

# KAHO'OLAWE

## Ko Hema Lamalama

Newsletter of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve

Fall/Winter 2012

### The Future of Kaho'olawe Rests with the Leaders of Hawai'i

by Michael K. Naho'opi'i, Executive Director

Kaho'olawe is for the people of Hawai'i. According to Hawaii's Revised Chapter 6K-9 Statutes: "The resources and waters of Kaho'olawe shall be held in trust as part of the public land trust; provided that the State shall transfer management and control of the island and its waters to the sovereign native Hawaiian entity upon its recognition by the United States and the State of Hawaii."

In 2011, the Hawaii State Legislature passed Senate Bill 1520, which was signed into law as Act 195 by the Honorable Governor Neil Abercrombie, recognizing Native Hawaiians as the indigenous people of the Hawaiian Islands and creating the Native Hawaiian Roll Commission. "This is an important step for Native Hawaiian self-determination and the ability of Native Hawaiians to decide their own future", stated Governor Abercrombie on the day he announced he was seeking applicants to the five-member commission. "This Commission will put together the roll of qualified and interested Native Hawaiians who want to help determine the course of Hawai'i's indigenous people".

This act brings much closer the eventual transfer of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve to a Native Hawaiian entity, but there is still much that must be completed before that day arrives. In preparation, the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) continues to fulfill its mission in which the natural environment of Kaho'olawe is restored and the people of Hawai'i care for the land in a manner that recognizes the land and waters of Kaho'olawe as a living spiritual entity. The effort to restore and protect Kaho'olawe's natural and cultural resources is a process

Welcome to Ko Hema Lamalama, a newsletter declaring the news from Kaho'olawe. Uncle Harry Mitchell interpreted this name as the southern beacon, which served as a source of light to those weary travelers who voyaged beyond the pillars of Kahiki. Let Ko Hema Lamalama aid us in sharing a source of light about the island of Kaho'olawe and the restoration of Hawaiian culture across Hawai'i nei.

that cannot idly wait for a sovereign Native Hawaiian Government to be recognized, but must proceed forward.



When the State of Hawaii accepted the return of Kaho'olawe, it committed its resources and people and set aside one place within Hawai'i to be used solely and exclusively for the preservation and practices of all rights customarily and traditionally exercised by native Hawaiians for cultural, spiritual and subsistence purposes; for the preservation and protection of the Reserve's archaeological, historical and environmental resources, rehabilitation, re-vegetation, habitat restoration and preservation; and for education.

Thus Kaho'olawe, as envisioned in the motto "Kūkulu ke ea a Kanaloa", will be a cultural learning center where traditional cultural practices of the Hawaiian people can flourish in unison with the natural environment and resources of the past. This is a commitment that the State of Hawaii made to the Hawaiian people, a people who are finally recognized as the indigenous people of Hawai'i. It is also a commitment that needs to be honored by the State of Hawaii through the legislative and financial support of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission as it fulfills the State's obligation to the people of Hawai'i regarding Kaho'olawe.

### Ua hilo 'ia i ke aho a ke aloha

Braided with the cords of love – Held in the bond of affection

Olelo No eau—2786 (Pukui)

## Cleaning Up Kanapou

Toothbrush, deodorant, comb, rubber slippers, carton of milk, plastic silverware, engine oil, lighter...sounds like a shopping list, right? Actually those are just a few of the items we picked up while doing our beach clean-up in Kanapou Bay on Kaho'olawe. We also found more unusual items such as: bowling balls, shopping carts, a tweetie bird costume, and a stereo, just to name a few. All in all we removed around 31 tons of marine debris from a beach that is less than a half mile long.

Thanks to a generous grant from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and the hard work of 153 volunteers, we were able to transform Kanapou Bay. During the course of our 18-month clean-up project, volunteers and staff put in nearly 6,000 hours working in the hot, windy conditions found at Kanapou. Both staff and volunteers completed 10 overnight trips, camping for 3 days at a time, and together we accomplished a lot in a short period of time!

We did not want to contribute 31 tons of marine debris to Maui's landfill...so we got creative, and reused and recycled everything we could. Of all the debris we collected; 13 tons of nets were used on Kaho'olawe in gulches mauka of the beach for erosion control, 2.1 tons were recycled, 6.6 tons went to Zürich, Switzerland for an educational display that will be touring around Europe, and only the remaining 9.3 tons went to the landfill. We even had fun with some

of it by hosting a marine debris costume contest and art displays. A good portion of the debris showed marks characteristic of animal bites including tooth marks of birds, sharks, fish and sea turtles. We found over 6,000 pieces of plastic bearing some type of animal bite. These bites are a sad remainder that animals ingest plastic when they mistake it for food, and that many of them die be-



Kanapou before and after (Photo by Jennifer Vander Veur)

cause of it, as the plastic blocks their digestive system and prevents them from actually processing "real" food.

