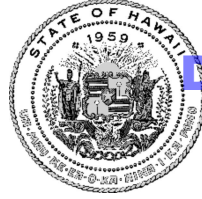


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



DEPT. COMM. NO. 181

DAWN N.S. CHANG

CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING

FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

December 20, 2023

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of Relating to House Concurrent Resolution 17 Requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for the West Hawaii report as required by House Concurrent Resolution 17, Regular Session of 2022. In accordance with Section 93-16, HRS, a copy of this report has been transmitted to the Legislative Reference Bureau and the report may be viewed electronically at <https://files.hawaii.gov/dlnr/reports-to-the-legislature/2024/FW24-Ungulate-Plan-FY23.pdf>.

Sincerely,

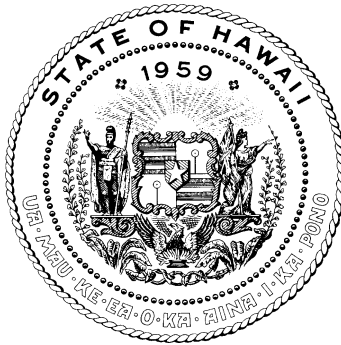
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Dawn N.S. Chang".

DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson

Enclosure

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII
2024 REGULAR SESSION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURLA RESOURCES TO
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A FERAL UNGULATE MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR WEST HAWAII



Prepared by

THE STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
In response to House Concurrent Resolution 17 Regular Session of 2022

December 2023

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A FERAL UNGULATE MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR WEST HAWAII

PURPOSE

The legislature finds that populations of feral goats and pigs in west Hawaii have increased to sizes that cannot be sustained by the environment and that feral ungulates in Hawaii have no natural predators to limit their population growth and impacts to native ecosystems. Feral ungulates may contribute to the spread of rapid ohia death, and the over populations of feral ungulates has a significant detrimental impact on the health of watersheds and coral reefs through increased vegetative disturbance and erosion and create major hazards on roadways. Collaborative efforts are needed to identify opportunities for more effective management of feral ungulate populations, such as higher bag limits and increased open seasons for hunters, incentivization of commercially guided hunting operations, increased use of game mammals for meat and food security, targets culling in overpopulated areas.

The House of Representatives of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) is requested to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for west Hawaii.

The task force consists of the following members,

- (1) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
- (2) One member appointed by the President of the Senate.
- (3) One member appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.
- (4) One member appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture
- (5) One member appointed by the Director of Transportation
- (6) One member appointed by the Mayor of the County of Hawaii.
- (7) One member appointed by the Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Hilo.
- (8) One member appointed by the Co-Chairpersons of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council.
- (9) One member appointed by the Manager of the Big Island Invasive Species Committee
- (10) One member appointed by the Chairperson of the Hawaii County Game Management Advisory Commission.

Members of the task force must have expertise in estimating wildlife populations, knowledge of ungulate management, actions for managing hazards to roadways, and preservation of biodiversity. The task force is required to select a chairperson and task force members are to work closely with wildlife managers, watershed manager, park and reserve managers, invasive species control experts, and large landowners in West Hawaii.

Over the past six months (9) nine members have been appointed to the task force and there has been (2) meetings held where members reviewed the current impact of feral ungulates in West Hawaii to develop recommendations for a plan.

Meeting #1

Introductions were made and resolution reviewed. Members reviewed associated Hawaii Revised Statutes that pertain to owners of unbranded animals- Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) 142-44, Game mammals defined- HRS 183D-51, Adaptive Management Authority HRS 183D, and HRS 183D-61- permits to take wild birds, game birds, and game mammals. A trappers list was developed to be distributed as a tool for private landowners to aid in ungulate management. Discussions were had on private landowner fencing and where animals can easily exit to the Daniel K. Inouye (DKI) Highway while investigating how hunting pressure may move animals across different landscapes. Past successful Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) animal control operations like the goat removal project conducted at Pu'uuhonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park which removed 450 goats were discussed to review if similar options could be available for West Hawaii. The task force requested that DOFAW provide maps showing high density areas of goats and problematic fence lines where management can be implemented. DOFAW provided this information to the task force which is available upon request. The task force agreed to develop an outline for the plan and assigned tasks to its members.

Meeting # 2.

