



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update 1, February 2009

*A number of endangered species and habitats will benefit from the current refuge planning effort underway at Hakalau Forest Refuge / USFWS*

## Comprehensive Conservation Planning begins at Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge

Greetings! Over the next year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will seek your concerns, observations, and ideas regarding important refuge management issues. Your input is needed to identify and analyze issues and opportunities in a comprehensive manner as we develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and associated Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge (refuge).

This update is the first in a series of updates we will distribute to keep you informed about and invite your participation in CCP planning.

The purposes of the refuge will remain the same as when its lands were set aside to protect wildlife habitat and provide wildlife-dependent recreation consistent with wildlife needs. As we begin the planning process, however, we have the opportunity to review the refuge's wildlife, habitat, public use

and infrastructure needs and management from fresh perspectives. Some of the programs we will review include environmental education, location of trails and parking lots, refuge signage, and forest and riparian habitat management.

Please share your ideas with us by attending upcoming public open house meetings or by submitting written comments (see page 6 for more information).

**Two Public Open House Meetings will be held March 3 and 4, 2009,  
in Hilo and Captain Cook respectively (see page 6 for details).**

*Your participation is critical to the success of this effort—we want to hear from you!*



*The 'alala (Hawaiian crow) above, and the Hakalau Unit below / USFWS*

## Refuge Overview

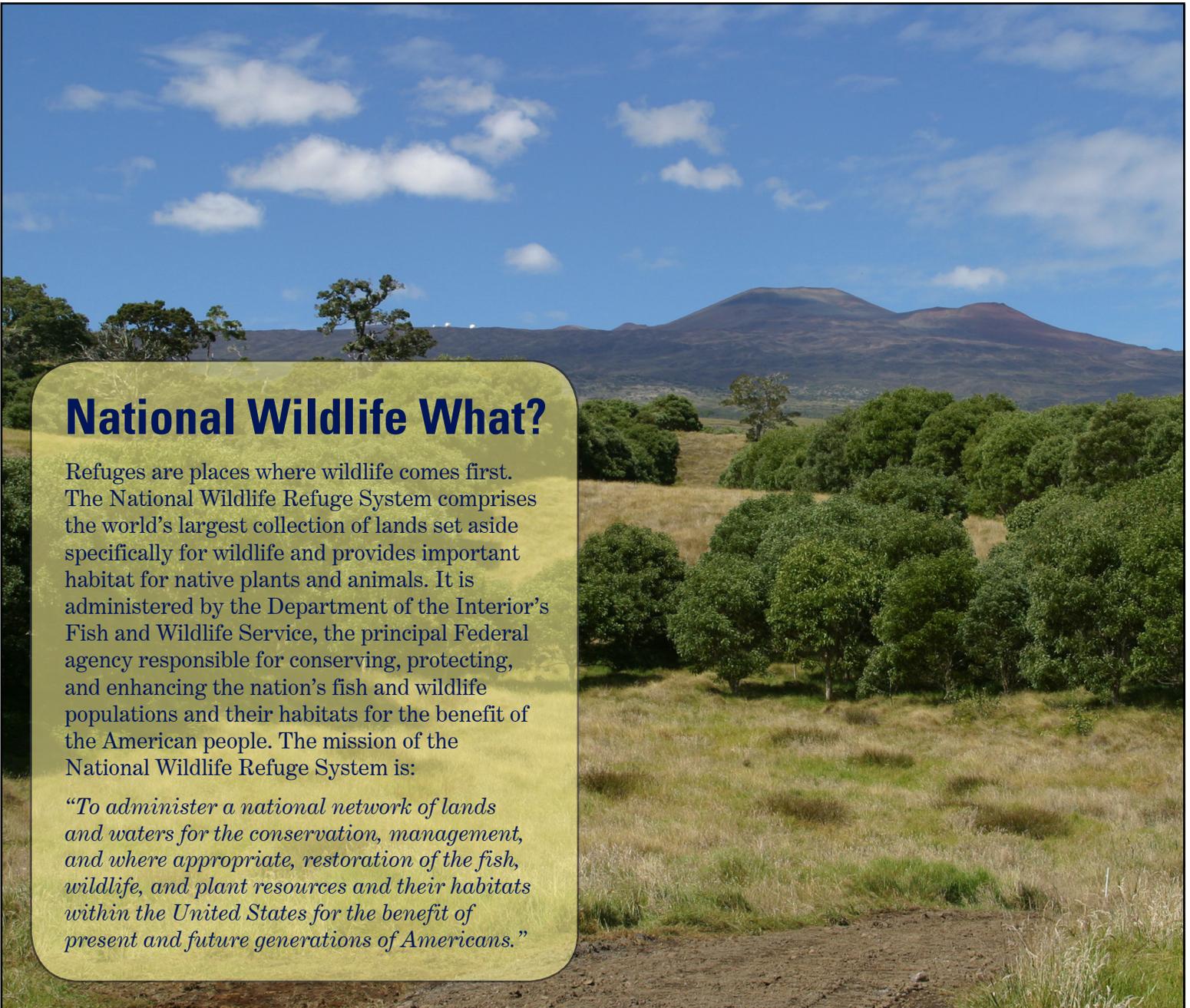
The Hakalau Forest Refuge is located on the Island of Hawai'i. It encompasses two refuge units, the Kona Forest Unit and the Hakalau Forest Unit. The Hakalau Forest Unit was established in 1985 to protect endangered forest birds and their rain forest habitat. Located on the eastern or windward slope of Mauna Kea, its 32,733 acres of land support a diversity of native

