



March 4, 2019

Aloha Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Please accept this letter as an expression of support from the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (HILT) for the acquisition of lands in Kamehamehenui, Kula, Maui. Acquisition of this property would provide substantial benefits to both native ecosystems and to the people of Maui.

Having spent a substantial amount of time on this land, both in my youth, and more recently in my professional capacity as Chief Conservation Officer with HILT, I understand that creating a maunalei reserve, where native flora and fauna can once again thrive in the upper elevation cloud forest, will have tangible benefits for both native species, while contributing to the groundwater recharge so vital for the life of the land. I believe it is particularly important to note that the permanent protection of this land will ultimately provide a corridor that protected and endangered birds can use to maintain biological connections across a broad swathe of east Maui. An additional benefit that will come about is an increase in public access to this very special place. In our experience, enhancing public access is one of the most important ways to gain public support for the restoration of native ecosystems, and to foster a sense of aloha `aina.

In my discussions with the members of the staff at the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, I have sensed a high degree of enthusiasm for seeing this special place protected forever. I have always been extremely impressed with the passion and professionalism of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, but the potential to see a large swath of land restored. Their commitment to the health and integrity of the land is evident in my numerous encounters with them. Funding this grant request will help to protect the ecological integrity of Kamehamehenui ahupua`a, Kula moku, and the entire island of Maui. If you have any questions, or if I can provide any other information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mahalo

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Scott G. Fisher". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Scott Fisher, Ph.D.

Associate Executive Director of Conservation