

From: [Janet Ashman](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES April 28, 2023, Agenda item D.7
Date: Thursday, April 27, 2023 9:15:00 AM

Via email to:
blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DATE: April 28, 2023

TIME: 9:15 AM

LOCATION: 1151 Punchbowl St, Room 132 (Kalanimoku Building) online via ZOOM, livestream via YouTube

Re: Agenda Item D-7

NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board,

My name is Janet Ashman. I have worked with Hawaii farmers and ranchers for over 30 years, helping them understand and comply with the many laws and regulations that apply to them.

During this time, I have watched as lessees and revocable permit holders on State DLNR-managed agricultural lands struggled with the insecurity and instability of the terms of their leases. This has caused much anxiety and despair that has greatly affected these families in their daily lives. As Chair Chang observed when she visited both Kapapala and KK ranches, these are good stewards of the land. They have deep connections to the land and the ecology it supports. The land needs the everyday caretaking of these lessees who are continuously watching and monitoring, and responding to every change on the ground.

The sad truth is that these ranchers were made promises by DLNR many years ago that have still not been fulfilled, and they relied upon them. DLNR has not been responsive and in fact, has not provided assistance or oversight. Because of this, and the fact that it is not in DLNR's mission to support agriculture, nor is it possible without major statutory changes that will take many years to change and implement, the best course of action is to transfer these lands to the DOA. It is the right thing to do.

Please support both the conservation of these agricultural lands and agriculture in Hawaii with your thorough review of the issue, before any decisions are made. Thank you,

Janet Ashman

From: [lucienne denaie](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#); [Hurd, Sharon K](#); [Chang, Dawn](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Item D.7
Date: Thursday, April 27, 2023 12:07:34 PM

Aloha Chair Chang, Chair Hurd and BLNR memnbers and staff

Re: Item D.7 NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

I would like to support the efforts of well respected Maui rancher Brendan Balthazar to continue his lease on a portion of the 3,433 acres of land the DLNR acquired in 2020 (former Von Tempsky ranch/ now known as Kamehamenui Forest - TMK (2) 2-3-005-002.) Mr Balthazar has invested considerable time and funds in creating water storage, upkeep of fencing, installation of a new corral and other improvements to the pasture area of the land. Mr. Balthazar has worked diligently to rid the pastures of invasive pests such as gorse and fireweed.

Furthermore, he had been assured by previous owners that they had every intention of continuing a long-term lease arrangement with him and appreciated his efforts in managing the land.

While it is beneficial to have current watershed restoration efforts concentrate on the upper elevation (around 2,000 acres of the parcel that adjoins Haleakala National Park and the Kula Forest Preserve) it does not seem just or even prudent to remove a good steward of the land from the lower elevation pasture areas. Mr. Balthazar's cattle and sheep help manage the grasses in that area to reduce fire risk and that continued presence is a practical solution to help manage this very large parcel. He also has interests in planting apple and peach trees in a portion of the lower pasture lands to help increase local food security.

As a person active in conservation causes, I have been in working groups with Mr. Balthazar over many years. He is a most knowledgeable person who has cared for the pastures he leases. The DLNR/DOFAW and Department of Agriculture should find a way to co manage this large parcel, one of Maui's historic ranches for over 100 years, and negotiate an appropriate lease with Mr. Balthazar for the lower portion of the land that includes the water tank and system he installed at his own expense. This would respect his good stewardship of the land and the investments and improvements he has made to the land while moving forward with restoration efforts of the areas that currently have some forest growth.

Mahalo for your consideration

Lucienne de Naie
PO Px 610
Haiku, HI 96708

Lucienne de Naie

laluz@maui.net

Lucienne de Naie
huelogrl@icloud.com
808 214-0147

From: [randall francisco](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I Strongly Support Act 90
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 8:34:25 PM

Randall Francisco, Hanapepe, Kauai, HI

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

Submitted via email to: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

April 28, 2023

Dawn Chang
Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Land and Natural Resources
P.O. Box 621
Honolulu, HI 96809

**RE: Board of Land and Natural Resources Meeting April 28, 2023, 9:15 a.m.
Testimony on Item D-7 NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.**

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB respectfully offers the following observations on this agenda item.

