



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII
BOX 63002
KANEHOE BAY HAWAII 96863-3002

IN REPLY REFER TO:
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The Honorable Ryan Kanaka'ole and Members of the Board,
State of Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Board,

SUBJECT: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE ACQUISITION OF MAUNAWILI
VALLEY FOR CONSERVATION

On behalf of the Marines, Sailors, and civilian personnel of Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH), I am writing to express unequivocal support for the proposed acquisition of Maunawili Valley by the State of Hawai'i. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect vital cultural and natural resources important to the community and to the operational readiness of military forces in the Pacific.

The Department of War's (DoW) Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program, in collaboration with many diverse partners, has identified the conservation of Maunawili Valley as a priority. The REPI Program is designed to protect our nation's military readiness by preventing incompatible development near our installations that can constrain our ability to train and operate. The proposed acquisition is possible through a collaborative effort with funding from the REPI Program, MCBH, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawai'i, the U.S. Forest Service, and state and county sources, and will create a vital buffer precluding encroachment that could otherwise impact our training and readiness in the future.

The protection of Maunawili Valley also aligns with the Marines deep commitment to environmental stewardship. MCBH has a proud history of conservation and we remain motivated to protect and enhance the natural resources of Hawai'i. Protecting of this critical watershed for the Kailua ahupua'a provides fresh water to the Kawainui Marsh and is crucial to long-term water resiliency. Protecting Maunawili provides a link to Hawai'i's past with culturally significant ancient and historic sites, including heiau, petroglyphs, and traditional lo'i. Preserving Maunawili will protect these sacred sites and provide an opportunity for the revitalization of traditional Hawaiian agricultural practices.

The collaboration between the DoW, the U.S. Forest Service, the State of Hawai'i, the City and County of Honolulu, and dedicated community organizations is a model for achieving land conservation and preservation goals. The Trust for Public Land and community groups comprising Hui Maunawili-Kawainui have been instrumental in bringing this opportunity to fruition, and we are proud to stand with them in this effort.

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The transfer of Maunawili Valley to the State of Hawai'i is a profound investment in the future of O'ahu and our environment, culture, and national security. I urge the Board of Land and Natural Resources to approve this historic acquisition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. E. Detrinis', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

S. E. DETRINIS
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer
Marine Corps Base Hawai'i

June 8, 2026

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

SUBJECT:

REQUEST PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE LANDS AT MAUNAWILI, KO'OLAUPOKO DISTRICT, ISLAND OF O'AHU, IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP KEY NOS. (1) 4-2-006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, AND (1) 4-2-008:043, lands commonly known as Maunawili Forest, Queen's Retreat and Keko'owai.

Aloha Chairperson and Board Members of the Department of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the State of Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry & Wildlife (DOFAW) efforts to acquire and protect the Maunawili Forest, Queen's Retreat, and Keko'owai lands in Maunawili, Oahu, Hawai'i.

As a founding member of Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, I ardently support the acquisition of agricultural, forested, historical, and conservation lands in Maunawili Valley in order to protect and manage the wetlands, fresh water resources, important ancient and historic sites, forests, and historic trails and roads there. The forest area of Maunawili, being considered by BLNR for acquisition, is a 909-acre property of iconic cliffs, forested foothills, and lush valleys cherished by our community that needs the protection and care afforded by the State of Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry & Wildlife (DOFAW). These lands comprise a vast natural and cultural landscape with ancient cultural sites which extend from the peaks of the Koolau Mountains, across streams, springs, historic agricultural terraces, irrigation ditches, historic trails, heiau, and burial sites. We need to protect and steward this precious resource and I am confident DLNR/DOFAW will partner with stewards, caretakers, and cultural practitioners in the community to do that.

A mission of Hui Maunawili Kawainui is to utilize both traditional and contemporary knowledge to educate, revitalize, steward, protect, and manage the natural and cultural water resources and lands of Maunawili and Kawainui and the entire Kailua ahupua'a. We know ancient Native Hawaiians maintained an agricultural system within their ahupua'a that recognized the importance of the relationships between each region and resource of the ahupua'a. Preserving and taking care of forested areas of the ahupua'a was critical to maintaining a healthy flow of waters for lowland agriculture, and the health of streams, wetlands, and ocean waters. Acquisition of these lands by DLNR/DOFAW would ensure the health and preservation of the watershed resources and forests of Maunawili as well as the agricultural lands and wetlands downstream. Our mission is completely in sync and supportive of the mission of DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife which is to responsibly manage and protect forests, watersheds, native ecosystems, and cultural resources, support native food growing and production, outdoor recreation, and sustainable forest products opportunities, while facilitating partnerships, community involvement, stewardship, and education.

