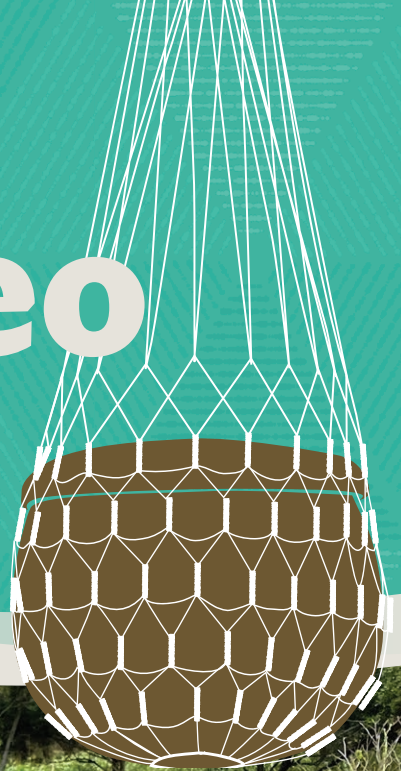


‘Umeke Kā‘eo

A well-filled calabash, a well-filled mind.

HAWAI‘I LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2 | FALL 2021



Celebrating

10

YEARS OF TRUST



HAWAI‘I LAND TRUST

GENEROUS GIFTS HAVE STATEWIDE IMPACT

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ISLAND HAPPENINGS

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'Umeke Kā'eo is the newsletter of Hawai'i Land Trust, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization committed to land conservation in Hawai'i.

As a Hawai'i organization, we encourage our entire community to learn more about the Hawaiian language. Should you come across a Hawaiian word or term you don't understand in our newsletter, please visit wehewehe.org or email info@hilt.org for more information.

On the Cover: Lei Ishikawa, Project Coordinator at Paeloko, teaches interns in the Ahupua'a Stewards program about lo'i kalo management.

Hawai'i Land Trust
126 Queen St., Ste 306
Honolulu, HI 96813
(808) 744-AINA (2462)
www.hilt.org

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FROM THE CEO

Aloha HILT 'Ohana,

As we approach the end of 2021 and I reflect on the year that has past, I come to the realization that we could all use a little more connection to 'āina and connection to one another. My New Year's wish for you is to make cherished memories in our natural spaces, whether that is finding peace by yourself or enjoying time with loved ones.

For context, I would like to share a personal story involving 'āina and one of my loved ones. I have always been fascinated by the history of land in Hawai'i. I share this "love for land" with my cousin, Cami Kameealoha Kanoa-Wong. A few years ago, the senior generation in our 'ohana tasked us to research and protect our ancestral lands in Nāhiku, Maui. We learned that Kamehameha IV granted two ili or land divisions to our ancestor in 1851. I had heard stories from my great grandmother about growing up there with her grandparents, and stories from my uncles about hiking through the land down to the ocean in the 80's. Soon, Cami and I found ourselves ready to enter our ancestral lands for the first time.

We offered our oli kahea or entrance chant, and a nice breeze welcomed us in. When we spotted the bright red flowers of lehua, both of us shouted in joy "lehua!" a reference to our hālua hula Nā Pualei o Likolehua. Feeling like we were seeing long lost hula sisters, we rushed through tall uluhe ferns to the base of each lehua tree. "I can't believe it...they are still here," said Cami, her voice quivering with emotion. The rest of the day we followed pig trails, admired 'ēkaha ferns perched high in trees, and ate a snack under hāpu'u ferns. We passed massive mango trees and wondered aloud which kupuna could have planted them 100 years ago. When we reached the stream that empties into the ocean, Cami called for us, "this is the tallest ti leaf I have ever seen!" We gazed at the towering ti, banana, and hala trees. We were witness to the prior generations' stewardship of the land.

This year my dear cousin Cami passed away. In the wake of her passing, I have thought a lot about the impermanence of each of us, balanced with the permanence of land. I believe 'āina and values are two treasures that get passed on. Just as our kupuna left us lehua, mango, ti, hala, and inspiration to protect our family land, Cami leaves behind the legacy and values of aloha 'āina and mālama 'āina, passed down to her amazing keiki.

I know many of you have also lost loved ones, and faced other struggles, over the past two years. My heart goes out to all of you. I take comfort during these challenging times knowing HILT's work caring for the 'āina and teaching aloha 'āina values to the next generation will outlast us all. Mahalo for helping to protect more places for these connections and memories to be made.

