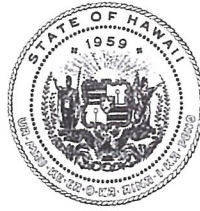


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 325  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA  
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAIHOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

March 1, 2017

Aloha Partners,

Hawai'i's forests protect our most precious resource in the islands – fresh water. These forests while providing aesthetic and scenic value and economic opportunities, also provide habitat for native plant and animal species, cultural resources, and forest products that help diversify our economy. Nearly half of Hawai'i's total land area is covered with forests and around 66% of this is privately managed. As you might be aware of or perhaps experiencing, these private forest lands are in threat of conversion to non-forest uses by forces such as urban encroachment, infrastructure development, and subdivision of large agricultural properties into smaller "gentleman estates".

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP), a federal program in partnership with states, protects environmentally and culturally important forestlands from conversion to non-forest use through acquisition of fee land or conservation easements. FLP is an important tool for private forest management that can support the protection of these forests in perpetuity.

The FLP Assessment of Needs (AON) is a state document that uses the program's federal guidelines to guide implementation of the FLP at the state level by identifying key areas of existing forestlands, significant natural resources, and land use trends and threats. The Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) first drafted the AON document in 1994 and last updated it in 2004. This 2004 version can be downloaded from the DOFAW website for review [http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/files/2013/09/Forest-Legacy\\_Assessment-of-Needs.pdf](http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/files/2013/09/Forest-Legacy_Assessment-of-Needs.pdf) The Division with the support of the Hawai'i Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee and the U.S. Forest Service has determined that the Hawai'i FLP AON is due for another update and further refinement based on the current conditions, needs, and threats to Hawai'i's forests.

The revised AON can only be as useful as the accuracy of information used to update it. Therefore, in addition to available documented information, we seek your firsthand observations and experiences relative to recent trends, threats, and challenges in the management of private forest lands in Hawai'i. In particular, we seek your responses to the following questions:

Item 6.

- 1) Describe the top three issues that threaten a private landowner's ability and willingness to continue to maintain forest cover on their land in Hawai'i. Feel free to narrate your personal experience or discuss the challenges in general in your region/island.
- 2) Discuss the forest land conversion trends in your region/island. For example, are forest lands being converted to pasture, coffee production, macadamia nut farming, or recreational use such as zip lines?
- 3) In protecting working forests as economic assets for the state, what recreational activities (e.g. hunting, horseback riding, hiking, off-road-vehicle use, etc.) do you think would be compatible to maintaining forest cover and also allowing for future forest recovery efforts in your region/island?
- 4) The 2004 AON identifies six (South Kona, Kohala, Olokele Valley, Auwahi-Kanaio, Kaunakakai Gulch, Kawela-Kamalo) areas of emphasis which are given priority under the state's FLP. Based on current conditions and the importance of resources or the conversion threats faced by private forest lands; are there specific areas in your region/island that you think the FLP should identify as priority areas in the 2017 update?

Please help us protect Hawai'i's forests from conversion to non-forest uses and update the FLP AON's document such that it addresses the current trends and threats to Hawai'i's forests. **Please respond to the questions above via email by March 15, 2017 to [Irene.M.Sprecher@hawaii.gov](mailto:Irene.M.Sprecher@hawaii.gov)**. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Irene Sprecher at the email above or at 587-4167.

Best Regards,



Irene Sprecher  
Forestry Program Manager  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife  
State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural  
Resources