

From: [Diamond B Ranch](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] testimony
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 2:39:33 PM

I totally support the long awaited transfer of Kapapala Ranch and KK Ranch to the DOA. It is about time that ranchers and rest at night knowing that they can rely on the ranch being in agg and in the hands of the agency that truly understands agg. May God bless them and all who have fought years to make this right thing happen.

Diamond B Ranch
Brendan Balthazar

From: [Alex Franco](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting June 23 - Agenda Items D4 and D5
Date: Saturday, June 17, 2023 5:39:09 AM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

Sent from my iPhone

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

June 16, 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 June 23, 2023, 9:15 am

D. Land Division. Agenda Item D4, Act 90 K.K. Ranch, Inc. and
D5, Act 90 Kapapala Ranch

Position: Support

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 ongoing collaboration to transfer large pasture lands to the Department of Agriculture (DOA), with an expected completion date of December 31, 2023. One of the collaboration results is the proposed transfer of K.K. Ranch Inc, and Kapapala Ranch lands from DLNR to the DOA.

We strongly support this transfer because when managed by the DOA, K.K. Ranch and Kapapala Ranch will be assured of long-term leases needed for planning and infrastructure investments. Ranchers, and all involved in agriculture production, need long-term leases before capital investments can be made for production.

We appreciate the acknowledgment that ranchers and farmers are good stewards of the land, managing watersheds, soil health, invasive species management and more. We understand that K.K. Ranch and Kapapala Ranch have proven track records as responsible tenants and good stewards.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

From: [woody child](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting June 23 - Agenda Items D4 and D5
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 7:51:44 PM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

Woody Child
Kaapahu Ranch

From: mail.kealiaranch.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting June 23 - Agenda Items D4 and D5
Date: Monday, June 19, 2023 2:54:05 PM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long-term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

These transfers are a step in a positive direction for the future of agriculture in our State.

Mahalo for your support of this action.

Sara Moore

Ranch manager

Kealia Ranch

From: [Keith Unger](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] McCandless Ranch support of lease transfers
Date: Monday, June 19, 2023 6:49:08 AM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

This is not about DLNR 'giving up' their lands, this is about DLNR being smart about acknowledging their limited budget and limited manpower to steward the lands they currently manage, and partnering with proven partners to further their mission without impacting their budget.

Aloha

Keith Unger
McCandless Ranch



Ponoholo Ranch Limited

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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DATE: June 23, 2023 TIME: 9:15 AM

Re: Agenda Items D-4 & D-5

Aloha Chair Dawn Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources:

Ponoholo Ranch strongly support the transfer of Lands leased by the DLNR to Kapapala Ranch and KK Ranch to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA). The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of HDOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

Ponoholo Ranch Limited operates its cattle ranch on Hawaii Island on over 10,000 acres of land, some fee simple, some leased. Some of the leased lands have been with the State of Hawaii. In fact, we have leased State of Hawaii land, managed by DLNR since our inception in 1979. Two of the leases we have held in recent years have been long term and one was a revocable permit we leased on a month-to-month basis for over 40 years.

In 2002, when one of the DLNR leases we previously held for many years came up for renewal, it was required to be put out for auction. At auction someone else bid up the price and to keep this lease, which had become an integral part of our operation and upon which we had invested many dollars on improvements, we won the auction by paying about 7 times the economic value of that land, in essence buying back the improvements WE had made over the years. Fortunately, when the rent reopened after 10 years we were able to demonstrate to DLNR the economic carrying capacity of the lease and they reduced the annual rent to a fair rate.

We have worked for many years to try to get our leases transferred to HDOA under Act 90, 2003 for the reasons the legislature passed Act 90 in the first place: to allow farmers and ranchers to work with a State Department which specialized in agriculture, and which had favorable terms to promote agriculture and sustainability in the State.

As our 20 year leases with DLNR were coming to an end in the early 2020's, we spent very little money investing in improvements on these leased DLNR lands. It made no economic sense for us to invest money in the last 10 years of the lease, only to have to buy back our OWN improvements at Auction. In fact, the way the DLNR system now works, it makes sense for the current operator to let the leased property get run down. This is contrary to the best stewardship of the land, but it is an economic reality.

We were fortunate when in early 2018 former HDOA Chair, Scott Enright, worked with DLNR to attempt to get many of the pasture leases transferred to HDOA, supporting the legislative intent of Act 90. After a meeting, DLNR agreed to use Ponoholo as a "test case" for transfer of pasture lands from DLNR to HDOA. The meeting participants agreed to meet at Ponoholo Ranch to see all the things the ranch was already doing production-wise, but more importantly stewardship-wise and discuss any concerns DLNR

may have. Ponoholo hosted representatives from DLNR, DOFAW, HDOA and ranch personnel at Ponoholo Ranch with an all-day tour and lunch in February of 2018. The final outcome of the tour was that the lease for Ponoholo would be transferred from DLNR to HDOA per Act 90.

Ponoholo's two long term leases and one Revocable Permit were eventually transferred to HDOA in late 2020 and HDOA and Ponoholo were able to negotiate lease extensions for the two long term leases and HDOA was even able to issue a long term lease for the Revocable Permit we had held at DLNR for over 40 years. With a long term lease, instead of a month-to-month tenure, we were finally able to make investments on that piece.

Under DLNR, Ponoholo Ranch has always been an active cooperator with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Watershed Partnerships and in fact have won awards and community support for our stewardship. We have allowed public access for hunting. Some of our lands (Not State lands) border the forest reserve and we are active stewards of those watersheds. Furthermore, Ponoholo has practiced intensive grazing on all its lands for over 40 years, a practice which has been coming into favor with many land stewards for its very positive Carbon Sequestration from improved grasslands. These practices continue on our leases under HDOA. We take our kuleana seriously.

Having lease terms that support investment in the land and increased productivity of the cattle makes sense for production AND environmental sustainability. Transferring the leases from DLNR to HDOA for KK Ranch and Kapapala Ranch makes sense, just as it made sense to do so for Ponoholo Ranch in 2020.

There is NO loss for the community if ranchers succeed. It is not the environment versus food production. It truly is a win/win, a win for the productivity and a win for the environment. Ranchers do every day what the State does not have the manpower or budget to do!



Alan Gottlieb
Vice President

From: [Theresa Thompson 808-283-4942](mailto:Theresa.Thompson@808-283-4942)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting June 23 - Agenda Items D4 and D5
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 4:29:52 PM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and good stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

Mahalo,
Theresa Thompson
Thompson Ranch
Kula, Maui

From: [Aileen Yeh](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BLNR Meeting June 23 - Agenda Items D4 and D5
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 9:18:18 PM

I strongly support the transfer of Kapapala and KK Ranch to the Department of Agriculture. The past actions and activities of both of these ranches have proven that they are responsible tenants and stewards of these lands. The ability of DOA to provide affordable long term leases will provide them the assurances needed to increase their investments in agriculture and become even better stewards of these lands.

Thank you for your attention.

Aileen Yeh
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Hilo, HI. 96720
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