

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting Division of Forestry and Wildlife Item C.5., Acquisition of Private Lands  
for Proposed Addition to Moloka'i Forest Reserve, Pua'ahala, Moloka'i  
Board of Land & Natural Resources, State of Hawai'i  
Friday, November 8, 2019

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 40,000 acres in 13 preserves and work in over 30 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs, waters and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnership with government, private parties and communities to protect forests and coral reefs for their ecological values and the many benefits they provide to people.*

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The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the East Moloka'i Watershed Partnership (EMoWP) support the acquisition of private lands for proposed addition to Moloka'i Forest Reserve and set aside to the Division of Forestry and Wildlife for Wildlife Sanctuary purposes in Pua'ahala, Moloka'i.

TNC's Moloka'i Program coordinates the EMoWP, which is currently building the 5.5 mile Pāku'i fence that includes native forests in the mauka sections of Pua'ahala. Considerable community outreach, done over the course of many years for the Pāku'i project by TNC and the EMoWP, included discussions about the Department's proposed acquisition of Pua'ahala for conservation. Community support for this work became clear during these outreach efforts. Many members of the east Moloka'i community clearly remember the devastating history of failed development in Pua'ahala, and in large part because of this history, there is strong community support of the Department's acquisition and desire to do conservation in the area.

Additionally, our biological survey work in the ahupua'a found exceptional resources both mauka and makai making the protection of this area paramount.

The Department's acquisition of Pua'ahala, restoration of its coastal areas, and inclusion of its native forests in the EMoWP's Pāku'i fence unit will help protect these resources and all the good that comes from them. The Nature Conservancy and the East Moloka'i Watershed Partnership appreciate the State's partnership on this project.

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