



26 Pepeluali 2026, 'Olepau, Kā'elo

**Subject: Agenda Item F-3, Strong Support of the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan**

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

My name is Kamalei Lind, and I write on behalf of **Kīpahulu 'Ohana, Inc. (KOI)** in strong SUPPORT of the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules moving forward to a public hearing as part of the administrative rulemaking process.

Kīpahulu 'Ohana is a Native Hawaiian nonprofit organization based in Kīpahulu, East Maui. Our work centers on cultural practice, kilo (careful observation), and community-based marine and land management rooted in ahupua'a systems. We successfully achieved designation of our Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) in 2024 and are now actively engaged in its implementation and ongoing kuleana-based care along our shoreline in Kīpahulu. Through this process, we have firsthand experience with the depth of commitment, patience, and collaboration required to move a community-driven fisheries proposal forward.

We understand intimately what it means to build consensus over years—sometimes decades—while balancing cultural practice, subsistence needs, scientific monitoring, and State partnership. The Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o community, through Hui Kahuwai, has demonstrated that same level of dedication and rigor.

An eight-year planning process grounded in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to the kai reflects a serious and thoughtful approach to resource protection. Their extensive outreach—engaging thousands of community members, students, fishers, and stakeholders—demonstrates transparency and commitment to inclusion. Revising the plan multiple times in response to feedback further shows their willingness to collaborate and strengthen enforceability while protecting the gains achieved during the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period.

From our own CBSFA experience in East Maui, we know that rest periods and community-based management can lead to measurable ecological recovery and renewed abundance when paired with education, monitoring, and shared responsibility. However, without formalized rules, those gains remain vulnerable. Advancing this plan to public hearing is a necessary next step to protect the investment of time, trust, and restoration already made by the community.



As people deeply connected to the kai —through subsistence fishing, shoreline monitoring, and intergenerational teaching—we recognize the importance of giving communities the tools to responsibly resume sustainable fishing practices. The Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan represents a comprehensive co-management model that aligns cultural knowledge with contemporary management needs.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules. Doing so honors the decades of community leadership, strengthens collaborative governance between DLNR and communities, like Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, and supports the long-term health of Hawai'i's nearshore fisheries.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued service to the people and resources of Hawai'i.

Me ke aloha 'āina,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheyenne K Lind".

Cheyenne Kamalei Lind  
Executive Director

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[EXTERNAL] Ka'upulehu "Try Wait" Science Been Made Public?

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From Robert Duerr <surf77@me.com>

Date Thu 2/26/2026 2:05 PM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Riley Smith  
C/O DLNR Land Board

Aloha Land Board,

I am writing about BLNR Agenda Item 2/27/26 F.3. [Request For Approval to Hold Public Hearings on 1\) the Adoption of a New Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter Within Title 13: Chapter 13-60.12,...](#)

Baseline resource conditions were documented with the Ka'upulehu "Try Wait" closure in 2016. From 2016 to 2026 were there resource studies or surveys done by county, state, federal or other public or private agencies, individuals or groups for the ["Ka'upulehu Fisheries Management Area?"](#)

Has the Land Board reviewed these studies, surveys and data? What are the Board's conclusions? Are these studies, surveys and data available to the public? Does science support what is asked for in these proposed Rule Changes for Ka'upulehu?

Where is DAR's review and analysis of the data?

In 2016 the ["Ka'upulehu Fisheries Management Area"](#) was closed for a 10 year "Try Wait" closure. There were studies done. What has been done since this report:

**"Establishing the Baseline Condition of Marine Resources:  
Results of 2012 and 2013 Ka'upulehu, Hawai'i Marine Surveys"  
by Dwayne Minton, Eric Conklin, Alan Friedlander, Rebecca  
Most, Kydd Pollock, Kostantinos Stamoulis and Chad Wiggins**

The report was done by The Nature Conservancy 923 Nuuanu Ave. Honolulu, HI 96817 and Fisheries Ecology Research Lab, Department of Biology, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Hilo.

The report says "Benthic and fish surveys at Ka'upulehu were conducted by TNC's marine monitoring team and researchers from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Hilo. The survey area covered approximately 20 km (12.4 mi) of coastline and included coral reef habitat from high tide to the 20-m (60 ft) depth cline. A total of 416 sites (290 in 2012 and 126 in 2013) were randomly generated using ArcGIS. Sites were stratified across two factors: management status and reef area."

Besides addition to baseline studies, does the Land Board have studies that take pollution into account with resource abundance or scarcity at the ["Ka'upulehu Fisheries Management Area?"](#) Have

pollution point sources like injection wells, golf course effluents and others been inventoried and monitored for effects on seaweed, algae, fish, muliwai zones, ph levels, oxygen levels and other influences that affect ocean and fresh water resources at Ka'upulehu? Are pollution baseline and on going studies available to the public?

Closing public access to Hawaiian shoreline and ocean for "Try Wait" was a controversial undertaking.

With ramifications statewide, the public agreed with the understanding that the 10 year wait period would produce enhanced ocean resources. Has this materialized? Is it supported by data? Where is the data?

Mahalo,

Robert Duerr  
Albatross News  
Senior Active Outdoor Writers Association of America  
808-937-9104  
albatrossnews@proton.me

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**[EXTERNAL] Testimony for Agenda Item F-3, Feb 27, 2026**

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**From** Phil F <philferna@gmail.com>

**Date** Wed 2/25/2026 4:51 PM

**To** DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

 1 attachment (60 KB)

Kaupulehu Group Comments.pdf;

My name is Phil Fernandez. I have lived in Holualoa, Big Island, for over 20 years and have fished the waters off of Kona since 1988. I fished in Kukio Bay prior to the construction of the present development, and have fished at the shores of Kona Village Resort since 1988.

I am currently a Hawaii Commissioner to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and a member of the Pacific Islands Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. I was the past president of the Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition. I testified in favor of the Hawaii State Herbivore Plan which was approved by the Board. I am also a member of the founding group of the Maunalua Bay Fisheries Management Area, which the Board designated in 2025.

I have attached point-by-point recommendations to modify the draft proposal as presented by the Division of Aquatic Resources.

While I appreciate Hui Kahu'wai's efforts to create a management plan and their willingness to adjust it to DAR's draft plan, there is much that still needs to be adjusted. My suggestions are based on scientific findings that DAR is very well aware of. Adopting current state-wide rules, especially for migratory fish and fish with wide-ranging habitats, will simplify the proposed rules without jeopardizing the fish stocks in the South Kohala region.