Unfortunately Kaho'olawe isn't the only place where large amounts of marine debris washes up. There are many other places in Hawai'i where plastic accumulation is a problem such as South Point on the Big Island, for example. Wide eddies in the Pacific Ocean condense these debris and transport them far away from the source until they wash up on beaches exposed to strong winds and currents. Here, they turn into one large "eye-sore of human waste". Areas such as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch are appalling reminders of the impacts of our "throw-away society". Next time you're out shopping, please, opt for the glass, metal or wood package if it is available and try to eliminate consuming those one-time-use plastic items. Simple decisions about plastic packaging and doing things like carrying your own metal reusable water bottle will really start to add up and make a difference to our environment.



Display made of plastics from Kanapou (Photo by Cheryl King)

*Hokule'a crew members and supporters work hand-in-hand with KIRC staff and PKO members to build a portion of the Ala Loa trail near Sailor's Hat on Kaho'olawe. (Photo by Daniela Maldini, May 2012)*

## Integrating Culture and Restoration

Kaho'olawe is considered a sacred and spiritual place as well as a cultural treasure; in fact, the entire island is listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its archaeological, cultural, and historic significance. Therefore it is paramount to emphasize cultural integration in all facets of Kaho'olawe's restoration.

The KIRC's Culture Program is intended to ensure that experts in Hawaiian culture are on hand to provide cultural assessments prior to and during restoration and ocean management activities, and to perform protocols, ceremonies, and rituals as appropriate.

KIRC's staff maintains the cultural essence of Kaho'olawe by adhering to the 'Aha Pawa-lu, a protocol book written by the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation specifically for the island. The book details sixteen chants and nine protocols, which KIRC's staff recognizes and acknowledges as guidelines for proper cultural behavior when working on the island.

Appropriate ceremonies and rites are also regularly performed on Kaho'olawe using traditional cultural practices in conjunction with specific activities, seasons or traditional customs. The annual planting ceremony, for example, takes place every year. During this time, both KIRC staff and Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO) members, who work in conjunction to restore and maintain the integrity of the island's landscape and cultural traditions, come together to give offerings to open the planting season. Cultural practitioners, usually from the

PKO, perform seasonal ceremonies for Kāne and Kanaloa during the solstices and even ceremonies for Lonoikamakahiki during the Makahiki season.

Maintaining a cultural connection in all activities occurring on island is one of the ways in which the KIRC fulfills its mission to hold Kaho'olawe in trust for a future generations of Hawaiians.

*Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana and Polynesian Voyaging Society members prepare the imu at Honokanai'a to celebrate the arrival of the wa'a Hokule'a to Kaho'olawe (Photo by Daniela Maldini, May 2012)*



## Restoration Continues at Kaukaukapapa and Keālialalo

Because of its remoteness and limited human use, Kaho'olawe Island presents a unique opportunity for the restoration of coastal wetland areas. Here, native Hawaiian plants that are able to brave the heat of the sun and the dry conditions of the land, have a chance of reforming a landscape that is rarely seen on other islands. The Restoration Team at KIRC knows what the challenges are on Kaho'olawe but continues to endure, together with the plants, the arduous conditions and the limitations that come from working in a remote and desolate part of the planet.

Under a joint cooperative project between the State of Hawaii and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), two seasonal wetland sites are being restored and kiawe (*Prosopis pallida*), a hardy non-native tree that is water hungry and competes with native vegetation, is painstakingly being removed from the landscape.

The two restoration sites represent a coastal wetland, Kaukaukapapa, located adjacent to the beach and experiencing very hot temperatures and very little rain, and an upland wetland, Lua 'O Keālialalo, a slightly moister site with seasonal rainfall and a wider range of temperatures. Both sites support native vegetation, invertebrates, and migratory birds.

Since 2008, KIRC staff, collaborators and hordes of volunteers have fought kiawe with chainsaws and clippers and applied herbicide to the newly cut stumps. Everyone endured cuts, bruises, muscle soreness, heat and wind up to 50 miles per hour. In the process, they planted thousands of native plants and spread seeds to fuel the regeneration of the land.

Today, Kaukaukapapa enjoys 1.04 acres clear of kiawe and Lua 'O Keālialalo measures 4.07 acres of new native vegetation. Native plants are slowly but persistently fighting their way back, covering the hardpan soil with green mats which spread over the land like an unfolding carpet. A good sign for the future.

## Volunteer Perspectives: A Message from Canada

by Andrew Wright, Restoration Volunteer 2012

Late March of this year found me dusty, dehydrated and soul-satisfied at the end of a hard day's work on the Island of Kaho'olawe. An invitation from Jordan Jokiel, Paul Higashino and James Bruch by way of an introduction from Gregg Howald at Island Conservation resulted in a glorious day on the island.

The day to day restoration work is hard and enduring, but the nature of this work has a much deeper importance to my mind. These efforts illuminate how precious "viable land" is, how care must be taken to protect the natural world and how expensive it is to re-wild and reclaim open spaces. The lessons I learned during my short time on Kaho'olawe are so valuable to my own country as well.

I am from Canada and I have been witnessing our government annulling all environmental laws that protect land and water from industrial development to enable oil pipelines to be built through the Great Bear Rainforest. This is a rare temperate coastal rain forest, my home, and one of the few surviving temperate rainforests in the world with a largely intact eco-system. It is home to the rare spirit bear, salmon bearing streams and trees as tall as skyscrapers. The pipeline will carve the eco-system into two fragments or islands.

