

Date: October 17, 2025

Subject: Status updates from the Royal Sonesta Kaua‘i Resort and 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay, participants of the Kaua‘i Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan in preparation for the Friday, October 24, 2025, ESRC meeting.

Background: The Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC) provided both general recommendations and site-specific recommendations to each participant of the Kaua‘i Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan (KSHCP) during the April 10, and 24, 2025, KSHCP annual review meeting. The ESRC requested three licensees—Royal Sonesta Kaua‘i Resort, 1 Hotel Hanalei, and the County of Kaua‘i—provide updates on these recommendations before the 2025 fledgling season. Responses to the ESRC’s general and site-specific recommendations from Royal Sonesta Kaua‘i Resort and 1 Hotel Hanalei are provided below. The County of Kaua‘i did not provide a response.

Royal Sonesta Kaua‘i Resort

ESRC General Recommendations

1. Include information on property size and search area in reporting

Of the 26 acres within the property boundary, 4 acres are unsafe to search.

2. Provide the percentage of staff who received training

All staff receive seabird and honu awareness training. Security and search staff receive seabird response training. Training rosters and a data summary will be provided with the annual report.

3. Address lighting issues to reduce seabird fallout.

- The lightbulbs have been changed out around the pool and all spotlights are now aimed straight down.
- All windows in Ha‘upu tower have been tinted.
- During fledgling season, overhead lights and table lamps are turned off at all elevator landings.
- The garden uplights are turned off during seabird season.
- The garden lights have been changed to bulbs that are 950 lumens.
- All lights are now set to a maximum of 2700K color temperature.
- The maximum luminance output for all lights has been changed from 3,000 lumens to 1,500 lumens.
- Duke’s walkway floodlights are turned off, overhead lights are aimed down, and the color temperature has been changed from 6500K (bright white) to 2700K (warm white).

- Duke's sign lights turned from uplights to downlights.
- Recess lighting at the entrance to Wai'ale'ale tower gets deactivated in season.
- The light at the service entrance behind the Royal Lanai is needed for human safety, as is the light at the emergency exit on the back side of Kahili Tower.
- Photos of lighting adjustments will be provided in the 2025 annual report.

4. Predator Control Reports

- a. Provide catch per trap night results over the term of the permit for each site.
- b. Show predator detection data in relation to trapping numbers

Data and summaries will be provided in the 2025 annual report. The predator control contractor is tracking catch rates and searchers are recording predator observations.

5. Recommend all participants demonstrate through 3rd party searcher efficiency trials that discovery rates are meeting or exceeding the discovery rates stated in their participant inclusion plan (PIP) and incidental take license (ITL) to stay in compliance with HCP / ITL. Review and follow standard operating procedures given by agencies.

- c. 3rd party searcher efficiency trials should take place in the 2025-2026 season for participants whose actual discovery rates were below the discovery rate stated in their PIP within the last 5 years.
- d. Licensees who are not currently meeting their discovery rate [1 Hotel Hanalei, Royal Sonesta, and County of Kaua'i] must demonstrate steps that they have taken before August 1, 2025 (i.e. before next fall out season). ESRC to meet with these licensees by August 1st.

An in-house decoy program is being implemented to assess searcher efficiency throughout the property. The protocol was submitted to the agencies for their input. KESRP is welcome to conduct additional trials this season to assess team improvement.

ESRC Recommendations for Royal Sonesta Kaua'i Resort

1. Increase number of predator traps at the site

The number of traps has been increased from 3 to 6 traps. The number of traps that can be deployed on the property is constrained by the need to keep the trapping locations discrete to minimize the probability that the traps will be vandalized or that cats will be released by members of the public.

2. Implement staff or guest incentives for finding birds

Sonesta is providing an incentive of \$20 for information leading to the recovery of a downed bird.

3. Have a plan for staff turnover and staff training and ensure there is always an adequate number of staff members to conduct seabird searches

- a. Consider using a contractor to fill gaps with staffing

Sonesta provides basic awareness training to all staff and detailed seabird recovery training to all security staff. Each shift manager received additional training on data collection. In addition to security staff, Resort Manager Hannah Taito is trained to supervise the program. Sonesta is committed to hiring 2 seasonal staff to supplement the security team in conducting searches during the fledgling season.

4. Encourage the use of detector dogs for finding downed birds for a property of this size and complexity

Sonesta is open to having detector dogs support the human search team during peak fledgling season. Sonesta requests assistance from the agencies in developing a protocol for using dogs to assist in finding downed birds.

5. Continue to pursue additional adaptive management measures to get to the assigned discovery rate of 50%

We have revised training materials, increased the number of in-person training sessions provided to the team and are hiring dedicated searchers to expand the team during the fledgling season.