I will attend the February 27th board meeting and will be available for questions.

Phil Fernandez

DAR Proposal		Fishermen's Comments	
Reference Number	Proposal Description	Fisher's Group Position	Relative Importance to Fishers
1	Fishing Permit	A area fishing permit is acceptable, catch data monitoring must be analyzed by DAR, not another party such as The Nature Conservancy or by Hui Kahu'wai.	Medium
2	Aggregate bag limit of 10 fish	This bag limit is not science based. Current state rules, by species, are science based and should be applied, not an arbitrary non-science based limit. The area is subject to a strong north current, thus fish in the area migrate to the north and south with the current so an area specific rule does not make sense. Consistent rules across the region allows for better management of the fishery. Also makes it easier for fisher rule compliance and DOCARE enforcement.	High
2B	exceptions to bag limit (invasive species)	Acceptable	Low
2C	20 each, Opelu, Akule, Ooma	These species are seasonal and/or schooling fish, thus most fish are not in the area most of the time. When they are in the area they are in large schools (schools of 100's or 1,000's). Harvest of 20 fish during abundant seasons or as schools move through is not a science based approach to management. This rule proposal should be deleted, a revert to state-wide rules. Abundance of opelu and akule are based on successful recruitment (spawning). Years with good recruitment lead to large schools and bad recruitment leads to smaller schools. Recruitment is dependent on ocean conditions, not fishing pressure.	High
2D	Bag limit of 2 from list: Any finfish over 12", 'Ōmilu, Mū Kūmū (min size 12"), Moi, Moana Kali, 'Ama'ama, Uku, Ulua, Aukea, Uhu – all spp (max size 20")	All herbivores should follow state-wide herbivore rules. Non-herbivores should follow state-wide species based rules. Agian, the proposed rule is not science based and does not recognize that most species migrate up and down the coast. Uku, Omilu, and Ulua may migrate 100's of miles. Species based biology of other species do not have science based tagging studies to understand migration movement.	High

3	No Take of: Blue Uhu (terminal phase male) all species; Bag & Size Limit : 1 per species (listed as priority species); Maximum size of 20" (for large bodied species)	Should use state-wide herbivore rule: Small bodied spp. 10" min; Large bodied spp. 14" min. There is no justification or scientific basis for veering from state rules.	High
4	INVERTEBRATES Limit of 15 Combined Bag; No Take Live Kupe'e; Limit of 2 Lobster (spiny & slipper); Sea Urchins (all species); 'A'ama No take of females; He'e Bag limit of 2	Again, not science based. Recent crab science indicate that protecting female crabs may lead to an imbalance of the female/male ratio which lead to reduced spawning. Again, management of invertebrates should follow science-based state rules.	High
5A	Allowed Gear: Spear (Speargun, 3-Prong, Hawaiian Sling) Thrownet Pole and Line (2 poles per person, 2 hooks per pole) Traps (visually check every 2 hrs)	This proposal, originating from the proponents, indicate lack of knowledge of standard fishing methods. For example, Damashi rigs typically are sold with 6 hooks,, thus the 2 hook limitation simply reflects the lack of knowledge of fishing. Likewise, in trap fishing the traps are typically left overnight. The 2 hour visual checking applies to gill net-type gear to prevent entanglement of monk seals. This rule is already in effect in that area. State-wide rules should be applied to gear usage.	
5B	Gear Restrictions: No nighttime spearing; No kite fishing (including notrash bags); No drone fishing; No bow fishing	Again much of this proposal from the proponents reflect lack of knowledge. Kite fishing is impractical as the winds are on-shore winds. Trash bag fishing is also not practical due to the wind direction and is a method used at South Point. Drone fishing is already banned by rule. Bow fishing is a non-existent method of fishing in Hawaii. Fishers accept a ban of night spearfishing. It should be noted that night spearfishing from shore is impractical as the access points are closed at dusk by the Four Season Resort Hualalai.	Medium
6	Other rules: No aquarium fishing No feeding fish No anchoring and no wake zone	No comment.	Low
7	'Opihi (all species) - combined bag limit of 15 Kō'ele - 2.5" min to 3.0" max Makaiauli & 'Ālinalina 1.25" min to 2.5" max; Rotational closure, changing bag limits. 4 management sub-zone	The Opihi Study is a reserach-based management plan, which fishers can support for the betterment of opihi management. Strong monitoring plan should be developed. Monitoring should be overseen by DAR and the results made publicly available. It should be noted that due to limited entry into the area due to lack of packing, opihi picking is already limited.	Medium

8	KAI MALU& Wai a Kāne Management Plan	<p>This is a proposal within a proposal. The proposal is not science based and is based on cultural protection. This area is known for an abundance of he'e. Fishers are aware of the large and productive fresh water spring, and have problems with the added protection of the spring. Fishers are agreeable to no entry, but this should be enforced to all including snorkel and tour boats that use moorage in the bay. No Entry should be just that, no entry for everyone, including picking up passengers for tours.</p>	Medium
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## Hawai'i Wildlife Fund

*Post Office Box 1801, Kealahou, Hawaii, HI 96750 &*

*Post Office Box 790637, Paia, Maui, HI 96779*

*Celebrating 30 years of protecting Hawaii's native wildlife through  
research, education and conservation.*

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26 February 2026

Board of Land and Natural Resources

P.O. Box 621

Honolulu, HI 96809

Re: Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026

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

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF) is in **strong support** of the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules proposed and advancing to a public hearing as part of the administrative rulemaking process. With fishing scheduled to resume on July 1st, 2026, timely approval of this plan is critical — and any delay risks leaving the area without enforceable protections at the very moment they are most needed.

The community of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, through their community-based non-profit Hui Kahuwai, has thoughtfully engaged in a deliberate eight-year planning process rooted in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. They have conducted over two years of robust outreach on the fisheries plan by consulting with 'ohana, fishers and other interested stakeholders, public scoping, online surveys, outreach events, and scientific conferences. During these efforts they have engaged over 6,000 people through outreach events, over 1,700 students through educational programs, and over 600,000 interactions through social media.

