

## HFC Committee

---

**From:** Laura Berthold <laura@mauiforestbirds.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2020 9:59 AM  
**To:** HFC Committee  
**Cc:** Alice L. Lee; Keani N. Rawlins; Tasha A. Kama; Riki Hokama; Kelly King; Mike J. Molina; Tamara A. Paltin; Shane M. Sinenci; Yukilei Sugimura  
**Subject:** Healthy Families and Healthy Communities Re: feral animal management

Hello,

I am writing to support the initiative to reduce the impacts of feral animals across our island landscape. Feral cats and other animals are wreaking havoc on our native ecosystems from mauka to makai. Any initiative that reduces their impacts should be done: stop feeding feral animals (like cats), stop supporting feral cat colonies and TNR programs (these do not work). We need to support **responsible pet ownership** which includes taking care of animals on your own property, making sure they are kept inside or an enclosed yard/outdoor facility, or leashed. People should not be able to just dispose of their animals on public land and expect others to deal with these consequences. Feral animals spread diseases to our wildlife and to people (for example toxoplasmosis and cats). They eat endangered birds like the nene. Feral ungulates destroy native forest and other habitat, increase runoff to our oceans, and more.

I support reduction of feral cats on the landscape and the proposed feeding ban to reduce overall cat numbers and densities. Cats should be treated as pets (which is better for cats and our community!) and should be held to the same standards that we have for dogs (licensing and containment- people don't support wild dogs wandering around the landscape). TNR (trap-neuter-release) is not being done at the critical levels necessary to reduce cat numbers. I support the enforcement of current laws already in place that forbids feeding of feral cat colonies in County Parks but which is not being enforced. You are hearing from a very loud and vocal minority of cat colony feeders. Whenever I am at local Maui events hosting an education table, people come up to me and ask what we can do about the feral cats. I've been asked that at the Maui Ag Fest, the Upcountry Ag fest, the Ulu fest, and more. I give public presentations and people ask the same thing, at rotary clubs, at Maui Mauka Conservation Awareness presentations for tourist operators. So even the tourist operators recognize that cats are an issue and have had tourists even mention it on their tours. What is this image that we are portraying?

I appreciate your time and review of this very important issue.

Mahalo,  
Laura Berthold

--

Laura Berthold  
Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project  
Ornithological Research/Logistics and Outreach Technician  
2465 Olinda Road, Makawao, HI 96768  
(808) 573-0280- office  
(808) 269-9381- cell  
[www.mauiforestbirds.org](http://www.mauiforestbirds.org)