

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

April, 6, 2016

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

NARS Commission Members:

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A PERMIT TO SAN DIEGO ZOO TO REINTRODCE
'ALALĀ (*CORVUS HAWAIIANEIS*) INTO THE KŪLANI SECTION OF
PU'U MAKA'ALA NATURAL AREA RESERVE, ISLAND OF
HAWAI'I.

This submittal requests the Natural Area Reserves System Commission (NARSC) approve and recommend to the Board that it grant this permit.

Background and Discussion:

The attached Special Use Permit application was withdrawn from the December 14, 2015 NARSC meeting agenda, to be rescheduled for the April 6, 2015 meeting. The 'alalā, once a common sight and sound in the forests of the island of Hawai`i, was one of the first birds added to the Endangered Species List from Hawai`i, as its numbers dramatically declined due to a variety of reasons from habitat alteration to disease, to predation, and it was declared extirpated from the wild in 2000.

Various attempts have been made to bring this raven- sized bird back from the brink, and the San Diego Zoo, working as a Cooperator with the State and other partners, has built up a captive flock from with the ultimate goal of re-introducing them back into the wild.

After careful consideration of numerous localities, it was determined that the Kūlani Section of Pu'u Maka'ala Natural Area Reserve (NAR) was the best site due to ongoing management of habitat and predator control. The birds will be released in small numbers over time. This action has been long anticipated by the Forest Bird Recovery team, as well as other groups and individuals. Their calls were varied and quite noisy in the wild (according to Pukui, 'alalā means to caw or make noise). Fortunately, their wild vocalizations were tape recorded and it is hoped that the young will pick up and re-learn these sounds. Although Hawai`i has lost so many of its

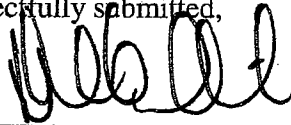
Item 4.a.

birds, there is a chance here to restore this unique bird and bring its sights, sounds, and connections back to the wild. The proposed actions have the support of DOFAW staff as well as other agencies and organizations.

Recommendation:

That the NARS Commission approve and recommend, to the Board of Land and Natural Resources, approval for a Special use Permit for the proposed reintroduction of 'alalā (*Corvus hawaiiensis*) into Kūlani Section of Pu'u Maka'ala Natural Area Reserve, island of Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID G. SMITH, Administrator
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

Attachment: Application form