Hui Kahuwai has also worked collaboratively with the State to refine the proposed Fisheries Management Plan so it reflects both the lived fishing knowledge of the community and contemporary management needs. The plan has been revised four times in response to feedback received, strengthening its ability to be effectively enforced while safeguarding the gains achieved during the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period. The resulting regulations are science-based, culturally grounded, and carefully balanced, and include:

- **Bag limits** of 10 fish per person per day, with stricter limits of 1 fish per person for priority species (including Achilles tang, kūmū, 'ōmilu, ulua, and moi), protecting the species most vulnerable to overharvest.
- **Gear restrictions** including no night spearfishing, no braided line, no kite or drone fishing, and trap check requirements — minimizing ecological impact while preserving traditional fishing methods.
- A **Kai Malu Management Area**: encompassing the ecologically rich Kahuwai Bay, which restricts fishing to low-impact methods only (straight pole with no reel, lūhe'e, and hand gathering) to protect critical nursery habitat and the culturally sacred spring, Wai a Kāne.
- **Rotational 'opihi harvest zones** with bag limits of 15 combined and minimum size requirements, allowing limpet populations to recover while ensuring continued subsistence access.
- **Exemptions for invasive species** — roi, ta'ape, to'au, and kanda are explicitly excluded from bag limits to actively incentivize their removal and support reef health.

Their work builds on decades of observation, monitoring, collaborative planning, and reflects a comprehensive co-management approach to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The community is ready — and the reef is ready — to move forward.

Founded in 1996, Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF) is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving Hawai'i's native wildlife through research and education. For 30 years, we have worked to protect native wildlife and restore coastal and nearshore ecosystems across the Hawaiian Archipelago through community engagement and education, environmental research, and conservation advocacy. After three decades of work across Hawai'i, we have seen firsthand what happens to our native ecosystems when protections are insufficient: we lose irreplaceable flora, fauna, and habitats. The window to act is now. If the KFMP is not approved prior to June 30th, 2026, the area will remain closed to fishing indefinitely — an outcome that serves no one. This community-based initiative provides the enforceable, adaptive framework needed to protect what remains, restore what has been damaged, and support this wahi pana into the future.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules without delay, and passing BLNR Agenda item F3 at tomorrow's meeting.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify. Sincerely,



Megan Lamson Leatherman, M. Sc.  
HWF President & Hawai'i Program Director  
[megan@wildhawaii.org](mailto:megan@wildhawaii.org) | (c) 808-217-5777



Hannah Bernard, HWF  
Co-founder & Exec. Director  
[hannah@wildhawaii.org](mailto:hannah@wildhawaii.org) | (c) 808-280-8124



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February 25th, 2026  
Testimony of Support  
Agenda Item F-3  
Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan

Aloha Chair and members of the Board of Land & Natural Resources,

My name is Taha'a H. Kahele, I am a lineal descendant of Miloli'i, one of the last fishing villages on the island of Hawai'i (Moku O Keawe). I come before you all today in the form of this written testimony in strong support of the Ka'upulehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

Ten years ago I had testified in support of Try Wait, and now I testify in support of Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan. Within those ten years the team at Ka'ūpūlehu have developed a meticulous plan to ensure not only the protection of resources but to safeguard it for the many generations to come.

The communities of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, located along the stunning coastline of Hawai'i Island, have demonstrated remarkable dedication to environmental stewardship through their community-led non-profit organization, Hui Kahuwai.

This group has embarked on a meticulous and intentional eight-year planning initiative, deeply anchored in traditional Hawaiian principles. Central to their approach is "kilo," the practice of keen observation and understanding of natural patterns; "mo'okū'auhau," which honors the genealogical and historical connections to the land and sea; and "kuleana," the profound sense of responsibility and duty to care for and protect the 'āina (land) and kai (ocean).

These cultural foundations ensure that their efforts are not just reactive but profoundly respectful of ancestral wisdom, fostering a holistic strategy for resource management that balances human needs with ecological health.

To develop their proposed Fisheries Management Plan, Hui Kahuwai invested more than two years in extensive and inclusive outreach efforts. This involved meaningful consultations with 'ohana (extended family networks), local fishers who rely on these waters for sustenance, and a broad array of interested stakeholders, including environmental experts and community members. They facilitated public scoping sessions to gather diverse perspectives, distributed online surveys for widespread input, hosted interactive outreach events to build dialogue, and even presented at scientific conferences to integrate expert insights.

The scale of this engagement is impressive: over 6,000 individuals participated directly in these events, providing hands-on feedback; more than 1,700 students were reached through targeted educational programs that instilled values of sustainability in the next generation; and an astounding 600,000 interactions occurred via social media platforms, amplifying awareness and inviting global commentary. This multifaceted outreach not only democratized the planning process but also ensured that the plan reflects a tapestry of voices, from traditional knowledge holders to modern scientists, reducing potential conflicts and enhancing community buy-in.



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February 25th, 2026  
Testimony of Support  
Agenda Item F-3  
Ka'ūpulehu Fisheries Management Plan

In a spirit of true partnership, Hui Kahuwai has collaborated closely with state agencies to refine and polish the Fisheries Management Plan. This joint effort merges the invaluable “lived fishing knowledge” passed down through generations in the community—such as seasonal patterns, species behaviors, and sustainable harvesting techniques—with contemporary management imperatives, like data-driven regulations and enforcement mechanisms. The plan has undergone four iterative revisions, each incorporating constructive feedback from consultations and reviews, which has bolstered its practicality, enforceability, and alignment with legal standards.

Importantly, these updates prioritize preserving the hard-won ecological benefits from the decade-long “Try Wait” voluntary rest period, during which fishing was paused to allow marine ecosystems to recover from overexploitation. This rest initiative, often hailed as a model of proactive conservation, led to noticeable rebounds in fish populations, coral health, and biodiversity, underscoring the value of temporary restrictions in long-term sustainability.

This comprehensive endeavor is the culmination of decades of vigilant observation, rigorous monitoring of ocean health indicators, and collaborative planning among community members, scientists, and policymakers. It embodies a co-management framework, where local indigenous knowledge and governmental authority coexist to create resilient policies.

By preventing the erosion of “Try Wait’s” achievements—such as restored habitats and thriving marine life—the plan aims to promote a balanced future where resources are not depleted but regenerated. Now, with this solid foundation in place, the community stands poised and eager to advance through the administrative rulemaking process. This step will formalize the plan, enabling the responsible resumption of sustainable, subsistence-based fishing practices that honor cultural traditions while ensuring the kai remains abundant for generations to come. Through such thoughtful leadership, Ka'ūpulehu and Kūki'o exemplify how community-driven initiatives can harmonize heritage, science, and policy for enduring environmental prosperity.

