

State of Hawai`i
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

January 13, 2010

Natural Area Reserves System Commission
State of Hawai`i
Honolulu, Hawai`i

NARS Commission Members:

SUBJECT: `Ilio Point 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.

BACKGROUND:

The NARS Commission officially nominated `Ilio Point as a NAR on August 25, 2009. A public hearing and an informational meeting were held on the nomination in November 2009. A day prior to the public hearing, NARS staff and DLNR Director Laura Thielen were contacted by Josh Strickler, Facilitator, Renewable Energy Programs, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). Mr. Strickler informed staff that `Ilio Point was identified as the most feasible location for a transmission cable connecting Moloka`i and O`ahu for a proposed wind energy project, and met with NARS staff about the proposal. Director Thielen requested NARS staff work with DBEDT on the proposal and discuss the status of the NARS nomination.

Status of `Ilio Point NAR Nomination: The BLNR has not heard the proposal for decision-making on a set aside to NARS. The BLNR will review the proposal and public comments, including DBEDT's concerns about the proposed transmission cable and AC/DC converter station. If the BLNR approves the set aside, the Governor will be requested to sign an Executive Order to set the land aside to NARS, subject to approval as to form by the Attorney General. The Executive Order will officially set the land aside as a Natural Area Reserve.

RECOMMENDATION:

Prior to BLNR decision-making, staff recommend that the NARS Commission begin preliminary discussions with DBEDT on the proposed wind energy project. Discussion topics include: briefing on wind energy project, proposed NAR conservation management objectives, and the locations of the most biologically important resources in relation to the proposed transmission cable route.

If you have any questions please contact Emma Yuen, 587-4170, Emma.Yuen@Hawaii.gov

Respectfully Submitted,



Emma Yuen, NARS Enhancement Coordinator