The story of Kaho'olawe and the Hawaiian Islands inform us that extinctions readily occur in isolated places, and the lessons I learned in Hawai'i will be valuable as I fight my environmental battles here at home. For me, spending a day in the company of Jamie and Paul, members of the KIRC Restoration Team, and totally committed individuals who quietly strive to restore a vibrant natural world, was a rare privilege, and a truly uplifting and informative experience – thank you gentlemen, and thank you KIRC and PKO for all that you do.

## Hokule'a Visits Kaho'olawe: Kealaikahiki Ceremonies, 'Ai Pono and 'Ohana

On the morning of May 29, 2012, Hokule'a and her escort boat Ho'okele appeared on the horizon, crossing the rocky point at Kealaikahiki, and, once again, approached the shores of the island of Kaho'olawe-Kanaloa. Hokule'a and its crew came to the island of Kanaloa to reaffirm their purpose, as they launch the 2013 worldwide voyage, a voyage to share with the world the message of caring for the land (malama aina). They were greeted on island by other members of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), by KIRC staff and by the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO), all of whom arrived on Kaho'olawe the day before and were busy preparing for the upcoming pā'ina in honor of the wa'a and her crew.



*Hokule'a and its crew offshore Honokanai'a, Kaho'olawe  
(Photo by Daniela Maldini, May 2012)*

As Hokule'a and Kaho'olawe embraced each other once again, two symbols of strength and resilience in Hawaiian traditions, new bonds were created and old ones reestablished among those that participated. Ceremonies and offerings, native foods prepared in the traditional and natural way ('ai pono) and a sense of 'ohana created connections, lifted spirits and allowed the sacredness of the island to heal and prepare us all for Hokule'a's next journey.

As the crew of the Hokule'a conducted navigational training and sacred ceremonies at Kealaikahiki, the traditional departure point for voyaging canoes to and from Tahiti, others remained busy in the kitchen preparing traditional meals from foods donated by families and organizations around the islands: kalo, bananas, sugar cane, breadfruit and fresh fish and game were prepared in a variety of ways, all enjoyed greatly by crew and supporters. 'Awa was shared throughout the day, singing and laughter was commonplace on the beach and around the KIRC camp throughout the week.

There was another important purpose to this trip. It was the symbolic gathering of many people and organizations to lend a hand in building the Ala Loa, the trail that circumnavigates Kaho'olawe and unites its nā'ili (districts) so that the white banner symbolizing the god Lono will once again be walked around the entire island in celebration of Makahiki (planting season). Together, KIRC staff, members of the PKO and members of the PVS cleared a portion of the trail and lined it with pōhaku celebrating the fact that many hands working together can accomplish a lot.

**'A 'ohe hana nui ke alui'a**  
*No task is too big when done together by all*  
Olelo No eau—142 (Pukui)



*Members of PKO and PVS work together to prepare the 'imu at Honokanai'a on Kaho'olawe—(Photo by Daniela Maldini, May 2012)*

## KO HEMA LAMALAMA

A newsletter of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC)  
Phone: (808) 243-5020  
Fax: (808) 243-5885  
Email: [administrator@kirc.hawaii.gov](mailto:administrator@kirc.hawaii.gov)  
Web: [kahoolawe.hawaii.gov](http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov)

## MAHALO TO OUR SPONSORS

KIRC's Commissioners and Staff would like to take this opportunity to send our heartfelt mahalo a nui loa to all the volunteers who worked with us to help restore the island and to the organizations and companies that so generously contributed to preserving the special heritage of Kaho'olawe: Kupu, Hawai'i Youth Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps; Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc; Four Seasons Hotel and Staff; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Natural Resources Conservation Service; Tri-Isle Resource Conservation and Development; Atherton Foundation; Hawai'i Community Foundation; Dan Cohen; Travis Schnepp and Mark Morabito; Deborah Enrich; Bryan Ogiore; Nathaniel Jackson; Manuheali'i, Inc.; Thomas Royer; Calvin M. Ichinose; Wren Wescoatt.



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Executive Director

### Cultural Resource Project Coordinator

The KIRC welcomes Kuiokalani L. Gaper. A Maui native, Kui graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa with a B.A. in Hawaiian Language and was a Hawaiian Language Instructor at Kamehameha Schools Kapālama. Kui has been involved in various cultural groups and has strong family ties to both ma uka and ma kai, and of course, Kaho'olawe. He pilina wehena 'ole.



### Public Information Specialist

The KIRC also welcomes Dr. Daniela Maldini. Daniela was born and raised in Italy and obtained her Ph.D. in Zoology at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and her M.S. in Marine Sciences at Moss Landing Marine Labs in California. A marine researcher for 26 years, Daniela joined the KIRC last April. She has been studying marine mammals around the world and working on a variety of conservation projects. She truly hopes to make her contribution to help Kaho'olawe thrive.



Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission  
811 Kolu Street  
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96753

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