

News Release

Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 5-122
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96850
808.792.9400
<http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands>



For Release July 10, 2013
Contact: Ken Foote at (808) 792-9535 or (808) 282-9442

PIFWO-13-06

Hawai'i Receives \$1.5 Million in Endangered Species Conservation Grants from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced yesterday that more than \$1.5 million in grants to conservation projects in Hawai'i. The grants are part of nearly \$32 million to 20 states to help advance their collaborative efforts to conserve America's rarest species.

The cooperative grants will provide vital support to efforts by partnering state wildlife agencies and conservation organizations to improve the health of the land and water that supports these species and scores of communities across the nation.

Issued through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act), these competitive grants enable states to work with private landowners, conservation groups and other government agencies to initiate conservation planning efforts and acquire and protect habitat that benefits threatened and endangered fish, wildlife and plants.

Hawai'i will receive \$578,250 to acquire 635 acres of forested lands on the island of O'ahu. This narrow tract lies between two existing conservation areas and extends to top of the Ko'olau Mountains at 2,750 feet in elevation and is part of USFWS-designated critical habitat for the endangered O'ahu 'Elepaio, an endemic Hawaiian songbird, and 11 plant species. The upper reaches of this parcel support some of the best examples of native forest remaining on O'ahu. The popular 'Aiea Ridge Trail falls entirely within the subject parcel, and thus offers hikers the opportunity to access high quality native forest and to observe native birds. This purchase will ensure continued public use, which in turn will result in a greater public appreciation for native forest. Project partners include the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership, and Kamehameha Schools.

The other projects in Hawai'i are:

- \$445,331 for coordination and planning of the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Program on Kaua'i
- \$508,348 for Kaua'i Nēnē Island-wide Habitat Conservation Plan

“Our wild animals and the wild places they inhabit are among our nation’s greatest treasures, and it is incumbent on us to provide the stewardship and care that will protect them for future generations,” said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. “The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund grants make a real and tangible difference in preserving natural habitats and recovering species such as the Peninsular bighorn sheep, Owens tui chub, red-cockaded woodpecker and Salt Creek tiger beetle. These efforts provide important benefits to people as well, helping to improve water quality and restoring habitat that supports jobs and economic growth.”

The grant funding is provided through programs established to help advance creative partnerships for the recovery of imperiled species. This year, the fund will allocate approximately \$8 million in grants through the Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program; \$14.2 million through the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program, and \$9.4 million through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program.

“Private landowners play a critical part in conserving our threatened and endangered species,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Director Robyn Thorson. “These grants provide funding for essential partnerships between federal, state and local governments, private organizations and individuals, allowing us to work together to enhance ongoing conservation and recovery efforts.”

A complete list of the 2013 grant awards under these programs (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 15.615) is available online at www.fws.gov/angered/grants/index.html.

The Endangered Species Act provides a critical safety net for America’s native fish, wildlife, and plants. The Service is working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species. To learn more about the Endangered Species Program, visit <http://www.fws.gov/angered/>.

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. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

–FWS–