

# Remarks by the Honorable Daniel K. Akaka on the dedication of the conservation biology field station of the Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i

Senator Daniel K. Akaka Papers

Public relations, Speeches, statements, and messages, Box PR4, Folder 77

<https://hdl.handle.net/10524/78549>

---

Items in eVols are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

*UHM Library Digital Collections Disclaimer and Copyright Information*

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA  
ON THE DEDICATION OF  
THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY FIELD STATION  
OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF HAWAII

Haleakala National Park  
Haleakala, Maui, Hawaii

December 9, 1991

**Aloha and good morning!** I share with all of you the enthusiasm and excitement of the moment as we dedicate this new outpost in the battle for the preservation of Hawaii's native ecosystem.

We hear about the global decimation of tropical forests and feel helpless to do much about it, because we have so little control over what happens in other countries. But, we **can** and **must** do something about the extinction crisis here in our own state.

If we are to make a difference in our world, we **must** begin at home. And certainly, few places can rival Hawaii's stunning beauty -- or match its heartbreaking ecological plight.

We realize that no single individual, group or agency working alone can do what needs to be done. The Haleakala Conservation Biology Field Station is a stellar example of precisely the kind of partnership that is essential to the effective preservation of our environment.

Recognizing the urgency of bolstering research efforts in Hawaii, the MacArthur Foundation provided a half-million dollars in seed funding to establish the Hawaii Conservation Biology Initiative. And to the Foundation, we are profoundly grateful. The organizations and individuals who came together within the Initiative determined a high-priority requirement for cutting-edge research and field facilities. The Nature Conservancy planned, built and donated the actual structure. And Haleakala National Park provided the site and has assumed responsibility for maintenance and management.

We are gathered this morning to dedicate and applaud a truly model endeavor. We have here a bold illustration of exactly what the **spirit** of cooperation is all about and a working testament to the very **tangible** results it can achieve.

Our presence here on Haleakala is also rich in **symbolism**. Haleakala means "House of the Sun." In a very

(name)  
(date)  
Page 2

real sense, the opening of this house and field station is a **shining ray of promise** for Hawaii's endangered species. It marks the dawn of a threshold era of hope for the embattled species of Haleakala, the Waikamoi Preserve and the refuges of East Maui.

And as we praise the accomplishments of true partnership, I would like to take this occasion to extend my hand with a new offering. **When the Congress reconvenes next year, I will be introducing a legislative package called the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative.**

While its final details are now being completed, its goals are **straightforward, clear and absolute.** The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is a multifaceted bill whose objective is to maintain the integrity of Hawaii's forest ecosystems for native biota and watershed preservation.

**The challenge before us today is unmistakable:** We must work quickly and with firm determination to preserve our beleaguered forests and their fast-disappearing inhabitants. **As the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is being prepared to wend its way through the halls of Congress, I call upon you and the dedicated legions of our partnership to help me in securing its enactment.** Here are some of the Initiative's major provisions:

It creates a multi-discipline, multi-interest blue ribbon panel to study measures and make recommendations about preserving Hawaii's tropical and dryland forests and to identify island-by-island priorities. **Clearly,** there is a scientific knowledge gap. The threats are many, the answers few. A coordinated and comprehensive advisory mechanism is **vital.**

To combat alien species, the bill will authorize inspection for and interception of destructive pest species carried in the mail. Of 50 weed species in Hawaii targeted for biocontrol, nearly 40 were deliberately introduced. **Our Garden of Eden has become a garden of weeds.**

The legislation will also increase personnel levels within the Department of Agriculture's sorely understaffed Animal Damage Control Unit. The smuggling of pet snakes, iguanas, alligators -- and recently, even a cougar -- **must be stopped.** I will also seek a review and possible raising of fines and penalties for the knowing introduction of alien species and the unauthorized collection or gathering of plant and animal specimens in protected refuges.

(name)  
(date)  
Page 3

The proposal further calls for the establishment of a Hawaii Tropical Forestry Foundation and an extensive educational campaign to stimulate public awareness and cooperation.

Provisions will be made to promote compatible uses within our forests, such as silviculture of koa, sandalwood and other rare resources.

There will be a Kahoolawe demonstration project aimed at aggressively attempting to restore her dryland forests and revegetate her land.

