloka`i at their expense. Mr. Strickland: agreed they currently going to O`ahu and will be conducted on Moloka`i, but Moloka`i can benefit from collecting fees from using their land

Member Menard: NARS has rules prohibiting construction and utility use; would need to create an easement. Member S. Conant: would like to know more about the nature of the equipment. Mr. Strickland: have started the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); hope to get contract started in March; trying to address native Hawaiian concerns, issues of whales, birds, and so on. Someone will need to be at the converter station, but likely minimal and will use jeep trail (2-3 personnel daily); open ownership of road; looking to start construction in 2013; EIS must be finished by April 2012. Member S. Conant asked about designation of easement before or after becoming a NAR. Ms. Minn: would not want to do easement; would want to do separate lot; would want to do before the NAR is established; could do a nonexclusive easement for the road but a subdivided lot for the facility; could include the area in the NAR and then have them pay to subdivide out at a later date.

Staff Kennedy suggested that NARS staff go out with Josh and his staff and lay out the area. Staff Yuen: to make easement would need to completely go back through the process. Chair Bonar: could it be designated as a NAR and then have to go back through the Commission and subdivision process. Member S. Conant: it takes years to get a NAR designated and would be hard to do. Member Sinton: does not want to sacrifice `Ilio for something that might or might not happen. Staff Yuen: if there is conflict, the Board/Governor may say no NAR. Chair Bonar: if can show that impacts would be mitigated, more likely to be subdivided; need to know exact location of the site; likely would have to go through this same process before or after the area became a NAR; work on the NAR will be delegated to outside of potential areas and should not conflict.

Member Rapanot: needs to be on coast guard station or south of there because of birds and plants. Member Hughes: also numerous archeological sites. Chair Bonar: do not have the data to do any modifications on the recommended NAR and will continue to go forward with it; can make modifications later in the process. Staff Yuen said that projected designation as a NAR is potentially within the next four months. Member P. Conant: the sooner evaluated the better, then do archaeological, flora, and fauna surveys.

MOTION: S. CONANT/ALAKAI moved that the NARSC move up Items 6.a. and 6.b. on the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 6.a. Update by Henry Loescher, Ph.D., NEON Team Leader for the Fundamental Instrument Unit (all tower/soil based measurements) that are key for site-based design; followed by discussion or site visit to Laupahoehoe and Community Meeting on January 19, 2010 by the NARSC NEON Subcommittee, followed by action to approve, defer, deny, or make other recommendations on possible location of a tower site within the NAR portion of Laupahoehoe. Dr. Jody Bolyard with NEON: arranged teleconference calls for the Environmental Assessment and site visits; group also visited the small HIPNET tower located on the Forest Reserve portion of the HETF, and compared that with what they were looking to put into the NAR: a 6 by 6 foot structure. Why observatory station inside the NAR? How do we offset damage? Is this the only place this can be done? NEON needs to prepare more to address these questions; they are going to reopen the search for places outside of the NAR, but not totally moving away from choosing this particular area. Believes there will be a direct benefit to the

NAR: this observatory station would provide data over a 30 year life span of what is going on in the NAR; air and soil data will be available for management plans; would like the opportunity to present these benefits at the next subcommittee meeting; working with the subcommittee and appreciate the formation of one. The plan is that by late February, NEON will do more site visits and determine the appropriate mix of people to identify other potential locations.

Member P. Conant asked for a list of criteria for site wherever it may be so that people can look for sites. Member S. Conant said members need to know not whether Laupahoehoe is best site but whether or not this is the **only** place you can do what you want to do. Member Alakai: need to hear what other sites have been looked at and why they are not good. Chair Bonar expressed concern about the issue of power; Dr. Bolyard said there were financial, logistic, and power routing concerns.

ITEM 6.b. Update by Dr. Christian Giardina, Acting Program Manager, Institute for Pacific Islands Forestry (IPIF), on current status of the Experimental Forest and proposed Education Center. Since the last NARSC Meeting, there have been a number of changes: Laupahoehoe has opened a manager position; has funding for a management plan; established an advisory council and have solicited names; and are in the process of identifying individuals to fill the seats. Legal access for the road has been discussed and alternatives have been identified; have presented a handout on parcel of property the Forest Service may be purchasing.

The 20-acre infrastructure area (leased state unencumbered land) proposed to go beneath Laupahoehoe NAR: the Community responded by wanting easier access to area; this area will have a covered pavilion for educational purposes; have obtained another property, just last night, that can be used immediately, and are expecting this facility to be operational in the next few months; site will be available to hosting scientists, etc. Member S. Conant asked that a report and maps be sent to staff and members.

