



News Release

KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION

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October 9, 2007
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kaho'ohalahala to Retire

Sol Kaho'ohalahala, executive director of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission since January 2005, today announced his decision to retire effective January 1, 2008.

"Three years ago, I committed to advance the cause of the restoration of Kaho'olawe and toward meeting strategic goals set out by the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission to the very best of my ability," Kaho'ohalahala said in his announcement. "Today, I believe that much has been accomplished during my tenure and that I would like now to take the opportunity that retirement will afford me to apply the valuable insights I have gained to the serious challenges we face here in Maui County. I am looking forward to providing my support wherever my abilities and experience may be needed most."

Among the KIRC's accomplishments during his directorship, Kaho'ohalahala noted: "we've made major strides in re-vegetating the island's hardpan with Native Hawaiian plants; gathered valuable data on resource management; increased the KIRC's volunteer roster; added an electronic information distribution system to an expanding database of interested and supportive individuals and organizations; streamlined internal procedures; and, networked with multiple agencies to open the island up to culturally based educational projects for adults, students and teachers."

Concurring with and expanding upon the agency's accomplishments during Kaho'ohalahala's tenure, Commission Chair Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli added, "Since Sol took the reins of the day-to-day operations of the KIRC, he has expanded our volunteer base, participated in the establishment of the Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, partnered with the Girls' Court, Pacific American Foundation, and the Department of Health – among many other agencies – to develop and expand culturally based science and math curricula within the public and charter schools programs statewide, and he initiated our move toward energy sustainability for Kaho'olawe island operations.

"Although we on the Commission will miss his energy and talents," Aluli added, "we look to use this as an opportunity to advance programs he has begun, including strict budgeting to extend the life of the Trust, and, with input from our staff,

to maximize use of the strengths and talents of both Commission members and staff to ever-greater operational efficiencies, self-sufficiencies and sustainability.”

A transition team, headed by Interim Executive Director Michele McLean, Interim Deputy Executive Director Ka’ōnohi Lee, Senior Policy Advisor Ray “Kalā” Enos, and Deputy Attorney General Rowena Somerville, has been designated by the Commissioners to provide a seamless leadership transition and begin the search process for a new executive director.

“I have had the privilege of working with many extraordinarily talented men and women at the KIRC and leave it in capable hands,” Kaho’ohalahala said. “So, with the continued dedication of our commissioners and staff, combined with the many organizations and individuals who volunteer or support our programs, I am confident the objectives of KIRC’s Strategic Plan – *Hānau hou he ‘ula ‘o Kaho’olawe* – will be met, and the kino of Kanaloa restored.”

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