

# HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

‘ U M E K E K Ā ‘ E O

A WELL FILLED CALABASH, A WELL FILLED MIND

*Quality of Life Through Agriculture & Conservation:  
HILT's 1st Step to Protect Kona Coffee Lands  
Story Pg. 5*

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A Culture of 'Ohana*



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'Umeke Kā'eo is the newsletter publication of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to land conservation in Hawai'i.

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Cover photo: HCC Farms LLC. Courtesy of Janet Britt.



## LETTER FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

– Scott Fisher

Aloha HILT 'Ohana,

Last month I met a woman hiking on the Waihe'e Refuge with her five year old son. While speaking with her, she mentioned that when she was in high school she came down with her science class and had worked with the HILT staff to clear invasive species out of the wetlands. Although I did not remember her specifically, I clearly remember the work. It was often hot, hard work with lots of bugs climbing all over us. School groups would call us up and we would put them to work, and we always had a really great time. There was laughing and we would get incredibly muddy, but at the end of the day there was always the satisfaction of a job well done. We could look back and see a section of the wetlands cleared of invasive species, and prepared for the native plants to regenerate.

Today, we welcome approximately 150 students to the Waihe'e Refuge each month. These students come from all over Maui, and often they include camping on the property with their volunteer work. Land trusts protect land in perpetuity. That is our mission and our reason for being. More importantly, however, we facilitate people coming to our lands, particularly those lands we own. We recently signed a Conservation Easement with

HCC Farms LLC on Hawai'i Island to protect agricultural lands, Kona coffee, native 'apapane and 'ōhi'a (read more on page 5). Cultural groups on Maui have spent several recent weekends harvesting the bark of the Hau tree to make a traditional type of Hawaiian rope known as 'ili Hau. On O'ahu, volunteers have been instrumental in clearing, maintaining and restoring the Maunawila heiau in Hau'ula. On Kaua'i, Kanuikapono School has worked to bring native plants back to the river edge along the Kilauea Stream at our Kāhili Beach Preserve. Land Trusts protect land, and we engage with our community to reinforce our connection to the land. Among our most gratifying work is seeing people of all ages enjoying themselves on our land, and learning about why land conservation is so important to all of us.

Engaging with the community is nothing new. However, as our protected lands grow each year, we are finding new and innovative ways to invite you onto these lands and to ensure that the young people we engage understand the kuleana, the responsibility, of mālama 'āina, caring for the land. The best, and perhaps only way, to teach this is to foster a sense of connection, which is at the heart of the notion of aloha 'āina, (love of the land).

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Scott Fisher, Ph.D.,  
Interim Executive Director

*We hope that every person who visits our protected lands will come away with a renewed understanding of our connection to the land;  
he ali'i ka 'āina, he kauwā ke kanaka. The land is the chief, and people are the servants.*

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# ‘ĀINA ACTIONS



Hōkuao Pellegrino with school group at Noho'ana Farm.



Image Courtesy of Phil Sabado.

## ‘IKE KŪPUNA: LOOKING TO THE PAST TO LEARN FOR THE FUTURE

We look to the time that came before us when our ancestors walked this ‘āina and we learn that we have a kuleana (responsibility) to mālama (care for) this land. When we think about ‘ike kūpuna, we are looking at ancestral wisdom, experience, and knowledge to learn from those that came before us. ‘Ike is defined as: To see, know, feel, greet, recognize, perceive, experience, be aware, and/or understand. The word kupuna is traditionally defined as: Grandparent, ancestor, relative or close friend of our grandparent's generation, grandaunt, granduncle, however, there is another definition of this word, which is: **Starting point, source; growing.**

Kūpuna (plural) are acknowledged as the starting point or “source” because Hawaiians look to ka wā ma mua (“the time

in front” - the past), to their ancestors, for guidance and to lead them down a pono (balanced) path. Ka wā ma hope or “the time in back” refers to the future in Hawaiian thinking. Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa describes this concept: “It is as if the Hawaiian stands firmly in the present, with his back to the future, and his eyes fixed upon the past, seeking historical answers for present-day dilemmas,” (Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992).

