



P.O. Box 417  
Kula, Hawai'i 96790

The Honorable Josh Green  
Governor, State of Hawai'i  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha, Governor Green,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Kula Community Association to seek your assistance in addressing a critical issue that affects our community. Over the past year, Kula has experienced many large wildfires that have posed significant threats to our safety and well-being. To mitigate these risks, we propose a proactive approach to managing the fuel load on agricultural lands and overgrown parcels in our area. Our community has witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of wildfires fueled by unmanaged vegetation on unfenced and fenced private lands and county and state lands in conservation or preservation. Overgrown invasive grasses and trees on these lands are highly flammable and cover a significant portion of our Upcountry landscape, creating a dangerous environment that contributes to the intensity and spread of fires.

We propose that owners of these overgrown agricultural lands and large private parcels be required to reduce their fuel load each spring before the onset of the dry summer fire season. Effective methods include cutting, mowing, or grazing these lands. This approach has proven successful, as evidenced by photos we have seen showing how the recent Crater Road fire was halted at a pasture fence line where cattle had grazed, leaving no fuel for the fire to continue (an example is shown here).



We believe that a collaborative effort involving landowners, county and state authorities, and community members, to address this issue is essential. Therefore, we ask for your help in protecting our Kula community from the risk of future wildfires by:

1. Supporting our request that the County Fire Chief prioritize Kula for enforcement of removing overgrown fuel loads on County-owned and privately-owned large parcels; and
2. Requesting to amend the State Administrative Rules of the Department of Agriculture and of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to allow grazing on their overgrown Conservation and Preservation Lands to mitigate the fuel load on State lands to keep our community safe.

Your support in mandating these practices would be invaluable in safeguarding Kula from the unnecessary devastation of wildfires. Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to your positive response and to working together to create a more resilient and fire-safe community.

Me ke mahalo nui,

Bobbie Patnode  
President, Kula Community Association