

Aloha Alika,

My name is Michael Kiyoshi Wailani Adachi. I am the lead invasive ant research associate at the Hawaii Ant Lab here in Hilo. I have asked my superiors to reach out to you by way of this letter. I have always been taught to show respect for my elders and the two occasions we have met have both been pretty stressful and controversial. I have wanted to let you know where I come from since our first meeting in Huelo.

As the lead research associate I am responsible for the majority of treatments and surveys done here on the Big Island. I am also very involved with our community outreach program as it is one of the most gratifying parts of my job. Helping friends, family, and neighbors reclaim their yards and or gardens from Little Fire Ants.

I feel it is my duty as a lifelong resident here to inform and help as many people as I can about this threat that we face in the form of Little Fire Ants. Here on the Big Island I am witnessing the detrimental effects of the heavy and widespread infestations of LFA. I am seeing elders being hospitalized due to stings. Children, pets, and visitors are being stung on a daily basis. Just so much pain and suffering caused by this invasive ant that it is truly heartbreaking. Some farms here have been forced to cease operations also. Employees refuse to harvest produce for fear of being stung. The cost of combatting large infestations can be overwhelming too. LFA are having huge negative effects on our island, whether it be physical, emotional, or even financial.

As a husband, father, and descendant of many generations here in Hawaii, it saddens me to see the lifestyle changes happening here. Beaches where I have learned to swim, surf, and dive are now overrun with LFA. It's the same with a lot of my hunting grounds. My ohana and I have always depended so much on our natural resources to make and maintain the lifestyle we know and love. I honestly fear that my keiki will grow up in a different Hawaii than I have because of LFA. I have lots of family in Hana also with the same fears.

Leaving my keiki every month to do treatments in Maui is always hard. It does help knowing that I can make a positive difference there for many other keiki and kupuna by eliminating LFA from the area. I would never put my family on the side to go somewhere and poison the people and land. That is the farthest thought for myself or my team. Our pilikia should be with LFA and never with eachother.

We do have the opportunity to eradicate LFA from Huelo and even Maui. The time to act is now though, as I know firsthand what will happen if we don't put all of our efforts into combatting this invasive ant.

As a keiki o ka aina I humbly ask you hear my words and understand what my team and I are trying to accomplish.

Always with Aloha,

Kiyosh