

## **FACT SHEET: Hilo Forest Watershed Acquisition**



The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) purchased 1335.98 acres in the District of Hilo, Island of Hawai'i, for addition to the Hilo Forest Reserve, in order to manage and protect native forest, wildlife habitat, and watershed resources on the land.

### **Funding and partners:**

The Legacy Land Conservation Program provided \$380,000 for the purchase and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided \$870,000 through its federal Recovery Land Acquisition Program.

### **Public benefits:**

Under Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 173A-2.6, the Legacy Land Conservation program is mandated to prioritize the protection of land having exceptional value due to the presence of habitats for threatened or endangered species of flora or fauna, as well as land that is in imminent danger of being modified, changed, or used in a manner to diminish its value.

The acquired parcel is habitat for federally-listed threatened and endangered species, such as the Hawaiian Hoary Bat (opae'ape'a), the 'apapane, and the 'i'iwi. The acquisition of this land for inclusion into State Forest Reserve protects contiguous habitat and travel corridors, improving the chances of survival for these species.

Forest habitat for endangered species requires active management against threats from invasive species. Prior to this acquisition, neighboring parcels in the area were converted to non-forest uses, which often speeds the introduction of alien pest species into neighboring parcels. The classification of the land as Forest Reserve allows the State to provide the active management necessary to prevent the spread of invasive species that threaten native plants and animals.