I would like to leave you all with this *'Olelo No'eau* that I constantly reminisce on. **“He Ali'i Ka 'Aina He Kauwa Ke Kanaka.”** (The land is a chief and man is its servant).

Mahalo for allowing me to present this testimony,

Me ka pomaikai a me ke aloha,

Taha'a H. Kahele

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**[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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**From** Jenny Kalmbach <JKalmbach@kukio.com>  
**Date** Thu 2/26/2026 9:46 AM  
**To** DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

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

My name is Jenny Kalmbach and I SUPPORT the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

I have worked on the beach at Uluweuweu Bay for the past 20 years, spending the majority of my days in and on the water paddling, sailing, surfing, and snorkeling. Over that time, I have had the unique opportunity to observe firsthand the changes in our nearshore marine environment, particularly the decline in fish populations that occurred over many years. During the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period, I have also been fortunate enough to witness something truly remarkable: the return of our reef fish. There has been a noticeable increase not only in the number of fish, but also in their size and in the overall variety of species present in the bay. It has been absolutely incredible to see this level of recovery take place within an ecosystem that once felt depleted.

As noted by the community of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o through Hui Kahuwai, this plan is the result of an intentional and collaborative eight-year planning process grounded in kilo, the mo'okū'auhau of place, and a shared kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. Their outreach efforts, engaging thousands of community members, fishers, students, and other stakeholders reflect a genuine commitment to ensuring that this plan is informed by both lived fishing knowledge and contemporary management practices.

Hui Kahuwai has clearly invested tremendous time and effort into refining a rules package that meets the needs of the community while safeguarding the gains achieved during the Try Wait period. My hope is that with these thoughtful and carefully considered rules in place, the increases we are now seeing in fish population, size, and diversity can be protected and sustained for future generations.

Please do not let their hard work go to waste. I respectfully urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan so that the progress we are now witnessing can continue for years to come.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jenny Kalmbach

Date: February 25, 2026

From: Caitlin Kryss & Taz Rosam  
PO Box 711687  
Mountain View, HI 96771

To: Hawaii Board of Land and Natural Resources

**Subject line: Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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

My name is Caitlin Kryss and I SUPPORT the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

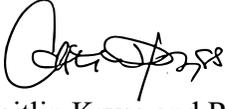
I am a resident of Hawai‘i Island, and the health of our nearshore fisheries is deeply personal to me and my ‘ohana. The Ka‘ūpūlehu coastline has long been known for its abundance, and the 10-year “Try Wait” rest period demonstrated what is possible when community, science, and stewardship work together. The visible recovery of reef fish populations during Try Wait stands as powerful evidence that careful, place-based management works.

As parents and community members, we want our keiki to see what strong, community-based resource management looks like. We want them to witness how Western science and traditional ‘ike can bridge together to create thoughtful, adaptive, and enforceable policy. Most importantly, we want them to grow up with healthy reefs — not stories of what once was. Healthy reefs are a living model of what the future should look like when kanaka actively and responsibly mālama ‘āina and the kai.

The community of Ka‘ūpūlehu and Kūki‘o, through their community-based non-profit Hui Kahuwai, has thoughtfully engaged in a deliberate eight year planning process rooted in kilo, mo‘okū‘auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama ‘āina and the kai. They have conducted over two years of robust outreach on the fisheries plan by consulting with ‘ohana, fishers and other interested stakeholders, public scoping, online surveys, outreach events, and scientific conferences. They have engaged over 6000 people through outreach events, over 1700 students through educational programs, and over 600,000 interactions through social media.

Hui Kahuwai has worked collaboratively with the State to refine the proposed Fisheries Management Plan, so it reflects both lived fishing knowledge of the community and contemporary management needs. The plan has been revised four times in response to feedback received, strengthening its ability to be effectively enforced, while safeguarding the gains achieved during the 10-year “Try Wait” rest period. This work builds on decades of observation, monitoring, collaborative planning, and reflects a comprehensive co-management approach to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The community is ready to move forward with administrative rulemaking to ensure that sustainable, subsistence-based fishing can responsibly resume in the Ka‘ūpūlehu and Kūki‘o.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpulehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Caitlin Kryss" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Caitlin Kryss and Rosam/Kryss 'Ohana

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**[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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**From** Noelle Lindenmann <noelle.royer@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 2/26/2026 10:23 AM

**To** DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha Chair Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Noelle Lindenmann and I **SUPPORT** the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

The community of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, through their community-based non-profit Hui Kahuwai, has thoughtfully engaged in a deliberate eight year planning process rooted in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. They have conducted over two years of robust outreach on the fisheries plan by consulting with 'ohana, fishers and other interested stakeholders; engaging in robust public scoping; distributing online surveys; attending and presenting at outreach events; and learning and sharing their insights at scientific conferences. They have engaged over 6,000 people through outreach events, over 1,700 students through educational programs, and over 600,000 interactions through social media.

Hui Kahuwai has worked collaboratively with the Division of Aquatic Resources to refine the proposed Fisheries Management Plan, so that it reflects both lived fishing knowledge of the community and contemporary management needs. The plan has been revised four times in response to feedback received, strengthening its ability to be effectively enforced, while safeguarding the gains achieved during the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period. This work builds on decades of observation, monitoring, and collaborative planning, and reflects a comprehensive co-management approach to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The community is ready to move forward with administrative rulemaking to ensure that sustainable, subsistence-based fishing can responsibly resume in the Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony,

Noelle Lindenmann (she/her/hers)

e. [noelle.royer@gmail.com](mailto:noelle.royer@gmail.com)

Kailua-Kona

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**[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda Item F3 – February 27, 2026**

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From ekolusiphone@gmail.com <ekolusiphone@gmail.com>

Date Wed 2/25/2026 4:54 PM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

**Re: Support for BLNR Agenda Item F3 – February 27, 2026**  
**Request to Advance the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan to Public Hearing**

Aloha e Chair and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Ekolu Lindsey, and I write in strong support of advancing the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and its associated fishing rules to public hearing as part of the Chapter 91 administrative rulemaking process.

