



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Pacific Islands Area

ANNUAL
Report

Fiscal Year 2025

FARMERS First



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*A special mahalo to the Hawai'i Department of
Land & Natural Resources and Kona Conservation
for use of project photographs.*

OUR Mission

We *deliver conservation solutions* so agricultural producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world.



Helping People, Help the Land



OUR Vision

Resilient islands with clean and *abundant* water, *healthy* soils, and *thriving* agricultural communities.

DIRECTOR'S Message

Conservation Rooted in Putting Farmers First



How do you sum up a year of change, a year of new beginnings and familiar challenges? We in the Pacific Islands Area answer with our unwavering commitment to “Helping People, Help the Land.”

In Fiscal Year 2025, we proudly supported 293 conservation contracts, securing more than \$24 million in funding through NRCS programs and initiatives.

We remain steadfast in our mission to prioritize direct farmer assistance. We rely on core NRCS programs while creating new opportunities through the Regenerative Agriculture Pilot Program, delivering conservation solutions to producers, ranchers and forest landowners in our local communities.

As we look forward to Fiscal Year 2026, NRCS PIA will continue to emphasize field engagement and technical assistance by meeting farmers where they are. This approach aligns with NRCS Chief Bettencourt’s priority to refocus on field engagement and technical assistance, always putting farmers first.

Our dedicated staff continues working with our committed partners and stakeholders to deliver conservation solutions that safeguard agricultural resources and protect our unique island ecosystems. Given the daily threats to our fresh water, wildlife and coral reefs, sustainable conservation solutions are more critical than ever. We pledge to diligently meet future conservation needs in PIA, ensuring resilient islands with clean and abundant water, healthy soils and thriving agricultural communities.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in putting farmers first.

J.B. Martin
Director

FARMERS First



Conservation Programs and Initiatives

\$24.3

MILLION in targeted
Farmers First

assistance to Pacific Islands
Area producers, growers,
partners.

293

CONTRACTS

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**\$20.3
MILLION**

Helping Pacific Islands Area farmers, ranchers and forest landowners *integrate conservation* into working lands.



Conservation Stewardship Program

**\$2.475
MILLION**

Helping Pacific Islands Area farmers, ranchers and forest landowners achieve *next-level conservation*.



Agricultural Management Assistance Program

\$112,229

Helping Hawai'i agricultural producers use water management structures to *minimize risks* and *protect crops*.



FARMERS **First**

Top 5 *Conservation Practices*

- 1** Mulching
- 2** Fence
- 3** Watering Facility
- 4** Brush Management
- 5** Vegetative Barrier

FARMERS First

A Closer Look

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

**\$1.4
MILLION**

Fiscal Year 2025

Collaborating with partners to fund *locally-led solutions* for natural resource challenges in the Pacific Islands Area.

**\$18.5
MILLION**

Total Funding



RCPP Project

Innovation in Kona's Upland Forest



Kona Soil & Water District Project 2491

This initiative focuses on restoring native Koa forests in South Kona to support the recovery of endangered Hawaiian bird species and improve biodiversity across upland ecosystems on Hawai'i Island.

Through the planting of native tree species, the project will enhance forest quality and quantity, increase groundwater recharge, and sequester carbon to address extreme weather.

Over the next 20 years, the project will establish 1,600 acres of new forest, improve 8,000 acres of existing forest and recharge an estimated 32 billion gallons of groundwater.



RCPP Project

Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Wildlife

Project 2649

This landscape-scale forest restoration effort aims to mitigate environmental change throughout the Hawaiian Islands, reducing forest fragmentation, and improving habitat connectivity for native wildlife.

The project will plant 210,000 native trees and remove invasive, fire-prone plant species from 1,650 acres. Restoration sites are strategically located adjacent to high-value forests to maximize ecological benefits and wildfire prevention.



*Enhancing
Hawai'i's Forests*



RCCPP Project

Improving O'ahu North Shore Working Wetlands

O'ahu Resource Conservation & Development Council Project 2802

This project enhances wetland management along O'ahu's coastline to support indigenous agricultural practices and restore critical habitat for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. Utilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge and biocultural restoration methods, the initiative will improve water quality, restore wetland function and increase natural vitality. Key activities include invasive species removal, native plant establishment and shoreline stabilization.

RCPP Project

Reducing Land-Based Pollution

Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Wildlife Project 3341

This collaborative effort leverages public and private resources to restore non-industrial forest lands across the Hawaiian Islands with high potential for reducing land-based sources of pollution. Planned activities include planting 75,000 native trees and removing invasive species from 2,700 acres to reduce wildfire risk, improve habitat connectivity, and combat runoff and erosion.