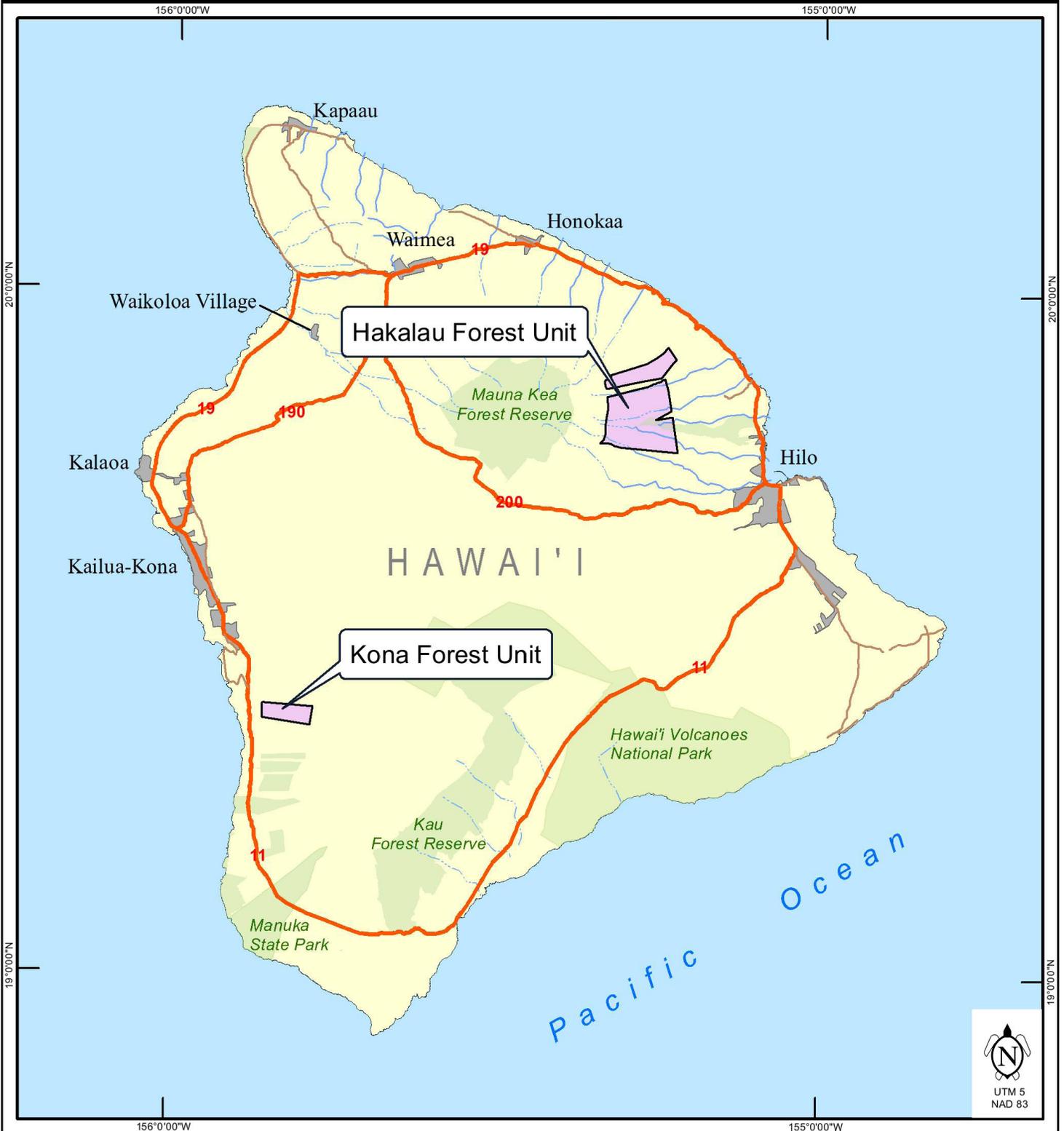
birds and plants. The Kona Forest Unit was established in 1997 to protect native forest birds and the endangered Hawaiian crow ('alala). Located on the southwestern or leeward slope of Mauna Loa, the 5,300-acre unit supports diverse native bird and plant species as well as the rare habitats found in lava tubes and lava tube skylights. The CCP will cover both refuge units.

