

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

March 31, 2017

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

Commissioners:

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO APPROVE THE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE OR RESTRICT PUBLIC USE IN NATURAL AREA RESERVES FOR PERIODS OF UP TO TWO MONTHS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL, GEOLOGICAL, OR CULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE AREA OR THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF PERSONS OR PROPERTY, TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION

Occasionally, the Division needs to temporarily close areas for hazards such as fires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters, or management needs such as animal removal. In practice, these temporary closures have lasted a few days each or less, and often are unforeseeable. However, closures in the Natural Area Reserves System (NARS) require approval of the NARS Commission and the Board of Land and Natural Resources under § 13-209-4.5, Hawaii Administrative Rules. It is impractical to convene both a NARS Commission meeting and receive Board approval for an action in a time period of less than two months.

While the current NARS rules require a more involved consultation process, that must be balanced with the need for natural resource managers to act quickly to ensure public safety or respond immediately to management needs. This delegation of authority to close areas or restrict public use in areas for periods of up to two months represents the minimum amount of time the Division needs to deal with these situations immediately while going through the existing consultation process if a more extended period is needed.

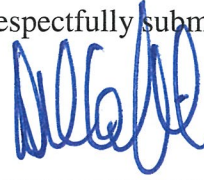
RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission approve the delegation of authority to temporarily close or restrict public use in Natural Area Reserves for periods of up to two months for the protection of the natural, geological, or cultural resources of the area or the safety and welfare of persons or property, to

Item 4.C.

the Administrator of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Respectfully submitted,



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David G. Smith, Administrator  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife