

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

July 8, 2016

Chairperson and Members
Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Land Board Members:

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE
DRAFT KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS SAFE HARBOR AGREEMENT,
KEAUHOU, KA'Ū, HAWAI'I ISLAND**

SUMMARY:

The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife has prepared a draft Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Kamehameha Schools (KS) for KS lands at Keauhou (the proposed "Enrolled Property"). A SHA is a voluntary agreement between parties that is intended to promote recovery of endangered species. The SHA, once approved, will result in issuance of an Incidental Take License from the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) for incidental take of endangered plants and animals associated with the SHA activities.

BACKGROUND:

The draft SHA proposes a 50 year term for an Enrolled Property of 32,207 acres in the Keauhou, Ka'ū area on Hawai'i Island. The SHA covers 8 wildlife and 25 plant species (the "Covered Species"). Baseline is a key concept for an SHA and is defined in the SHA as a quantified habitat area (in acres) or a specific number of listed individuals present on the Enrolled Property, depending on the species. The baseline value(s) reflect how much habitat or how many individuals of a species are present at the start of the SHA. SHA conservation measures are intended to increase the baseline. Although unlikely, the enrolled property can be returned to baseline upon termination of the agreement.

The SHA specifies the types of activities that would occur and that could result in incidental take. These include: removal of predators, restoration outplanting, koa silviculture, fence and ungulate control, weed control, fire threat management, and response to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death.

A net conservation benefit is required and would result from this SHA. Net benefits that would result include: reduction of habitat fragmentation by connecting a network of protected areas, prevention of further habitat degradation and predation from invasive species, restoration/enhancement of habitat for multiple covered species, potential for expanded ranges and populations of covered species, increased genetic diversity, and additional seed sources.

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to HRS §195D-4, a public hearing on the affected island in conjunction with a comment period of no less than 60 days is required prior to the Board review and approval of the draft SHA.

CHAPTER 343 – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

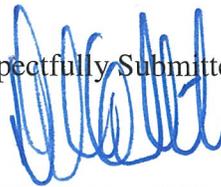
This action before the Board requests approval to conduct a public hearing and does not constitute a use of State lands or funds, and therefore, this action is exempt from the provisions of HRS Chapter 343 relating to environmental impact statements.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Grant permission to conduct a public hearing on the island of Hawai‘i for the Draft Kamehameha Schools Safe Harbor Agreement, Keauhou, Ka‘ū, Hawai‘i Island
2. Authorize the Chairperson to set the dates and times for the public hearing and;
3. Authorize the Chairperson to appoint a hearing master for the public hearing.

Respectfully Submitted,



David G. Smith, Administrator
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



Suzanne Case, Chairperson