

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COMMUNITY GROUPS AND COUNTY RESOLVE DISPUTE OVER LED STREETLIGHT CONVERSION PROJECT

Wailuku, HI – Hawai'i Wildlife Fund, Conservation Council for Hawai'i, and the Department of Public Works of the County of Maui have finalized an agreement for temporarily setting lighting levels for 1,021 light emitting diode (LED) streetlight fixtures that were installed in East and Central Maui beginning in the fall of 2018. The installation of the LED fixtures was part of a county-wide streetlight conversion project from high-pressure sodium (HPS) lights to newer LED technology the County determined was more energy efficient.

Under the agreement, the lighting levels for 56 LED streetlight fixtures in East Maui and Central Maui were adjusted in November of last year. For the remaining 956 Central Maui LED fixtures covered under the agreement, lighting levels are expected to be adjusted through the use of smart node technology later this year. The lighting levels will remain at the adjusted levels until the County completes the environmental review process under the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) for the streetlight conversion project, which the County initiated in August 2019.

The agreement resolves a lawsuit that Hawai'i Wildlife Fund and Conservation Council for Hawai'i, represented by Earthjustice, filed in February 2019 against the County for failing to comply with HEPA for the streetlight conversion project. The community groups claimed that, because the LED streetlight fixtures have a high blue-light content (*i.e.*, they emit a high percentage of short-wavelength light), they threaten harm to Maui's imperiled seabirds (including the Hawaiian Petrel, Newell's shearwater, and Wedge-tailed shearwater) and sea turtles (including the hawksbill sea turtle and green sea turtle).