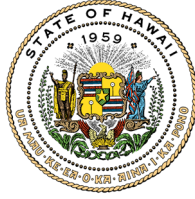


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April 27, 2026

Endangered Species Recovery Committee
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i

SUBJECT: Division of Forestry and Wildlife Evaluation of the Kamehameha Schools
Keauhou and Kīlauea Forest Lands Safe Harbor Agreement Implementation for
Fiscal Year 2025 and Request for ESRC Review of Participant's Annual
Reports

Dear Committee Members:

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), requests that the Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC) review the annual report for the Kamehameha Schools (KS) Keauhou and Kīlauea Forest Lands Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) on Hawai'i (ITL-20). The annual report was prepared by Nāmaka Whitehead on behalf of the Trustees of the Estate of Bernice P. Bishop, doing business as Kamehameha Schools. This submittal provides a summary of the annual report, along with DOFAW's evaluation, in accordance with Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) §195D-25.

BACKGROUND

- Licensee: Trustees of the Estate of Bernice P. Bishop, DBA Kamehameha Schools
- Project: Restoration and enhancement of habitat for native plants and animals
- ITL Term: June 22, 2018 – June 21, 2068
- Take Authorization: A suite of listed forest birds, plants, and other species, based on established baseline conditions across the enrolled property.

SUMMARY OF FY2025 IMPLEMENTATION

Habitat Restoration and Silviculture

- KS outplanted 14,808 individuals during the reporting period (including 6,512 koa), bringing the total to 101,459 plants representing 51 native species over the first seven years of the agreement.
- Restoration efforts were focused outside Forest Bird Stratum 1—primarily in lower elevation areas.
- A total of 572 volunteers participated in planting efforts, including 33 educational group events.
- An additional 112 acres of koa were established in FY2025 (660 acres total to date).
- Stand improvement activities included competition control (130 acres) and pruning (115 acres).

Fencing and Ungulate Control

- Approximately 48 miles of fencing were inspected regularly (2-4 times annually; monthly in high-risk areas).
- 37 pigs were removed from the Lower Ranch unit; ungulate presence remains low across most of the property.

Weed Management and Infrastructure Maintenance

- Weed control was conducted across 2,126 acres, including priority invasive species.
- KS maintained water systems, roads (31 miles total), and firebreak infrastructure.

Forest Bird Monitoring

- Surveys covered 237 stations across 9 transects, including new and expanded transects.
- All four covered forest bird species were detected, along with 'io and nēnē.
- Notably, detections outside Forest Bird Stratum 1 suggest expanded or previously unrecognized habitat.

Nēnē (Hawaiian Goose) Monitoring

- Monthly surveys documented up to five breeding pairs, though no nests or juveniles were observed.
- GPS tracking indicates use of shrubland and kīpuka habitats, as well as movement between properties.

'Ōpe'ape'a (Hawaiian Hoary Bat) Monitoring

- Acoustic monitoring confirmed bat presence at all survey sites across all sampling periods.

Plant Surveys and Conservation

- Surveys indicate declining trends for several covered plant species, with two species no longer detected on the property.
- New populations and previously undocumented species were identified, including endangered and rare taxa.
- Ex situ conservation efforts for *Vicia menziesii* were impacted by pest outbreaks, reducing representation of founders.

AMENDMENTS

KS continues to work with the agencies on an amendment to the SHA/HCP that would:

- Revise baseline conditions for covered plant species to account for early outplant mortality; and
- Add nine additional plant species (both present and potential) as covered species.

Surveys supporting the amendment are ongoing and expected to be completed in FY2026.

STATUS OF PRIOR ESRC RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressed in FY2025:

- Terminology revised to replace “passive restoration” with “proactive restoration” or “facilitated regeneration.”
- KS invited to participate in statewide wetland coordination efforts.

Outstanding:

- Forest bird disease sampling
- Collaboration on mosquito monitoring, control, and research

KS has indicated willingness to support these efforts where feasible.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The proposed amendment to revise baseline conditions and add additional covered plant species remains under development. Timely submittal of this amendment is important to ensure continued alignment between conservation outcomes and permit conditions.

AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS

DOFAW recommends:

1. Kamehameha Schools submit a draft amendment addressing baseline revisions and additional covered species as soon as practicable; and
2. DOFAW continues to work with KS to facilitate the timely review and approval of the amendment.

DOFAW plans to conduct a site visit in May 2026 to further evaluate implementation and inform ongoing coordination.

If you have any questions, please contact Jesse Adams, Habitat Conservation Planning Associate, at jesse.w.adams.researcher@hawaii.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID G. SMITH
Administrator