

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 27, 2026

Chairperson and Members
Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

Board Members:

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE TO CONDUCT PUBLIC HEARINGS TO GATHER INPUT ON THE POTENTIAL SET ASIDE OF LANDS AS FOREST RESERVES ON MOLOKA'I (TMK [2]5-8-003:012 AS AN EXTENSION OF THE MOLOKA'I FOREST RESERVE), MAUI (TMK [2]1-1-002:007 AS AN EXTENSION OF THE KO'OLAU FOREST RESERVE), AND HAWAII (TMKs [3]1-8-006:026, [3]1-8-006:027, AND [3]1-8-006:029 AS AN EXTENSION OF THE 'OLA'A FOREST RESERVE); AND NATURAL AREA RESERVE ON MAUI (TMK [2]1-7-003:036 AS THE KAILIO POINT NATURAL AREA RESERVE).

AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRPERSON TO ESTABLISH THE DATES, LOCATIONS, AND TIMES FOR THE PUBLIC HEARINGS, AND TO APPOINT HEARING OFFICERS FOR THE HEARINGS.

BACKGROUND:

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife has identified land parcels suitable for designation as Forest Reserves and a Natural Area Reserve (see Figures 1 through 4, Exhibit 1). These parcels are currently classified as unencumbered land and are managed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources Land Division. The lands have low value to the Land Division and high value to the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW); the transfer is mutually acceptable to both. Designating areas as Forest Reserve and Natural Area Reserve will enable proper management of natural resources within each parcel, improve connectivity for access and management, and give DOFAW direct authority to oversee these areas. These parcels were chosen because they are adjacent to existing reserves, will increase public access to those reserves and the shoreline, and will provide habitat for native species.

The State aims to strengthen and expand the connectivity of protection and management of Maui and Moloka'i's forests, from the summit to the sea. This includes (2)5-8-003:012 and (2)1-1-002:007. Many upland forests are protected, but most

coastal areas are not, creating a significant protection gap for lowland forests and streams. (2)1-7-003:036 features coastal cliffs that serve as habitat for rare native bee species. With improved management, it could also provide habitat for seabirds and other coastal species.

TMKs (3)1-8-006:026, (3)1-8-006:027, and (3)1-8-006:029 are near a recreational hunting and gathering area and face access issues from neighboring landowners. Adding these lands will establish secure public access to the nearby 'Ōla'a Forest Reserve by connecting it to a maintained county road.

Under Sections 183-12 and 195-4 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, public hearings are required for proposed land set-asides. After these hearings, the Division will return to the Board to present public testimony and recommend dispositions based on the feedback received.

CHAPTER 343 - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

Under Section 343 HRS, actions such as holding a public hearing are *considered de minimis*, and an environmental assessment is not necessary. If the lands are transferred to DOFAW, then Chapter 343 environmental requirements will apply to the Division's management of those lands, and the Division will be responsible for complying with Chapter 343, HRS, as amended, at that time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Authorize the Division of Forestry and Wildlife to hold public hearings on designating the subject lands as Forest Reserves or Natural Area Reserves.
2. Authorize the Chairperson to:
 - A. Set the dates, locations, and times for the public hearings; and
 - B. Appoint hearing officers for the public hearings.

Respectfully Submitted:



David G. Smith, Administrator

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



Ryan K.P. Kanaka'ole, Acting Chairperson

AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE TO CONDUCT PUBLIC HEARINGS TO GATHER INPUT ON THE POTENTIAL SET ASIDE OF LANDS AS FOREST RESERVES AND A NATURAL AREA RESERVE

Exhibit 1: Maps of set aside parcels.



Figure 1: Map of the proposed extension of the 'Ōla'a Forest Reserve on Hawai'i. Tax Map Key (TMK) parcels (3) 1-8-006:026, (3) 1-8-006:027, and (3) 1-8-006:029 border the current 'Ōla'a Forest Reserve boundary.

