

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of**  
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
**Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on**  
**JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, March 24, 2022**  
**2:00 PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 325, Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of**  
**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 WEST HAWAII**

House Concurrent Resolution 17 requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for West Hawaii. **The Department supports this measure.**

One of the Department's top priority issues is feral animal management. The proposed task force could bring additional attention to this important issue which may result in increased funding and coordination to implement control actions. In a similar measure that proposed a feral animal management plan (House Bill 1721), the Department testified that many of the solutions to control damage to feral animals have already been planned, yet implementation is underfunded. For example, the recurring general funds provided to LNR 804 (Forest and Outdoor Recreation) do not fully cover payroll costs and provide only nominal operational funds for the program. The recent funding and position cuts to LNR 407, 402, and 172 have significantly reduced the ability of the Department to control feral animals through fencing and provide hunter access through road and trail maintenance. These cuts cripple the Department's ability to carry out future actions that require these staff to coordinate, such as the collaboration with the National Park Service to salvage goats for the public in Pu'u Honua O Hōnaunau, and special feral cattle hunts in the Hilo Forest Reserve. While additional planning is needed, the Department's capacity to manage such programs needs to be restored per the governor's budget request.

The Task Force provides a forum to gather feedback on the Department's existing efforts referenced in the resolution including increased hunting days, the default for which should be year-

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
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

round/daily, increased bag limits, incentivization of commercially guided hunting operations, increased use of game mammals for meat and food security, targeted culling in overpopulated areas, and other methods. An overview of those issues is summarized below.

#### *Other Methods*

While not listed in the resolution, fencing has proven successful for protecting landscapes from feral animals. Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park removed goats at a rate of up to 5,000/year for a half-century without any decrease in the feral goat population. After building fences, the park eliminated its goat population within a decade.<sup>1</sup>

The Maui Axis Deer Group is similar to the proposed Task Force because it consists of agencies, organizations, and political and community representatives dedicated to reducing ungulate impacts in specific areas. This group has been in existence for over twenty years. The group has commissioned population studies and published recommendations on deer management. Despite hunting regulations allowing daily year-round harvest with no bag limit for decades, deer populations have exploded since they were first introduced to Maui in 1959. These results demonstrate that removing restrictions to hunter harvest does not necessarily control the populations and that a more aggressive strategy of deer removal is needed. A private company harvests deer from private lands for sale as venison, and the Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is seeking hunter access agreements with private landowners and culls deer in un-fenced watershed areas. While these actions help, the deer population continues to increase and spread to new areas.

Early on, the Maui Axis Deer Group recognized that a long-term protection strategy would require fences to keep deer out of sensitive areas, prioritizing protection for the upper watershed forests. Fence projects that encircle Haleakalā and Mauna Kahalawai (West Maui mountains), also known as the "Maunalei" projects (as they encircle the mountains like a lei) are being built incrementally with Watershed Initiative CIP funds and grants and are proving effective at controlling the spread of feral ungulates and restoring native ecosystems.

The Department has published multiple plans to create additional fenced areas in West Hawai'i that focus on upland forest and endangered species protection. Many of these projects are included in the Executive Budget request for CIP: LNR 407: Add \$4,000,000 for Watershed Protection and Initiatives, Statewide; and LNR 402: Add \$200,000 for the Mauna Kea Fence.

*Increased Hunting Days, Open Seasons, and Increased Bag Limits Put Meat on Hunters' Tables*  
Increasing hunting and harvest opportunities is a good first step, as hunters are valuable partners. This includes removing certain hunting restrictions, which DOFAW will be proposing after authority for adaptive management was provided by the Legislature via Act 49, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021. DOFAW's newly released hunter harvest app will provide real-time monitoring of success rates and help inform future hunting regulations. DOFAW is already loosening certain restrictions via issuing animal control permits.

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<sup>1</sup> Hawaii Conservation Alliance. 2005. Controlling Ungulate Populations in Native Ecosystems in Hawaii. <https://www.hawaiiconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/ungulates-1.pdf>. Adapted from Reeser, Donald W., 1993. Establishment of the resources management division, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Pages 431-436, Proceedings of Seventh Conference on Research and Resource Management in Parks and on Public Lands, George Wright Society

While DOFAW manages approximately a quarter of Hawai‘i’s land area (over 900,000 acres) as public hunting lands, access to these lands can be a limitation. Oftentimes, public hunting lands are land-locked by privately-owned residential areas. DOFAW needs additional capacity to counter the statewide trend of lands being sold and public access blocked off.

In the past fifteen years, more than 17,000 acres of new hunting land have been added to DOFAW’s managed lands and an additional 28,000 acres are in the process of being added to serve the approximately 11,500 licensed hunters in Hawai‘i. However, DOFAW is severely limited in the capacity to pursue these opportunities or maintain the roads and trails and legal agreements. The Department supports House Bill 1721 to prioritize projects and programs to implement these actions.

