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Maui News

Case announces \$10 million to protect Hawai'i's natural resources

January 28, 2023 · 4:00 PM

Congressman Ed Case (HI-01) announced a combined total of \$10 million in federal funding from the US Department of Defense to implement four natural resource conservation projects under DOD's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program.



Congressman Ed Case and Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth at the Pōhakuloa Training Area. PC: US Army

The DOD REPI awards this year will go to the following projects in Hawai'i:

- \$2.9 million to increase the resilience of endangered wildlife on Lāna'i. (To be supported by \$4.8 million in partner contributions.)
- \$1.3 million to mitigate impacts on rare plants on Hawai'i Island. (To be supported by \$1.3 million in partner contributions.)
- \$2.7 million to preserve threatened and endangered species and enhance watersheds on O'ahu Island. (To be supported by \$6.8 million in partner contributions.)
- \$3.1 million for the detection and management of land and water-based invasive species near military installations on Kaua'i, O'ahu and Hawai'i Islands. (To be supported by \$5.6 million in partner contributions.)

The funds will be matched with \$18.5 million in private partner contributions to work towards improving coastal, forest and watershed resilience on military-utilized lands and nearby communities.



Congressman Case and Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth at the Pōhakuloa Training Area greenhouse. PC: Tiffany DeMasters/Big Island Now

Congressman Case was recently re-appointed to his third two-year term as a member of the US House Committee on Appropriations responsible for all federal discretionary spending.

“Our military’s operations in Hawai‘i are critical to our country’s national security and a major contributor to our local economy, but require a constant commitment to full partnership in our present and future and full stewardship of our communities and resources,” said Case in a news release. “The REPI program is a key avenue for our military to fulfill this commitment.”

Case recently accompanied Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth in a tour of the Pōhakuloa Training Area on Hawai‘i Island. There, the two viewed the Army’s REPI-funded conservation efforts to protect and recover native Hawaiian plants and animals, including our state bird, the nēnē goose, and several endangered endemic plants, all located on the military’s owned and leased lands.

Through REPI, DOD works with state and local governments, conservation organizations and willing private landowners to implement compatible uses of lands for both the military mission and conservation.

Case said the unique partnerships and funding opportunities for natural resources protection facilitated by REPI, has been among his top areas of focus on the Appropriations Committee. For the current Fiscal Year, Case helped secure \$175 million for the national REPI program, according to the news release.

Since 2021, the REPI program in Hawai‘i has matched \$30.2 million in federal funding and \$35.2 million in partner contributions for projects at eight locations restoring critical habitats and native forests, protecting island aquifers, climate adaptation efforts and promoting compatible land uses.

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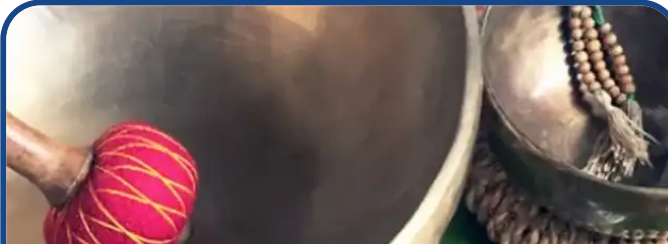
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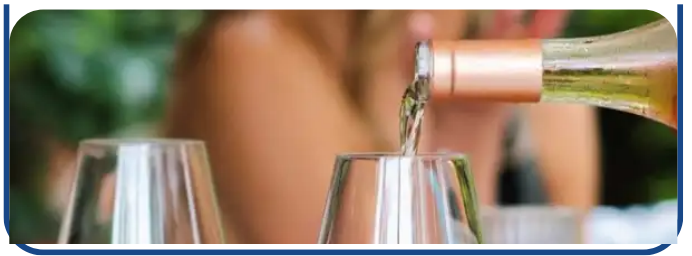
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