



December 9, 2020

Sent via email

State of Hawai‘i

Board of Land and Natural Resources

blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

**Board of Directors
2020**

Board Chair
Mary Charles

Vice Chair
Lisa Grove

Treasurer
Keith Ogata

Secretary
Jennifer Luck

Past Chair
Jonathan Scheuer

McD Philpotts

Neil Hannahs

Matt Beall

Le‘ahi Hall

Larry Stevens

Jody Kaulukukui

Marissa Harman

Randy Vitousek

Jocelyn Herbert

President & CEO
Laura H. E. Kaakua

ph: 808.791.0729
126 Queen St., Ste. 306
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
www.hilt.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BLNR AGENDA ITEM C(3)

**BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES MEETING
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020, 9:00AM**

Aloha mai e Chair Case and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (HILT) is Hawai‘i’s islands-wide land trust that is both a Hawai‘i 501(c)3 nonprofit, and a nationally accredited land trust. Our mission is to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai‘i, and to perpetuate Hawaiian values by connecting people to ‘āina.

HILT shares its strong support for the approval of the federal funds subgrant to Moloka‘i Land Trust for the fee acquisition of 1,819 acres of land, more or less, at Kona, Moloka‘i, Hawai‘i, Tax Map Key numbers (2) 5-7-005:002 and :027, for the Mapulehu conservation transaction.

The above approval will allow project partners to leverage federal U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Lands Acquisition (USFWS-RLA) funding awarded for the conservation purchase and permanent protection of a large portion of the ahupua‘a of Mapulehu. This project will ensure Mapulehu’s resources are protected in perpetuity while providing opportunities for community stewardship of native forest and endangered species habitat, cultural sites and trails, and many other conservation values attributed to this property. HILT supports continued efforts by project partners, Moloka‘i Land Trust, The Trust for Public Land, HILT, Maui County, the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DLNR-DOFAW), and USFWS-RLA to leverage public and private funding to support the conservation purchase and permanent protection of Mapulehu.

Mahalo nui loa for your service and the opportunity to submit testimony. We look forward to working collaboratively to protect our most special places in Hawai‘i.

Mālama pono,

Shaelene Kamakaala
Director of ‘Āina Protection
Hawaiian Islands Land Trust
shae@hilt.org, 808-940-0639

*Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor
P.O. Box 48
Ho'olehua, HI 96729*



December 9, 2020

Sent via email
State of Hawai'i
Board of Land and Natural Resources
blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Re: Testimony in Support of BLNR Agenda Item C(3)
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF FEDERAL FUNDS SUBGRANT TO MOLOKA'I
LAND TRUST FOR THE FEE ACQUISITION OF 1,819 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR
LESS, AT KONA, MOLOKA'I, HAWAI'I, TAX MAP KEY NUMBERS (2) 5-7-005:002
AND :027

Chair Case and Members of the Board of Land Natural Resources, aloha kākou.

My name is Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor and I am a professor of Ethnic Studies and Director of the Center for Oral History at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I live in Kaiwi'ula, Kapālama O'ahu and in Ho'olehua, Moloka'i, from where I have been working online since mid-March.

I serve as member of the Moloka'i Land Trust and our mission is to protect and restore the land, natural, and cultural resources of Moloka'i, and to promote, educate, and perpetuate the unique Native Hawaiian traditions and character of the island for the benefit of the future generations of all Moloka'i, particularly Native Hawaiians.

I am testifying in **support** of the approval of a federal funds subgrant to Moloka'i Land Trust for the fee acquisition of 1,819 acres of land, more or less, in the ahupua'a of Mapulehu.

The property to be acquired encompasses the major part of the Mapulehu ahupua'a, as it extends from agricultural lands along Kamehamehe V Hwy, slopes up a ridge to a bog at the 3,488 foot summit and also reaches into the recesses of valleys along intermittent streams on both sides of the ridge. As with any ahupua'a, there are diverse features and resources.

The Mapulehu lands are wahi kapu (sacred). Importantly, the ‘Ili‘ili‘opae Heiau, the largest heiau on Moloka‘i (and second largest in Hawai‘i) is located on these lands, as well as significant archaeological and cultural sites. We hope to work with Molokai archaeologists and families with ancestral ties to Mapulehu to clear the heiau, using appropriate protocols.

The Mapulehu lands are momona - fertile and fruitful. Portions of lower Mapulehu were historically used for ranching, a dairy, apiaries, commercial sisal and fruit orchards. With the guidance and involvement of the community, we hope to reintroduce agriculture on the flat portions of Mapulehu, approximately 60 acres, that border Kamehameha V Highway. This can result in sustainable food production to increase food sovereignty and possibly generate some revenue.

In addition, neighboring families engage in subsistence hunting of pigs and deer on these lands and MLT will guarantee continued access for that purpose. Subsistence hunting is a critical and essential part of our Molokai economy.

