

KAHO'OLAWE

Ko Hema Lamalama

Newsletter of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve

Summer 2010

Aloha KIRC Commissioners

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

This year, the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), will be welcoming new commissioners and saying goodbye to very dedicated commissioners as they have reached their statutory term limit. According to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 26-34, any member serving on a State of Hawai'i board or commission is limited to two terms or eight consecutive years.

The KIRC consists of seven commissioners; one member from the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO), two members nominated by the PKO and appointed by the Governor, one member a trustee or representative of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), one member a Maui county official appointed by the Governor, one member nominated by Native Hawaiian Organizations and appointed by the Governor, and the chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (HRS-6K).

Departing commissioners include Commissioners Charles P.K. Burrows, Ed.D and Noa Emmett Aluli, M.D.. Kai'ulani Murphy and Davianna Pomaika'i McGregor, Ph. D., will be filling the vacancies.



Commissioner Burrows, affectionately known as Doc, served as the Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO) representative from January 2002 to January 2010. An educator and environmental leader, Commissioner Burrows has championed the protection of many critical habitats here in Hawai'i and abroad as well as trained many of today's young environmental leaders.



Kai'ulani Murphy, nominated by the Polynesian Voyaging Society, will serve as the NHO representative. A graduate of the Kamehameha Schools and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Commissioner Murphy brings her knowledge and

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.

expertise in Hawaiian cultural traditions in way finding. She is one of the youngest and most promising traditional navigators in Hawai'i. As part of the next generation of traditional Hawaiian navigators, the knowledge and training Commissioner Murphy brings with her will assist the KIRC in achieving its strategic goal in establishing a traditional Hawaiian navigation field school on Kaho'olawe as well as restoring archaeological and cultural sites relating to traditional way finding.



Commissioner Aluli is a founding member and long time leader of the PKO. He has served two 8-year terms, from 1993 to 2001 and 2002 to 2010. He was appointed KIRC Chairperson during both tenures.



The PKO has designated - Davianna McGregor, PhD as their representative. A professor of ethnic studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and long-time organizer and spokesperson for the PKO, Commissioner McGregor brings the institutional memory of Kaho'olawe's struggles and various historic management regimes, rules, regulations and policies. With the anticipated passage of the Native Hawaiian Reorganization Act, Commissioner McGregor's many years in the Native Hawaiian movement as an advocate for the protection of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, will benefit the KIRC in meeting the challenges of the eventual transfer of the island and its waters to a recognized sovereign Hawaiian entity.



Ocean Resources

Monk Seals in the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve

The Hawaiian monk seal (*‘Īlio‘ho‘i‘kaua‘ua*, which translates to “dog who runs in rough seas”) is a critically endangered species found only in Hawai‘i. Unfortunately, this native population is diving closer and closer towards extinction. The current population estimate is 1,100-1,200 and decreasing at approximately 4% each year. Over 1,000 of these seals live in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, protected in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. A small but naturally growing population of over 100 seals lives among the populated Main Hawaiian Islands.



Pup born on March 29, 2010 to RM305 near Sailor's Hat, one day old

Numerous threats are affecting Hawaiian monk seal recovery including entanglement in marine debris, infectious disease, fishery interactions, human disturbance, and habitat loss. These first two threats persist within the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve (KIR), but steps are being taken to remove marine debris as well as study and manage Kaho'olawe's feral cat population (carriers of *Toxoplasmosis*). The KIR provides a relatively safe haven for seals compared to the other MHI in that fishery interactions and human disturbance are minimal, and Kaho'olawe's coastline provides important natural resting and pupping habitats.

The KIRC Ocean Resources Management Program has documented five seal births since 2001 (2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2010). All but one pup has been born in a tide pool habitat near Sailor's Hat referred to as “Picnic Tables” by the Navy. Pups are born jet black (weighing 24-33 lbs), and turn grey as they approach weaning time (weighing 110-175 lbs). During the nursing period, the pup more than quadruples in size and the mom, who does not eat or leave the pup's side for ~6 weeks, loses considerable weight. The mom then leaves the pup to fend for itself, which it does in that vicinity for another month or so as it ventures farther and farther away from its natal area.