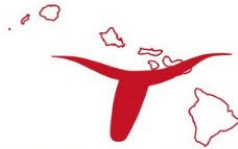
The intent of Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, was to transfer *agricultural* lands from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to the Department of *Agriculture* (DOA), the agency whose mission it is to support *agriculture*. DOA is the agency that is equipped to manage agricultural lands and leases to ensure that farming remains viable on these lands. We fully believe that DOA will have the necessary resources, both fiscal and staff, to responsibly manage these lands and leases. We understand that over the last twenty years, approximately nineteen thousand acres have been transferred, however the vast majority of these lands have not been transferred.

We are encouraged that with new leadership at both DLNR and DOA, there is recognition that agriculture and conservation goals are not mutually exclusive under DOA. DLNR will still be able to protect the public trust resources on these lands, along with the combined efforts of DOA and the ag producers. **The success of ranchers and farmers is predicated upon their careful stewardship of the land and other natural resources.** And their success is a key component in the State's sustainability goal to double local food production.

These lands need the everyday support of caretakers on the ground, observing changes and following through with action to manage invasive species, fire prevention, soil health, watershed management, and exotic disease monitoring and suppression. Conservation and stewardship are what these DLNR ag lessees and revocable permit holders have already been doing.

Farmers and ranchers must have long-term leases to prudently invest in infrastructure improvement on the leased land. While the DOA laws and regulations are specifically structured to make it practical for farmers to do this, DLNR is unable to provide lease terms that help farmers. One example of this is that lands for lease under DOA are appraised on their agricultural value whereas DLNR is mandated to get the “highest and best use” or fair market value for the lands, resulting in appraisals that are often at much higher and therefore unaffordable costs to farmers and ranchers.

HFB and the agricultural community ask for your support and your understanding of the issues, including the commitment that farmers and ranchers make every day to protect and conserve our precious natural resources. We sincerely believe that agricultural lands should be transferred to DOA as it is best suited for supporting agriculture, while ensuring that conservation and preservation measures continue to be followed. Please support the transfer of agricultural leases from DLNR to DOA. Thank you.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

**Board of Land and Natural Resources Meeting
April 28, 2023, 9:15 a.m.**

D.7. NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

Chair Chang and the Members of the Board of Land & Natural Resources,

Mahalo for providing the update on Act 90, 2003. We are encouraged that Chair Hurd and Chair Chang have taken steps to transfer lands in agricultural production to the Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of Act 90, 2003 is to ensure the long-term productive use of public trust agricultural lands by allowing these lands to be transferred to and managed by the Department of Agriculture. We advocate for the transfer of all agricultural lands, including all lands designated as intensive agricultural use, special livestock use, and pasture use. These are lands that are in active agricultural production and producing food for our community.

Carbon Sequestration

Both forests and grasslands sequester carbon. A key difference is that grasslands sequester carbon underground in the soil, while forests sequester carbon in the leaves and woody biomass. This carbon is susceptible to fires as well as decay which would then release that carbon back into the atmosphere. The carbon stored in soil is more stable and resilient, as it is impacted less by droughts and fires (Dass et al. 2018). There are also other additional ecosystem services that rangelands provide, such as watershed management, soil health, and fire risk reduction (Bremer et al., 2021). **It is important to consider the fact that well-managed grasslands can sequester carbon while also raising cattle for beef production, an important protein source.** In addition, ranchers are exploring ways to plant trees in strategic areas so that they **can contribute to reforestation while still keeping their operations economically viable** – this provides an economic driver to continuing conservation practices.

Continued Conservation Practices

Ranchers are proponents for stewarding the land well and **will continue to implement conservation practices when leases are transferred to DOA**—the health of the land allows ranchers to continue their production. Under the DOA, leaseholders will have access to longer terms based on agricultural production, and **ranchers will be even better situated to invest in long-term conservation practices.** Transferring agricultural lands from DLNR to DOA will help many productive leaseholders continue raising cattle for beef and stewarding the land with confidence that they will be supported in their agricultural operations.