I have followed and supported the Ka‘ūpūlehu community’s efforts since before the “Try Wait” rest period was even implemented. What began as a bold, community-driven decision to allow the fishery to rest has evolved into one of the most thoughtful and deliberate place-based management efforts in our state.

The Ka‘ūpūlehu community, through Hui Kahuwai, has demonstrated that mālama is not just a word — it is action. Rooted in kilo, informed by mo‘okū‘auhau, and guided by kuleana to both ‘āina and kai, this work reflects years of observation, outreach, revision, and collaboration. The plan has been refined multiple times in response to feedback. It incorporates traditional knowledge and contemporary science. It reflects extensive engagement with fishers, ‘ohana, students, and the broader public.

The measurable recovery of the resource during the Try Wait period speaks for itself. More importantly, the process has strengthened the community itself. They navigated differing opinions, state law, political realities, and the weight of public scrutiny with patience and integrity. That precedent matters.

This effort represents more than reopening a fishery. It represents a model of how communities can responsibly steward cultural and natural resources within the framework of state law. It honors the ‘ike of the kūpuna who understood seasonal restraint and intergenerational responsibility. It also protects the rights of future generations — the keiki who deserve to inherit an ‘āina momona, not stories of what once was.

Advancing this plan to public hearing does not predetermine its outcome. It simply affirms that this community’s years of diligent work deserve to move forward in the rulemaking process.

I respectfully urge the Board to approve moving the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan to public hearing.

Me ka mahalo,

Ekolu Lindsey



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**[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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From Jan Marrack <janmarrack@hotmail.com>

Date Wed 2/25/2026 5:10 PM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

To: [blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov](mailto:blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov)

**Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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

My name is Jan Marrack and I SUPPORT the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

The community of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, through their community-based non-profit Hui Kahuwai, has thoughtfully engaged in a deliberate eight year planning process rooted in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. They have conducted over two years of robust outreach on the fisheries plan by consulting with 'ohana, fishers and other interested stakeholders, public scoping, online surveys, outreach events, and scientific conferences. They have engaged over 6000 people through outreach events, over 1700 students through educational programs, and over 600,000 interactions through social media.

Hui Kahuwai has worked collaboratively with the State to refine the proposed Fisheries Management Plan, so it reflects both lived fishing knowledge of the community and contemporary management needs. The plan has been revised four times in response to feedback received, strengthening its ability to be effectively enforced, while safeguarding the gains achieved during the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period. This work builds on decades of observation, monitoring, collaborative planning, and reflects a comprehensive co-management approach to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The community is ready to move forward with administrative rulemaking to ensure that sustainable, subsistence-based fishing can responsibly resume in the Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules.

Jan Marrack  
65-1183 Kapiolani Rd  
Kamuela, HI 96743.

February 25, 2026

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

My name is Dr. Kanoë Morishige and I SUPPORT the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules moving forward to a public hearing as part of the administrative rulemaking process. I provide this testimony in my personal capacity. I am a Native Hawaiian researcher and Assistant Professor at the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, graduate faculty of the UH Mānoa Sustainable Fisheries Graduate Program, and a member of the Nā Maka Onaona intertidal research team that developed the ‘opihi management plan adopted by Hui Kahuwai. Our team brings expertise in ‘opihi life history, reproductive ecology, and seasonal dynamics of intertidal systems, and my dissertation examined environmental drivers shaping reproductive timing and productivity of ‘opihi and hā‘uke‘uke.

For more than sixteen years, I have been part of Nā Maka Onaona, working alongside Hui Kahuwai to conduct community-based intertidal monitoring at Kalaemanō in Ka‘ūpūlehu and across Hawai‘i, learning with communities on diverse shorelines. This work, which extends to research in Papahānaumokuākea, is grounded in Huli ‘ia—an ‘Ōiwi kilo methodology documenting seasonal mauka–makai change while strengthening ‘Ōiwi ‘āina literacy and engaging the tools of institutional science. Guided by the ‘Āina Momona Research Framework, long-term monitoring, outreach, and Nā Kilo ‘Āina engagement have contributed to Na Maka Onaona maintaining one of Hawai‘i’s longest-running intertidal monitoring programs that directly informs the adaptive ‘opihi management plan.

Through transects, gonad studies, rapid assessments, and Productivity and Carrying Capacity surveys, this research advances understanding of population dynamics, habitat relationships, and environmental drivers shaping the reproduction and growth of ‘opihi and hā‘uke‘uke. This nearly two-decade body of research has informed Nā Maka Onaona’s rotational management approach, pairing ongoing monitoring with five-year cycles of rest and sustainable harvest and protecting highly reproductive size classes to sustain productive intertidal ecosystems for future generations.

The partnership among Hui Kahuwai, Nā Maka Onaona, UH partners, and the Division of Aquatic Resources positions this plan as a model for adaptive, community-driven fisheries management grounded in monitoring and shared stewardship. The Ka‘ūpūlehu community has dedicated more than eight years to developing this fisheries plan through kilo, mo‘okū‘auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama ‘āina, building on decades of observation and the ecological gains of the 10-year rest period. It is imperative that the community now has the opportunity to engage public input through DAR-facilitated meetings. I respectfully urge the Board to move the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated rules forward to public hearing.

Mahalo for your consideration,



Dr. Kanoë Morishige  
[kanoëulalani@gmail.com](mailto:kanoëulalani@gmail.com)

Moana Ohana  
PO Box 4454, Kailua Kona, HI 96745  
[mike@moanaohana.com](mailto:mike@moanaohana.com)



Re: Support for BLNR Agenda Item F3,  
February 27, 2026.

Date: February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Aloha e Chair and members of the Board of Land and Natural resources,

My name is Mike Nakachi, I am from Kekahawaiole, on Moku o Keawe. I come to you all humbly and with aloha! I bring into this conversation and testimony the legacy of my 'ohana, my kūpuna, my 'aumakua, with my steadfast love for our pae 'āina. I am a dive professional with over 40 years of experience, a practitioner of traditional Native Hawaiian customary rights and principles of aloha 'āina to mālama this 'āina and try as best as we can to restore the abundance of 'āina momona. I am blessed to have a mo'okū'auhau that has guided me in the lineage as Kahu Manō. Through these practices it has allowed me the privilege and the honor to be blessed by forms of akua and kinolau in the realm of Kanaloa throughout our pae 'āina.

