

The year is 2010. The place is somewhere within the high fenced landscape of a west Hawaii game management area, well the only game management area in the state of Hawaii publicly owned and privately operated for the benefit of the State of Hawaii's hunting program.

The program is the result of the brain-trust of assembled hunters, DOFAW, and several biologists amongst the group of volunteers, trying to come to grips with Hawaii's abandoned game management program.

It was an ambitious plan two years in the making. Volunteers who wanted to work with the State to help devise a plan to benefit all hunters of Hawaii were enthused with the challenge of balancing environmental concerns, with land area issues, and hunter demand.

The weeks droned on, the meetings were long and late, and the key people slowly dropped from attendance at each subsequent meeting. The leadership, was buoyant at first, but as things progressed, became reticent and seemingly distrusting of the groups ability to do even simple tasks, such as writing a letter for information, and finally when it came time to evaluate rules changes, some of which hadn't been looked at for a quarter century, DOFAW leadership sends a terse communiqué that they have discussed with "District" and for us to send in our recommendations and "Leadership" would discuss as appropriate with the "Districts". This is fondly known as the Angelina letter... the great kiss off.

After months of deliberation, research, and effort on the part of the remaining group members, each subsequent recommendation seemed to have some dysfunctional component, like maybe enhancing game animal habitat, or just enhancing game even, which is a surprising result from those employed to improve hunting opportunity for the masses.

Disillusion had been lurking but as the second winter approached, the loss of a world class shooting range being assured with its assignment to an incompetent State Agency wrestling with its own crisis of identity, and increasing resistance by rank and file DOFAW biologists and managers to fundamental change of philosophy, the zeal wavered, flickered, and finally extinguished itself. The bureaucracy had overcome change.

As a final dying gasp, it was suggested that the State look into money from the Fed's to fence in Puuanahulu Game Management Area. This was essentially a straw cast into a hurricane of resistance, but to the shock and dismay of DOFAW, the idea was eagerly embraced by the Fed's. About the same time, a private contractor approached the state with a proposal that essentially said that if the state and the Fed's can contract out the management of natural areas to private environmental organizations, it should be only natural to contract out this game management area to a private FOR PROFIT contractor.

Things went swiftly from there. The State eager to capitalize on a no risk, no responsibility, cash flow, had public hearings, EA's, EIS's and all applicable permits fast tracked for the contractor who quickly created reservoirs, had massive plantings of fast growing trees for shade that would be eventually cycled out with the plantings of native trees to take their place maybe a decade or two down the road. Animals were brought in, exotics from Niihau, Texas, and Oklahoma, were quarantined and released into the high fenced management area, a 100 square miles of high class hunting opportunity for... \$1,000 a day fully guided hunting opportunities. Trophy fee's to \$3,500 in addition for such things as Ibex, Axis, Eland, and others with accompanying Hotel Packages for wife and family.. Finally, hunting in Hawaii has been placed on the map.

Hunting for the masses? Well its right on track, just as the state always wanted it to be..