Protecting Food-Producing Lands

According to the State Ag Land Use Baseline, 1.1 million acres of the state's land was in grazing use in the 1980s. In 2015, that number dropped to 761,000 acres. The 2020 State Ag Land Use Baseline reports that pasture continues to decline on Oahu and Hawaii Island. Astute land stewards are well aware that when land is taken out of management, Hawaii's environment and prevalence of invasive species make it costly and difficult to get it back to working order. It is extremely important that we support those who are still operating as agricultural businesses. **We believe that the DOA is best suited for supporting these agricultural businesses. We ask that you support the transfer of agricultural leases from DLNR to DOA.**

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this priority for our industry.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council

Citations

Dass, P.; Houlton, B.Z.; Wang, Y.; Warlind, D. Grasslands May Be More Reliable Carbon Sinks than Forests in California. *Environ. Res. Lett.* **2018**, *13*, 074027

Bremer, L. L., Nathan, N., Trauernicht, C., Pascua, P., Krueger, N., Jokiel, J., Barton, J., & Daily, G. C. (2021). Maintaining the Many Societal Benefits of Rangelands: The Case of Hawai'i. *Land*, *10*(7), Article 7. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10070764>

From: [Megan Blazak](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting 04/28/23 9:15 A.M. Item D-7
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 9:44:37 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board,

I appreciate the BLNR's discussion of Item D-7: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

I stand with Hawaii Farm Bureau and the agricultural community in asking for your support and understanding of the issues surrounding Act 90. Please support the transfer of agricultural leases from DLNR to DOA.

--

Best,

Megan Blazak, MBA
President, Hilo County Farm Bureau
(808) 313-0904

From: [woody child](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Act 90 D.7
Date: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 7:38:18 AM

D.7. NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90.

Chair Chang and the Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Walter D. Child III and I am Owner of Kaapahu Ranch on the Island of Hawaii . I currently have a pasture lease under DLNR, and have had this lease for 20 years and have a remaining 10 years to go. My family has been raising cattle now for 60 years on both fee and leasehold land.

I am in full support of the transfer of agriculture land, including pasture, from the DLNR to the DOA. Ranchers are responsible stewards of the land and can better produce food for our community if they are given the appropriate support and lease terms under the Department of Agriculture.

I believe that under the DOA, leaseholders will have access to longer terms based on agriculture production and will be able to continue ranching and raising cattle for our families and our future generation.

I humbly ask that you support the transfer of agricultural leases from DLNR to the DOA.

Walter D. Child III
Kaapahu Ranch, Kamuela, Hi.

KAPĀPALA RANCH
98-1900 Mamalahoa Hwy
Pahala, HI 96777
Kapapala.ranch@aol.com; lanipetrie@aol.com

Board of Land and Natural Resources Meeting
April 28, 2023, 9:15 am

D.7 NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003,
Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Dear Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources:

I am Lani Petrie and have been a part of Kapāpala Ranch since 1977 when my parents purchased the operation, a revocable permit, from Parker Ranch. The ranch was founded in 1860 when King Kamemehameha IV issued the first lease of this portion of his crown lands. Kapāpala Ranch has been in continuous operation for 163 years.

For more than a century the importance of forestry and conservation have long been recognized by ranchers. In 1906 Kapāpala ranch manager Julian Monserrat was instrumental in establishing the first territorial reserve, the Ka‘u Forest Reserve. In an effort to maintain a healthy watershed he was the first to fence cattle out of this native forest. During our tenure we have maintained that boundary and made every effort to remove feral cattle as they wander makai looking for water during dry times.

The ranch around the turn of the 20th century, early 1900’s, was 172,000 acres.