With gratitude and aloha,

Laura H. E. Kaakua
PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER





KUAHAUA

Generous Gifts Have Statewide Impact

The coastline at Māhukona, Hawai'i Island

A number of generous donors have stepped forward recently to move forward land protection efforts, or ensure protected lands are cared for in perpetuity. Their generosity means more **historic, coastal, and food-producing places** across our island chain will be protected and stewarded forever. *Mahalo piha.*

HAWAI'I ISLAND

HILT is working to purchase and permanently protect the 642-acre Māhukona Navigational & Cultural Complex on the Kohala Coast of Hawai'i Island by the end of 2023, in partnership with Nā Kalai Wa'a and the Kohala community. HILT recently received a generous grant from the Metabolic Studio to support our work to connect indigenous communities to place. The grant will directly support our protection efforts at Māhukona which spans six ahupua'a along the Kohala coast and has been cared for by lineal descendants and traditional Hawaiian navigators for generations.

Ko'a Holomoana Heiau, a navigational heiau on the bluffs of Kamano Bay in the ahupua'a of Kou, is renowned throughout the Pacific since ancient times. Makali'i, Hawai'i Island's traditional voyaging canoe, is dry-docked at Māhukona, and cared for by Nā Kalai

Wa'a, a Hawai'i Island nonprofit that trains traditional navigators and teaches school children Hawaiian values and customs through experiences with the wa'a or canoe. The shoreline at Māhukona was a traditional fishing village, and the mauka lands extended into the historic Kohala Agricultural Field System.

Today, the shoreline teems, abundant with marine life providing subsistence fishing for the local community, and a place where generations of keiki from all over the island have learned to swim. Māhukona has been slated for a resort development for over a decade, but the Kohala community and Makali'i's voyagers have long since hoped for the land's protection. We are now getting closer to realizing that dream. Learn more at mahukona.org.

KAUA'I

When HILT protected Kāhili Beach Preserve in 2003, as was the case for many of the places we've protected over the years, there was no stewardship fund providing for the perpetual care and maintenance of the Preserve. This summer, Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg through the Chan Zuckerberg Kaua'i Community Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation made a generous gift, endowing a part-time staff presence for stewardship of Kāhili Beach Preserve. This gift provides HILT a foundation upon which we can move forward with confidence in our planning for the future of Kāhili Beach Preserve. The area, a popular location for surfers and families, is also important habitat for native wildlife. The muliwai at the mouth of Kīlauea River and the sand dunes provide places for 'iwa to drink fresh water and native plants like the pōhinahina to thrive. While we must continue to fundraise to support educational programming and special native ecosystem restoration projects, we are grateful for this generous and lasting gift to the Kaua'i community.

Community members and Hawai'i Land Trust ...envision the restored fishpond providing food for the community, habitat for native species, and capturing sediment to create a healthier reef ecosystem

MAUI

As Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge is permanently protected and peaceful, we are able to work in partnership with Native Hawaiian descendants of the area and the State to offer Waihe'e Refuge as a safe place to reinter iwi kupuna (bones of Hawai'i's ancestors) that may have been exposed due to natural erosion or human action. Between November 2021 and June 2022, HILT will provide a series of seminars regarding the proper repatriation of iwi kupuna, including all the legal and cultural aspects that should be considered. We will work with lineal and cultural descendants of Waihe'e and Waiehu to craft oli and cultural protocols, mitigate coastal erosion on specific parts of the Refuge where iwi are known to be buried to prevent any burials from becoming disturbed, and install barriers to prevent cars from driving over sensitive areas. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is supporting our iwi kupuna burial protection and education efforts at Waihe'e Refuge with a \$50,000 grant. Waihe'e and Waiehu descendants can contact scott@hilt.org for more information.