Through the Lense of time, significant changes have happened to the land scape and sea scape of Kaupulehu, from Kikaua to Kalaemano.

I have supported the effort of Hui Kahuwai, the lineal descendants of Kaupulehu for the last 20 plus years to get to this point of asking for this process of Chapter 91 to move forward.

We are here because the system we currently have for our aquatic resources is NOT improving, communities like Hui Kahuwai and others are fulfilling the role of a Konohiki, coming from the community for the community and reminding folks that responsible fishing is needed in these special places many here call home. I support all of the efforts of Hui Kahuwai, their administrative record along with all of the appendices and iterations of their original fishery management plan, where the community engaged with scientific partners to do the science, to do the intertidal monitoring, with Ike' Hawaii and place base management best practices with Aloha for 'aina always being there for resources first and foremost. Try wait has worked! We just need to ensure the wait will be there for generations and best management practices from Hui Kahuwai will be implemented.

I support the efforts of all communities that have this pilina to their place, that have the kuleana to care for their wahi pana, that want to restore aina Momona...

Mahalo for your time, Malama pono,

Mike Nakachi,  
Moana Ohana LLC





Board of Land and Natural Resources

Agenda Item F3

APPROVE REQUEST TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR THE ADOPTION OF A NEW HAWAI‘I ADMINISTRATIVE RULES CHAPTER WITHIN TITLE 13, CHAPTER 13-60.12, “KA‘ŪPŪLEHU FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AREA, HAWAI‘I”

Pepeluali 27, 2026

9:00AM

DLNR Boardroom

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** staff submittal’s recommendation to authorize and approve the holding of public hearing(s) on the proposed adoption of chapter 13-60.12, Hawai‘i Administrative Rules (HAR), “Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area, Hawai‘i.” We deeply appreciate the communities of Ka‘ūpūlehu and Kūki‘o, whose leadership to protect their natural and cultural resources has already delivered exponential benefits and demonstrated success. OHA urge the Department to move forward with the public hearings to adopt new HAR rules.

OHA is the constitutionally-established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians,<sup>1</sup> and has substantive obligations to protect the cultural and natural resources of Hawai‘i for the agency’s beneficiaries.<sup>2</sup> OHA consistently supports community-based stewardship and management, and OHA specifically supports community-based fisheries management initiatives particularly by rural fishing communities as continuation of the Native Hawaiian resource management traditions, values, and lifestyles that have sustained them for centuries.<sup>3</sup> Most recently, OHA’s Board of Trustees’ adopted a resolution on January 15, 2026 demonstrating their continued support for Ka‘ūpūlehu and their proposed administrative rules in anticipation of these forthcoming actions following the 10-year moratorium.

Ka‘ūpūlehu has been a model for continued practice of traditional resource management. The 10-year nearshore “Try Wait” period for the Ka‘ūpūlehu Marine

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<sup>1</sup> HAW. CONST. ART. XII SEC. 5

<sup>2</sup> See HRS Chapter 10

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees Resolution of February 27, 2014, A Resolution Supporting Community Based Subsistence Fishing Area Designation and Rules.

Reserve represents a conscious, community-driven effort to return to a successful subsistence fishery, to ultimately benefit the environmental, cultural, and economic interests of current and future generations. In addition to management, the Ka‘ūpūlehu community developed a community monitoring program which uses five different survey methods as part of their Fisheries Management Plan. With their intimate knowledge of and commitment to their place and resources, they demonstrate how communities possess the expertise and capacity to effectively ensure the conservation and protection of the local marine environment.<sup>4</sup>

OHA supports and commend Ka‘ūpūlehu and Hui Kahuwai for their outstanding leadership and demonstrated success. In addition to having the foresight to take action to protect their precious natural and cultural resources, they have also coordinated with DLNR’s Division of Aquatic Resources, provided hundreds of educational opportunities for their community, developed strategic plans to further facilitate the protection of these resources, and have demonstrated success to not only protect and grow these natural resources, but also engage various stakeholders.

Accordingly, OHA urges the BLNR to **APPROVE** the request to hold public hearings for the adoption of a new HAR Chapter regarding Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area, Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this critical issue.

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<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Wayne Tanaka, Ho‘ohana aku a Ho‘ōla aku: First steps to averting the tragedy of the commons in Hawai‘i’s nearshore fisheries, 10 ASIAN PACIFIC LAW AND POLICY J. 235 (2008) available at [https://manoa.hawaii.edu/aplpj/wpcontent/uploads/sites/120/2011/11/APLPJ\\_10.1\\_tanaka.pdf](https://manoa.hawaii.edu/aplpj/wpcontent/uploads/sites/120/2011/11/APLPJ_10.1_tanaka.pdf)

[EXTERNAL] BLNR Agenda Item F3 2-27-2026

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From Klaus Radtke <klaus.wh.radtke@gmail.com>

Date Wed 2/25/2026 8:44 PM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

February 25, 2026

Aloha Chair Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources

**Re.: Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan**

After years of hard work, research and collaborative planning the community has now presented you with the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan. It highlights that sustainable, subsistence-based fishing can responsibly resume in the Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o.

Based on the above, I urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules.

Sincerely yours,

Klaus Radtke, Ph.D.

Wildland Resources Sciences



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[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026

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From Shannon Rudolph <shannonkona@gmail.com>

Date Thu 2/26/2026 10:56 AM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha BLNR,

I **SUPPORT** the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

Mahalo,

Shannon Rudolph

40+ year Hawai'i resident



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**[EXTERNAL] F-3 Oppose**

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**From** Todd Shiraki <c2cfishingsupply@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 2/26/2026 10:36 AM

**To** DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

I oppose the adoption of the rules package set forth. I would like to see the data that these rules are made from. I support all sustainable fisheries that are back by hard truth and data.



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

Testimony to  
**BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

February 27, 2026

9 AM

Room 132

**In SUPPORT of F-3:**

Request For Approval to Hold Public Hearings on 1) the Adoption of a New Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter Within Title 13: Chapter 13-60.12, "Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area, Hawai'i" to establish the area boundaries, establish bag limits, size limits, and open and closed seasons for various marine life species, implement gear restrictions, establish a fishing permit requirement including permit terms and conditions, and to establish rules and boundaries for the 'Opihi Rest Area Rotational Zones to implement enhanced 'opihi management measures, the Kai Malu Management Area to align with the traditional fishing practices of Kahuwai Bay, and the Wai a Kāne Cultural Site and Freshwater Spring to recognize and preserve the important cultural and ecological role Wai a Kāne plays for Kahuwai Bay and the surrounding nearshore ecosystem; and 2) Amendments to and Compilation of Chapter 13-60.4, Hawaii Administrative Rules, "West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area, Hawai'i" to repeal rules for the Ka'ūpūlehu Marine Reserve, reestablish the Ka'ūpūlehu Fish Replenishment Area, and make other housekeeping amendments throughout the chapter.