Pup at 24 days old, relaxing with Mom who nursed her for a total of 45 days

The mother of these last two pups is known to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) as R305. It is likely that she has given birth to all of the pups at Picnic Tables, but this can't be confirmed since she isn't tagged and has virtually no scars (which are how individual seals are matched and tracked over the years). There have been three females and two males born, and all except the 2003 male have been seen recently and seem to be doing well. They have been sighted not only on Kaho'olawe but as far away as Moloka'i and Hawai'i Island. Seals are known to return to the area where they were born to give birth (at 5-10 years of age), so hopefully our three female pups will do so. Hawaiian monk seals have a fascinating life history, and we're fortunate that Kaho'olawe can play a role in the survival of this endemic species.



Pup at 56 days old, after the KIRC Ocean Program & NOAA tagged her (red numbered tags on each rear flipper)



Culture



Completed Kahualele at Honokanai'a.



Commissioner Craig Neff looking at completed work.

In 1992, Cultural Practitioner Parley Kanaka'ole lead the opening 'awa ceremony for Kahualele in Hakioawa to mark the beginning of the 10 year clean-up of Kanaloa Kaho'olawe by the U.S. Navy. He then selected a site in Honokanai'a, where

the second Kahualele was to be constructed for the closing ceremony. Parley had requested the kōkua from Attwood Makanani to design and construct both Kahualele for the purpose mentioned above.

The construction of Kahualele in Honokanai'a is currently in progress under the direction of "Uncle Maka". He has been working extensively on this 20x40 kahua for the past few months, and has completed the basic structure. Uncle Maka has utilized heavy equipment operators from various islands to get majority of the work done. John Pia from Kaua'i, Donald Poepoe from Maui, and Keoki Pescaia from Moloka'i have all helped with moving pōhaku for this project. Various volunteer groups from both PKO and KIRC have also participated in gathering some of the material for the Mua and its surrounding area. The blessing and ceremony is being coordinated by the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana; which will also coincide with the 20th anniversary of stopping the bombing on Kanaloa Kaho'olawe.



View of Kahualele from Honokanai'a Beach.



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA

INTRODUCING THE SOUVENIR KIRC STAINLESS SPORT BOTTLE

You'll be ready for the outdoors with our stylish 24 oz. brushed stainless steel sport bottle with its classic deep blue KIRC logo. With your tax-deductible gift of \$45 or more to the Kaho'olawe Rehabilitation Trust Fund, we'll send you this classic KIRC sport bottle (free priority shipping included).

Or, you may purchase a KIRC stainless sport bottle for \$20 (free parcel post included; for priority shipment, please add \$5).

Either way, you'll be contributing to two great causes: Helping to rid the world of plastic water bottles and showing your aloha for and support of the cultural and environmental restoration of Kanaloa Kaho'olawe.



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Sacred Lands Film Project to Shoot on Kaho‘olawe

A documentary film project called “Losing Sacred Ground” began preliminary research and shooting on Kaho‘olawe June 28 with the assistance of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana and the KIRC. The film, which is being produced as a series for PBS, will be directed by noted documentary filmmaker Christopher “Toby” McLeod.



Director Toby McLeod and Cinematographer Andy Black film Manam Volcano, Papua New Guinea

For the past 26 years, McLeod has been the Project Director of the Sacred Land Film Project, under which this film project falls. The Project produces a variety of media and educational materials — films, videos, DVDs, articles, photographs, school curricula and Web site content — to deepen public understanding of sacred places, indigenous cultures and environmental justice. Their mission is to use journalism, organizing and activism to rekindle reverence for land, increase respect for cultural diversity, stimulate dialogue about connections between nature and culture, and protect sacred lands and diverse spiritual practices.



Q'eros pilgrimage to Mt. Ausangate, Peru .

“Losing Sacred Ground” will portray eight indigenous communities struggling to protect land and culture, with a focus on sacred sites. The film will focus on eight sites; Northern Australia, Alberta(Canada), Siberia, Northern California, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Peru and Hawai‘i. Kaho‘olawe will be the centerpiece of the Hawai‘i section and will highlight the work of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana and chronicle the island’s journey from military occupation to restoration and healing.

The research and development phase of the project is being funded in part by a \$15,000 grant from Pacific Islanders in Communications. As part of the PIC grant, McLeod will be working with Pacific Islander filmmakers Matt Yamashita and Josh Pastrana. Also working with the Sacred Lands Film Project on this initial R&D phase of the production are ‘Ohana members Kaliko Baker, Donne Dawson, Atwood Makanani , Blake Brutus LaBenz and Derek Mar Jr.. The Sacred Lands Film Project hopes to apply for additional \$100,000 in PIC production and completion grants. The target completion date for the film project is 2011 with airing anticipated for 2012.