ITEM 4.d. Current draft of the Hawai'i Statewide Assessment of Forest Condition and Trends: 2010, focusing on the chapter dealing with preservation of biodiversity and possible request to place two permanent monitoring plots in Pu'u Maka'ala NAR and one in Pu'u O'Umi NAR for the National Forest Inventory Analysis Program (FIA). Staff Cannarella said that the Forest Service wants to reestablish 'ahupua'a, and wants to paint an accurate picture of what is going on with our resources. The Farm Bill has a new program requirement produced in 2008: need an assessment of trends and long term strategy; deadline is June 18' 2010, with consequences of not turning in on time that state is not eligible for funds; also want to complement with ocean management plan; must also incorporate wildfire plans, CWCS plans, educational plans, etc. Legally, just need approval of DOFAW Administrator Paul Conry approval but would also like commission approval; handed out a timeline on what needs to be done; public draft will go out on April 1, 2010, and need a 30-day review period before; will get more review by May 12' 2010, when it goes out for final review.

By January 31, 2010 document will be finished for DOFAW review; February for internal and partner agency review; February 22-25, need to read documents and get comments out; March will be devoted to laying it out and editing, with April 1' 2010 deadline; to the BLNR by May 4; or could do June meeting if absolutely necessary; would like information in reports, fliers, grants, etc.; would like to know how you prioritize your landscape areas; where you want resources concentrated. Member S. Conant thanked Staff Cannarella for the update and remarked it was a tremendous effort.

ITEM 5. Update on *Myoporum* (naio) thrips. Or other potential pests of natural areas; any progress on recommending protection for dominant native forest trees: P. Conant: Agriculture Department obtained \$40,000 per year for 3 years to conduct surveys; plus pursue biocontrol and chemical control.

ITEM 7. Enhancement.

ITEM 7.a. Receive recommendations for DOFAW, if any, and approve, defer, make other recommendations, or deny to the Board of Land and Natural Resources and the Governor the following proposals: i.) Na Kula Natural Area Reserve, Maui; ii.) Pu`u Maka`ala Natural Area Reserve Extension (Kulani), Hawai`i. Staff Yuen handed out report on Biologically Important Areas (BIA) that NARSC and staff have identified.

ITEM 7.a.i. Staff Yuen: received recommendations for NAR at Na Kula located in leeward Haleakala, Maui; recommend go forward; but need Forestry in put; NARSC Enhancement Subcommittee is recommending same as original plan. Member Buchholz asked about public access and if it would be denied. Staff Yuen said that the area had been closed to public access; that public access would be part of the management plan for the area.

MOTION: SINTON/MENARD moved that the NARSC recommend approval, to the Board of Land and Natural Resources and the Governor, of Na Kula being designated as a Natural Area Reserve. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 7.a.ii. Staff Yuen reviewed the Puu Maka`ala NAR extension (Kulani lands): there is a need for a boundary review with Department of Public Safety and Department of Defense, because not sure who will take over the former Correctional Facility, and will then know who to negotiate with. Member Hughes felt it was important to note which areas are appropriate for the NAR. Chair Bonar asked to be kept up to date; Staff Yuen: setting a timeline; will send recommendations to DOFAW, to start the 90-day comment process. Chair Bonar asked if it would be better to wait until learn who will be in charge; Staff Yuen agreed and recommended deferring decision.

ITEM 7.c. Update on NARS Enhancement Project: Staff Yuen referred to her handout and explained that this list of Biologically Important Areas is not necessarily just for NARSC nominations, but to bump up conservation protection as a whole of these areas, no matter whose jurisdiction they fall under, and to stress this importance to DOFAW. Waiea Tract, South Kona: meeting with DOFAW to determine if NAR or Plant Sanctuary would be more appropriate. For Ku`ia NAR, currently managed under NAR and State Park management guidelines; Forestry Program Manager does not want to change designation, wants Forestry to do that management. Member Menard asked if public hunting will be affected; management guidelines were developed but never adopted; need to be refined and adopted; DOFAW Administrator Conry needs to be pushed to complete these guidelines. Staff Yuen: NARS staff work in NARs rather than Forest Reserves; Forest Reserve Management Plans do not identify such management of natural areas). Chair Bonar said that Enhancement is at the core of what we do; with new ones going up the line. Staff Wysong said that for Kaua`i, considering all options; however if left in Forest Reserve, it is important to be pro-active with management. Member Menard said that former Kaua`i Branch Manager Alvin Kyono was our champion, is retired now, and we need to re-cultivate other Kaua`i staff on the importance of broader management; Staff Wysong agreed.

ITEM 8. Announcements. Next NARSC Meeting will be either May or June; to be determined by when `Ahihi-Kina`u NAR/Keone`o`io Advisory Group meets on Maui, then recommend the

Reserve be opened or kept closed for another two years, then come to NARSC, then go to the BLNR for final determination.

Good news for protection of a Biologically Significant Area: crew started construction on the Alaka'i fence last week; it will be largest fenced area on Kaua'i: 25,000 feet that will link existing bog fences for added protection to the summit.

ITEM 9. Adjournment. Chair Bonar adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Betsy Harrison Gagné, Executive Secretary
Natural Area Reserves System Commission