

**FACT SHEET: Hamakua Hillside Acquisition**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), used Legacy Land funds to purchase 67 acres in Hamakua, Kailua, Island of O‘ahu, for the protection of natural habitat, watershed, and scenic open space.

**Funding and partners:**

The State of Hawai‘i Legacy Land Conservation Program granted \$450,000, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided \$720,000 through the federal Recovery Land Acquisition Program, and the landowner donated a reduction in price from the appraised fair market value of the property.

**Public benefits:**

Under Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 173A-2.6, the Legacy Land Conservation Program is mandated to prioritize the protection of lands having exceptional value due to the presence of unique aesthetic resources, as well as lands having exceptional value due to the presence of habitats for threatened or endangered species of flora, fauna, or aquatic resources.

The hillside (“Pu‘u o Ehu”) is the mauka watershed for the Hamakua Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary. The watershed quality of this slope strongly affects the quality of Kawainui Stream and the health of wildlife habitat in the Sanctuary, which provides habitat for endangered waterbirds like the Koloa Maoli (Hawaiian Duck), ‘Alae ‘Ula (Hawaiian Moorhen), and Ae‘o (Hawaiian Stilt). The hillside is also one of the last green spaces in the urban town of Kailua and is a popular spot for wildlife viewing and educational activities.

DOFAW is integrating the hillside lands into the management of the adjacent Wildlife Sanctuary and nearby Kawainui Marsh. As part of the acquisition, DOFAW is removing grazing livestock from sensitive watershed areas. Native forest and shrubland will replace the existing pasture and introduced scrub vegetation, allowing for recovery of threatened and endangered coastal plants.



*photo credit: Katherine Doyle*

DOFAW plans to manage the property for watershed protection, hiking trail access, wetlands and native forest restoration, and cultural and natural education activities.