

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

September 23, 2016

Chairperson and Members  
Board of Land and Natural Resources  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Land Board Members:

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO SIGN, EXECUTE, AMEND, AND EXTEND AGREEMENT(S), CONTRACT(S), AND OTHER DOCUMENT(S) FOR THE OPERATING GRANT-IN-AID TO HAWAII WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION TO SUPPORT WILDFIRE RELATED OUTREACH AND EDUCATION AND HAZARDOUS VEGETATION REDUCTION PLANNING STATEWIDE**

**AND**

**REQUEST APPROVAL OF DECLARATION OF EXEMPTION TO CHAPTER 343, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROJECT**

**BACKGROUND:**

During the Regular Session of 2016, the Twenty-eighth Legislature authorized funds to Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization (HWMO) to coordinate wildfire related outreach and education and a public awareness campaign and map and prioritize hazardous vegetation reduction measures in high-risk fire-prone communities and sensitive natural resource areas statewide. Funds of \$158,000 were appropriated by Act 124, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, for an operating grant-in-aid (GIA) pursuant to Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

Founded in 2002 by a diverse group of stakeholders concerned about the lack of wildfire preparedness and prevention in the face of increasing frequency and severity of wildfires, HWMO works with relevant collaborators on each island to lead and coordinate multi-partner wildfire planning, mitigation, and education projects. Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization is dedicated to protecting communities and natural resources across the State of Hawaii from the impacts of wildfire. The organization's founders and stakeholders include representatives of county and state agencies, fire fighters, scientists, ranchers, natural resource managers, community leaders, planners, and cultural practitioners, who came together to address

the growing wildfire problem in a way that was not achievable through one agency or entity alone.

Each fire suppression agency in Hawaii and other entities currently present fire prevention materials and messaging with varying degrees of emphasis on wildland fire and collaboration and with varying frequency. Furthermore, fuelbreak mapping and vegetation reduction efforts are currently disconnected across jurisdictions and land ownership boundaries on all islands in Hawaii.

In order to address these concerns, funds will be used to:

- 1) Outreach & Education:  
Create all-agency unified wildfire prevention messaging, related materials, and a public awareness campaign to maximize public protection and preparedness; and
- 2) Hazardous Vegetation Management Mapping and Prioritization Plan:  
Develop cross-boundary vegetation management priorities, maps, and projects for all four counties in Hawaii.

**REMARKS:**

This project qualifies as a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F, HRS. As the expending agency, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife must develop the contractual documents and specifications necessary to implement the operating GIA.

**CHAPTER 343, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:**

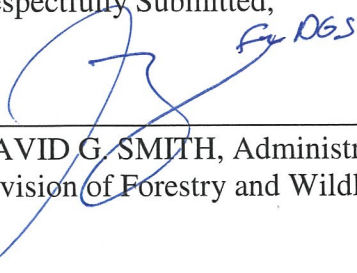
In accordance with the requirements of Chapter 343, HRS, and Section 11-200-8, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), and the Exemption List for the Department of Land and Natural Resources as approved by the Environmental Council on June 5, 2015, the subject project is exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment pursuant to the exemption classes listed in Attachment 1.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board of Land and Natural Resources:

- 1) Delegate authority to the Chairperson to sign, execute, amend, and extend agreement(s), contract(s), and other document(s) for this operating GIA to HWMO subject to the release of funds, availability of funds, and approval by the Department of the Attorney General; and
- 2) Declare, after considering the potential effects of the proposed project as provided by Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200, HAR, that this project will likely have minimal or no significant effect on the environment and is therefore exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment.

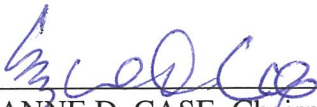
Respectfully Submitted,

 For DGS

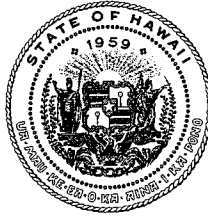
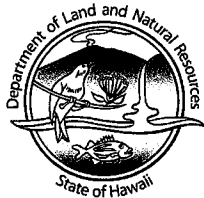
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DAVID G. SMITH, Administrator  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:

  
SUZANNE D. CASE, Chairperson  
Board of Land and Natural Resources

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA  
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**DECLARATION OF EXEMPTION**

from the preparation of an environmental assessment under the authority of Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and Chapter 11-200, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR)

**Project Title:** Operating Grant-in-aid (GIA) to Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization to Support Wildfire Related Outreach and Education and Hazardous Vegetation Reduction Planning Statewide

**Project Description:** During the Regular Session of 2016, the Twenty-eighth Legislature authorized funds to Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization (HWMO) to coordinate wildfire related outreach and education and a public awareness campaign and map and prioritize hazardous vegetation reduction measures in high-risk fire-prone communities and sensitive natural resource areas statewide. Funds of \$158,000 were appropriated by Act 124, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, for an operating GIA pursuant to Chapter 42F, HRS.