Importantly, with regard to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service subgrant funds, these lands are also a habitat for endangered wildlife (‘ope‘ape‘a, nēnē), forest birds, such as the ‘i‘iwi, ‘oloma‘o and ‘Akohekohe and native plants, including endangered species, such as the Hawaiian gardenia, ha‘iwale and alani. Conserving the Mapulehu lands may, with the support of the community, involve partnering with the East Molokai Watershed Partnership to extend the Paku‘i fence in Mapulehu and have the potential to create future jobs for such a project.

There are as many as 25 kuleana that may be landlocked within the parcels and our goal as a land trust is to keep those families connected and/or reconnect families with their ancestral lands.

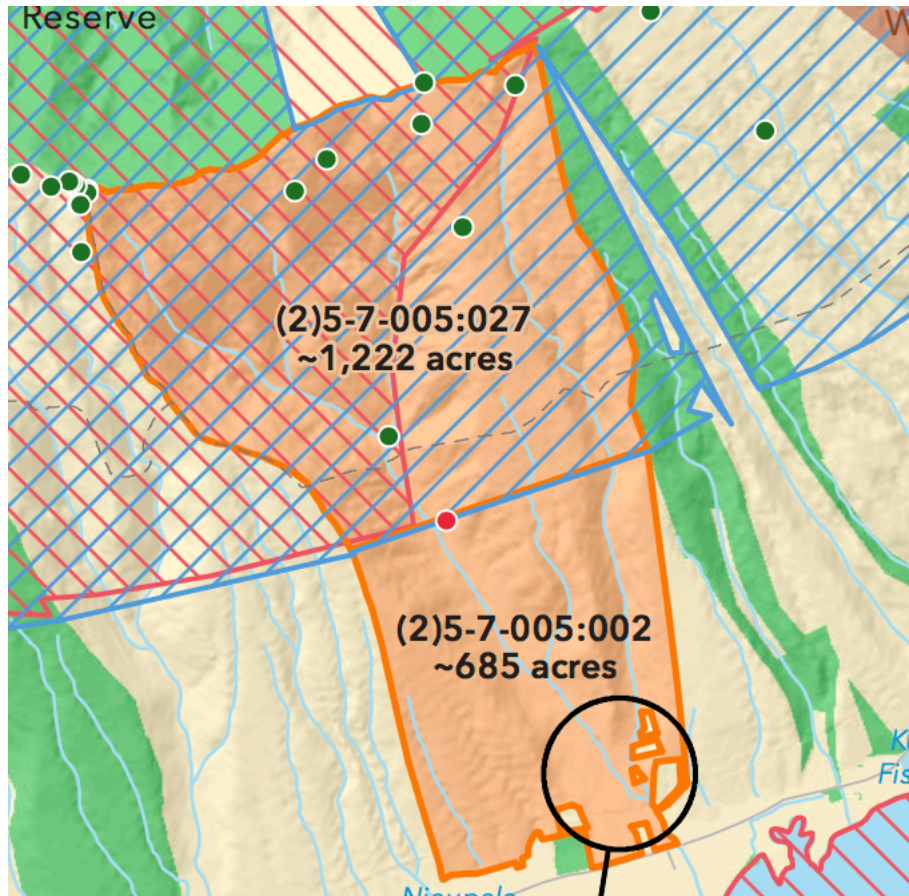
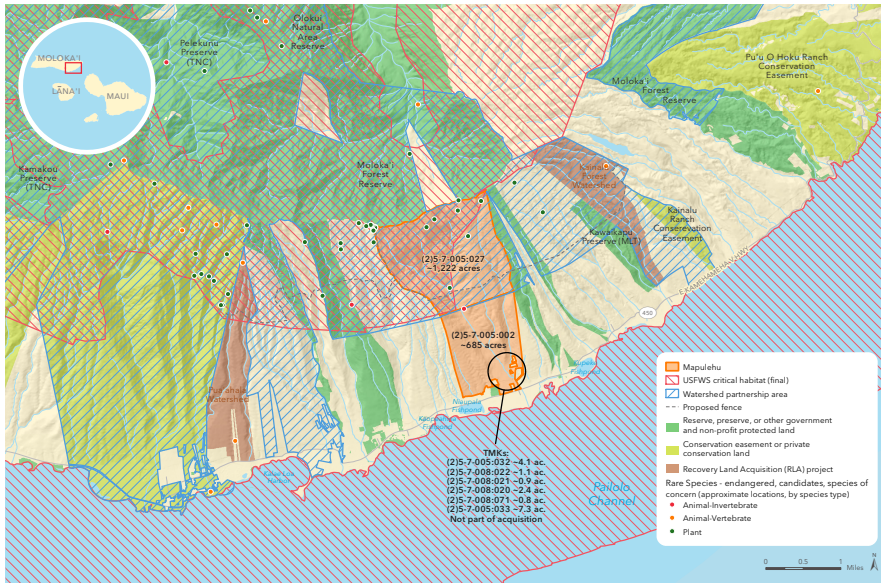
In the meanwhile, we have confirmation of funding \$1.2 million from the Maui Open Space Fund which is currently proceeding through the Maui County process for disbursement. The Legacy Lands Conservation Program will provide \$900,000 in matching funds. I urge each of you, as members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, to please vote in support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service subgrant to the Molokai Land Trust to acquire the cherished, abundant and valuable Mapulehu lands.

