



Office of the Governor

**GOVERNOR JOSH GREEN, M.D.**

*Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'āina*

**Home » Latest Department News, Newsroom » DLNR News Release – FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE CONNECTION PART OF HAWAIIAN HISTORY**

# **DLNR NEWS RELEASE – FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE CONNECTION PART OF HAWAIIAN HISTORY**

Posted on Dec 27, 2022 in [Latest Department News](#), [Newsroom](#)

---

(HONOLULU) – Forestry and agricultural interests have been intertwined in the Hawaiian Islands since well before statehood.

In 1903, when Hawai'i was a territory, the Board of Agriculture and Forestry was established. Creation of forest reserves soon followed, along with directed efforts to manage invasive plants and animals, implement watershed protections, and initiate reforestation of native tree and plant species. Although two separate state departments exist today, the DLNR and the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) maintain similar land stewardship principles that complement one another.

“We were one of the first forestry organizations in the country...created by agricultural interests,” said David Smith, Administrator for DLNR’s Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW). “Agriculture and forestry are closely tied in our nation’s history and in our state’s history, and that continues to this day.”

A critical resource for agricultural use, which forests help to provide, is water. Early farmers and ranchers in Hawai'i understood water's value and recognized the need to carefully manage the resource. The importance of healthy watersheds for ranching, food production, and plant and animal habitat, and forest's role in helping to provide clean water, was clear then and is now.

“There are many ranchers who are members of the watershed partnerships throughout the state, and I think that's a testament to the understanding of the value that the watersheds bring to agricultural and ranching use,” said DLNR Chair Suzanne Case.

With ranchers' and foresters' concern for good land management so closely aligned, there are ample opportunities to work collaboratively for mutual benefit. Examples include rotational grazing to protect soil and promote carbon sequestration, reforestation of koa trees on marginal ranch lands for cattle and controlling invasives for wildfire prevention. These efforts help conserve biodiversity within agricultural systems while improving and sustaining our multi-use, public trust lands statewide.

“Ranching is a big part of our heritage,” said Case. “It’s integrated with forest management and good stewardship and working together is a way to preserve all that.”

# # #

## **RESOURCES**

(All images/video courtesy: DLNR)

HD video – DLNR/DOFAW Support for Forestry and Agriculture #2, media clips (Dec. 27, 2022):

<https://vimeo.com/783764597>

Photographs – Forestry and Agriculture, Part 2, Hawai’i Island Ranch Land (Sept. 14, 2022):

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/anskr8rayjn71be/AADLzCi78aziwx4GgcxY-nyUa?dl=0>

## **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Ryan Aguilar

Communications Specialist

Hawai’i Dept. of Land and Natural Resources

[Dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov](mailto:Dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov)

(808) 587-0396

Dan Dennison

Senior Communications Manager

Hawaii Dept. of Land and Natural Resources

[Dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov](mailto:Dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov)

(808) 587-0396