

BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

STATE OF HAWAII

In the Matter of:) CASE NO. BLNR-CC-1602
A Contested Case Hearing Re Conservation)
District Use Permit (CDUP) HA-3568 for the) DECLARATION OF ANDRE L. PEREZ;
Thirty Meter Telescope at the Mauna Kea) EXHIBIT “ _ ”
Science Reserve, Ka‘ohe, Hāmākua District,)
Island of Hawai‘i, TMK (3) 4-4-015:009)
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DECLARATION OF ANDRE PEREZ

I, ANDRE PEREZ, hereby declare based upon personal knowledge of the facts stated herein.

1. I am kanaka maoli and am a practitioner and scholar of Hawaiian culture and religion.
2. My Curriculum Vitae is attached as Exhibit “1”.
3. From 1998 until 2005 I worked on the island of Kaho‘olawe as a field team coordinator where I assisted the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Council (KIRC)’s restoration manager in implementing the island’s environmental restoration plan which incorporated Hawaiian cultural healing approaches to restoration. There I worked and studied Hawaiian cultural practices and religion with several practitioners I consider my mentors including Auntie Pualani Kanahale, Professor Samuel Kaleikoa Ka‘eo, Kumu Hula Hokulani Holt Padilla, and Kalei Nu‘uhiwa.
4. On the island I worked with archaeologists and served as a cultural monitor for various restoration projects. In that capacity, I learned the duties and responsibilities of cultural monitors as well as the challenge of restoring heavily impacted cultural sites.

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5. In 2005 I returned to O‘ahu to pursue my degree in Hawaiian Studies and completed my Bachelor of Arts in Hawaiian Studies in Spring 2012. That fall, I entered the master’s degree program in Hawaiian Studies with a focus on ____.

6. I served as a teaching assistant for Hawaiian Studies 107 between Spring of 2013 and Spring 2016. The last year as a teaching assistant, I taught my own section of Hawaiian Studies 107. I currently work at Leeward Community College as a coordinator for Native Hawaiian Student Services as I work to finish my master’s degree focused on Hawaiian religion and in particular traditional Hawaiian carving of ki‘i akua (god images).

7. One of my sons is a direct descendant of Umi a Līloa who once called on his people to protect and defend Mauna Kea from desecration by his enemies.

8. Based on my own cultural beliefs and as my kuleana as a father, when I heard about the construction planned for the summit of Mauna Kea in April 2015, I visited the summit to see the site planned for the building of the Thirty-Meter Telescope and also participated in ceremony and pule at that site.

9. I reviewed Appendix D to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Thirty Meter Telescope Project dated May 8, 2010, which is the Cultural Impact Assessment Report.

10. Based on my experience in environmental restoration of culturally sensitive areas and my cultural and religious beliefs and understanding, the TMT project will have irreversible impacts on one of the most important sacred sites to Hawaiians.

11. The construction and excavation of a new area on the summit for the TMT project, from a religious standpoint is a desecration that could not ever be fully remedied or mitigated. Even if the physical building is removed, the excavated area cannot be restored to its prior state

and the ongoing affront to our religious beliefs as Hawaiians will continue throughout the lifetime of the telescope itself.

12. Future decommissioning also does not remedy or mitigate the impact of the project to the site itself. The impact is the project and there is no guarantee that future decommissioning and removal will ever occur or that there will be funds available to do so as we experienced on Kaho‘olawe.

13. The excavation of a new site on Mauna Kea for the TMT project would not result in a mere incremental impact to the mauna or to myself and other Hawaiian practitioners merely because there are other telescopes near the area. That the mauna was not properly cared for in the past does not lessen or reduce the impact of allowing further desecration today.

14. In my understanding and beliefs of Hawaiian religion, desecration cannot be mitigated. Once it occurs it is done. We can do our best to heal from the desecration through ceremony, pule, and other actions, but the desecration cannot be undone.

15. In my experience in restoration and Hawaiian religious practice, the physical structures, burials, pōhaku, or other physical symbols in a sacred or important place are not the site itself. The ‘āina and wahi that they are found in are what is sacred. In other words, it is not the heiau or ahu that creates a sacred place. Those physical objects are placed there because the place itself is sacred. Similarly, for Mauna Kea, it is not the upright Pōhaku or iwi kūpuna found there that are isolated sacred items, features, or structures. Our mo‘ōlelo refer to the mauna itself as sacred and in Hawaiian religion, the height and where people or things stand in relation to each other is a significant element that led to specific kapu or laws that governed behavior and placement of people as well as objects. As the tallest mountain in Hawaii, Mauna Kea physically

represents the most sacred place and commands the greatest respect. For the mauna itself, for the same reasons, the summit represents the most sacred place.

16. To allow the construction of the TMT project which would be one of the largest telescopes in the world on the summit of such an important site without our consent as a people and in direct contravention of the wishes of our cultural and religious practitioners and lāhui is a direct assault to us as a people.

17. In my view and based on my education in Hawaiian studies and religion both in school and in training with my mentors as well as my experience as a religious practitioner, there can be no Hawaiian cultural or religious view that accepts the TMT project as appropriate or anything other than an absolute desecration.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawaii, October 27, 2016.

ANDRE PEREZ

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STATE OF HAWAII

Contested Case Hearing Rd Conservation
District Use Application (CDUA) HA-3568 for the Thirty
Meter Telescope at the Mauna Kea Science Reserve,
Ka'ohe Mauka, Hāmākua, Hawai'i, TMK (3) 4-4-015:009

BLNR Contested Case HA-16-02
Document Title:

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that the above referenced document was served upon the following parties by the means indicated on 8 Kekemapa 2016:

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