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October 11, 2010

**TO: INTERESTED AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS and INDIVIDUALS**

**Re: Pre-Consultation on Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Pu'u Maka'ala Natural Area Reserve (NAR) Management Plan (Hawai'i, South Hilo and Puna Districts)**

The Division of Forestry & Wildlife is preparing an EA in compliance with Chapter 343, HRS for a Management Plan for Pu'u Maka'ala NAR, including 6,600 acres of forest at Kūlani which was put under NAR management and recommended for designation in September 2010 (map attached).

This Reserve was established to protect native Hawaiian forest for current and future generations. The purpose of this letter is to share information about the project, request your assistance in identifying historic sites or cultural practices that might be impacted by the project, and invite you to share any issues that you wish to be addressed in the EA or any other concerns you may have. The Management Plan will outline planned management actions over the next fifteen years. The overall goal is to protect, maintain, and enhance the Reserve's unique natural, cultural, and geological resources. The proposed project includes fence construction and pig removal to protect forest from feral pigs, invasive weed control, planting of rare native plants, public access and the development of interpretive trails for the public.

The EA will address topics including but not limited to: native plants and animals; invasive species; cultural resources; socioeconomic impacts; and public access. We invite your comments on any of these topics. We would especially appreciate your input on the following issues in the project area:

1. History, land use and cultural sites e.g., historic or archaeological sites, burials;
2. Traditional gathering practices in the project area – both past and present;
3. Cultural associations through traditions, legends, traditional use, or otherwise; and
4. Referrals of kupuna who might be willing to share their cultural knowledge of the area.

This information will help us determine if there will be any impacts to cultural resources by proposed management actions, ensure that all potential cultural impacts are appropriately considered, and to prevent to the greatest extent possible any negative impact.

**Please send comments on the project by November 15, 2010** and indicate whether you wish to receive a copy of the Draft EA. If you have any questions, contact me at 808-587-0027 or email: [Tanya.Rubenstein@hawaii.gov](mailto:Tanya.Rubenstein@hawaii.gov). Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for sharing your knowledge!

Tanya Rubenstein, Natural Area Reserves Project Coordinator

# Pu'u Maka'ala Natural Area Reserve

