



June 13, 2025

Board of Land Natural Resources
1151 Punchbowl Street
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Re: Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo's (KUA) Letter of Support of Item E-1 Approval to Continue Revocable Permit SP0002, to Hui Maka'āinana o Makana, for Management of Reservation System for Collection of Parking and Entry Fees, Shuttle Services and Resource Enhancement, Hā'ena State Park, Kaua'i, Hawai'i, Tax Map Keys: (4) 5-9-001:022 portion and (4) 5-9-008:001 portion.

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR),

Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA) enthusiastically submits this letter in support of agenda item E-1 which would authorize the continuance of a Revocable Permit with the Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (the Hui) a State of Hawai'i 501c3 to better manage and care for the original lands of their ancestors at the end of the road in Hā'ena State Park.

Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo means "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," our acronym KUA means backbone. KUA works to empower communities to improve their quality of life through caring for their environmental heritage together. We employ a community-driven approach that currently supports a network of more than 40 mālama 'āina (care for that which feeds) community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together), over 60 fishpond restoration projects and practitioners called the Hui Mālama Loko I'a (HMLI; the group that cares for fishponds), and the Limu (seaweed) Hui made up of limu loa (experts) all from across the state.

The foundational vision and work to create KUA has deep roots in the Native Hawaiian community of Hā'ena, their curatorship with State Parks, their lo'i restoration and CBSFA effort. In the late 90's and early 2000's ohana there began to reach out to similarly situated communities across the state to manage their places from mauka to makai. Some unborn and others who sat at their elders' feet now carry that vision forward. KUA exists because of those 'ohana. We are here because of the belief, faith, work and perseverance of their generations behind us and the new generation of Hā'ena today whom carry forward the vision of their ancestors. We are here because of the kuleana and 'āina momona they wish to grant to future generations. This too is the kuleana of the BLNR.

With are excited to see Item E-1 as a continued step in the evolution of the way we better manage Hawai'i's resources, community and culture together. For Hā'ena as it has been for a number of our founding communities there is a desire to grow stronger in co-management and evolve in responsibilities and partnership in cultural restoration and community and environmental governance.

Approval of Item E-1 continues the Hui's successful Revocable Permit to work with its partner non-profit The Hanalei Initiative (THI) to manage an integrated shuttle, parking and entry system as well as manage the cultural landscape and restore taro growing in the ancient lo'i



This agreement would also support the continuance of the Hui's kuleana to a larger area of the park.

Throughout the ten years+ of KUA's organizational existence to support community-based natural resource management a continued evolution in kuleana and capacity for the network and its members has been a priority. Today the Hui continues to show leadership at the statewide and local level. It takes leadership in E Alu Pū's governance council and Lawai'a Pono Hui (focus group). They educate their youth, connect them to their place and are building on a modern vision of kauhale for Hawai'i now recognized globally.

Our founders in the 'ohana of the Hā'ena and the moku of Halele'a continue to perpetuate the practices of their ancestors in their mālama of the area for their subsistence, cultural practice, and well-being. This benefits Hawai'i and our larger State and is a prime example of the direction we are going in Destination Management.

As climate and natural resource concerns grow globally so does the understanding that indigenous and local environmental governance is a key part of citizenship in our care for island earth. Indeed, building stronger, cohesive and environmentally mindful communities is an indicator of resilience. This extension builds on Hawai'i's status as an influential global conservation leader.

Please pass Item E-1.

On behalf of team KUA.

Pūpūkahi i holomua e ho'okanaka
(Let us unite to better the human condition)

Kevin K.J. Chang
Executive Director