In Waihe'e, Hāna, Kaupō, and Kahului-Wailuku, HILT is able to undertake four critical conservation initiatives due to a gift from Amazon Founder and Executive Chair, Jeff Bezos. At Waihe'e Refuge, HILT will prepare to restore the ancient Kapoho fishpond. Community members and Hawai'i Land Trust have dreamed of undertaking this monumental task for years, and envision the restored fishpond providing food for the community, habitat for native species, and capturing sediment to create a healthier reef ecosystem. In Hāna, HILT is assisting the Hāna community to protect an entire coastline from Mokae (Hāmoa Beach) to Maka'ālae (Waioka Pond), in partnership with nonprofit Ke Ao Halī'i, Maui County, and the State of Hawai'i. The coastal ranch lands have immense cultural significance and historic sites, and are used by the local community for subsistence fishing and gathering. Maui Coastal Land Trust (integrated into Hawai'i Land Trust in 2011) conserved the first parcel along this coastal stretch in 2002. Now, 20 years later, this gift will help support HILT's work to protect the final phase of the coastline, expected in early 2022. The lands will then be owned by the Hāna community through Ke Ao Halī'i, with conservation easements that permanently protect the lands held by Hawai'i Land Trust and Maui County. At Nu'u Refuge, this funding will support endangered bird habitat restoration at Nu'u wetland, as well as community volunteer programs. Finally, this funding will lay the foundation for a community farm, and native plant sand dune restoration at the Veterans Peace Park in Kahului-Wailuku.

O'AHU

At HILT's Maunawila Heiau Complex in Hau'ula, HILT's educational and stewardship programming is flourishing. Our 'Āina Educators Mamo and Mahea educate over 100 students a week at Maunawila. With so many students and volunteers now at Maunawila, we need a place out of the elements that is still open air and honors Maunawila's history. Beginning in early 2022, the Hau'ula community will be ready to build a traditional hale at Maunawila that will give students, volunteers and Hawaiian cultural practitioners shaded space to learn, take a break out of the elements, and live Hawaiian culture. HILT received \$183,937 through Honolulu City & County's Grant-in-Aid Program to support the hale build and associated education. As part of the process, the community will be invited to learn the skills and techniques required to build traditional hale alongside our stewards. The structure has long been needed and upon its completion, the local community will have the skills to build additional hale in Hau'ula and beyond.



HILT Happenings

Hawai'i

Hawai'i Land Trust received partial funding support from the Hawai'i State Department of Land and Natural Resources' Forest Stewardship Program to complete a Forest Stewardship Plan for our Kūkūau Forest Preserve. Kūkūau, spanning 1,640 acres outside of Hilo Town, is HILT's newest preserve, gifted to HILT in 2019 by generous donors. Kūkūau is a native 'ōhi'a and koa forest that is home to native forest birds such as 'io (Hawaiian hawk) and endangered 'ōpe'ape'a (Hawaiian hoary bats), but is also being invaded by aggressive non-native species such as strawberry guava, clydemia, and miconia.



There is much work to be done before we can begin welcoming the public with stewardship activities and educational programming. The next steps are to hire a Kūkūau Forest Steward & Educator, and develop a forest stewardship plan in order to build the resiliency of the forest and watershed, and strengthen human relationships to Kūkūau.

On Hawai'i Island's northern coastline, HILT was awarded over \$500,000 by the USDA NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program to support two agricultural easements permanently protecting and supporting two local family farms in Kohala, covering almost 50 acres that we aim to close in 2022 and early 2023. HILT is also moving the effort to protect Māhukona forward in partnership with Nā Kalai Wa'a, the Kohala community, and County, State and Federal partners (mahukona.org).

Above: Jay Penniman of Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project teaches the Ahupua'a Stewards Program about habitat restoration benefitting Ua'u Kani at Hāwea Point, Maui.

Left: Jim Trump of Island Harvest in Kapa'au, Hawai'i Island shares about his macadamia nut orchard

Kaua'i

Community stewardship at Kāhili Beach Preserve thrives! In the summer, as seas calmed and the rains took a break there were many opportunities to safely gather in small groups and engage in learning and mālama 'āina. The summer started off with Kaiāulu Ko'olau, a youth summer program held in the Ko'olau and Halele'a districts here on Kaua'i. This community-led program got going at Kāhili makai with invasive salvinia removal and kilo at the muliwai of Kīlauea River. Later in the summer, the youth program, along with HILT, organized a community watch, giving the youth participants and their families an opportunity to engage with kūpuna of the Kāhili/Kīlauea area and educators of cultural practice. This hui continued its way north and then doubled back for a closing hō'ike at Kāhili Beach Preserve. The intimate relationships that these young kama'āina now have with Kāhili are what fuel our passion for continuing to connect community to place.

In the Fall when students physically returned to the classroom, HILT's Kaua'i educators engaged students with a mix of virtual tours, classroom visits, and a joyous return of student visits to Kāhili. HILT is finalizing agreements with schools to formally recognize Kāhili as a remote classroom site making it easier for school administrators and teachers to arrange visits.



Pelika Andrade of Nā Maka Onaona teaches keiki how to make personal mini imu at Kāhili Beach Preserve's Community Watch this summer.