The Sacred Land Film Project crew at Kanapou.

McLeod has made three other award-winning, hour-long documentary films that were broadcast on national television, *The Four Corners: A National Sacrifice Area?* (1983); *Downwind/Downstream* (1988); and *Poison in the Rockies* (1990). In 1990, he produced *Voices of the Land*, a 20-minute preview of the Sacred Land Film Project’s series on sacred places around the world. In 1997, he completed *A Thousand Years of Ceremony*, a 40-minute profile of Winnemem Wintu healer Florence Jones and her efforts to protect Mt. Shasta as a sacred site for the Wintu — a film made specifically as an archival film for the use of the Wintu community. After ten years of work, McLeod completed *In the Light of Reverence* (2001), which was broadcast on the acclaimed PBS documentary series *P.O.V. (Point of View)* and won a number of awards, including the Council on Foundation’s prestigious Henry Hampton Award (2005).

For more information on the Sacred Lands Film Project, go to www.sacredland.org



The Sacred Land Film Project crew at Kealaikahiki.



Restoration

Restoration Successes on Kaho'olawe

One of the most urgent concerns facing Kaho'olawe is the estimated 1.9 million tons of soil eroding from the island annually. The soil is the island - without it we have no Kaho'olawe to restore. Erosion control is best accomplished through re-vegetation and is relatively straight-forward, assuming you can dig. The KIRC is making great strides in re-vegetating areas of the island where unexploded ordnance (UXO) has been cleared to a depth of up to 4 feet, but how do you plant if you cannot dig?

When the UXO clean-up project ended in 2004, 66% of Kaho'olawe was only surface cleared of UXO. This means that any number of unexploded bombs, bullets, and rockets could be lingering just below the surface. The no-dig question could be answered much more easily with infinite funding, but the plot thickens when you factor in the KIRC's limited trust fund. The restoration staff was offered the suggestion, "Think third-world. What do we already have that can be used? Waste nothing."

Successful planting areas provide Kaho'olawe with a supply of native seed. Using this seed and materials already on island, the KIRC and volunteers create "seed balls". Seed balls consist of compost, sediment, and sand bonded together with water and then filled with native seeds. The idea is to give a seed everything it needs to flourish in one package so that, when it rains and the seed germinates, it has a better chance of survival than if it were placed on hard pan alone.

In addition to native seed, sediment, and sand, the island also has several piles of kiawe wood chips created during the UXO clean-up. Wood chips both retain moisture and reduce water evaporation. Fill biodegradable bags with wood chips, add a seed ball, and you have a mini-aboveground planting area that can be placed anywhere on the hardpan.

The restoration staff has also had success using pili grass (*heteropogon contortus*) bales grown especially for the KIRC by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Plant



Pili grass bales capture soil and seeds

Materials Center on Moloka'i. The bales are placed in squares or "X's" and then implanted with a seed ball or hand full of native seed. Serving as a wind barrier, the bales both collect sediment and protect young seedlings. The bales can also be disassembled into "flakes" (smaller rectangular portions) and placed in gullies to provide erosion control. Pili grass also has the useful characteristic of spiraling its seeds into the ground, thus doing its own digging and creating more vegetation.



Cardboard boxes filled with wood chips capture soil and seeds

The restoration staff is even experimenting with cardboard boxes and other paper products brought to Kaho'olawe from food orders. These biodegradable boxes are filled with wood chips and placed on the hardpan to collect sediment. Additionally, they absorb moisture and help keep water available to thirsty seeds that are either planted or lucky enough to be captured.

With such ideas whose simplicity are exceeded only by their logic, the KIRC continues to face the challenges of restoring such a unique area. Through these innovative techniques we envision a healthy, native ecosystem for the future.



Paper bags filled with wood chips

KO HEMA LAMALAMA
A newsletter of the Kaho'olawe
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MAHALO TO OUR SPONSORS

Commissioners and Staff of the KIRC would like to take this opportunity to send our heartfelt mahalo a nui loa to the following individuals and companies who so generously contributed to preserving the special heritage of Kaho'olawe.

Tom Hauptman	Benton Pang
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Mahalo for keeping the dream alive!



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