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Aloha Chair Kanaka'ole and members of the Land Board,

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i, on behalf of its 20,000 members and supporters, **strongly SUPPORTS** the staff recommendation to move forward with a public hearing on the fishery rules developed by those who have worked for over three decades to restore the once-renowned and recently depleted fisheries of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'ō. **These proposed Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area rules represent the very type of community-driven and culturally-informed management strategies that the Division of Aquatic Resources and Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) must support to a far greater degree, in order to uphold the public trust and fulfill the state's constitutional obligations.**

The Hawai'i State Constitution makes clear that our natural and cultural resources, including our nearshore marine resources, are subject to the public trust doctrine.<sup>1</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup> HAW. CONST. ART. XI SECS. 1, 6.

trust resources must be held and administered for the present and future generations who are the beneficiaries of the public trust.<sup>2</sup>

The constitution also requires the protection and enforcement of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, many of which rely upon healthy and abundant nearshore resources, and which have also been recognized as a “public trust purpose” afforded a high degree of protection under the trust.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, the BLNR’s constitutional responsibilities and fiduciary obligations strongly counsel its support of proposals that can both restore and sustain our nearshore public trust resources for the benefit of Hawai’i’s people, and perpetuate the constitutionally protected Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices and ways of life that rely upon them.

The Ka’ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area rules represent the very type of proposal the BLNR and Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) should be supporting, in order to uphold the state’s constitutional obligations in the waters of Ka’ūpūlehu and Kūki’o. Decades of observation and discussion, and years of data collection, community consultation, outreach, and deliberation, grounded in ‘ike kūpuna and the cultural values that sustained Hawai’i’s fisheries and people for generations, have resulted in a comprehensive place-based management strategy that the DLNR, with its limited resources, has never been able to unilaterally develop. Notably, the proposed rules provide for truly meaningful management measures that would have a much better chance at sustaining public trust marine resources than what the DLNR has ever put forward on its own, and would thereby protect and perpetuate constitutionally-protected Native Hawaiian traditional and customary fishing practices reliant on a healthy and abundant nearshore environment. **Moreover, the deliberate and community-driven process underlying these rules has also resulted in a proposal that has garnered far more support than any non-community-based Division of Aquatic Resources fisheries management proposal has likely ever received, even further increasing their chance of success.**

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai’i strongly urges the BLNR to **ADOPT** the staff recommendation in agenda item F-3, and move the proposed Ka’ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area rules to a public hearing consistent with its constitutional duties. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify

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<sup>2</sup> HAW. CONST. ART. XI, SEC. 2; HRS § 187A et. seq.

<sup>3</sup> HAW. CONST. ART. XII SEC. 7.

‘Olepau, Nana – 26 Pep 2026

SUBJECT: Testimony for BLNR Agenda Item F3 for Feb 27, 2026

Aloha e Chair and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Kēhau Springer, I am kanaka ‘ōiwi residing in Kea‘au, Moku o Keawe. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am writing this letter in **STRONG SUPPORT** for the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

Throughout the 20+ years working in marine conservation across our Pae ‘Āina of Hawai‘i and the Pacific, I have witnessed the work of many communities and got to see how resources have changed (and not always for the good). However, I know the commitment of the lineal descendants of Ka‘ūpūlehu and the members of Hui Kahuwai understand the importance of leaving their place in a better condition for future generations.

The ‘ohana, lawai‘a and community of Ka‘ūpūlehu, Kūki‘o has worked for many decades to support sustainable marine management efforts in the Kekaha wai ‘ole lands. They have worked collaboratively with the State on the rules, with partners for monitoring and engaged over 6000+ people to share about their efforts.

I urge the BLNR to approve a public hearing for the Ka‘ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and Administrative Rules.

Na‘u me ke aloha,

*Shauna Kēhaunani Springer*

na Shauna Kēhaunani Springer  
Kea‘au, Moku o Keawe, Hawai‘i  
Founder & Executive Director, Ka Pa‘akai Consulting  
PhD Candidate, Te Whare Wānaga o Waikato (The University of Waikato)

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**[EXTERNAL] Support for BLNR Agenda item F3, for February 27, 2026**

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From Kaleiheana Stormcrow <kaleiheanaapohaku@gmail.com>

Date Thu 2/26/2026 11:47 AM

To DLNR.BLNR.Testimony <blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha Chair Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow and I **SUPPORT** the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated fishing rules going to a public hearing as part of the administrative rule making process.

**PLEASE ADD YOUR SPECIFIC PERSONAL REASONS:** including connection to place, knowledge of Try Wait, connection to the kai and fishing.

The community of Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o, through their community-based non-profit Hui Kahuwai, has thoughtfully engaged in a deliberate eight year planning process rooted in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. They have conducted over two years of robust outreach on the fisheries plan by consulting with 'ohana, fishers and other interested stakeholders; engaging in robust public scoping; distributing online surveys; attending and presenting at outreach events; and learning and sharing their insights at scientific conferences. They have engaged over 6,000 people through outreach events, over 1,700 students through educational programs, and over 600,000 interactions through social media.

Hui Kahuwai has worked collaboratively with the Division of Aquatic Resources to refine the proposed Fisheries Management Plan, so that it reflects both lived fishing knowledge of the community and contemporary management needs. The plan has been revised four times in response to feedback received, strengthening its ability to be effectively enforced, while safeguarding the gains achieved during the 10-year "Try Wait" rest period. This work builds on decades of observation, monitoring, and collaborative planning, and reflects a comprehensive co-management approach to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The community is ready to move forward with administrative rulemaking to ensure that sustainable, subsistence-based fishing can responsibly resume in the Ka'ūpūlehu and Kūki'o.

We urge the Board to approve a public hearing for the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and administrative rules.