Regina Serrano-County of Hawaii and Kim Kozuma-Board of Agriculture opted to head the task force as Chair and Co-Chair. DOFAW West Hawaii presented an outline for the group related to DOFAW's current management actions, research, and hunting practices that effect ungulate populations in the area. Recommendations for other partners agencies were developed and shared. DOFAW outlined their limited personnel capacity for West Hawaii and reviewed positions needed to provide management assistance. DOFAW provided an overview of draft temporary rules changes (HRS 183D-3) increasing the number of available hunting days and removing the bag limit for goats and pigs in both Puu Waawaa Forest Reserve and Puu Anahulu Game Management Area. The temporary season would increase archery hunting in Puu Waawaa from 16 days to 89 days (a 550% increase) and in Puu Anahulu from 38 days to 89 days (a 230% increase). This rules change would also increase the Puu Waawaa muzzleloader season from 7 open days to 52 open days (a 740% increase) and add a 52-day muzzleloader season to Puu Anahulu (no season currently exists). Discussions continued on animal ownership and how this changes as animals move across the landscape. Maps created were reviewed to understand where fence lines need to be improved, herbicide applied, controlled grazing areas identified, and where additional hunter access points need to be created. Information was declassified regarding the County of Hawaii implementing a program to loan or rent pig traps to the public. This would include proper training for those using the traps and an option for the county to remove the trapped animals, if requested. Cost estimates for traps and the creation of a trap program are being explored.

Main issues in North Kona identified are:

- Public safety as goats encroach highway corridors.

- Crop damage and forage competition with livestock producers.
- Native forest preservation/ conservation.
- Damage to cultural /archeological sites.
- Public and livestock health

Review of DOFAW management actions and future proposed actions

- Pu‘uhonua O Hōnaunau goat round up.
- Work with ranch lessees at Puu Waawaa to change old barbed wire fencing along highway to hog wire fencing to reduce the number of goats along highway..
- Continue public hunting at Puu Waawaa and Puu Anahulu to successfully maintain populations.
- Draft new 1020 Adaptive management administrative rules changes for goats in the area that may provide additional hunting opportunities. Goat population is estimated at 2,000 for the Puu Waawaa and Puu Anahulu area.
- Collect data from road side surveys.
- Meet with PTA to increase public hunting opportunities.
- Work with Hui Aloha Kiholo on fencing project and animal tracking studies.
- Develop new hunter access point on of DKI Highway
- Distribut list of hunters and trappers that can assit private landowners with removal of feral animals.

Suggested solutions with general cost analysis

- Build DOFAW personnel capacity for West Hawaii – Fund 2nd half of Waimea Forestry and Wildlife Tech .50 full-time equivalent (FTE) \$40,000, Biologist IV 2.0 FTE positions @ \$95,000 ea., Forestry and Widlife worker 1.0 FTE \$70,000, and Hilo Forestry and Wildlife worker 1.0 FTE \$80,000.
- Lower fence along DKI Highway to the ground from Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to Old Saddle Road junction on both sides of road. Price to be determined.
- PTA and landowner improve fence along Highway 190 to keep animals from entering the road cooridor. Price to be determined.
- Department of Transportation to posion vegetation within a 10 foot buffer along all highways, eliminating foilage and reducing growth. This will keep animals from grazing along roadside.
- All new road construction use reflectors rather that rumble strips. Rumble strips create troughs where precipitation can be caught and stored, luring animals in to the road to drink.
- Permit control grazing along Highway 190 and DKI Highway to keep vegetation down

Task Forrce Member info:

Appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives – Zacary Judd

Appointed by the President of the Senate- Vacant

Appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Naturral Resources- Steve Bergfeld

Appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture- Dr. Kim Kuzuma

Appointed by the Director of Transportation- Meliss Marinda Johnson

Appointed by the Mayor of the County of Hawaii – Regina Serrano

Appointed by the Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Hilo – Nicholas Krueger
Appointed by the Co-Chairpersons of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council – Chelsea Arnott
Appointed by the Manager of the Big Island Invasive Species Committee – Jenn
Taamariki

Appointed by the Chairperson of the Hawaii County Game Management Advisory
Commission- Alan Nakagawa

Task force coordinator – Jason Omick, Wildlife Biologist -DOFAW-Admin

Hawaii Island staff – Kanalu Sproat, Wildlife Biologist DOFAW West Hawaii / Andrea
Buskirk-Outreach Specialist

Feral Ungulate Management Plan for West Hawaii

Over the last decade West Hawaii has seen an increase in the population and effects of feral goats and pigs. Goats and pigs are non-native ungulate species introduced to Hawaii. In public hunting areas they are designated as game mammals (HRS 183D-51). In all other spaces, unmarked or unbranded goats and pigs belong to the property owner or lessees of the land on which the animals are then running (HRS 142-44). Given these facts the responsibility for these animals and the damage or threats they may present may change as they move from one property to another.

The task force is in process of completing a draft management plan to address the issue these animals present while providing possible solutions for reducing the presence of ungulates on roadsides. The draft plan is available upon request.