- 1906 lands removed for the establishment of the Ka‘u Forest Reserve
- 1916 lands removed for the establishment of the Hawai‘i Volcano’s National Park
- 1930 lands removed for the establishment of the Kapāpala Forest Reserve
- 1990 lands removed for the establishment of the Kapāpala Koa Management Area (a regenerative forestry project which would later be repurposed the Canoe Management Area)
- Today we have proposed to the DLNR to remove 7,000 acres from our current lease to separate DOFAW’s mission for increased reforestation and public hunting from our agricultural mission of producing food.

Forestry and grazing are separate landscapes and have distinctly different management protocols. Historically management of watersheds and conservation areas has been separated from ranching lands and today our grazing operation is conducted on roughly 10,000 net acres of 34,000 gross acres. With technological advances in water systems and fencing the ranch today runs the same cattle inventory that it did decades ago on a fraction of the land while the adjacent areas designated conservation have increased by over 100,000 acres.

Kapāpala Ranch today is a significant contributor to the beef supplied locally and abroad. The ranch produces approximately 150,000 pounds of meat annually for our schools and island residents and an additional 900,000 pounds of meat into our national supply chain. The cow-calf sector of the cattle industry in Hawaii is a competitive segment the global production of beef. It has and continues to be a viable agricultural enterprise for our State.

We ask for your consideration to not change the landscape of this ranch anymore and transfer what remains in cattle production to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture pursuant to Act 90. Supporting information can be found at bit.ly/BLNRKapapala2023.

Very Sincerely,

KAPĀPALA RANCH

Lani C. Petrie

KK Ranch, Inc.
(Jason and Jeri Moniz)

Testimony/Information

Board of Agriculture and Board of Land and Natural Resources Meetings
April 25, 2023, 9:00 a.m./April 28, 2023.

Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

Chairs and the Members of the Boards,

KK Ranch is a beef cattle ranch that operates on 5200 acres on State General Lease 4475 at Hanaipoe on the northern slope of Mauna Kea. Nearly 200 years ago around 1832 King Kamehameha III initially brought three vaqueros from California to Hawaii to teach Hawaiian's the skills needed of working and controlling cattle on horseback. These vaqueros trained what are today's paniolos. Historians cite that Kamehameha III stationed the vaqueros at Hanaipoe upon their arrival in Hawaii. One can argue that cattle ranching as it is practiced today in Hawaii had its beginning at Hanaipoe which is the heart of General Lease 4475.

Today Hanaipoe is the home of KK (Kalopa- Kahawaili'ili'i) Ranch a 750-cow working ranch. All the ranches' culled cows and bulls along with a growing number of grass-finished steers and heifers are marketed annually locally. About five years after we took over operations of KK Ranch we were notified that first 1200 and then later 2100 acres, approximately 1/3 of the lease, would be withdrawn to satisfy USF&W mitigation requirements for the planned realignment of the Saddle Road through Palila critical habitat. Although the lease terms were clear to us that withdrawals could occur for public purpose/developments on the property, it was not clear that withdrawals could occur in exchange for satisfying public purpose for a project many miles away. After several years of meetings and attempted negotiations 2100 acres were eventually withdrawn from our lease without any financial compensation. DLNR argues that the lessees were compensated by a legislative initiative that allows for 10% of the remainder of the lease to be used for alternate agriculture with no increase in the rental. However, the lands that make up this lease are capable of supporting livestock grazing and potentially forestry. Since no viable commercial forestry enterprise has been demonstrated in Hawaii, we continue to produce livestock exclusively. The lease also does not have a suitable water source to support more intensive agriculture and the rocky terrain is not conducive for cultivation. The 2100-acre withdrawal resulted in the need to cull 300 cows from the herd at salvage value as there are no live livestock markets in Hawaii and shipping of adult cows and their calves to Mainland livestock markets was not feasible. HRS 171 provides compensation for the taking of crops but not for livestock, likely because it was historically copied from some statute of a Mainland State that has livestock markets where cow-calf pairs could be liquidated for their full value. HRS 171 provides for the payment of the depreciated value of