Funds will be used for:

- 1) Outreach & Education: Create all-agency unified wildfire prevention messaging, related materials, and a public awareness campaign to maximize public protection and preparedness

Each fire suppression agency in Hawaii and other entities currently present fire prevention materials and messaging with varying degrees of emphasis on wildland fire and collaboration and with varying frequency. This education and outreach objective will incorporate the newest and most relevant information about the widespread impacts of fire in Hawaii and strategies to protect homes, communities, and natural resources. The project will also bring together each agency's existing outreach materials and strategies to create a more current and effective outreach effort. Having consistent messaging and materials and a collaborative outreach plan will raise awareness that wildfires in Hawaii critically affect all people and lands in various ways and that wildfires and their damage are preventable. Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization will work with partners across the State to develop a coordinated outreach plan and public awareness campaign to maximize reach and minimize duplication as everyone moves forward with the same collaboratively developed materials and message.

- 2) Hazardous Vegetation Management Mapping and Prioritization Plan: Develop cross-boundary vegetation management priorities, maps, and projects for all four counties in Hawaii

Fuelbreak mapping and vegetation reduction efforts are currently disconnected across jurisdictions and land ownership boundaries on all islands in Hawaii. This project will

facilitate the collaborative development of plans and maps per county that identify areas of high hazard and strategically delineate fuelbreaks to protect sensitive resources and at risk subdivisions. From this map and its associated priority projects plan, landowners and land managers can work together in a coordinated fashion to ensure that the highest priority areas are protected and addressed first. This type of collaborative process to delineate and prioritize the reduction and maintenance of hazardous vegetation will be instrumental in strategically protecting communities and natural resource areas from wildfire spread across land ownership boundaries and jurisdictions. Additionally, this map of pre-identified vegetation management priorities will allow partners across the State to leverage additional funds and labor toward these priority areas.

Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization shall provide:

1) Outreach & Education

- 4 public-at-large products, 4 youth-focused products, and 4 PSAs outreach materials developed and endorsed by all fire agencies
- Outreach materials developed and distributed to fire-prone community associations and schools on all islands
- 10 fire prevention and preparedness in-school activities and/or community workshops/events per county\*
- National Wildfire Preparedness Day Event held in each county\*

\*These activities, workshops, and events may include planting of native species and removing unwanted vegetation to mitigate wildfire hazards.

2) Hazardous Vegetation Management Mapping and Prioritization Plan

- 4 maps and associated priority lists developed by and distributed to fire and land managers that demonstrate vegetation management needs and priorities for maximum fire protection

**Consulted Parties:** A copy of the board submittal, including this attachment, in draft form was transmitted to the State Historic Preservation Division, Land Division, Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, and Division of State Parks of the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and county planning departments for review and comment.

- The Land Division as well as its Hawaii District, Kauai District, and Oahu District and Division of State Parks of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, County of Hawaii Planning Department, and City and County of Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting have no comments and/or have no objections.
- The Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands has no objections to this declaration of exemption, but requests to be consulted prior to any work being done in the Conservation District.
- The State Historic Preservation Division has no comments regarding this declaration of exemption, but requests the opportunity to review future permit applications for projects involving ground disturbances and/or with potential to affect possible surface archaeological or architectural historic properties.

- The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, County of Maui Planning Department, and County of Kauai Planning Department did not submit any comments.

**Exemption Class:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, Class 1: Operations, repairs or maintenance of existing structures, facilities, equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion or change of use beyond that previously existing.

**Exempt Item Number:** 33

**Exempt Item Description:** Maintenance of state lands and waters to remove weeds, brushes, grass and other unwanted vegetation.

**Exempt Item Number:** 34

**Exempt Item Description:** Routine pruning, trimming, thinning, and removal of trees, excluding commercial logging.

**Exemption Class:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, Class 4: Minor alteration in the conditions of land, water, or vegetation.

**Exempt Item Number:** 22

**Exempt Item Description:** Natural resource management actions that the Department declares are designed specifically to monitor, conserve, or enhance the status of native species or native species' habitats, such as removal of introduced vegetation, reintroduction of native species into their historic range, or construction of fencing. This exemption would not apply to biocontrol of invasive species or commercial logging.

**Exemption Class:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, Class 5: Basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

**Exempt Item Number:** 22

**Exempt Item Description:** Conduct planning and feasibility studies.

**Exemption Class:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, Class 10: Continuing administrative activities including, but not limited to, purchase of supplies and personnel-related actions.

**Exempt Item Number:** 1

**Exempt Item Description:** Purchase of supplies, equipment, materials, motor vehicles, boats, and services.

**Exempt Item Number:** 4

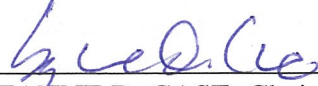
**Exempt Item Description:** Personnel-related actions.

**Exempt Item Number:** 5

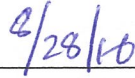
**Exempt Item Description:** Training, environmental interpretation, public safety efforts and other educational activities.

**Date of Agency Exemption List:** June 5, 2015

*I have considered the potential effects of the above listed project as provided by Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200, HAR. I declare that this project will probably have minimal or no significant effect on the environment and is therefore exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment under the above exemption classes.*



SUZANNE D. CASE, Chairperson  
Board of Land and Natural Resources



Date

Original: Agency file  
Copy: Project file