## National Wildlife What?

Refuges are places where wildlife comes first. The National Wildlife Refuge System comprises the world's largest collection of lands set aside specifically for wildlife and provides important habitat for native plants and animals. It is administered by the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service, the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for the benefit of the American people. The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is:

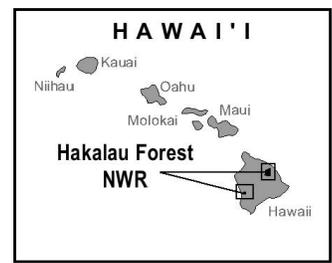
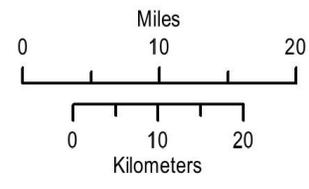
*"To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans."*





**Legend**

-  Hakalau Forest NWR
-  Parks & Reservations
-  Urban/Developed Areas





The endangered nēnē (Hawaiian goose) feeds on the refuge's grasses, seeds, and berries / © Jack Jeffrey



Refuge volunteers planting koa saplings / USFWS



The 'io (Hawaiian hawk) is the largest endangered forest bird in Hawai'i / © Jack Jeffrey

## Preliminary Goals

Goals are broad statements, intended to provide direction for future refuge management based on the purposes of the refuge, the mission and policies of the National Wildlife Refuge System, input received during CCP planning, and issues identified as most significant to the refuge. The planning team has developed the following preliminary goals for both refuge units, and would like your input on them.

- 1. Protect, maintain, and restore the sub-tropical rainforest community on both units**, for all life cycle needs of endangered species (e.g., forest birds, Hawaiian hoary bat, plants, and arthropods).
- 2. Protect and maintain lava tube and lava tube skylight habitat** throughout the Kona Forest Unit, with special emphasis on the unique and endemic flora and fauna.
- 3. Protect and maintain wetland and aquatic habitats** (e.g., streams and their associated riparian

corridors, ponds, and bogs) on the Hakalau Forest Unit.

**4. Protect and maintain grassland habitat** to support nēnē restoration.

**5. Conduct inventories, monitoring, and research necessary to support adaptive management** decisions on both units in support of Goals 1-4.

**6. Provide opportunities for visitors, volunteers and local residents** to understand and value the refuge's native forest environment and management practices.

**7. Protect and manage cultural resources and historic sites** for their educational and cultural values for the benefit of present and future generations of refuge users and communities.

**8. Provide adequate facilities and staff, and develop partnerships** to support conservation of endangered species and their habitats.

## Planning Schedule

Planning Step	Target Date
Planning Update 1 issued.....	February 2009
Public Open House Meetings.....	March 2009
Planning Update 2 issued.....	October 2009
Planning Update 3 issued.....	April 2010
Public Review/Comment on Draft CCP/EIS.....	April 2010
Final CCP.....	August 2010

*Schedule dates are tentative and subject to change*

# Preliminary Issues to be Considered

A range of alternative management approaches and their effects will be evaluated in the CCP/EA, including current management practices.