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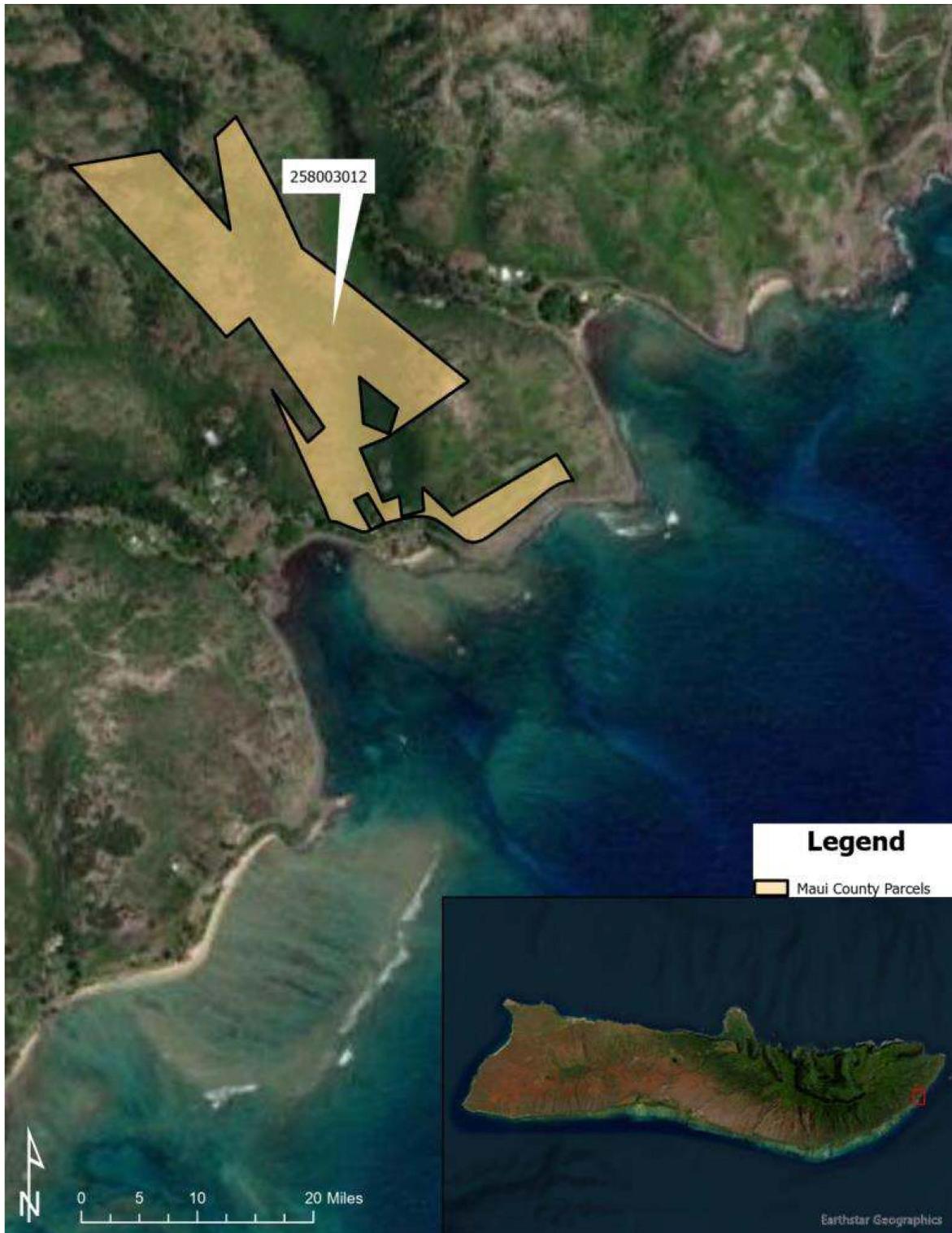


Figure 2: Map of the proposed extension of the Moloka'i Forest Reserve on Moloka'i. TMK parcel (2) 5-8-003:012 is on the eastern coast of Moloka'i and does not border the Moloka'i Forest Reserve's current boundary.

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Figure 3: Map of the proposed Kailio Point Natural Area Reserve on Maui. TMK parcel (2) 1-7-003:036 is on the southeastern coast of Maui and does not border a reserve.

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Figure 4: Map of the proposed extension of the Ko'olau Forest Reserve on Maui. TMK parcel (2) 1-1-002:007 borders the current Ko'olau Forest Reserve boundary.