improvements taken but none was provided. Per DLNR, since the withdrawal was required by the US-DOT that their rules on takings would take precedence and would provide maybe up to \$20,000 for the movement of livestock and improvements, but there was nowhere to move the herd and it was impractical to move much of the improvements including, posts, fences and improvements made to pastures. At best some pipe and a couple portable water tanks were salvaged. There was no interest or flexibility on the part of DLNR to make or allow for changes to their statute in order to keep livestock producers whole, so a few changes were eventually provided for by legislative actions over the years, including a substantial change, Act 90 in 2003. After the withdrawal KK Ranch was left with 2/3s of its lease and herd and was now challenged to support its fixed costs with a smaller herd substantially reducing net income. We were unable to renegotiate our mortgages with our creditors, so we were forced to seek an extension to our lease for more time to pay off our creditors. DLNR was not willing to alter their statutes/rules to provide a lease extension in lieu of this taking. What was allowed for in HRS 171 was an extension for the purpose of securing a mortgage to provide for improvements to be made to the lease. As a result, on top of our losses we were required to take on additional financial liability in order to secure an extension and attempt to survive long term. As expected, the lease rent was reduced by the percentage of land withdrawn, however when the lease was eventually extended the rate returned to the original amount for now 1/3 less acreage.

Both DLNR and HDOA cite that Act 139 recommended that "certain agricultural lands under DLNR that have multiple management objectives, which can include agricultural production, forestry, native forest restoration, watershed protection, habitat conservation, public recreation, fire fuel suppression, and other public purposes and that those multiple-use lands should remain under DLNR's management." However, they consistently fail to state that the **Working Group's first recommendation was that lands under DLNR used for the primary and substantial management objective of agricultural production should be transferred to DOA, following the processes and conditions pursuant to Act 90.** In addition to our lease there are other leases marked in DLNR's EXHIBIT B that clearly fit this recommendation but are listed to be retained by DLNR or requires their further review.

We are certainly appreciative that our lease is being recommended for transfer, but we do feel for other lessees that meet the same conditions for transfer and are not being recommended by DLNR for transfer. It is unfortunate and unfair that lessees that have been good stewards of these public lands, maintaining them as open and a predominately free of invasive introduced flora are in the radar of DLNR-DOFAW for easy reforestation while many of the Forest Reserves under their management have become inundated with invasives.

Regarding conservation value, today's ranchers should be thanked and not criticized for the stewardship they provide, securing millions of federal USDA dollars over many decades to better graze these lands and reduce soil erosion, control invasive species, develop water resources and reforest certain areas in conjunction with their grazing operations. If not for the

perceived threat of withdrawals by DLNR-DOFAW for reforestation purposes rancher lessees would likely increase their participation in silviculture type native reforestation projects.

Cultural and recreational use of these lands come with tradeoffs. Increased traffic results in increased biosecurity risk. Spread of invasive species (i.e. gorse, fountain gras, etc.) and infectious agents/pests (i.e. ROD, Two-Lined spittle bug) by vehicle and pedestrian traffic are liabilities. It has been frustrating to see forest reserve lands utilized for public hunting become so overgrown with invasive species, eradicated of game animals or placed in reserve status and just removed from public hunting altogether and see hunting pressure directed toward ranch lands without the understanding by DLNR as to what that impact has to the ranching operation.

DLNR claims to have partnerships with ranches, and we are aware of some of those relationships. However, for whatever reason, those of us exclusively on public leases seem to have been bypassed by any offers to participate. Most all these lessees, however, routinely participate in EQIP and other conservation programs with USDA-NRCS and have brought millions of federal and rancher cost share dollar to these leases for improvements.

We are very encouraged and supportive of the current administration's leadership and the quick actions they have taken to move Act 90 forward. We are also very appreciative of the efforts and support by the legislature to understand the ranchers concerns that we be treated fairly and be afforded the same considerations given to other farmers and ranchers that have had the management of their agricultural leases moved to the HDOA.

My apologies for this quick and rough presentation. We had short notice of these informational meetings and it's a busy time of the year on the ranch. Thank you for allowing us to provide our perspective and thank you for your consideration.