#### *Targeted Culling in Overpopulated Areas*

The most cost-effective way to cull feral ungulates across large wilderness areas is by aerial shooting. While the Department has multiple long-term aerial shooting operations occurring statewide, efforts in West Hawai‘i has encountered opposition. The Task Force would be an opportunity to revisit this option.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**HCR-17**

Submitted on: 3/23/2022 7:57:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emma Yuen	DLNR	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022  
2:00 P.M.**

**CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO.17  
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO  
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A FERAL UNGULATE MANAGEMENT  
PLAN FOR WEST HAWAII**

Chairperson Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution No. 17 requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for West Hawaii. The Department defers to DLNR and has the following comments.

There is a viable market for live goats on the island of Oahu evidenced by the transport of over an estimated, 3,000 live goats from the Hawai'i Island to Oahu for consumption during 2021. Identifying that segment of the populace and seeking their representation on the task force may prove useful to provide practical input on expanding the market.

Herding, trapping, and marketing of feral mammals by ranchers, trappers and other livestock producers is an important enterprise and local food source that can be an effective means of controlling large numbers of feral mammals. These



activities need to be supported by landowners and government agencies to be successful and achieve the desired outcome. Additional incentives for organized herding, trapping, and marketing will help to increase the use of game mammals for meat and food security.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this resolution.

**LATE**

**HCR-17**

Submitted on: 3/24/2022 10:59:23 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
isaac maeda	Dept. of Agriculture	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Available for Questions



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair

**HCR17**

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

Thursday, March 24, 2022, 2:00 PM  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members of the Committees

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HCR17** which requests the DLNR to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for West Hawaii.

Unmanaged ungulates are detrimental to the goals of conservation and agriculture alike. A concerted effort is needed for the State to assess the issue and take action. While ranchers have been addressing unmanaged ungulates using traps, managed hunting, and fences, coordinated leadership is needed to coordinate the removal of feral animals. Feral animals denude the land, cause economic hardship for agricultural entities, and disrupt sound grazing plans which are meant to improve soil health, maintain watershed function and protect ecosystem function.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director







## Hawai'i Wildlife Fund

PO Box 1801, Kealahou HI 96750 & PO Box 790637, Paia HI 96779

Celebrating 25 years of protecting Hawai'i's native wildlife  
through research, education and conservation.

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Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs (JHA)

March 23, 2022

Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair

Rep. Linda Ichiyama  
Rep. Nadine K. Nakamura  
Rep. Dale T. Kobayashi  
Rep. Roy M. Takumi  
Rep. Matthew S. LoPresti  
Rep. James Kunane Tokioka  
Rep. Nicole E. Lowen  
Rep. Gene Ward  
Rep. Angus L.K. McKelvey

### Re: Support for HCR 17

Dear Representatives of the Committee on Water & Land and the Committee on Agriculture,

On behalf of Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF), I would like to express our **support for HCR 17** requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to convene a task force to develop a feral ungulate management plan for West Hawai'i. We also strongly encourage and support the expansion of such efforts to island-wide and across Hawai'i Nei, as ungulates are found in and are seriously damaging most of Hawai'i's ecosystems, on Federal, State, and private lands.

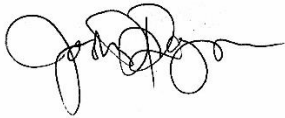
As a small non-profit organization, HWF has been protecting Hawai'i's native wildlife for over 25 years. And while we continue to see wildlife suffer due to effects of climate change, developments, and the inundation of plastic pollution in our ocean and beaches, the unfortunate issue of feral ungulates destroying sensitive native ecosystems and putting plant species at risk across the state is proving to be an increasingly difficult battle to fight. Combined with warming temperatures and a drier climate, these ungulates populations are increasing and are entering different habitats at an unprecedented rate.

With no natural predators and voracious appetites, feral ungulate populations have the capacity to devastate native forests and coastal strand species unfathomably quickly. Dessimating native species results in not only a loss in Hawai'i's precious biodiversity, but has the potential to alter watersheds, increase erosion, and accentuate the impacts of an already changing climate. More than one-third of Hawai'i Nei is forested land, supplying our islands with hundreds of billions of gallons of fresh water every year. Our communities' relationship with water and Hawai'i's forests is an interconnected one – yet we are allowing feral ungulate populations to increase to unmanageable population sizes, directly impacting our 'āina. It is our responsibility to minimize this threat to our native forests and coastal ecosystems today in order to ensure their quality and sustainability for future generations.

**We humbly ask for your support in moving HCR 17 through, and hopefully expanding its application as widely as possible within the state.**

Mahalo for all you do, and for your time and consideration of our comments.

