



A NEW DAY IN HAWAII

Environment and Natural Resources

A Commitment to Future Generations

Every aspect of our lives is intertwined with the natural resources of our islands. Our survival is literally dependent on proper stewardship.

Our environment is the lifeblood of our economy—the primary attraction for our visitor industry and a basic aspect of much of our business activity. Our land, water, oceans, and species form the foundation of our cultural diversity and are fundamental to the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian culture. Careful resource management is necessary to produce our own food and clean energy. And our island environment is the basis for our quality of life—hunting, fishing, hiking, surfing, swimming, and so many other activities that make Hawaii the place we call home.

Protecting our environment and being good stewards of our natural resources is much easier said than done. It is too easy to leave our mess for someone else to deal with at some future time. This has been a hallmark of politics-as-usual in Hawaii, where short-term thinking and private interests trump considerations for future generations. Hawaii simply cannot continue down this path.

We need to go beyond talking about “sustainability” and start acting on our common interest in managing our islands with wisdom and care. Too often, questions about the use of natural resources turn into endless bitter conflict. Worse, sides are sometimes actively pitted against each other for personal or political gain. Environmental and natural resource policy in Hawaii has suffered from a failure of leadership.

In an Abercrombie Administration, we will emphasize open, respectful discussion and decision making that puts the public interest above all else. We believe a strong economy is not one based on unfettered consumption of our natural resources, but instead one that is sustainable over time. We will look at environmental issues with future generations in mind, so that they do not suffer from poor decisions we make today.

Guiding Principles: Environment and Natural Resources

- Consider the interests of people many generations into the future
- Sustainable use and management of natural resources
- Long-term planning
- Taking responsibility for our own mess
- Personal responsibility and leading by example

RESTORE CAPABILITIES OF AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Prior to Western contact, Native Hawaiian society had the *konoiki* to enforce its resource management model from the land to the sea. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) is our modern day equivalent with extensive land, marine, and cultural resources under its watch. DLNR has not had the resources needed to do its job. Failure to provide adequate support to DLNR has negative economic and social consequences that we pay for in other ways. With the right leadership and capacity to look for additional sources of funding, including federal funding, we can ensure DLNR has the capacity to carry out its mission. And we can make sure DLNR is managed well by an objective Director who has broad community and agency support, understands the uniqueness of different islands and communities, listens to concerns, ensures proper enforcement of the rules and laws, and takes active initiative in carrying out the agency's critical mission. With the right leadership, we will make our parks great again; protect cultural resources and practices; appropriately support and regulate economic activities; acknowledge, respect, and perpetuate hunting, fishing, and other recreational and subsistence activities; and ensure that natural resources can be utilized and enjoyed by the people of Hawaii in perpetuity.

ADVANCE OUR CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

Moving to energy independence is Hawaii's most important economic enterprise right now. It is also critical to protect our environment from the pollutant risks and climate change impacts associated with fossil fuels. My plan on Energy details steps to accelerate our movement toward clean energy, including creating an independent Hawaii Energy Authority, allowing clean energy producers to sell directly to end-users, using PACE funding to increase clean energy implementation, realigning incentives for the public utility, increasing the Public Benefits Fund to encourage energy efficiency, "greening" government and the workforce, increasing research and deployment of new

technologies, and reducing gasoline and diesel usage in transportation.

INCREASE LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

Growing more of our own food in Hawaii is another economically beneficial effort that is also good for the environment because it reduces the risk of importing invasive species, makes positive use of our land and water resources to protect and preserve green spaces, and reduces the environmental impacts of transporting food into the islands. My plan on Food and Agriculture details steps to lead an Agricultural Renaissance in Hawaii by protecting and properly utilizing agricultural lands, repairing irrigation systems, developing integrated agricultural/environmental/cultural education programs, increasing the market for locally grown food, supporting small farms, and encouraging individual and community gardening and water catchment efforts.

IMPROVE PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT, AND RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR INVASIVE SPECIES

The lack of an expansive and coordinated inspection/intake process for our ports, planes and cargo allows hundreds of alien species to enter our island's ecosystems each year. Our ecosystems have suffered as a result. Continuing to leave this threat open and relying on luck to avoid future catastrophes is unacceptable. The problems caused by alien invasive species not only impact our natural resources, but also affect our watersheds and water supply, plants and agriculture, shipping, commerce, business, and even people's ability to sleep. We will seek additional federal resources and invest state resources—including educational resources—into a better preventive system that will stop these problems from arising in the first place and save money in the long run.

PREPARE FOR THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

To be good stewards for future generations, we must ensure Hawaii is able to withstand the impacts from climate changes that we are just now beginning to understand. When I saw firsthand the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, I learned how much worse the damage was because the coast and all its natural barriers against storms had not been properly preserved. With Oahu so densely populated and people living along the coast of every island, we must aggressively protect our coasts and properly manage these areas, looking at everything from scientifically based shoreline setbacks and modifications to vital infrastructure (roadways, sewage treatment plants, etc.) that will be inundated as sea levels rise. The time for a long-term statewide plan for the effects of climate change is now.

DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED PLAN FOR SOLID WASTE ACROSS THE STATE

Hawaii produces significantly more solid waste per person than the rest of the U.S., and our country overall produces much more solid waste than many other developed countries. Recycling is an important activity, but we must also take steps to produce less waste in the first place. Solid waste management is generally a county issue, and there have been commendable efforts and improvements. But we are rapidly running out of landfill space and we cannot responsibly export our trash to other locations. Hawaii can do better, and we will, with a comprehensive and integrated statewide plan for addressing consumption, waste, reuse, recycling, and waste to energy conversion.