



## THE COUNTY OF KAUA'I

DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHILIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

### News Release

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### **Mayor Kawakami signs MOU to allow night football games for 2019 season**

Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the County of Kaua'i to allow the Kaua'i Interscholastic Federation and the state Department of Education to use county stadium lights at night during the 2019 football season.

"We are committed to bringing back a long-standing national tradition of Friday Night Lights to our keiki and families here on Kaua'i, while ensuring the protection of our environment," said Mayor Kawakami. "While the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan is currently being finalized, we are grateful that this MOU will address the conservation of our endangered or threatened seabird species. Thank you to our federal, state, county, and community partners for your continuous dedication to our community while being strong stewards of our island and our precious environment."

As noted in the MOU, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will allow stadium lights to be used at night on Sept. 20, Sept. 27, and Oct. 4. The endangered seabird fledgling season runs every year from Sept. 15 through Dec. 15.

"This is good news for the Kaua'i community," said U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i). "Together, the county and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were able to balance the valued tradition of Friday night football with the conservation of endangered species like



Newell's shearwater. While both sides will need to continue to work toward a permanent solution, today's announcement is a win for everyone."

The county is participating in the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan. This plan, a coordinated framework that defines a set of actions to minimize and mitigate the effects of light attraction on the protected seabirds and defines conservation goals, is currently being finalized by the state Department of Land and Natural Resources – Division of Forestry and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Partnerships are essential for the conservation of threatened and endangered species," said Katherine Mullett, Acting Field Supervisor, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Working together, we can ensure a future for Kaua'i's 'ua'u, endangered Hawaiian petrel, 'akē'akē, endangered band-rumped storm petrel, and 'a'o, threatened Newell's shearwater."

As young 'ua'u, 'akē'akē, or 'a'o fly from their mountain burrows to the ocean, they can become disoriented by bright lights or strike tall objects in their path, causing them to fall to the ground. These grounded birds may be injured or become prey to invasive predators. If you see one of these birds on the ground, you can contact one of the licensed wildlife rehabilitators on Kaua'i for assistance. To learn more about what you can do, visit

<https://saveoursearwaters.org/rescue101>.

To view the MOU, environmental assessment, and other related documents, please visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website at <https://www.fws.gov/pacificislands>.

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