I can be reached at davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com if there are any questions, or to provide additional information.

Mahalo and Aloha,



Davianna Pōmaika‘i McGregor



Photos in 1931



Dairy in 1931





December 9, 2020

Sent via email

State of Hawai'i

Board of Land and Natural Resources

blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Re: Testimony in Support of BLNR Agenda Item C(3)
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF FEDERAL FUNDS SUBGRANT TO MOLOKA'I LAND TRUST FOR THE
FEE ACQUISITION OF 1,819 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, AT KONA, MOLOKA'I, HAWAI'I, TAX
MAP KEY NUMBERS (2) 5-7-005:002 AND :027.

Aloha Chair Case and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

The Trust for Public Land is a non-profit land conservation organization and our mission is to protect land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. For over 41 years we've worked to protect over 56,000 acres and 43 special places throughout Hawai'i. Our Aloha 'Āina Program protects lands that are culturally and historically important to Native Hawaiian communities and returns these lands to Native Hawaiian organizations for community and cultural stewardship. Our Sustainable Hawai'i Program conserves lands that support local food production, our forests and their native species, and clean water sources with the goal of improving Hawai'i's self-sufficiency.

The Trust for Public Land worked in partnership with Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DLNR-DOFAW), and Moloka'i Land Trust (MLT) to apply for \$1.8 million U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Lands Acquisition funds (USFWS-RLA) to purchase and protect Mapulehu. In April 2020, The U.S. Department of the Interior awarded the grant to DLNR-DOFAW. Now DLNR-DOFAW is requesting authority to sub-grant USFWS-RLA funds to MLT.

The project also has matching funds. MLT was awarded \$900,000 in Legacy Land Conservation Program funding. Maui County's approved budget includes \$1.2 million in funding for Mapulehu from Maui's Open Space Fund. TPL and MLT are working on getting a County Resolution passed to approve a grant agreement and authorize the acquisition of a conservation easement over the property.

Mapulehu in southeast Moloka'i extends from Kamehameha V Highway, about 200 hundred yards from the ocean, to over 3,488 feet at the summit of East Moloka'i. Protecting Mapulehu would preserve an exquisite cultural and natural landscape: its native forested watershed and streams, habitat for native birds, bats, and plants, 'Ili'ili'ōpae Heiau, important agricultural lands, and access to the Wailau Trail.

Mapulehu Stream and six intermittent streams wind from the 3,488 foot summit through native habitat and mixed forest to the lower valley, ancient fishponds, and the sea. Offshore there is a 35-mile long fringing coral reef – the longest in Hawai'i. The upper forest recharges the East Moloka'i aquifer and provides habitat for endangered birds and plants. Moloka'i Land Trust plans to control invasive species to enhance the watershed, prevent erosion and runoff, and coordinate landscape level management with other protected lands across East Moloka'i.

Protecting Mapulehu will preserve a sacred cultural and archaeological landscape. Mapulehu is the site of 'Ili'ili'ōpae Heiau, the largest heiau on Moloka'i, and second largest in Hawai'i. It is a luakini heiau, a sacrificial heiau, and training ground for kahuna (priests). 'Ili'ili'ōpae is on the National Register as part of the Hōkūkano-Ualapu'e complex, which includes six heiau and two loko i'a (fishponds). The Kulahalua Bell Stone, which when struck sends out a resonant bell-like tone, is also located on the property. Protecting Mapulehu will also preserve community subsistence, cultural, and recreational access to the ancient Wailau Trail which connects East Moloka'i to Wailau on the northern coast.

Mapulehu was historically used for kalo cultivation and later as a dairy and orchard. Its protection will preserve these important agricultural lands for the community's benefit, with the goal of reviving sustainable local food production by and for the community.

Moloka'i Land Trust will be the future owner and steward of the property. MLT had scheduled the start of a series of community visioning meetings back in March, but unfortunately due to the pandemic, the meeting was cancelled. Since then, MLT has been gathering community input remotely and virtually. MLT has also formed a Mapulehu Stewardship Hui to support long term community based management and stewardship of these lands.

The BLNR has an exciting opportunity to protect and conserve Mapulehu's precious natural, cultural, and agricultural resources to be stewarded by the Moloka'i Land Trust in partnership with the surrounding community. Moreover, the protection of these lands will help diversify Hawai'i's economy, supporting employment in conservation and agriculture and enhancing our local food system, making Hawai'i more resilient in the face of economic recession.

Please approve DOFAW's request to subgrant USFWS-RLA funds to Moloka'i Land Trust for the Fee Acquisition of the Mapulehu lands. Thank you for your support.

Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Reyna Ramolete Hayashi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Reyna" being the most prominent.

Reyna Ramolete Hayashi
Aloha 'Āina Project Manager
The Trust for Public Land