



News Release

Pacific Islands External Affairs Office

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Fish and Wildlife Service Provides \$2.1 Million in Land Acquisition Funds to Hawai'i

Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne today announced more than \$56.5 million in grants to 23 states and one territory – including \$2.1 million of recovery land acquisition grants to the State of Hawai'i –to support conservation planning and acquisition of vital habitat for threatened and endangered fish, wildlife, and plants. The grants, awarded through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, will benefit numerous species ranging from the red-cockaded woodpecker to Hawaiian waterbirds and sea turtles.

This year, on the national level the cooperative endangered species fund provides \$7.5 million through habitat conservation planning assistance grants, \$35 million through habitat conservation plan land acquisition grants, and \$13.9 million through recovery land acquisition grants. The three grant programs were established to help avoid potential conflicts between the conservation of threatened and endangered species and land development and use.

“These grants build long-term partnerships with landowners who help to conserve our nation’s imperiled species,” said Secretary Kempthorne. “They are important tools that empower landowners and communities to safeguard habitat and foster conservation stewardship efforts for future generations.”

The recovery land acquisition grants provide funds to states and territories to acquire habitat for endangered and threatened species with approved recovery plans. Habitat acquisition to secure long-term protection is often an essential element of a comprehensive recovery effort for a listed species. Funds awarded to the State of Hawai'i are often combined with other federal, state, and private funds to complete acquisitions.

On O‘ahu, \$361,196 will help the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife acquire and permanently protect the 3,582-acre Honouliuli Preserve. The preserve is located on the southeast slope of the Wai‘anae Mountains. The acquisition will permanently protect habitat for more than 90 rare and endangered plant and animal species, including 38 threatened and endangered plants, one endangered bird, one endangered picture-wing fly, and two endangered tree snails. Fifteen species (four of them endangered) can only be found within the Honouliuli parcel. The area represents the largest known population of the endangered O‘ahu ‘elepaio in the Wai‘anae Mountains and the second largest on O‘ahu.

Also on O‘ahu, the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife will receive \$740,000 to acquire and permanently protect 65-acres of

wetlands and uplands in the Hamakua Marsh watershed. The 65-acres will be added to the existing Hamakua Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary and will enhance ongoing recovery efforts for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds and plant species in Hamakua Marsh. Species that will benefit from the acquisition include the endangered Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian coot, Hawaiian moorhen, Hawaiian duck, and the sedge *Cyperus trachysanthos*.

On the Island of Hawai'i, a total of \$1 million will be provided to help Hawai'i County to acquire and permanently protect approximately 551 acres in the District of Ka'u along the southeast coast. The property provides approximately 2 miles of pristine coastline containing nesting beaches for the endangered hawksbill turtle and protects offshore feeding areas for the threatened green turtle. The protection of this property will also benefit tide pools, coral reefs, an intertidal brackish water pond, and coastal freshwater springs that provide habitat for the endangered Hawaiian coot and the orange-black Hawaiian damselfly, a candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The Trust for Public Land will provide technical assistance to Hawaii County.

Since 2002, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has given approximately \$7.4 million in recovery land acquisition grants to the State of Hawai'i.

For a complete list of the 2008 grant awards for these programs (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 15.615), see the Service's Endangered Species Grants home page at <http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.