RCPP Project

Restoring Hawai'i's Forest Habitats



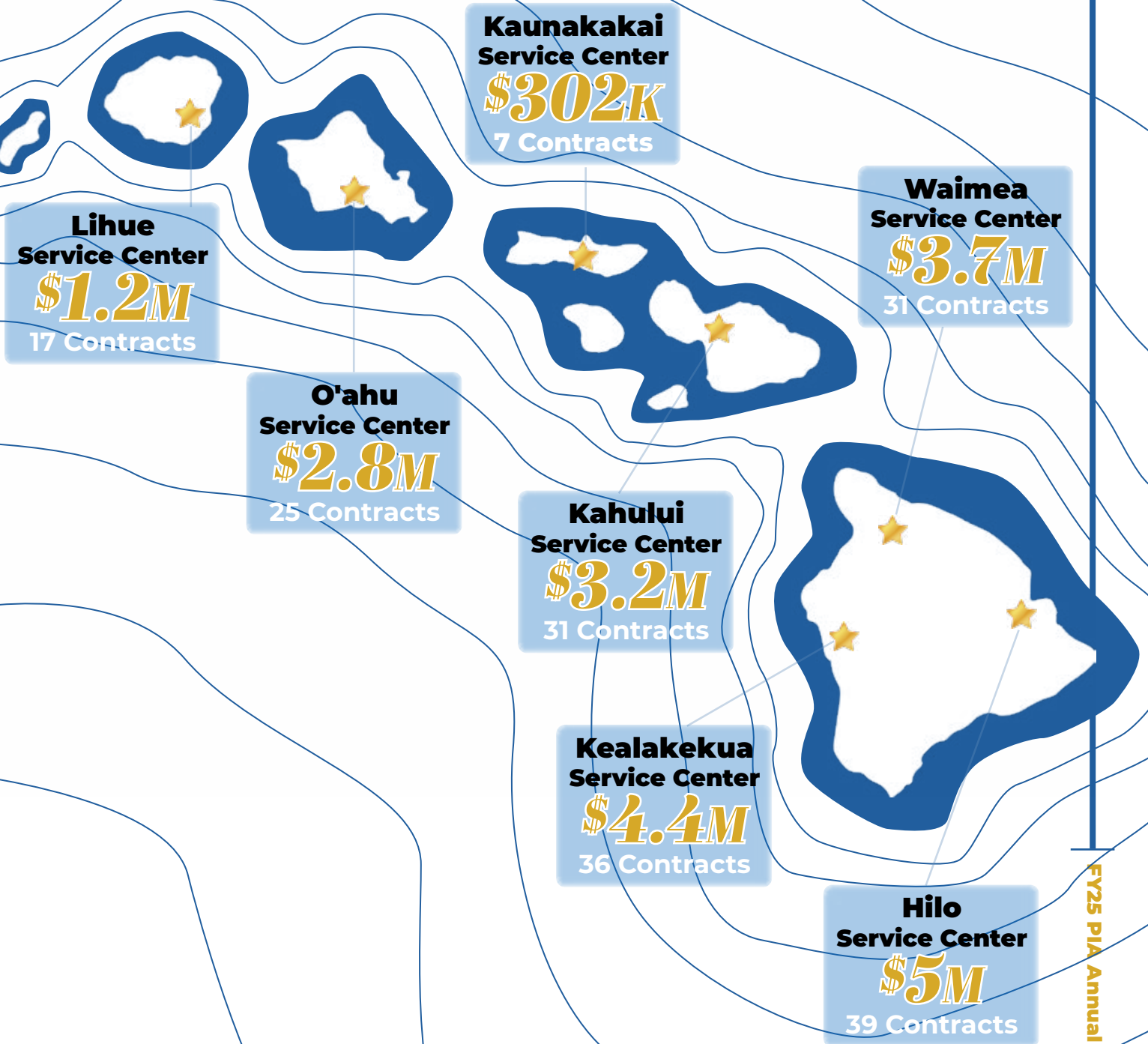
Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Wildlife Project 3604

This project prioritizes forest restoration in areas critical for rare species habitat. By planting 80,000 native trees and removing invasive species from 1,200 acres statewide, the initiative will enhance climate resilience and protect Hawai'i's unique landscape. Restored forests will improve freshwater availability through enhanced water capture and aquifer recharge.



MAPPING Conservation

Targeted assistance to Hawai'i



MAPPING Conservation

*Targeted assistance to the
Pacific Islands Area*

**American Samoa
Service Center**

\$1.4M

52 Contracts



**Guam
Service Center**

\$640K

30 Contracts



**Saipan
Service Center**

\$1.3M

25 Contracts



CENTER OF Innovation

Developing Conservation Technology

Ho'olehua Plant Materials Center Moloka'i Island

Ho'olehua PMC is one of 25 PMCs supporting resource conservation efforts of NRCS field offices around the country, developing innovative planting technology to collect and test plant species for use in conservation programs. The staff delivers vegetative solutions to address PIA'S natural resource challenges.

Grazing Management Tool assists ranchers in optimizing their grazing practices by using an ensemble of simple yield models. It provides yield estimates based on the climate and soil conditions at specific locations.

Vegetation Specification helps conservation planners select plants best suited for use in any plant-related conservation practice in PIA. Planners can use this information to understand plant limitations and reduce failures from using unsuitable plants.

Rainfall Sufficiency Tool helps conservation planners by identifying the likelihood of sufficient monthly rainfall for grass establishment, based on climatological forecasts and estimated evapotranspiration.

Sunn Hemp Seed Production

Producing plant seeds for conservation is a key activity of all PMCs. Ho'olehua PMC produces 'Tropic Sun' sunn hemp foundation seed, a widely grown cover crop. To meet a growing demand, PMC staff planted more Tropic Sun and harvested 400 pounds of seed to ship to growers who reproduce and market it to farmers and others.

Their work, including other technological reports, studies and field office training, helps create more healthy and productive farms and ranches, contributing significantly to the advancement of agricultural practices and environmental conservation in PIA.





One Mission.
One Team.

Serving All of PIA

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.