*Me ka mahalo pumehana,*



**Jodie R. Rosam, M.S.**

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund - Nā'ālehu, Hawai'i  
*Plant Program Coordinator*



**Megan R. Lamson, M.S.**

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund - Kealahou, HI  
*President & Hawai'i Program Director*



HAWAI'I FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

P. O. Box 66 ❖ 'O'ōkala, HI 96774

Phone: 808-933-9411

Email: [hfia@hawaiiiforest.org](mailto:hfia@hawaiiiforest.org)

Website: [www.hawaiiiforest.org](http://www.hawaiiiforest.org)

**Date:** 3/23/22

**TO:** JHA Chair Mark Nakashima, JHA Vice Chair Scot Matayoshi, JHA Representatives Linda Ichiyama, Dale Kobayashi, Matthew LoPresti, Nicole Lowen, Angus McKelvey, Nadine Nakamura, Roy Takumi, Jame Kunane Tokioka, and Gene Ward

**FROM:** Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

**SUBJECT:** Testimony in Support of HCR17

Dear Hawaii Legislators,

On behalf of the Directors of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), this testimony is in support of HCR17.

HFIA's long term mission has and remains to be to support and maintain Healthy and Productive Forests throughout Hawaii. The current state of the feral ungulate population on Hawai'i island threatens not only the health and productivity of the native forests on this island but also has the negative impacts to natural, human-built and economic environments as described within the resolution. HFIA and our partners are directly impacted by the overpopulation of feral ungulates, especially in west Hawai'i, in that goats are a consistent threat to our dryland forest restoration projects, including Ka'ūpūlehu Dryland Forest Restoration site and the La'i'Ōpua Preserve, both in North Kona. These ungulates damage our projects, costing us time and money, all while threatening the health of these dryland forest habitats and all that comes with that, including the native bird, plant and insect populations as well as watershed health.

HFIA believes that HCR17 seeks to not simply address the known threat that is the fast-increasing feral ungulate population in West Hawai'i, but seeks to do so in an inclusive manner, inviting and requiring many seats at the discussion table. We hope and value the potential this has to facilitate broad, deep and effective conversations about this issue.

We hope that you will support this resolution.

Mahalo,

Don Bryan, President  
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

*Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 100 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.*

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: President Don Bryan, Vice-President Guy Cellier, Secretary Peter D. Simmons, Treasurer Wade Lee Directors: Thomas Calhoun, Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nickolas Koch, Tai Lake, Gilles Lebbe, Michael Sowards, Irene Sprecher, Michael Tam, Jorma Winkler, Ron Wolfe, Aileen Yeh



## *Hui Aloha Kīholo*

March 23, 2022

Aloha mai kākou,

Hui Aloha Kīholo wishes to reiterate our support of HCR 17 to form a taskforce to develop a feral ungulate management plan for in West Hawai'i. In reviewing testimony from other organizations, it is evident that there is a widespread, critical need to control the ungulate population and limit further damage to ecosystems, agriculture and private business. Each organization is facing problems caused by an exploding ungulate population and a united taskforce led by diverse professionals is crucial to a comprehensive and effective response that will benefit all of West Hawai'i.

Hui Aloha Kīholo continues to stand ready to provide input and support.

Mahalo,  
Hui Aloha Kīholo

**HCR-17**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 2:01:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Metcalf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**To the Esteemed House Committee On Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,**

I have volunteered for the last 15 years restoring the Hawaiian dry forest ecosystem in West Hawaii, am president of the Ka 'Ahahui 'o Ka Nahelehele dry forest non profit, and sit on the Advisory Council for the Pu'uwa'awa'a State Forest Reserve.

During this time I have witnessed the feral goat population soar out of control in West Hawaii. I have witnessed first hand their devastation to native forests, coastal ecosystems and sacred cultural sites. Major feral goat herds roam in areas where hunting is not permitted, such as urban and coastal areas, and are destroying commercial and residential landscaping. Driving to the Wiliwili Festival in Waikoloa Village last Saturday I saw 4 dead goat alongside our very busy highways.

The task force recommend by HCR17 will create a much needed multi-agency and multi-organization task force of experts who will help West Hawaii in better managing these devastating feral ungulates. Please help us in addressing this increasing and uncontrolled problem by supporting the formation of this vitally needed task force.

Mahalo nui loa,

Mary Metcalf, Kailua Kona, HI

**HCR-17**

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 2:29:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of HCR17. The feral goat population has exploded on the Big Island and is ruining all plant and tree life that is encountered. Feral goats have caused accidents and also are often hit damaging cars as well killing goats. This issue is also a humane animal issue since the number of goats being killed by vehicles is increasing and in times of drought, they are not able to find enough food. We need to control this population ASAP.

I am Dr Billy Bergin on the Big Island where I was born in Laupahoehoe in 1940. My life has been spent outdoors, especially on ranches, large and small around Hawaii Island.

I have been home here in veterinary practice for the last 55 years and am deeply concerned with the rampant damage of our beautiful countryside by the hordes of wild sheep, goats, cattle and hogs. Beautiful rolling hills where managed cattle grazed intermittently are now denuded by goats and sheep while they reproduce in free abandon. Feral hogs are daily visitors in rural townships and even downtown Hilo next to Freddy's restaurant.

When I look at Molokai where cattle ranching prospered, the axis deer have denuded forage to a point of their demise via starvation. Beef production has ended on the friendly Isle where tons of meat once served the island and Oahu markets with quality products.

HRC 17 is the beginning of resolution of this serious problem and I support it wholeheartedly, Dr Billy Bergin