These are our lands. Not because we own it, but because we are connected to it and thrive from it. This is the mo‘olelo of one ‘ohana, the Pellegrino family, kama‘āina residents of Maui, and how they are connected to their ‘āina, how the ‘āina sustains them, and how the ‘āina thrives because of their stewardship of it.

### *There is something about the ‘āina that has allowed our ‘ohana to grow closer.*

More than a decade ago, we began farming kalo on the ‘ili of Noho‘ana, Waikapū. We were limited to farming only 2 of the 12 lo‘i kalo because of the minimal amount of water flowing through Waikapū Stream. We began to question, “Why do we not have enough water to grow food for our family and community?” This question, asked by many people, led to the formation of Hui O Nā Wai ‘Ehā, a non-profit organization that focuses on restoring mauka to makai stream flow to the four great waters known as Nā Wai ‘Ehā (Waikapū, Wailuku, Waiehu, and Waihe‘e).

Restoring the stream to cultivate kalo was just one of our objectives. Streams, we said, cannot speak for themselves; nor can the ‘ōpae, ‘o‘opu, or hīhīwai. Furthermore, there were Native Hawaiian cultural practices and traditions that were clearly being denied. For our ‘ohana, we looked to the past—the traditional ways of our Hawaiian kūpuna—to learn what we needed to do to advocate for positive changes for Maui’s future water resources.

Ten years later, we saw the efforts of our community well worth all of the time and energy it took to restore water into our streams. It was a bumpy road through the Hawai‘i legal system, but together as a community we stood firm until our goal was achieved.

Continued on following page.



Kawaihua, Mallette and Victor's granddaughter in the lo'i.

Now many more lo'i kalo are flourishing in Nā Wai 'Ehā. Through those years, we continued to restore our 'āina preparing for the day that enough water would return to the stream to cultivate all of our lo'i. As retired teachers, we believed that developing an education program was needed for the next generation while bringing to light issues around water resources, traditional agriculture, food production, and pono resource management in Hawai'i. We established Noho'ana Farm in 2004 and we have since welcomed thousands of students of all ages, kūpuna, community groups, and 'ohana. Our educational mission is simple yet purposeful, "E ola mau ka mahi'ai ku'una" – Keeping culture in agriculture. Noho'ana Farm is part of our everyday family life. Our mo'opuna are growing up connected to the 'āina and participate in all aspects of the farm whether it be in the lo'i, cleaning the 'auwai or making pa'i 'ai.

In many ways, we try to complement HILT's mission ("Protecting the lands that sustain us for current and future generations") by restoring and advocating for our resources and way of life (Noho'ana) in order to grow food that will sustain our family and community. Bringing the past forward to the present and knowing that we are moving into a more productive future is our small gift to Maui.

Walette and Victor Pellegrino

Mahalo to 'ohana Pellegrino for sharing their mana'o of working the 'āina and restoring it for so many to enjoy! We can all learn so much from pono stewards of the 'āina, like the Pellegrino family.

Hawaiian Islands Land Trust hopes to foster a culture of looking to ka wā ma mua to continue responsible stewardship of the lands across Hawai'i, encourage collaborative communities and the restoration of our lands through our 'āina actions. We need your help!

## NEW ADDITIONS TO HILT'S LEADERSHIP TEAM



### BILL SWANK

Bill Swank graduated from Pomona College and Stanford Law School. In 2009, Bill and his wife Lynn purchased a home in Hawai'i and recently moved here. Bill grew up in Arizona, Kenya, and Europe where his father was a wildlife biologist. Prior to moving to Hawai'i, Bill served on the Board of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. As chair of its acquisition committee, he was deeply involved in acquiring more than 1600 acres of open space either through conservation easements or land purchases.



### KEPĀ MALY

Kepā Maly was raised on the islands of O'ahu and Lāna'i. While growing up on Lāna'i, kūpuna immersed Kepā in Hawaiian cultural practices, language and values. Kepā's career has focused in the field of cultural and natural resources, ethnography and the recording of Hawaiian history from Ni'ihau through Hawai'i and beyond.

Since February 2013, Kepā has been responsible for overseeing activities related to archaeological-cultural surveys, preservation planning of cultural resources, and encouraging the perpetuation and preservation of Lāna'i's traditions and historical heritage, as a member of the executive team of Pūlama Lāna'i. He works to ensure the history and culture of Lāna'i are passed down by sharing the history of Lāna'i with residents, visitors, and staff members.