Jason and Jeri Moniz
Owners
KK Ranch, Inc.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892

April 28, 2023

Dawn Chang
Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Land and Natural Resources
PO Box 621
Honolulu, Hawaii 97809

Via Email: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Re: BLNR Meeting April 28, 2023, 9:15 am
Item D-7 Non-Action Item: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003; Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Dear Chair Chang and Members of the BLNR Board,

I am Larry Jefts, owner and operator of Larry Jefts Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms produce about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director and chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Thank you for the recent and ongoing collaboration to transfer large pasture lands to the Department of Agriculture, with an expected completion date of December 31, 2023. The transfer is long overdue and creates a situation where ranchers cannot do long-term planning to increase local grass-fed beef production. Ranchers, and all involved in agriculture production, need long-term leases before capital investments can be made for production.

It is important to acknowledge that ranchers and farmers are good stewards of the land, managing watersheds, soil health, invasive species management and more. They have to be if they want to stay in business.

We believe the Department of Agriculture best manages agricultural lands while ensuring continued measures for conservation and preservation. In turn, ranchers can expand their contribution to import replacement production.

Please continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Agriculture to support the transfer of agricultural leases from DLNR. Thank you.

From: [Keith Unger](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item D.7
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 3:30:16 PM

My name is Keith Unger and I am with McCandless Ranch. I support the transfer of agricultural lands, including pasture, from the DLNR to the DOA.

Giving ranchers longer agricultural leases under the DOA will allow ranchers to continue to invest in the land to make long term improvements.

Ranchers are conservationists AND we can help Hawaii attain our food sustainable goals, a win-win.

Mahalo

Keith Unger

McCandless Ranch

D.7. NON-ACTION ITEM: Update on Compliance with Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii
2003, Transfer of Non-Agricultural Park Lands to State of Hawaii Department of
Agriculture

Honorable Chair Chang and the Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Charles Stevens, and I am the owner of S.C. Ranch, a 7,000 acre ranch, located in Pa‘auilo, on Hawai‘i island. S.C. Ranch has been operating for nearly 50 years, after establishment by the late Dutch Schuman and Gordon Cran. Since purchasing the ranch in 2011, my family and I have been working daily to incorporate sustainable ‘āina-based practices to improve water catchment and storage capabilities, and maintaining the natural watershed to protect and serve as a responsible steward of these lands.

I understand that the purpose of Act 90, 2003 is to ensure the long-term productive use of public agricultural lands by allowing these lands to be transferred to and managed by the Department of Agriculture (DOA). We advocate for the transfer of all agricultural lands, including all lands designated as intensive agricultural use, special livestock use, and pasture use. These are lands that are in active agricultural production and producing food for our community.

Honorable Chair Chang, I thank you for including the “Update on Compliance with Act 90, 2003” on the agenda, and SUPPORT the proposed schedule on page 6 of the “Act 90 Status Briefing” submitted by Mr. Ian Hirokawa, Special Projects Coordinator. Conservation Values, Cultural and Recreation Values, and Overall Management Consideration Values, are at the core of S.C. Ranch operations. We view our pasture lands, as food producing land, thus, we take great measures to manage grazing responsibly, control invasive species and wildfire, and maintain fences and roads.

S.C. Ranch is family owned and operated. Sustainability is our goal and so far, 80% of our cattle stay local with our cattle being born, raised, and processed in Hawaii.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on agenda item “D.7. Update on Compliance with Act 90, 2003”, and invite you, committee members, and your staff to visit S.C. Ranch, and view our operations.

Charles Stevens, Owner/ Operator

S.C. Ranch Co.

From: [Theresa Thompson 808-283-4942](mailto:Theresa.Thompson.808-283-4942)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Act 90
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 1:06:21 PM

My name is Theresa Thompson and I am with Thompson ranch. I support the transfer of agricultural lands, including pasture, from the DLNR to the DOA. Ranchers are responsible stewards of the land and can better produce food for our community if they are given the appropriate support and lease terms under the Department of Agriculture. We need to retain grazing lands to continue to grow food for our communities.

Mahalo,
Theresa Thompson
Thompson Ranch
Kula, Maui