There are extensive reasons to acquire and protect the forested lands of Maunawili. The Maunawili Forest contains native forest and an extensive network of streams and freshwater springs which provide critical habitat for endangered plant and animal species. The property is a priority watershed vital for the recharge of the fresh water supply. The flow of clean water from Maunawili to nearby wetlands would be supported through protections of the forested watershed by DLNR/DOFAW. Water from Maunawili flows down from forested cliffs and mountains into Kawainui wetland, the largest wetland in the State of Hawai'i. Kawainui is

an internationally recognized wetland, and a historic fishpond. It provides flood control and filters sediment protecting the Kailua Bay ecosystem. It is essential that we care and protect the Kawainui wetlands and this land acquisition would help ensure that protection.

These wetlands also help mitigate climate change impacts by trapping enormous amounts of carbon that would otherwise accelerate global warming. By protecting the Maunawili Forest from impacts of non-forest use, flood impacts will be mitigated and climate resilience for surrounding communities will increase. The health of Kawainui, which sits downstream from Maunawili is co-dependent upon the protection and health of the forests and water resources of Maunawili Valley. It is essential to have DLNR/DOFAW preserving, managing, and caring for these resources.

Therefore, I strongly support DLNR/DOFAW acquisition of the Maunawili forest area properties, including Queen's Retreat and Keko'owai, because it will ensure protections and management of the precious resources contained there, as well as guarantee establishment of collaborative agency-community management of the area in partnership with the community, non-profit stewards, area descendants, cultural practitioners, and educators.

Mahalo and Aloha,
Beth Anderson
Founding Member, Hui Maunawili-Kawainui



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**THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BLNR AGENDA
ITEM C-1 TO OBTAIN PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE ACQUISITION OF
PRIVATE LANDS AT MAUNAWILI, IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP KEY NOS. (1) 4-2-
006:010, (1) 4-2-008:044, (1) 4-2-009:002, AND (1) 4-2- 008:043**

June 8, 2026

Re: Support for the State acquisition and protection of important conservation
and agricultural lands located in urban Honolulu

Aloha Chair & Members of the Board,

Trust for Public Land (TPL) strongly supports the State of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife's (DOFAW's) proposed acquisition and protection of four parcels of land in Maunawili totaling approximately 912 acres.

This large landscape level acquisition is home to significant ecological, cultural, historical, and recreational resources and is strategically located adjacent to the Waimanalo Forest Reserve and to the very nearby Kawainui wetlands.

These lands contain significant freshwater sources including over 50 springs and a network of seven streams comprising nearly five miles of waterways which provides the majority of water that flows into Kawainui, which once was the second largest fishpond and is now the largest wetland in Hawaii.

The area is also home to significant cultural and historical resources, including Heiau, intact stone-walled agricultural complexes, 'auwai, habitation sites, burials, alanui, and petroglyphs, along with more recent but nevertheless important homesites for the Boyd and Irwin residences and the famous Queen's Bath.

Absent DOFAW's efforts, these privately owned lands that would likely be listed for sale on the open market and critical forest and watershed resources, along with significant and important cultural and historical resources, would be under threat of subdivision and development. DOFAW

intends to manage these lands to protect these important resources and provide managed public access for cultural practice and recreation that has been cut off under current ownership and would continue to be off limits in the hands of new private owners.

Trust for Public Land is proud to provide transactional and technical assistance to secure this landscape level once-in-a-generation protection and conservation opportunity for public benefit. TPL is national land conservation non-profit organization that is dedicated in protecting land for people. Since the late 1970s, Trust for Public Land has protected over 79,000 acres of 'āina (land) and over 56 special places in Hawai'i. We strongly support DOFAW's efforts to protect these culturally, historically, and naturally rich spaces.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this letter of support, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aka Wedemeyer', written over a horizontal line.

Aka Wedemeyer, Project Manager
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