

HFC Committee

From: Chris Warren <warrech.gcwa@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 1:27 PM
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: Support of feral animal control

I am writing in support of controlling feral animals in Maui County. I have devoted my career to saving rare and endangered animals. Introduced predators, like feral cats, and ungulates, like axis deer, greatly threaten the dwindling populations of some of our most endangered animals in Hawaii. Feral cats and other invasive predators are implicated in the extinction of dozens of animals around the world. Even more apparent is the damage done to our ecosystem in Hawaii due to uncontrolled ungulates like goats, cattle, and deer.

Maui was once a forested island from mauka to makai filled with beautiful plants and animals found no where else in the world. We have traded this for barren dusty mountain slopes filled with goats. And the few animals that have managed to stick around are being eaten by invasive predators. Predators that are not only allowed but actively supported.

We MUST reduce the densities of feral mammals on Maui. We can do this by shifting the focus away from practices that serve only to maintain mammal populations. Feeding feral animals should be banned without question. They do not need our help. Trap-neuter-release (TNR) has time and time again been shown to be an ineffective system. A vocal minority supports these actions against the guidance of science.

I want to add that I love cats. I have two happy and healthy cats that live inside. They don't deserve to live on the street being thrown a bit of cheap kibble once in a while. Cats do not belong out on the street any more than dogs or other pets. When we moved here eight years ago we were impressed by the great, stringent rules we had to follow to import our cats. The lack of restrictions for animals already here is absurd and, frankly, insulting. Why should cats not be licensed like dogs?

This idea that cats must roam freely to be happy is ridiculous. We have accepted that it is not ok for people to allow their dogs to roam the neighborhoods and wilderness freely. No, they would cause damage, kill animals (including other people's pets), and defecate on other people's property. CATS DO THE SAME THING.

I urge you to support common sense measures to control feral mammals on Maui. I and the rest of the conservation community work hard for little pay to protect Hawaii's native animals from extinction. Please help us.

Mahalo
Chris Warren