

# Pacific Seabird Group



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

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March 21, 2001

Mr. Dennis Polosky, Manager  
Kauai Electric  
4463 Pahe'e Street  
Lihue, HI 96766

## Conservation of Newell's Shearwater

Dear Mr. Polosky:

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) is writing to express its concern about the conservation of the Newell's Shearwater on Kauai. PSG is an international organization that was founded in 1972 to promote knowledge, study and conservation of Pacific seabirds. It draws its members from the rim of the entire Pacific Basin, including the United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, and Russia. Among PSG's members are biologists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, state and federal officials who manage seabird populations and refuges, and individuals with interests in marine conservation. Collectively, our knowledge about seabirds is extensive and our interest in seabird conservation is keen.

In order to protect the Newell's Shearwater, PSG urges Kauai Electric to reconsider the proposed installation of utility wires 85-110 feet high at the proposed Hanamaula electric generating facility. This line placement is very likely to increase mortality of the this federally threatened seabird. Research indicates this species is declining and we are gravely concerned with the future of this unique Hawaiian bird.

We are especially concerned with the failure of Kauai Electric to adopt the management recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel published in 1996 by the Electric Power Research Institute regarding the placement of the elevated utility wires. Kauai Electric has not addressed these guidelines in the Environmental Impact Statement prepared for this project.

There are several additional actions Kauai Electric can take:

- 1) Proceed with a Section 10 Consultation under the Endangered Species Act with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in order to obtain an "incidental take" permit.
- 2) Place lines underground near the Hanamaula generation facility. This is a particularly important area, because it is the site of a major flight corridor for shearwaters. It is also near the Isenberg subdivision ballpark which is illuminated with bright lights at night games. Shearwaters are strongly attracted to lights; aerial lines in this area would greatly increase their mortality
- 3) Relocate, lower and redesign power lines so that they present a smaller target to flying shearwaters.
- 4) Join U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Honolulu, in their efforts to protect the shearwaters at their nesting sites. Mitigation efforts supported by funds from the *Tesoro Petroleum* spill will soon be available and could use added support.

Thank you for considering the above recommendations.

Sincerely,

Craig S. Harrison  
Vice Chair for Conservation

cc: Marilet Zablan  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
P.O. Box 50088  
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