Mr. Brian Choy, Director
Office of Environmental Quality Control
465 South King Street, Room 104
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Choy:

Enclosed is the Division of Forestry and Wildlife's Determination of Negative Declaration for the construction of a nursery operation building at the Central Tree Nursery in Kamuela, Hawaii.

We are submitting this Declaration for action as required in Environmental Quality Commission - Environmental Impact Statement Regulations.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

WILLIAM W. PATY

Enclosure

cc: Hawaii District Office
DETERMINATION NOTICE OF NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR

STATE TREE NURSERY OPERATIONS BUILDING

AT

KAMUELA, HAWAII

TMK: 6-6-05:01

I. PROPOSING AGENCY: DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE.

II. APPROVING AGENCY: DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE.

III. AGENCIES CONSULTED: DLNR, DIVISION OF WATER AND LAND DEVELOPMENT, HAWAII COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

IV. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION:

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOF) has plans to construct a replacement Nursery Operations Building containing 4,200 square feet at the State Tree Nursery, Kamuela, Island of Hawaii, TMK 6-6-05:01. The existing building is old and obsolete. The Nursery Operations Building is where the majority of tree seedling production activities such as grading and packing seedlings for shipment, washing of trays and containers, mixing of plant media, filling containers with media, bagging seedlings, sowing seed, and storing of nursery equipment and supplies.
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR
STATE TREE NURSERY OPERATIONS BUILDING
AT
STATE TREE NURSERY, KAMUELA, HAWAII

PROPOSED BUILDING FOR STATE TREE NURSERY

I. SCOPE:
This environmental assessment addresses the construction of a replacement Nursery Operations Building at the State Tree Nursery, Kamuela, Hawaii.

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
1. History of the State Tree Nursery
The State Tree Nursery which began operation in 1960, produces several hundred thousands of seedlings a year for statewide distribution for commercial timber, windbreak, erosion and pollution control, landscaping, and other forestation purposes. DOFAW, other government agencies, private landowners and the general public receive a economical source of tree seedlings to meet the various tree planting purposes.

The Nursery Operations Building is the center of the nursery as it is used for seedling production activities such as packing seedlings, mixing planting media, filling containers with media,
sowing seed, washing and sterilizing containers and trays etc.

The existing Nursery Operation Building is a military quonset building which was reconstructed at the State Tree Nursery in 1962. The building is approximately 50 years old, obsolete, and unsafe.

2. Project’s Environment:
The State Tree Nursery consists of approximately 15 acres of state-owned land. It is located at the 2,500 feet elevation, one mile from Kamuela town center, and is part of the Lalamilo Farm Lots which is zoned "Agriculture". Its eastern boundary is Mamalahoa State Highway, its northern boundary is Lalamilo Farm Lots Road, and the remaining two boundaries are adjacent Farm Lots.

The nursery complex includes a nursery operations building, greenhouse and propagation areas, office, garage, District Support Facility, and pesticide storage building. The proposed Nursery Operations Building site is approximately 150 feet from existing Nursery Operations Building. The proposed site was selected for its closer proximity to greenhouse and propagation areas. The proposed building is the same dimension as the existing building (100 feet X 40 feet).
B. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT FROM PROPOSED PROJECT:

1. Biota
   The site is currently vegetated primarily with Kikuyu grass. Kikuyu is a non-native grass that is found extensively throughout the Waimea area as a pasture grass.

2. Unavoidable Adverse Effects
   Short term unavoidable adverse effects would be soil loss through wind during excavation of site. The dust level can be reduced by watering the exposed soil during excavation for the new building.

3. Long Range Effects
   Long range effects are all positive as the project will provide a safer working environment for employees and seedling pick-up area for the general public.

   The State of Hawaii will benefit from the new building as more trees are planted. Planting of trees can protect watersheds and ocean reefs, reduce soil erosion, increase wildlife habitat, and enhance the scenery for residents as well as for visitors.

4. Relationship of Project to Management’s Goals
   The continuation of producing tree seedlings to DOFAW, the public and other government agencies is the function of the State Tree Nursery. DOFAW is
currently promoting the forest stewardship and land
grant programs which the cooperators are depending
on the State Tree Nursery for seedlings. Another
cost sharing program through Agricultural
Conservation Program, USDA, depend on purchase of
seedlings through the nursery.

III. 'ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECTS:'
A. Alternative Sites
   An alternative site would not be practical as this is a
   replacement building and is part of a total nursery
   complex.

B. No Action
   A "no action" plan cannot be accepted. Existing
   building is deteriorating rapidly and is dangerous.
   The Nursery Operation Building and site selection is
   essential to continued tree seedling production.

IV. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES:
   The funding allocated to this Capital Improvements
   Project will lapse and be irretrievable.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT'S IMPACT:
   This project is significant and essential to the continued
   production of tree seedlings available for statewide
distribution.
VI. REASON FOR FILING A NON-IMPACT STATEMENT:

The construction of the State Tree Nursery Operations Building is not expected to have a significant negative impact on the environment. The production, distribution, and planting of nursery seedlings will have a positive impact by benefiting the environment on a statewide and global scale.