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News Release



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Awards Funds for Habitat Restoration and Protection Projects in Hawai‘i

In an effort to reduce conflicts between hunting programs and endangered species protection, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has awarded \$638,478 for 17 habitat restoration and protection projects across the State of Hawai‘i through the Hawaii ESA Community Conservation Initiative. This unique Service program is designed to provide financial resources to local communities to implement a strategy that reconciles the needs of endangered species with the continued presence of game mammal populations where appropriate.

“2004 marks the third year of funding for this unique program that brings hunters and conservationists together to protect Hawai‘i’s precious natural resources,” said Jeff Newman, acting field supervisor for the Fish and Wildlife Service’s Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office. “What originally started on the Big island as a pilot project has expanded this year to include the entire state.”

The Service received approximately 50 project proposals representing all of the main Hawaiian Islands. Personnel from the Service and Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources worked together to verify that submitted proposals met basic Hawaii ESA Community Conservation Initiative requirements. The Service then ranked and selected the project proposals to be funded, looking for projects that enhance public hunting opportunities, populations of listed species, or benefit both game and listed species, such as wildland fire prevention.

Conflicts between hunters and conservationists often arise when difficult to manage game populations occur on landscapes that harbor vulnerable native plants and animals. Game mammals can reduce populations of endangered species by eating, trampling, and degrading native habitats.

“This program highlights the shared goals of hunters and conservationists, and respects their diverse opinions. Additionally, both sides realize that endangered species recovery will ultimately mean less regulation and more flexibility,” said Benton Pang, coordinator of the Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Pang cited several of this year’s projects as prime examples of how funded projects benefit both hunters and conservationists. One such project is conservation management within the Wai‘anae Kai and Mākaha

watersheds. The project will employ local experts to integrate hunting concerns with those of endangered species management.

Pang also cites the Honouliuli Preserve hunter access and fire abatement project on O‘ahu. On July 14, a fire near the preserve brought to the public’s attention the need for firebreaks and improved access into the preserve. This project will improve firebreaks that will reduce the likelihood of fire moving into the habitats of critically endangered plants and animals such as the O‘ahu ‘elepaio, and improve access for nonfirearms hunting.

For more information, contact Benton Pang at 808/792-9440 or by electronic mail at Benton_Pang@fws.gov.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 Fish and Wildlife Management offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

2004 Hawaii ESA Community Conservation Initiative Projects

Project	Cooperator	Amount	Description
North Kona Palila Restoration -Hawai‘i	Hawaiian Silversword Foundation	\$12,800	Fencing to protect māmane forest and facilitate restoration.
Pu‘uanahulu Exclosures - Hawai‘i	Pono Pacific, Inc.	\$55,000	Completion of rare plant Exclosures in the game management area.
Kawela access road improvements and firebreaks Moloka‘i	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Kawela Plantations.	\$40,000	Improvement of 20 miles of road that will act as firebreaks for native habitat and improve hunter access.
Māmane-Naio habitat restoration and game bird management at the Pōhakuloa Game Management Area-Hawai‘i	Big Island Bird Hunters	\$9,663	Improve habitat in game management area through repair and fencing of game bird guzzlers and outplanting native plants.
Updating the Natural Resources Information in Hunter Education Classes	DOFAW	\$30,000	Improve natural resources section of the State’s required Hunter Education Class.
Conservation Management within Hunting Units on Kaua‘i	DOFAW	\$77,500	Repair and maintain plant exclosures in hunting units.
Axis Deer Control at Pu‘u Kukui Preserve - Maui	Maui Pineapple Company, Ltd.	\$50,000	Installation of an 8 foot tall fence to exclude axis deer and other ungulates from the Honolua Plantation.
Makawao Forest Reserve Assessment - Maui	University of Hawai‘i-Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit	\$26,795	Systematic botanical and entomological surveys of the Makawao Forest Reserve.

Honouliuli Preserve hunter access and fire abatement – O‘ahu	TNC	\$32,500	Firebreaks in rare plant and ‘elepaio habitats of TNC’s Honouliuli Preserve will also improve hunter access.
Mokihana Ridge-Waiālae Trail Project - Kaua‘i	DOFAW	\$20,000	Repair portion of Mokihana - Waiālae Trail to improve access for hunters and conservationists.
National Tropical Botanical Garden (NTGB) predator control planning and implementation – Kaua‘i and Hawai‘i	NTBG	\$65,000	Integration of endangered species management with the concerns of the hunting community, while addressing the challenges posed by alien species on NTBG lands.
Kanakaleonui koa forest restoration	Hawaiian Silversword Foundation	\$25,000	Fence construction to protect koa and māmane forest.
Wai‘anae Kai Restoration Coordinator O‘ahu	Hoa ‘Āina O Mākaha	\$50,000	Integration of endangered species management with the concerns of the hunting community in the Wai‘anae Kai- Mākaha watersheds.
North Ko‘olau Pig Control - O‘ahu	Hawai‘i Nature Center	\$10,000	Coordination of hunting to control feral pigs in the North Ko‘olau Mountains to benefit water quality, rare and endangered species, and will provide opportunities to the hunting community.
Kaua‘i Bogs Endangered Species Management Kaua‘i	DOFAW	\$26,220	Continue DOFAW and USFWS joint partnership to survey and protect seven plant species found in the remote bogs of the Alakai area.
East Lana‘i Road Access Lana‘i	Lāna‘i Institute for the Environment	\$48,000	To improve roads and trails to enhance hunter access and provide access for biological surveys and management of rare species habitats.
O‘la‘a - Kilauea Pig Management – Hawai‘i	Hawaiian Silversword Foundation	\$60,000	Native forest habitat restoration near Kūlani prison.