### JENNIFER LUCK

Jennifer Luck is the Managing Director for the Porter Trust, overseeing land assets, charitable giving and estate planning for the Trust. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she graduated from the University of Oregon and previously worked for the United Farm-workers Union, Peace Over Violence and as Executive Director of the Institute of Real Estate Management. Jennifer and her husband Jason moved to Kaua'i in 2007 when Jennifer was offered a position as the Executive Director of the Kaua'i Public Land Trust. From 2011 – 2015 she served as the Kaua'i Island Director of the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. She currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Board of Kaua'i Planning and Action Alliance and in 2014 was elected to the Princeville at Hanalei Community Association Board of Directors. Jennifer is honored to join the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust Board of Directors, and looks forward to continuing her conservation work and supporting the mission of this fantastic organization.

Photo: HCC Farms.  
Courtesy of Janet Britt.

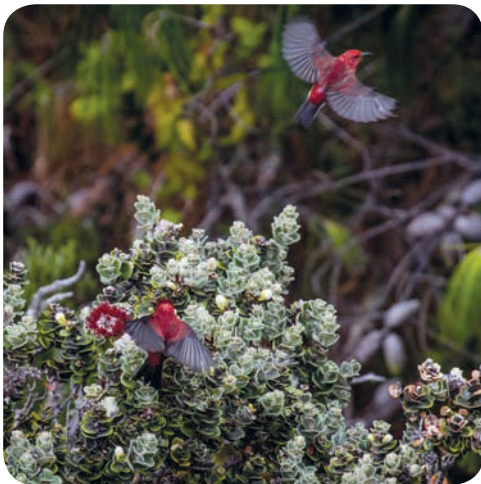
## QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION: HILT'S 1ST STEP TO PROTECT KONA COFFEE LANDS

Located on Kealakekua Ridge on the western slope of Mauna Loa, you'll find 75-acre HCC Farms LLC coffee farm. With about 60 inches of rainfall per year at the farm, it is in the ideal range for growing the world-renowned and signature product of Kona, Hawai'i, Kona Coffee. With the generous assistance of The Freeman Foundation of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (HILT) secured a conservation easement on this 'āina (land), in hopes of beginning a long-term effort to conserve coffee farms and other agricultural working lands in Hawai'i. This is the first step towards HILT's goal of helping farmers to continue to mālama (care for) the 'āina. With a permanent conservation easement in place, a single residence can be constructed on the 75-acre tract, with the remainder of the acreage remaining in agricultural use in perpetuity.

Agricultural use of land protects the soil and allows for the natural percolation of water into the ground and into the water table, thus contributing to clean water and increased water quality for surrounding landowners. The landowner has worked with NRCS to build retention basins that slow the flow of water and thus allow the sediment load that the water carries to settle out. After the installation of the retention basins along the ridge bottom, the runoff remains in the retention basins. The soil and silts are then used by the farm as part of their operations.

This agricultural use of lands is one value that HILT takes into consideration in its conservation work. Other values include scenic views, wildlife habitats, water resource areas, cultural and historical values, and outdoor recreation areas. These values define what people love about Hawai'i and these contribute to our quality of life. Aside from its agricultural value, the coffee farm consists of the beautiful and native 'ōhi'a trees. These forested areas on the property provide habitat for native birds including 'apapane (Hawaiian honey creeper) and 'io (Hawaiian hawk) which are known to nest on the property. With the farm's cooperation, these are now protected.

HCC Farms is bordered by the 11,000 acre Kealakekua Ranch on which a conservation easement is held by the State of Hawai'i. The addition of this approximately 75 acres will make for a substantial area of conserved lands. Our Kīpuka Mosaic Project (green oases) on Hawai'i Island demonstrates how piecing together various bordering properties can create large tracts of conserved 'āina. While the Kīpuka Mosaic Project properties are located in Volcano, the model can still be applied here. When surrounding landowners practice good agricultural techniques, our quality of water, wildlife habitats, forests, and overall environment increases. With our quality of life maintained and our Kona coffee growing, we are a whole lot happier!