There are numerous other aspects to this legislation, and I will be seeking your counsel and assistance in honing and securing the passage of all of them.

For now, let me simply say this: The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is far from a panacea. What I **hope** it will be is a bold step. What I **know** it is is a solemn commitment. It is a promise much like that which the demigod Maui obtained from the racing sun, la, whose hasty flight through the heavens left the earth in near-constant darkness and made the 'aina moribund. Maui stood on this volcanic peak, perhaps not far from where we stand today, and lassoed that speeding star. Maui evoked a pledge from la that it would slow its daily arc across the sky. In return, la was freed, and the people, the animals and the plants of old Hawaii flourished, as they had before.

**Today, on Haleakala -- as he did so purposefully with la -- Maui beckons us to slow down.** Maui commands our attention and tells us to open our eyes to the multitude of threats and the mournful devastation our forests and native habitats have endured. **Let us promise, then, to slow down in our harmful ways. Let us promise that we will do everything in our power to make this land, this special place that is our home, flourish as it did before.**

**Mahalo and bless you all in your work!**

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA  
ON THE DEDICATION OF  
THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY FIELD STATION  
OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF HAWAII

Haleakala National Park  
Haleakala, Maui, Hawaii

December 9, 1991

**Aloha and good morning!** I share with all of you the enthusiasm and excitement of the moment as we dedicate this new outpost in the battle for the preservation of Hawaii's native ecosystem.

This is yet the latest of a number of encouraging new cooperative efforts in Hawaii to work toward reversing the loss of our natural heritage and the world's biological diversity. We often speak of Hawaii as "Paradise." We must not let it become "Paradise Lost."

We hear about the global decimation of tropical forests and feel helpless to do much about it, because we have so little control over what happens in other countries. But, we **can** and **must** do something about the extinction crisis here in our own state.

Thanks to a truly remarkable partnership of Federal, State and private organizations, we have created a secure stronghold for animals and plants found nowhere else on earth -- here on the upper slopes of Haleakala. Regrettably, some species have already been lost and others are on the brink of vanishing, but many are still with us, and our fervent commitment to knowledge-based stewardship can ensure their survival for future generations.

We are all beginning to understand the urgency of working together to reverse the perilous trend of extinction. If we are to make a difference in our world, we **must** begin at home. And certainly, few places can rival Hawaii's stunning beauty -- or match its heartbreaking ecological plight.

We realize that no single individual, group or agency working alone can do what needs to be done. The Haleakala Conservation Biology Field Station is a stellar example of precisely the kind of partnership that is essential to the effective preservation of our environment.

Recognizing the urgency of bolstering research efforts in Hawaii, the MacArthur Foundation provided a half-million

(name)  
(date)  
Page 2

dollars in seed funding to establish the Hawaii Conservation Biology Initiative. And to the Foundation, we are profoundly grateful. The organizations and individuals who came together within the Initiative determined a high-priority requirement for cutting-edge research and field facilities. The Nature Conservancy planned, built and donated the actual structure. And Haleakala National Park provided the site and has assumed responsibility for maintenance and management.

We are gathered this morning to dedicate and applaud a truly model endeavor. We have here a bold illustration of exactly what the **spirit** of cooperation is all about and a working testament to the very **tangible** results it can achieve.

Our presence here on Haleakala is also rich in **symbolism**. Haleakala means "House of the Sun." In a very real sense, the opening of this house and field station is a **shining ray of promise** for Hawaii's endangered species. It marks the dawn of a threshold era of hope for the embattled species of Haleakala, the Waikamoi Preserve and the refuges of East Maui.

And as we praise the accomplishments of true partnership, I would like to take this occasion to extend my hand with a new offering. **When the Congress reconvenes next year, I will be introducing a legislative package called the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative.**

While its final details are now being completed, its goals are **straightforward, clear and absolute**. The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is a multifaceted bill whose objective is to maintain the integrity of Hawaii's forest ecosystems for native biota and watershed preservation.

