

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

August 23, 2019

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

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE AUWAHI WIND ENERGY PROJECT ON  
THE ISLAND OF MAUI, HAWAI'I, TAX MAP KEY: 1-9-001:006.

APPLICANT:

Auwahi Wind Energy, LLC

LEGAL REFERENCE:

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Section 343-5 and Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) Section  
11-200-23.

LOCATION:

Wind Farm Site - (2)1-9-001:006 (por.)  
Generator-tie Line - (2)1-9-001:006 (por.), 2-1-009:001 (por.), 2-1-009:999  
(por.), 2-1-008:001 (por.)  
Pāpaka Road - (2)2-1-002:001 (por.), 2-1-002:002 (por.), 2-1-003-050 (por.),  
2-1-003-054 (por.), 2-1-003-999 (por.), 2-1-004:006 (por.), 2-1-004:049 (por.),  
2-1-004:106 (por.), 2-1-004:999 (por.), 2-1-005:023 (por.), 2-1-005:045 (por.),  
2-1-005:055 (por.), 2-1-005:077 (por.), 2-1-005:108 (por.), 2-1-004:071 (por.),  
2-1-004:017 (por.), 2-1-004:018 (por.), 2-1-005:030 (por.), 2-1-005:100 (por.),  
2-1-005:095 (por.), 2-1-005:057 (por.), 2-1-008:999 (por.), 2-1-004:016 (por.),  
2-1-008:131 (por.)

AREA:

Wind Farm Site (footprint of permanent facilities) - approximately 68 acres  
Generator-tie Line - approximately 9 miles long

## CHARACTER OF USE:

Wind farm operation.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

A Supplemental Environmental Impact State Preparation Notice was published in The Environmental Notice of the Office of Environmental Quality on December 8, 2017. Auwahi Wind published the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in The Environmental Notice on December 8, 2018. Public comments on the Draft SEIS were accepted during the 45-day comment period and the responses included in the Final SEIS.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

The Auwahi Wind Farm Project (Project) consists of eight 3-megawatt (MW) wind turbines augmented by an 11-MW battery storage system located on 'Ulupalakua Ranch, on the eastern side of the island of Maui. Auwahi Wind operates under a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Incidental Take License (ITL) which authorizes take of endangered species protected under Hawai'i Revised Statute HRS 195D. Auwahi Wind is pursuing a major amendment to the HCP as part of the request to increase the amount of incidental Hawaiian Hoary Bat take authorized under the ITL.

Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was accepted by the County of Maui Planning Commission in August 2011. The Project was constructed in 2012 and has been in operation since that time.

Post-construction mortality monitoring data indicate that the wind turbines are causing a greater number of endangered Hawaiian Hoary Bat fatalities than anticipated in the approved Habitat Conservation Plan and authorized under the Incidental Take License and is the reason Auwahi Wind is pursuing a major amendment to the HCP. Except for the need for a major amendment to the HCP and ITL to allow for additional bat take, there have been no substantive changes to the Project; the size, scope, intensity, type of use and location of the wind farm facilities are consistent with the description provided in the 2011 EIS. However, given the increase in intensity of impact due to the increased take of the Hawaiian hoary bat this supplemental EIS has been prepared.

The purpose of this SEIS is to disclose the increase in Project-related impacts to the Hawaiian hoary bat and the additional measures that will be implemented to avoid, minimize and mitigate those impacts, within the context of the HRS Chapter 343 requirements. It is based on the information presented in the HCP Amendment, which was published for public review in December 2018, pursuant to the requirements of HRS Chapter 195D, and was subsequently revised in response to the comments received. This Final SEIS also reflects comments received on the Draft SEIS. A separate but parallel HCP Amendment and environmental review process is being conducted in compliance with federal requirements, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act.

## PROPOSED ACTION:

To reduce impacts to the Hawaiian Hoary Bat, an increased nighttime low wind speed curtailment (LWSC) with a 6.9 m/s cut-in speed, from 30 minutes before sunset to 30 minutes after sunrise is being implemented, for the months of August to October, the months when most of the bat take has occurred over the past 10 years. Mitigation for the Hawaiian hoary bat incidental take under

newly added Tier 4 would consist of habitat restoration that includes planting hedgerows (at least 80 feet wide or 6 trees across) and two small 50,000-gallon ponds within 1,750 acres of degraded forest and open pasture, entering into a conservation easement for the mitigation parcels, along with bat and insect monitoring. The hedgerows are intended to serve as both shelter and habitat for insects as well as potential night roosts for bats while the ponds will serve as water sources for the bats and for fighting wildfires. The conservation easement will provide long-term protection of the hedgerows and prohibit insecticide use and stocking of the ponds to promote insect populations for many generations of bats. Mitigation for Tiers 5 and 6 is tentatively proposed as land restoration and management at the Kamehamehenui Forest at Kula, Maui. The mitigation actions there are intended to complement and build upon DLNR's planned conservation actions on that parcel.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

Five alternatives were briefly discussed but were not carried forward in the SEIS for detailed analysis. Reasons provided were lack of technical and/or fiscal feasibility.

#### FEIS ACCEPTABILITY EVALUATION:

Pursuant to HAR Section 11-200-23(b), a statement shall be deemed to be an acceptable document by the accepting authority or approving agency if all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- 1) The procedures for assessment, consultation process, review and the preparation and submission of the statement, have all been completed satisfactorily as specified in this chapter;
- 2) The content requirements described in this chapter have been satisfied; and
- 3) Comments submitted during the review process have received responses satisfactory to the accepting authority, or approving agency, and have been incorporated in the statement.


The Final SEIS contains the applicant's responses to public comments received, both in favor and in opposition to the project. The primary issues of concern were the effect on the Hawaiian Hoary Bat. The applicant will address take issues related to impacts to the bat through Board approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for issuance of an Incidental Take License as well as consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for issuance of a federal Incidental Take Permit (ITP).

The final SEIS for Auwahi Wind is available here:  
[http://oeqc2.doh.hawaii.gov/EA\\_EIS\\_Library/2019-08-08-MA-FSEIS-Auwahi-Wind-HCP-Amendment.pdf](http://oeqc2.doh.hawaii.gov/EA_EIS_Library/2019-08-08-MA-FSEIS-Auwahi-Wind-HCP-Amendment.pdf).

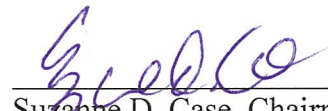
RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board accept the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Auwahi Wind Power Project located on Maui, Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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David G. Smith, Administrator  
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:

  
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Suzanne D. Case, Chairperson  
Board of Land and Natural Resources