Native 'Apapane and 'ōhi'a.  
Courtesy of Bryan Berkowitz.

*“We were really excited to find a conservation group aligned with our goals for protecting agricultural land in Hawai'i for the long term. HILT's leadership team did a great job of educating us on the process and really worked with us every step of the way to ensure our land was conserved the right way.”*

*~ Ed Schultz, President of HCC Farms LLC*

## CURRENTS

## HILT HAPPENINGS



MAUI

## THRIVING HABITAT AT OUR NU'U REFUGE

2016 marks five years since HILT took ownership of the Nu'u Refuge, and eight years since we began actively managing the refuge for the benefit of endangered Hawaiian water birds. We continue to deepen our understanding of this wahi pana (storied place), and are continually amazed with what we are seeing and learning. Through a generous grant of a local family, we began an intensive study of the paleo-environment of the Nu'u Refuge by extracting

sediment cores from the wetlands. While these are still being analyzed, already we have found the shell remains of a species of freshwater snail, *Tryonia porrecta*, that malacologists (snail specialists) had not previously seen on Maui. We will get a much better understanding of the ancient environment of the region, and perhaps the approximate date humans arrived in the area. Look for the results of this study in a future edition of 'Umeke Kā'eo.

This year we have observed 11 endangered 'Alae Ke'oke'o (Hawaiian Coot) chicks at the Nu'u pond...more than we have ever counted. We are very excited to see the wildlife habitat flourishing.

We have welcomed a number of students to the refuge to learn about the history, culture and environment of Nu'u. These excursions are a great way to engage the next generation and teach them the importance of aloha 'āina. For questions regarding the Nu'u Refuge or other Maui properties, contact Interim Executive Director, Scott Fisher at [scott@hilt.org](mailto:scott@hilt.org).



O'AHU

## 'ĀINA-BASED PROGRAMS AT MAUNAWILA HEIAU

Maunawila Heiau Preserve continues to serve as a hub for 'āina-based education and mālama 'āina activities. This year, Brigham Young University (BYU) Hawai'i incorporated Maunawila Heiau into its curriculum as part of its Local Communities Class – a requirement for all

entering freshmen. 300 students from BYU Hawai'i visited and learned about the property's history and mo'olelo through service projects. This wahi also continues to serve as a host site for BYU Hawai'i's Cultural Anthropology courses.

We are thankful for its strong partnership with BYU Hawai'i, which has provided thousands of hours in volunteer support. Students removed truckloads of trash formerly dumped on the property, cut down invasive plants to make way for future trail infrastructure, and cleared brush from Punaiki stream, which flows through the property. Moving into ka wā ma hope (the future), HILT hopes to implement the access plan and install trails and signage to make the site more accessible to the public, including more local schools and community organizations. To mālama 'āina or volunteer at Maunawila, contact O'ahu Island Director, Tina Aiu, at [tina@hilt.org](mailto:tina@hilt.org).



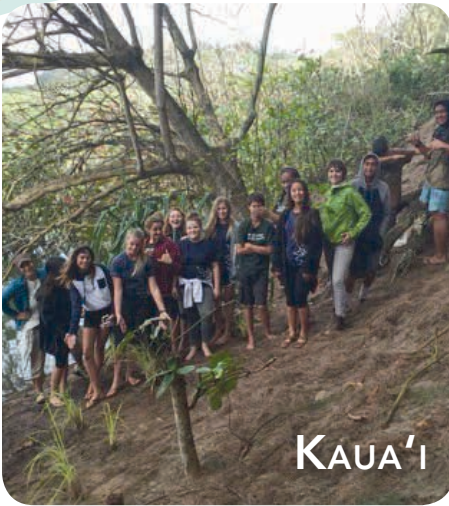
HAWAII ISLAND

## CULTURE-RICH LANDS OF KAIHOLENA

The Kaiholena South tour of our Talk Story on the Land series on Hawai'i Island expanded over two days due to high demands for attendance. These were the first of our