6. Consider repeat searcher efficiency trials if rate is below the rate assigned in the PIP

Sonesta is open to repeating trials if the in-house decoy program is not acceptable. Should we be reaching out to KESRP directly to arrange for the trials?

1 Hotel Hanalei

ESRC General Recommendations

1. Include information on property size and search area in reporting

The entire property consists of 23.44 acres, of which 14 acres are resort area (i.e., landscaped) and 11 acres are safe to search.

2. Provide the percentage of staff who received training

All staff receive seabird and honu awareness training. Security and search staff receive seabird response training. Training rosters and a data summary will be provided with the annual report.

3. Address lighting issues to reduce seabird fallout.

Completed

- The Welcome Hale lights are angled straight down.

- The spotlights on top of the pizza ovens were replaced with down-angled track lighting.
- The beach access path has new amber fixtures (24” tall mushroom lights) for human safety.
- The skylight on the 7th floor roof is now tinted

For 2025

- Shields have been added to the parking lot lights extending down 16” to reduce the glare from the lamps while focusing adequate lighting in the parking lot.
- The 2nd floor emergency stairway light is shielded to direct the light down, rather than out of the stairwell.
- Welina blinds are lowered partway while the bar is serving guests and lowered entirely during cleaning.
- If left on at night, the Beach Hale lights are down directed and amber.
- Photos of lighting adjustments will be provided in the 2025 annual report.

4. Predator Survey Reports

- a. Demonstrate catch nights over time (show catch per trap night at each site over term of permit)
- b. Show predator detections in relation to trapping numbers

Data and summaries will be provided in the 2025 annual report. The predator control contractor is tracking catch rates and searchers are recording predator observations.

5. Recommend all participants demonstrate through 3rd party searcher efficiency trials that discovery rates are meeting or exceeding the discovery rates outlined in their PIP / ITL to stay in compliance with HCP / ITL (review and follow standard operating procedures given by agencies)

- a. 3rd party searcher efficiency trials should take place in the 2025-2026 season for participants whose actual discovery rates were below their licensed discovery rate in the last 5 years.
- b. Licensees who are not currently meeting their discovery rate must demonstrate steps that they have taken before August 1st (before next fall out season); ESRC to meet with these licensees by August 1st

An in-house decoy program is being implemented to assess searcher efficiency throughout the property. The protocol was submitted to the agencies for their input. Additionally, 1 Hotel is submitting a permit amendment request with a 50% discovery rate that is supported by the most recent (2024) KESRP decoy trials.

ESRC Recommendations for 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay

1. Calculate multiple average take rates for
 - a. 3 years of construction
 - b. 2 years of operation, and
 - c. 5-year rolling agency average

The licensee will report on this at the next annual review.

2. Predator Control

- a. Consult with another trapping contractor
- b. Increase number of traps and predator trapping efficacy on property (focus traps on hot spots of ingress)
- c. Encourage outreach to Pu‘u Poa to prevent residents from letting cats outdoors

Quotes were requested from several contractors. A contractor was selected and they are doubling the number of traps that were deployed in 2025, focusing on the parking area in the northeastern corner of the property and the southeastern corner where trails enter the property from Hanalei Bay Resort and private property. The number of traps that can be deployed is constrained by the need to keep the trapping locations discrete to minimize the probability that the traps will be vandalized or that cats will be released by members of the public.

3. Train up more staff members in seabird awareness and response training

All staff receive seabird and honu awareness training as part of their weekly team meetings. This training provides information on seabird life history and light attraction and guidance on who to call at the resort if any staff find a bird. Training also includes identification of honu and honu tracks. Security and search staff receive seabird response training that includes information on seabird life history, search methods, protocols for recovering live and dead birds, and data collection and management. Security staff is also trained to conduct honu searches on the beaches and on who to contact (USFWS and NOAA) if they find signs of honu activity. Training rosters and summaries will be provided with the annual report.

4. Amend current 90% discovery rate and increase number of take for ITL/ ITP (quickly address this)

We are revising the Participant Inclusion Plan, which is required as part of the permit amendment request. The revised PIP uses 50% as the discovery rate for calculating take. The amendment request is complicated because the increase in take will exceed the mitigation available at the current site. Further consultation is needed with state and federal agencies to confirm the take calculations and discuss additional mitigation options.

5. Replace screens at inside dining area to reduce lighting in direct flyways.

Existing screens are fully functional and will be used throughout the fledgling season to reduce light spill from Welina Terrace. As mentioned in the list of lighting adjustments, the screens will be pulled down partially during operating hours and fully during after-hours cleaning.

6. Create an overlay of lighting versus where birds are found downed.

The engineering team is acquiring the outdoor lighting schematics and specs from the lighting designers. We will include those schematics in the revised PIP and the annual report. The comparison of downed birds with lighting locations will be included in the presentation to the ESRC in April 2026.