We know that Hawaii is the only state in the Union to possess tropical forests. What many do not appreciate, however, is the amazing wealth of ecological treasures they hold -- their marvelous abundance of life; their importance as watersheds; the untold, maybe miraculous, medicinal values of their unidentified plant and insect species. And let us not forget the allure they hold for our fellow citizens of the world. The unique enticement of the Aloha State is that it is a place to which others can come to be recharged, even find peace. They are not revitalized by strolling through concrete canyons but by being immersed in the raw beauty and power of Hawaii's 'aina, its land, and the forests that continually rejuvenate the land.

**The challenge before us today is unmistakable:** We must work quickly and with firm determination to preserve our beleaguered forests and their fast-disappearing inhabitants.

(name)  
(date)  
Page 3

**As the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is being prepared to wend its way through the halls of Congress, I call upon you and the dedicated legions of our partnership to help me in securing its enactment. Here are some of the Initiative's major provisions:**

It creates a multi-discipline, multi-interest blue ribbon panel to study measures and make recommendations about preserving Hawaii's tropical and dryland forests and to identify island-by-island priorities. **Clearly**, there is a scientific knowledge gap. The threats are many, the answers few. A coordinated and comprehensive advisory mechanism is **vital**.

To combat alien species, the bill will authorize inspection for and interception of destructive pest species carried in the mail. The interstate mailing of noxious weeds is illegal, yet it goes on and is difficult to monitor. Of 50 weed species in Hawaii targeted for biocontrol, nearly 40 were deliberately introduced. Recipients ordered them as ornamental plants for local gardens, but it wasn't long before they invaded our forests. **And our Garden of Eden became a garden of weeds.**

Beyond intensification of postal inspections, the legislation will increase personnel levels within the Department of Agriculture's sorely understaffed Animal Damage Control Unit. The smuggling of pet snakes, iguanas, alligators -- and recently, even a cougar -- **must be stopped**. Rabbits released in Hawaii's reserves and national parks constitute the latest threat to our native plants. I will also seek a review and possible raising of fines and penalties for intentional vandalism -- which could include the knowing introduction of alien species and the unauthorized collection or gathering of plant and animal specimens in protected refuges.

The proposal further calls for the establishment of a Hawaii Tropical Forestry Foundation and an extensive educational campaign to stimulate public awareness and cooperation.

Provisions will be made to promote compatible uses within our forests, such as silviculture of koa, sandalwood and other rare resources.

There will be a Kahoolawe demonstration project aimed at aggressively attempting to restore her dryland forests and revegetate her land.

(name)  
(date)  
Page 4

There are numerous other aspects to this legislation, and I will be seeking your counsel and assistance in honing and securing the passage of all of them.

For now, let me simply say this: The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is far from a panacea. What I **hope** it will be is a bold step. What I **know** it is is a solemn commitment. It is a promise much like that which the demigod Maui obtained from the racing sun, la, whose hasty flight through the heavens left the earth in near-constant darkness and made the 'aina moribund. Maui stood on this volcanic peak, perhaps not far from where we stand today, and lassoed that speeding star. Maui evoked a pledge from la that it would slow its daily arc across the sky. In return, la was freed, and the people, the animals and the plants of old Hawaii flourished, as they had before.

**Today, on Haleakala -- as he did so purposefully with la -- Maui beckons us to slow down.** Maui commands our attention and tells us to open our eyes to the multitude of threats and the mournful devastation our forests and native habitats have endured. **Let us promise, then, to slow down in our harmful ways. Let us promise that we will do everything in our power to make this land, this special place that is our home, flourish as it did before.**

**Mahalo and bless you all in your work!**

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA  
ON THE DEDICATION OF  
THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY FIELD STATION  
OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF HAWAII

Haleakala National Park  
Haleakala, Maui, Hawaii

December 9, 1991

Aloha and good morning! I share with all of you the enthusiasm and excitement of the moment as we dedicate this new outpost in the battle for the preservation of Hawaii's native ecosystem.

We hear about the global decimation of tropical forests and feel helpless to do much about it, because we have so little control over what happens in other countries. But, we can and must do something about the extinction crisis here in our own state.

If we are to make a difference in our world, we must begin at home. And certainly, few places can rival Hawaii's stunning beauty -- or match its heartbreaking ecological plight.

We realize that no single individual, group or agency working alone can do what needs to be done. The Haleakala Conservation Biology Field Station is a stellar example of precisely the kind of partnership that is essential to the effective preservation of our environment.

