

To: Board of Land and Natural Resources
From: Anna Maidment
Position: Support
Subject: Agenda Item F-2, Division of Aquatic Resources
Request for Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding Between DLNR
DAR, Kaua‘i Sea Farms, LLC, and Ho‘omaluku Ke Kai to Establish and Operate
a Coral Nursery on Kaua‘i

Submission

Date: November 12, 2025

Meeting Date: November 14, 2025

Dear Chair Chang and Members of the Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Agenda Item F-2.

I am writing in strong support of the establishment and operation of the coral nursery on Kaua‘i. The initiative to support coral restoration efforts, enhance marine biodiversity, and provide educational outreach to the community appears to be an excellent addition to the Department of Aquatic Resources’ existing coral restoration projects, per [DLNR Coral Reefs](#) and the [Hawaii Coral Reef Strategy 2030](#).

I agree that the recovery of coral reefs is an emergency that requires an immediate response. The [US Environmental Protection Agency](#) recognized that coral reefs are foundational to Hawai‘i’s marine ecosystems and long-term environmental health. Specifically, “Hawai‘i’s coral reefs have experienced recent bleaching events, with the 2014 and 2015 events have unprecedented amounts of bleaching. In these events, up to 50% of the reef died in some locations, due to temperature effects from climate change.” [DLNR Coral Reefs](#). The warming ocean temperatures, coral bleaching, ocean acidification, invasive species, and local stressors such as pollution from land-based sources (runoff from agriculture, sewage, and construction), overfishing, marine debris, and physical damage from tourism and vessels are ruining coral populations in Hawai‘i. Because these human factors led to the destruction of the reefs, we are duly responsible for repairing and maintaining coral health, now and for future generations.

Effective coral restoration is necessary to maintain ecological function and community well-being. Hawai‘i has put much effort into the coral reef recovery techniques and strategies. [Hawaii Coral Reef Strategy](#); [Coral Restoration Review Guidelines](#). Establishing a dedicated nursery on Kaua‘i represents a critical step towards reef recovery and long-term resource stewardship.

As a shark diver on the North Shore of O‘ahu and a second-year law student in the Environmental Law Program at the William S. Richardson School of Law, with a degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Management, I have a strong passion for ensuring that humans take responsibility for protecting and improving our natural environment. I am currently in Belém, Brazil, as a University of Hawai‘i delegate at the UN Climate Change Conference. On a global scale, the conference is focusing on the urgent need to decarbonize and reduce greenhouse gases to slow the damage to coral reefs. For further information on the United Nations partnerships for climate resilient coral reefs, please visit: [Protecting Climate-Resilient](#)

[Coral Reefs](#). From a local perspective, government and community intervention such as this coral reef restoration in Kaua‘i is invaluable to the health of the ocean ecosystem.

Overall, the proposed Kaua‘i coral reef recovery plan appears well funded and well organized, aligning with the State’s public trust obligations, contributing to broader climate resilience priorities, and strengthening Hawai‘i’s capacity to repair and protect its coral reefs for future generations.

I respectfully urge the Board to approve the agreement.

Mahalo for considering my testimony and for your continued work to safeguard Hawai‘i’s natural resources.

Respectfully submitted,

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