offerings on moku o Keawe, and they were a huge success, largely in part to our tour leaders, Aric Arakaki, Rick Gmirkin and Toni Withington (HILT Island Council Member). What a wealth of knowledge between these three individuals! We learned about the three ancient villages whose remnants are still visible along the rocky coastline of North Kohala. The tour took place on a 35-acre HILT conservation easement on a property owned by the Ala Kahakai Trail Association. Visible from this Property are heiau (temple), kahua (house site foundations), ko'a (fishing shrines), and even an hōlua (slide). More offerings include our newest conservation easement on the HCC coffee farm, our Kīpuka Mosaic Project properties in Volcano and the upper hillside of Mauna Loa near Pa'auilo. Please join us by contacting Acquisitions Specialist & Hawai'i Island Director, Janet Britt at [janet@hilt.org](mailto:janet@hilt.org).

# GIVING MATTERS



## CELEBRATING THE 'ĀINA

HILT and the students from Kanuikapono Public Charter School will celebrate Earth Day out on the land. Beginning with a lesson from Kaua'i Island Director, Angela Anderson, on GIS, they will then travel to our Wai'oli Valley conservation easement to join the Talk Story on the Land tour and learn about the role conservation easements play in preserving Hawai'i's working agricultural lands and supporting cultural traditions. Students will observe first-hand areas of Wai'oli which have been in Kalo production for generations. Walking along the ancient pre-contact lo'i and 'auwai systems, they'll take in lessons from the past to help shape their vision of a sustainable future. The group will mālama 'āina by removing invasive plants encroaching on native outcroppings and planting native species at our Kāhili Beach Preserve. For more information on the work at Kāhili Beach, check out the Story Map of our recent visit with Kanuikapono at: <http://arcg.is/1THEZHP>. We truly appreciate the collaborative efforts from Peter King, our Kaua'i Island Council volunteer, and Rachel Smith of the Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee in lending their expertise. Contact Kaua'i Island Director, Angela Anderson at [angela@hilt.org](mailto:angela@hilt.org) to get involved with HILT's education and outreach programs on Kaua'i.



Courtesy of Tina Aiu.

## A CULTURE OF 'OHANA

Exciting news this year in the realms of philanthropy and conservation! The prominent Hawai'i Community Foundation celebrates its centennial anniversary and 100 years of giving, Edmund C. Olson provided stability for The Trust for Public Land's State Directorship position in Hawai'i through his generous endowment, and we mourn the passing of not only a HILT donor, but also a highly philanthropic individual, Maizie Sanford. Through it all, we support, delight in, and send our aloha throughout the community because we all will feel the effects.

Hawai'i is familiar with the 'ohana (family) lifestyle of collaboration, as we are rich in ethnic diversity, culture, and traditions. This culture of 'ohana and aloha is fostered by the respect and collaboration between individuals and organizations, and they have had tremendous impact on these lands. Whether it is relationships between HILT and its staff with kama'āina (children of this land), various environmental or philanthropic organizations, schools, legislators, landowners, realtors, or neighborhood associations, the support of the community is essential in achieving our mission of *protecting the lands that sustain us for current and future generations*. We hope to provide that same familial support to other individuals and organizations in our community as well. We delight in the successes, bear the weight of the failures, and take seriously the burden of our kuleana of the conservation, environmental, and philanthropic world. We look forward to celebrating more in the successes of our partners throughout the year and to contributing to protecting more 'āina and helping to improve the quality of life for people to enjoy across the islands.


**TO JOIN OUR 'OHANA AND MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION,  
BECOME A RESPONSIBLE STEWARD OF THIS 'ĀINA AND  
MEMBER OF HILT. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE  
AT 808-244-LAND (5263) OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.HILT.ORG/JOIN-US/MEMBERSHIP/](http://WWW.HILT.ORG/JOIN-US/MEMBERSHIP/)**



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Photos: Courtesy of Kit Hawkins.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**DON'T MISS OUT ON OUR ANNUAL  
FREE COMMUNITY PICNIC!**

Spend a few hours out on the 'āina and experience a taste of the traditional Hawaiian way of life, visit the wetlands on guided tours, enjoy great food, and listen to the music of local musician, Ka'ena Elaban!

**Waihe'e Coastal Dunes &  
Wetlands Refuge, Maui**  
**Saturday, June 18, 2016.**  
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

R.S.V.P. at (808) 244-5263 or info@hilt.org.