



University of Hawai'i at Hilo

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**Minutes
Regular Meeting**

Mauna Kea Management Board
Wednesday, April 27, 2011

Kukahau'ula, Room 131
640 N. A'ohoku Place
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Attending

MKMB: 2nd Vice Chair/Secretary Ron Terry, John Cross, Herring Kalua and Christian Veillet

Kahu Kū Mauna: Ed Stevens

OMKM: Stephanie Nagata and Dawn Pamarang

Others: Doug Arnott, Cory Harden, Stewart Hunter, Jeff Melrose, Alvin Miyashiro, and Scotty Paiva

I. CALL TO ORDER

Second Vice Chair Terry called the meeting of the Mauna Kea Management Board (MKMB) to order at 10:03 a.m.

Second Vice Chair Terry requested to move agenda item V.B. Rules Committee to after VI. New Business. Board members had no objection to this request.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Christian Veillet and seconded by Herring Kalua the minutes of the January 18, 2011 meeting of the MKMB were unanimously approved.

III. INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Thirty-Meter Telescope (TMT) Conservation District Use Application (CDUA)

On February 25, 2011, the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) granted a permit for the TMT project and also granted a contest case hearing and authorized the chair of the Land Board to select a hearing officer. Since that time they have appointed Paul Aoki as the hearing officer. A pre-hearing on determining standing and scheduling has been scheduled for May 13th at the State Building in Hilo.

B. Pohakuloa Training Area Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for High-Altitude Mountainous Environmental Training (HAMET)

At the last meeting the inadequacies of the Army's first EA was discussed. The office met with the Army and they agreed that their EA was deficient. They have since prepared a revised EA and comments are due by May 23, 2011.

C. Mauna Kea Ranger Program

Interim Director Nagata met with the rangers on April 14, 2011. Rangers were reminded of the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (DLNR) and the Office of Mauna Kea Management's (OMKM) responsibilities and respective jurisdictions. The Natural Area Reserve (NAR) falls under DLNR's jurisdiction while the Mauna Kea Science Reserve (MKSR) falls under the University of Hawaii's.

Ranger Shane Fox was nominated for the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) employee of the year. Although he was not selected, Shane was recognized for taking the initiative to delineate the summit trail's boundaries by coordinating the placement of rock boarders and his initiative to begin removing *Senecio madagascarensis* (fireweed) on the mountain.

Chief Ranger Paiva reported that the two new rangers are currently in training with the National Park rangers. He also reported that the rangers completed their observatory Conservation District Use Permit compliance inspections. The results were all positive with only one minor infraction, which was quickly corrected. The rangers experienced some busy snow days this past winter season but there were no major incidents. He reported one minor accident involving observatory personnel that resulted in some injuries. The rangers are now monitoring radio frequency interference on the summit. The information will be submitted to the observatories for their use.

D. Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC)

The office is working with BIISC to develop an invasive species control plan. BIISC will also conduct training with the rangers for the proper removal of fireweed. Christian Veillet thought it would be good to also open the training to observatory personnel.

E. Hale Pohaku Improvements

Mauna Kea Support Services (MKSS) will be purchasing an electronic vehicle counter for Hale Pohaku. This will electronically count vehicles and will also identify specific vehicles with electronic tags, such as observatory and commercial tour vehicles. It will also give us real time counts of vehicles on the mountain.

MKSS and OMKM are also looking at putting up a digital sign that can be programmed to let the public know about conditions of the road.

OMKM is working with MKSS on making improvement to the half of the building housing the presentation room at Hale Pohaku. It will be gutted and renovated for use by commercial tour passengers. They will have an area to sit and eat their dinners, thus removing the congestion at the Visitor Information Station (VIS). Commercial operator fees will be used for this project.

F. Legislative Information Briefing

An informational briefing was held by joint Senates committees on Water, Land and Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs. Chancellor Don Straney gave a short historical overview of UH's management since 2000 and in particular the Hale Pohaku area. However, because UH is currently in a contested case proceeding for the TMT CDUA we were not able to answer some of their questions. Also in attendance at this meeting were Ed Stevens, Arthur Hoke, and Chad Kalepa Baybayan.

G. Comprehensive Management Plan Annual Report

OMKM's annual report to the BLNR was scheduled for April 9, 2011; however, on the day of the meeting, the BLNR chair withdrew the agenda item without an explanation. No new date for presentation of the report has been scheduled.

IV. KAHU KŪ MAUNA COUNCIL (KKMC)

Ed Stevens reported that at the last Council meeting Lisa Hadway, Big Island NAR manager, requested the Council's input on the development of a sign to prevent the use of water activity in Lake Waiau. This was prompted by an incident in which someone had entered the Lake on a paddle board and apparently used the oar to engrave some markings on the shoreline. The Department of Conservation and Resources Enforcement conducted an investigation based on information provided by the OMKM rangers. They concluded that there was no sign to indicate such an activity was prohibited. The Council fully supported erecting a sign and recommended that the sign indicate it was a Hawaiian sacred site and contain pictographs showing no swimming, no watercraft, and no rock stacking. Mr. Stevens added there should be more signage on the mountain because of the abuse that is going on. He feels there should be a sign at the pathway to the summit being that it is a very sacred site for the Hawaiian people.

