

News Release

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KPNWR 16-03

Building a new colony of endangered Hawaiian petrel at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge

Kaua'i, Hawai'i – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in collaboration with the American Bird Conservancy, Kaua'i Endangered Seabird Recovery Project, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Pacific Rim Conservation and State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, will translocate 'Ua'u chicks from montane colonies into a protected, predator free site on Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge. This project is expected to begin the first week of November.

“The purpose of this translocation is to establish a new, predator-free colony of the 'Ua'u on the island to help prevent the extirpation of the bird from Kaua'i,” said Acting Project Leader Michael Mitchell. “The project was made possible by working with our partners and we will be providing the public with updates on the translocation throughout the process.”

The decision comes after the refuge completed the first predator proof fence on Kaua'i, making it safe for the birds. The Service completed an environmental assessment (EA) on Management Actions for Immediate Implementation to Reduce the Potential for Extirpation of 'Ua'u from Kaua'i. The Service has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the EA.

While this project will be the first translocation of chicks of listed seabirds on Kaua'i and within Hawai'i, translocation of closely related seabird species has been used with great success in New Zealand in order to create new colonies. It is hoped that similar outcomes will be achieved on Kaua'i. This project will protect nesting 'Ua'u from predation by non-native feral cats and rats, and now potentially mongooses, a new introduced predator that may have become established on Kaua'i.

As described in the FONSI, implementation of the selected alternative will not result in significant impacts to any affected resources. The Service evaluated and responded to comments received on the EA. This information, the EA, and FONSI are now available for public review and may be found at <http://www.fws.gov/kilaueapoint>.

The Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge (KPNWR) was established in 1985 to preserve and enhance seabird nesting colonies, and in 1988, the refuge was expanded to include Crater Hill (Nihoku) and Mōkōlea Point. To learn more about the Refuge, please visit www.fws.gov/kilaueapoint and friend us on Facebook.

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