

January 17, 2024

From: Elizabeth Theriault
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To: Chair Alex Kelepolo and the Commissioners of the Public Access, Open Space & Natural Resources
Preservation Commission
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1101
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4252

**RE: SUPPORT FOR COUNTY ACQUISITION OF THE JOSEPH ROCK
ARBORETUM**

Aloha Commissioners:

I am writing to support the Conservation Easement for the Joseph Rock Arboretum. I have known Ms. Wagner for 15 years from her work in (restoration, seed banking, teaching, land consultation, etc.) and she has been extremely dedicated in her work.

It would be wonderful if the Joseph Rock Arboretum could have a Conservation Easement which would preserve the land in perpetuity for the people of Hawaii. It is important to save the open spaces now, while we can. This property is in the heart of Kona and will make a wonderful green space for generations to come.

Jill Wagner and I share the community vision of importance for diversity, cultural restoration, Hawaiian language preservation, environmental integrity, personal empowerment, healing, rejuvenation, and peace. My community groups are immensely grateful to have the use of the land and facilities to do our work in connection with nature for our shared vision... making drums, learning of plants, trees and process to maintain and perpetuate green life and food sustainability in our individual environments. Simply being at Future Forests Nursery and land inspires action and personal responsibility.

In this process I continue to be amazed and inspired by Ms. Wagner's integrity, generosity, ingenuity, and commitment to global reforestation. Her powerful yet humble educational prowess empowers the individual to community service as well as to take action on our individual human abilities to make a difference. She leads with her relentless examples of dedicated hard work, knowledge and understanding that time is running out for balance on our planet for sustainable life of all beings. She extends her efforts in a global way that encourages a lens back to Hawaii as a leading example of environmental care and integrity.

Commissioners, please support this Conservation Easement to ensure a shining example for the people of Hawaii and an empowered example for all people to do their part and more!

Sincerely in gratitude with Aloha,
Elizabeth Theriault, DrumSpeak

Elizabeth Theriault is a highly respected kumu with DrumSpeak and Let Love Lead for 3 decades. She has been bringing her groups to JRA to hold sacred drum circles, drum making courses and other sacred work in the native traditions.