Last month, members of the Council met with the Pohakuloa Training Area cultural advisory committee. The purpose of this was to discuss the Army's High Altitude Mountainous Environmental Training (HAMET) Environmental Assessment.

Regarding the legislative information briefing, Mr. Stevens felt Senator Malama Solomon wanted to see if we had cultural people taking care of the cultural aspects of Mauna Kea.

V. Committee Reports

A. Environment Committee

Dr. Terry reported the natural resources position is moving thru UH Hilo Human Resources. The committee is looking at a botanical survey with Dr. Grant Gerrish, who will do a full inventory of the astronomy precinct as well as sample the entire MKSR. They are also looking at hydrological information on the mountain. OMKM will also be funding a 4-year climate change study.

B. Rules Committee

(This agenda item was moved to after New Business.)

Jeff Melrose updated the Board on the rule making process. There are two guides to the rules – Act 132 which gives us the authority to do rules and to coordinate with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), and consistency with DLNR rules which lands surrounds UH's managed lands. Interim Director Nagata and Mr. Melrose met with OHA and will continue meeting with them. They also met with Kahu Kū Mauna Council. The first larger public meeting is the Waimea Community Association's Town Meeting on May 5th. He anticipates the public hearing process will take place at the end of the year or early next year.

Mr. Melrose discussed alternative approaches to the commercial tour permits. He met with all eight tour operators to inform them that the rules will have an impact on commercial operations. Most operators expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to be on the mountain.

Mr. Melrose presented some alternative approaches to commercial tour rules:

1. Eliminating commercial tour operations all together
2. Maximizing agency oversight
3. Maximizing revenues and competition
4. Prioritizing stability in tour operations
5. Providing alternate permit programs to enable intermittent tours by non-core permittees

Discussions

Mr. Stevens asked if it was known how much of the smaller tours the mountain can handle. He sees a danger in encouraging rather than discouraging more traffic. He feels the less people up there the better. How dependent are we on revenues from this small group and is it worth it? Carrying capacity should determine how much is allowed. We need to look at all the aspects before deciding on more permits, such as what is needed to support additional capacity.

Ron Terry stated education is an important value. He would like to see rules that would help to maximize education, understanding, appreciation, and taking care of the mountain, all of the things that we want for Mauna Kea. Herring Kalua stated when people try something and it turns out good then everyone wants to do it. He thinks it can be done and the key is education, culture and working with the community.

Mr. Melrose also had discussions with observatory personnel who indicated they do not want to be a gate keeper. While they are not advocates for commercial operators, they do not want to be a deterrent either.

Interim Director Nagata stated we are at the point where we need to really think about which direction we want to go. What we are hearing so far is to maximize education and safety rather than maximizing revenue and competition. OMKM also needs a mechanism to accommodate the occasional commercial operator, that is an individual or company that does not operate on a regular basis.

Doug Arnott stated that the number of European guests that crashed their cars was so great that he wanted to provide a better way to transport people safely. Commercial operators provide a service by compressing about six car's worth of people into one van.

Dr. Terry stated we will have to decide how many operators and the rules should give us the flexibility to do that.

Mr. Melrose felt that it comes back to education and that is the University's role on the mountain aside from protecting and developing the science and managing the historical and cultural resources.

Christian Veillet pointed out that it may not work if on one hand we want less people, and on the other more education. At some point we have to decide what is really important. Astronomy, for example, it is the

decommissioning of telescopes. Is this something we want to for commercial tours? That is, if one of the permitted tour operators is closing its business, do we not fill the vacancy?

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Informational Presentation - Understanding Groundwater Processes within Mauna Kea

Dr. Don Thomas gave a Powerpoint presentation on the groundwater processes within Mauna Kea. Topics included:

- Management of groundwater resources requirements
- The underlying structure of Mauna Kea
- What we know about Mauna Kea
- Groundwater and recharge
- The hydrology of Mauna Kea

He posed a number of management questions such as the existence, influence and role of permafrost in the summit ecosystem. What are the impacts of climate change or ongoing uses at the summit on permafrost? What is the extent of wastewater in the summit and whether it has an impact on the natural hydrologic cycle and groundwater resources within Mauna Kea? He also suggested potential methodology for studying these questions.

Dr. Terry stated our charge is to take care, among other things, the water on the mountain and to understand it better. It was suggested that this also be presented to the Kahu Kū Mauna Council.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 24, 2011.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Terry adjourned the meeting at 12:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Signed by Dr. Ron Terry
Dr. Ron Terry, Secretary, MKMB

June 28, 2011
Date