Sincerely,

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Mountain View

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy  
Supporting Agenda Item F-3  
Board of Land and Natural Resources  
February 27, 2026 at 9:00 am  
DLNR Boardroom, Kalanimoku Building and via Zoom**

Dear Acting Chair Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra strongly supports Agenda Item F-3, which is a Request For Approval to Hold Public Hearings on 1) the Adoption of a New Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter Within Title 13: Chapter 13-60.12, "Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area, Hawai'i"; and 2) Amendments to and Compilation of Chapter 13-60.4, Hawaii Administrative Rules, "West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area, Hawai'i".

TNC works closely with dozens of communities and individuals leading community-based makai management efforts across five Hawaiian Islands. We carry kuleana to the places where we work and to the people and communities we work alongside. As an organization guided by science with values aligned with conserving the biodiversity that underpins all life on Earth, we are deeply aware that biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate. To reverse this trend, we must find more inclusive and effective ways to manage humanity's footprint on land, freshwater, and the ocean. Addressing the twin crises of rapid climate change and biodiversity loss requires strong partnerships among communities, governments, and businesses—and above all, a foundation of respect for peoples, communities, and cultures.

Our work at Ka'ūpūlehu follows this principle. Scientific studies beginning in the early 1990s documented more than a 50% decline in coral cover and up to a 75% decline in highly prized food fish in the region, reinforcing the observations of kūpuna and other longtime residents. These studies were undertaken over a 20-year period and provide a clear record of ecological decline prior to the establishment of the 10-year Try Wait rest period in 2016. Conditions were further impacted by the 2015 statewide bleaching event, during which scientists recorded an additional 44% loss of coral in the Ka'ūpūlehu area.

In response, the Ka'ūpūlehu Marine Life Advisory Committee (KMLAC), a group of local families, cultural practitioners, landowners, and partners, initiated a long-term effort to restore their nearshore ecosystem. At KMLAC's request, TNC began formal reef and fish surveys in 2009 to establish baselines and support a community-designed recovery strategy for fish populations. In 2015, KMLAC completed a Conservation Action Plan (CAP) that clarified shared goals and paved

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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*Founders:* Samuel A. Cooke Herbert C. Cornuelle

the way for a rest period focused on rebuilding abundance from a place of cultural responsibility. With overwhelming support, the State established this 10-year Try Wait rest period in 2016. Within the first few years of Try Wait, kūpuna and kama'āina observed abundance returning to the reef, and fishers who knew the area commented that it looks like how it used to be a long time ago.

From 2018–2021, the Ka'ūpūlehu community, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR), the Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE), and TNC participated in workshops that combined traditional and customary practices and fisheries science expertise to test management options and shape a comprehensive plan for reopening. In 2023, Hui Kahuwai, a community-led nonprofit grounded in lineal stewardship, formed to carry this work forward and co-manage with the State. Continuous and consistent monitoring created one of the strongest nearshore datasets in Hawai'i, and a collaborative analysis of those data with partners from the University of Hawai'i, Hui Kahuwai, and DAR again reinforced kūpuna observations that fish abundance was returning to these reefs. Altogether, this was evidence that the rest period achieved its ecological goals and that management must now ensure continued ecological integrity.

Hui Kahuwai and KMLAC have developed the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) through eight years of deliberate planning rooted in kilo, mo'okū'auhau of place, and kuleana to mālama 'āina and the kai. This planning has been strengthened through extensive outreach, fisher engagement, public scoping, and multiple rounds of refinement with the DAR and the DOCARE. Over two years of collaborative work with DAR, the plan was revised several times to simplify rules, improve clarity and enforceability, and ensure the framework meets the needs for both community subsistence and ecological functions. Subsistence fishing and harvest are dependent upon a healthy marine ecosystem.

With fishing anticipated to resume this year, these proposed rules are necessary to ensure the gains of Try Wait are not lost. The Ka'ūpūlehu FMP establishes a balanced, adaptive framework that includes comprehensive bag limits, gear restrictions, size protections, 'opihi rotational management, and sensitive-area protections such as the Kai Malu cultural and nursery zone. These approaches work together to safeguard abundance while honoring subsistence traditions and respecting fishing practices that are appropriate for the place. Additionally, the plan invests in ongoing monitoring, community education, and adaptive management, ensuring that the fishery at Ka'ūpūlehu can remain healthy for future generations.

TNC's work with Indigenous Peoples and local communities is based on building relationships, honoring self-determination, establishing trust, and focusing on shared interests. TNC is committed to upholding human rights standards including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant conventions to appropriately support the governance, knowledge systems, and self-determined sustainable visions of current and future generations of Native Hawaiians and local communities. In Hawai'i, we rely heavily on the partnership and

The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra  
February 27, 2026  
Page 3

stewardship of Native Hawaiians and local communities that mālama 'āina. These are the people with intimate, place-based knowledge of our nearshore ecosystems. That knowledge must inform and guide the management of our shared resources.

Advancing the Ka'ūpūlehu FMP to public hearing is the appropriate next step to honor this work, allow for broad public input, and uphold the State's responsibility to steward marine resources in partnership with the people most connected to them. The community of Ka'ūpūlehu has completed the robust scoping, iterative refinement, and inclusive engagement that TNC encourages for all fisheries rule proposals. A public hearing is a required procedural step (not final approval) and ensures transparent, statewide input before the Board makes its final findings, including those required under *Ka Pa'akai o Ka 'Āina*.

We respectfully urge the Board to advance the Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Plan and associated rules to public hearing. Thank you for your commitment to thoughtful, community-based management of nearshore ecosystems across Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of Agenda Item F-3.

Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono.

Aloha,



Kalani Quiocho  
Hawai'i Island Marine Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy Hawai'i and Palmyra

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*Guided by science, TNC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 84,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and 18 managed areas and have supported over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands.*

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**HE'EIA**  
NATIONAL ESTUARINE  
RESEARCH RESERVE

February 25, 2026

To: Board of Land and Natural Resources

From: Kawika Winter, Ph.D.  
Director, He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve

**Re: Support for Item F3 (Ka'ūpūlehu Fisheries Management Area)**

Aloha to members of the Land Board,

I am submitting testimony in support of the Ka'ūpūlehu Management Area moving forward to public hearing. I have been a personal witness to how hard they have worked over the last several years to prepare for this moment. Please join me in supporting them in holding a public hearing.

*Me ka 'oia'i'o,*

Kawika Winter, Ph.D.  
Director, He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve