

Pacific Seabird Group



DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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August 31, 2009

Elizabeth Krueger
Department of Planning and Permitting
650 S. King St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Kaena Point Ecosystem Restoration Project, File Nos. 2009/SMA-44 and 2009SV-9

Dear Ms. Krueger:

On behalf of the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) we support the fencing project at Kaena Point on Oahu. PSG is an international, non-profit organization that was founded in 1972 to promote the knowledge, study, and conservation of Pacific seabirds. It's membership of about 600 scientists is drawn from the entire Pacific basin, including Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Russia, Japan, South Korea, China, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. Among PSG's members are biologists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, government officials who manage seabird refuges and populations, and individuals who are interested in marine conservation. Since its inception PSG has been a strong and vocal advocate of removing invasive species from seabird colonies throughout the Pacific region. PSG members are some of the world's experts in island restoration, and many of our members have worked on restoring and conserving seabirds in Hawaii.

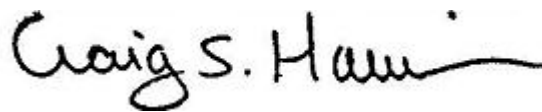
PSG strongly supports the proposal to erect a predator-free fence at Kaena Point to eliminate the harm that dogs, cats, mongoose, pigs and rats cause to seabird colonies at the Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve. Islands throughout the world have been threatened by introduced predators, which plague seabird colonies. In the worst circumstances, a seabird colony can be entirely destroyed; in other situations a colony can be crippled, suffering huge annual losses of eggs and chicks, as well as of adult birds. Such changes can disturb entire island ecosystems. It has been reported that a least 100 seabirds are killed annually at the Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve, and this level of interference is likely a major obstacle to the reserve maintaining healthy wedge-tailed shearwater and Laysan albatross colonies. In fact, if introduced predators are removed and native vegetation is restored, colonies of red-footed boobies or frigatebirds

might also become established. Indeed, it is possible that storm-petrels and other seabirds might eventually colonize a predator-free Kaena Point.

We believe that a fundamental mission of Hawaii's Natural Area Reserve is to restore habitat such as that found at Kaena Point to its natural state and to allow wildlife such as seabirds to flourish there. Predator-free fencing was pioneered in New Zealand, and the author of this letter has had the privilege of viewing Karori Wildlife Sanctuary in Wellington, New Zealand – an area where predator-free fencing has been successfully implemented for more than a decade. We have confidence that if implemented (*and* that the fence is monitored to keep its integrity), this project will be a great success for native seabirds and plants. This project may also promote increased tourism in this area, once the seabird colonies have become re-established.

For these reasons, we strongly endorse this proposal. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance in implementing this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig S. Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Craig S. Harrison
Vice Chair for Conservation