Recognizing the urgency of bolstering research efforts in Hawaii, the MacArthur Foundation provided a half-million dollars in seed funding to establish the Hawaii Conservation Biology Initiative. And to the Foundation, we are profoundly grateful. The organizations and individuals who came together within the Initiative determined a high-priority requirement for cutting-edge research and field facilities. The Nature Conservancy planned, built and donated the actual structure. And Haleakala National Park provided the site and has assumed responsibility for maintenance and management.

We are gathered this morning to dedicate and applaud a truly model endeavor. We have here a bold illustration of exactly what the spirit of cooperation is all about and a working testament to the very tangible results it can achieve.

Our presence here on Haleakala is also rich in symbolism. Haleakala means "House of the Sun." In a very real sense, the opening of this house and field station is a shining ray of promise for Hawaii's endangered species. It marks the dawn of a threshold era of hope for the embattled species of Haleakala, the Waikamoi Preserve and the refuges of East Maui.

And as we praise the accomplishments of true partnership, I would like to take this occasion to extend my hand with a new offering. When the Congress reconvenes next year, I will be introducing a legislative package called the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative.

While its final details are now being completed, its goals are straightforward, clear and absolute. The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is a multifaceted bill whose objective is to maintain the integrity of Hawaii's forest ecosystems for native biota and watershed preservation.

The challenge before us today is unmistakable: We must work quickly and with firm determination to preserve our beleaguered forests and their fast-disappearing inhabitants. As the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is being prepared to wend its way through the halls of Congress, I call upon you and the dedicated legions of our partnership to help me in securing its enactment. Here are some of the Initiative's major provisions:

It creates a multi-discipline, multi-interest blue ribbon panel to study measures and make recommendations about preserving Hawaii's tropical and dryland forests and to identify island-by-island priorities. Clearly, there is a scientific knowledge gap. The threats are many, the answers few. A coordinated and comprehensive advisory mechanism is vital.

To combat alien species, the bill will authorize inspection for and interception of destructive pest species carried in the mail. Of 50 weed species in Hawaii targeted for biocontrol, nearly 40 were deliberately introduced. Our Garden of Eden has become a garden of weeds.

The legislation will also increase personnel levels within the Department of Agriculture's sorely understaffed Animal Damage Control Unit. The smuggling of pet snakes, iguanas, alligators - - and recently, even a cougar -- must be stopped. I will also seek a review and possible raising of fines and penalties for the knowing introduction of alien species and the unauthorized collection or gathering of plant and animal specimens in protected refuges.

The proposal further calls for the establishment of a Hawaii Tropical Forestry Foundation and an extensive educational campaign to stimulate public awareness and cooperation.

Provisions will be made to promote compatible uses within our forests, such as silviculture of koa, sandalwood and other rare resources.

There will be a Kahoolawe demonstration project aimed at aggressively attempting to restore her dryland forests and revegetate her land.

There are numerous other aspects to this legislation, and I will be seeking your counsel and assistance in honing and securing the passage of all of them.

For now, let me simply say this: The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is far from a panacea. What I hope it will be is a bold step. What I know it is is a solemn commitment. It is a promise much like that which the demigod Maui obtained from the racing sun, la, whose hasty flight through the heavens left the earth in near-constant darkness and made the 'aina moribund. Maui stood on this volcanic peak, perhaps not far from where we stand today, and lassoed that speeding star. Maui evoked a pledge from la that it would slow its daily arc across the sky. In return, la was freed, and the people, the animals and the plants of old Hawaii flourished, as they had before.

Today, on Haleakala -- as he did so purposefully with la -- Maui beckons us to slow down. Maui commands our attention and tells us to open our eyes to the multitude of threats and the mournful devastation our forests and native habitats have endured. Let us promise, then, to slow down in our harmful ways. Let us promise that we will do everything in our power to make this land, this special place that is our home, flourish as it did before.

Mahalo and bless you all in your work!

**REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA  
ON THE DEDICATION OF  
THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY FIELD STATION  
OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF HAWAII  
Haleakala National Park  
Haleakala, Maui, Hawaii  
December 9, 1991**

**Aloha and good morning! I share with all of you the enthusiasm and excitement as we dedicate this new outpost in the battle for the preservation of Hawaii's native ecosystem.**

**This is the latest in a number of encouraging new efforts in Hawaii to reverse the loss of our natural heritage and the world's biological diversity. We often speak of Hawaii as "Paradise." We must not let it become "Paradise Lost."**

**Thanks to a truly remarkable partnership of Federal, State and private organizations, we have created a secure stronghold for animals and plants found nowhere else on earth -- here on the upper slopes of Haleakala.**

We are all beginning to understand the urgency of working together to reverse the perilous trend of extinction. If we are to make a difference in our world, we must begin at home. And certainly, few places can rival Hawaii's stunning beauty -- or match its heartbreaking ecological plight.

We realize that no single individual, group or agency working alone can do what needs to be done. The Haleakala Conservation Biology Field Station is a stellar example of the kind of partnership that is essential to the effective preservation of our environment.

Recognizing the urgency of bolstering research efforts in Hawaii, the MacArthur Foundation provided a half-million dollars to establish the Hawaii Conservation Biology Initiative. To the Foundation, we are profoundly grateful. The organizations and individuals who came together within the Initiative identified a high-priority requirement for cutting-edge research and field facilities. The Nature Conservancy planned, built and donated the actual structure. And Haleakala National Park provided the site and has assumed responsibility for maintenance and management. Again, we can see how partnership makes things happen.

Our presence here on Haleakala is rich in symbolism. Haleakala means "House of the Sun." In a very real sense, the opening of this house and field station is a shining ray of promise for Hawaii's endangered species. It marks the dawn of an era of hope for the embattled species of Haleakala, the Waikamoi Preserve and the refuges of East Maui.

And as we praise the accomplishments of true partnership, I would like to take this occasion to extend my hand with a new offering. When the Congress reconvenes next year, I will introduce the Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative.

While its final details are now being completed, its goals are straightforward, clear and absolute. The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is a multifaceted bill whose objective is to maintain the integrity of Hawaii's forest ecosystems for native biota and watershed preservation.

We know that Hawaii is the only state in the Union with tropical forests. What many do not appreciate, however, is the amazing wealth of ecological treasures they hold -- their marvelous abundance of life; their importance as watersheds; the untold, maybe miraculous,

medicinal values of their unidentified plant and insect species.

The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative would create a multi-discipline, blue ribbon panel to study measures and make recommendations about preserving Hawaii's tropical and dryland forests and to identify island-by-island priorities. Clearly, there is a scientific knowledge gap. The threats are many, and answers must be found.

To combat alien species, the bill will authorize inspection for and interception of destructive pest species carried in the mail. The interstate mailing of noxious weeds is illegal, yet it goes on and is difficult to monitor. Of 50 weed species in Hawaii targeted for biocontrol, nearly 40 were deliberately introduced. Recipients ordered them as ornamental plants for local gardens, but it wasn't long before they invaded our forests. And our Garden of Eden became a garden of weeds.

The proposal further calls for the establishment of a Hawaii Tropical Forestry Foundation and an extensive educational campaign to stimulate public awareness and cooperation.

Provisions will be made to promote compatible uses within our forests, such as silviculture of koa, sandalwood and other rare resources.

There are numerous other aspects to this legislation, and I will be seeking your counsel and assistance in honing and securing the passage of all of them.

The Hawaii Tropical Forestry Initiative is a commitment, much like that which the demigod Maui obtained from the racing sun, Ia, whose hasty flight through the heavens left the earth in near-constant darkness and made the 'aina moribund. Maui stood on this volcanic peak, perhaps not far from where we stand today, and lassoed that speeding star. Maui evoked a pledge from Ia that it would slow its daily arc across the sky. In return, Ia was freed, and the people, the animals and the plants of old Hawaii flourished, as they had before.

Today, on Haleakala-- as he did so purposefully with Ia -- Maui beckons us to slow down. Maui commands our attention and tells us to open our eyes to the threats and the mournful devastation our forests and native habitats have endured. Let us promise, then, to slow down our harmful ways. Let us promise that we will

do everything in our power to make this land, this special place that is our home, flourish as it did before.

**Mahalo and bless you all in your work!**