Our Kāhili Community Workdays continue on the first Sunday of each month from 8:30-10:30am. We appreciate the ways in which the community shows up by donating native plants, joining in the removal of invasive plants, and pulling up marine debris like fishing nets. Join us at our next Kāhili Community Workday!

HILT is also exploring five potential land protection projects all over Kaua'i from local farms to Hawaiian cultural landscapes. We look forward to sharing as the efforts take shape.

Volunteers plant native trees at Kāhili Beach Preserve.



O'ahu

HILT's stewardship at Maunawila Heiau Complex is built on a strong foundational relationship with the Hau'ula community. This pilina is critical to our care for Maunawila, a heiau ho'ola or a place of traditional healing. We continue to nurture and build these relationships by scheduling visits to Maunawila for Hau'ula Elementary classes where students are given on-site opportunities to learn about a multitude of subjects from soil science to archaeology, and strengthen their conservation stewardship skills through place-based learning. We are proud to announce that HILT and Hau'ula Elementary School have signed a Memorandum of Understanding which gives Hau'ula Elementary access to Maunawila Heiau Complex for use as a satellite campus. We look forward to creating educational programming and professional development that will have long-lasting benefits for the community. Later this year and into 2022, the

Hau'ula Community will be invited to join as we host traditional hale building workshops. All are welcome for monthly community work days every 2nd Saturday. Be sure to follow us on social media, subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter, or visit our website for information on scheduling.

HILT's O'ahu land protection efforts currently span from Maunawili on the East side to Lualualei on the West side. We are working to protect: historic lo'i kalo lands in Maunawili Valley in Kailua, and Luluku and Kuou in Kāne'ohe; Kawa'ewa'e heiau and cultural complex in Kāne'ohe, Waikalua Fishponds Complex in Kāne'ohe, and Kahumana Farms in Lualualei, Wai'anae. All efforts are being done in partnership with amazing fellow nonprofits and government agencies, too numerous to fully name here. We can't wait to share more in our next newsletter.



Our Maunawila Menehune learning from Aunty Lurline McGregor, who's family gifted Maunawila Heiau to HILT in 2014.

Maui

This summer saw the inauguration of the Ahupua'a Stewards Leadership Program, a collaboration between HILT and UH Maui College, made possible through generous donations by the Robert F. Orr Foundation and Kamehameha Schools. This educational program introduced twelve Maui high school students from five high schools across the island to traditional Hawaiian knowledge ('ike kupuna) about caring for the land (mālama 'āina), and conservation work with HILT and a number of community groups and government agencies at a variety of locations across the island. Based on the concept of "ma ka hana ka 'ike," the cultivation of knowledge through work, the students met with, and worked alongside, both cultural practitioners and conservation professionals to gain a better understanding of how they can translate their love of the land into a career path in the field of conservation. The students enthusiastically learned about traditional Hawaiian

practices starting at the ocean where they monitored and learned about marine ecosystems, and into the upland areas where they planted koa trees as part of a reforestation project on the slopes of Haleakalā. Feedback from the students was incredibly positive, and we are grateful to all of the individuals and organizations who took the time to share their wisdom and insights with the students.

We also saw a land protection effort that started 17 years ago take a big step forward when the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service awarded HILT partial funding for the permanent protection of nearly six acres of historic lo'i kalo lands on Ke'anae Peninsula. HILT has been working toward this conservation easement effort since 2004. We are excitedly working to raise the matching funds and close in 2022.



HAWAI'I LAND TRUST

126 Queen Street, Suite 306
Honolulu, HI 96813
WWW.HILT.ORG
(808) 791-0729

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Celebrate Conservation and Support HILT!

HILT's popular **lū'au benefit event hosted by Old Lāhainā Lūa'u, is celebrating its 20th anniversary!** This in-person event will honor Susan Bradford and Lucienne de Naie and the Founders of Maui Coastal Land Trust as our 2022 Champions of the Land.

Join us for an event that is sure to inspire. Guests will be treated to live entertainment by Tavana and the Old Lāhainā Lūa'u Entertainers, an amazing live and silent auction with highly exclusive items and experiences curated specifically for HILT, and 'ono cuisine provided by local farmers, ranchers and fishermen who work with the chefs at Nā Hoaloha 'Ekolu. Table sponsorships and tickets can be purchased online at www.hilt.org/events or by calling (808) 791-0731. For more information, contact Angela Britten, Director of Development at angie@hilt.org.

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