The planning team has identified potential issues (see right) to be considered during CCP development. We would like to hear your comments on these and any other topics or issues of interest to you at our public meetings. If you aren't able to attend, please submit your comments in writing to the refuge. See page 6 for meeting and contact information.



*The beautiful Hawai'i 'ākepa feeds and nests in the refuge's forest habitats / © Jack Jeffrey*



*The rare and endangered 'akiapōlā'au occurs in only a few forested areas in the refuge's upper elevations / © Jack Jeffrey*

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## Wildlife and Habitat Resources

- Should we continue or expand partnerships with adjacent landowners for tree planting, weed control, and fire management?
- How can we manage diseases spread by mosquitoes and birds, such as avian influenza, West Nile virus, avian malaria, and avian pox?
- How will global climate change impact refuge resources?
- How can we control plant diseases, such as 'ōhi'a rust and koa wilt?
- How can we control invasive plant species, banana poka, blackberry, holly, photenia, grasses, Himalayan raspberry, miconia, strawberry guava, ginger, tibouchina, clidemia, christmasberry, palm grass, fireweed, and gorse?
- How can we control invasive animal species, such as pigs, sheeps, cats, rats, goats, cattle, mongooses, coqui frogs, mice, mosquitoes, yellow jacket wasps, ants, red-billed leiothrix, game birds, myna birds, Northern cardinals, house finches, and yellow-fronted canaries?
- How can we enhance the endangered plant propagation, outplanting, and genetics programs?
- How should we protect cultural and archeological resources?
- How should we protect unique forest habitats, lava tube caves and skylights?

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## Visitor Services

- Should we assess visitor recreation/facility needs as part of the CCP?
- Do existing visitor facilities need to be upgraded or new ones developed?
- How can we effectively manage and utilize our extensive network of volunteer work groups?
- How can we support educational partnerships with other agencies (such as the Hawai'i Endangered Bird Conservation Program's Kīpuka 21)?
- How can we best protect priority wildlife species from disturbances during breeding seasons?
- Which additional areas could we potentially open for public visitation?
- How can we measure and evaluate visitor impacts to wildlife?

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## Historic and Cultural Resources

- What plant and animal species did native Hawaiians historically gather on the refuge, and what gathering activities continue to occur?
- Should the Pua 'Ākala cabin be restored?
- Should the Maulua and Nauhi cabins be rehabilitated?
- How can we protect known and potential archeological features?
- How should we manage the historic Maulua Trail?

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## Facilities Management

- What are the refuge's priorities for upgrading/maintaining on-refuge management facilities?
- What are the refuge's priorities for road maintenance and upgrades?
- What are the refuge's priorities for fence maintenance?

## You are Invited to Our Public Open House Meetings

Two public open-house style meetings are scheduled at different locations and times for your convenience. The meetings provide opportunities for you to help us identify the issues to be addressed in the CCP and to have your questions answered about the refuge. Meeting details follow.

**Date:** March 3, 2009

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge  
60 Nowelo Street, Room M02  
Hilo, HI 96720

**Date:** March 4, 2009

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Yano Hall  
82-6156 Mamalahoa Highway  
Captain Cook, HI 96745

## How do I Contact the Service or Provide Comments?

We will be documenting verbal comments at the public open house meetings or you can send written comments, ideas, and questions to us via mail, fax, or e-mail using the following information:

Jim Kraus, Refuge Manager  
Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge  
60 Nowelo Street, Suite 100  
Hilo, HI 96720

**Phone:** (808) 443-2300

**Fax:** (808) 443-2304

**E-mail:**

[FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov](mailto:FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov)

**Refuge Website:**

<http://www.fws.gov/hakalauforest/>

**Planning Website:**

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>



Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge  
60 Nowelo Street, Suite 100  
Hilo, HI 96720

*Change of address requested.*

**In this issue:**

Your comments on the Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge are requested. What natural resource issues are important to you?

You are invited to our Public Open House Meetings, scheduled March 3 and 4, 2009, see details above.