

# SOUTHERN BEACON

## Ko Hema Lamalama

June 2001

Newsletter of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission

### Words We Live By

Welcome to *Southern Beacon*, a newsletter signaling news from Kaho'olawe. The name "Ko Hema Lamalama," according to the late Uncle Harry Kūnihi Mitchell, was one of several ancient names for Kaho'olawe. It described the island's use as a navigational aid, or shining beacon, for long-distance voyagers returning to Hawai'i. Today, the vision of a fully restored Kaho'olawe serves as a guiding light to the revitalization of Native Hawaiian culture across the Islands.

"Kūkulu Ke Ea A Kanaloa," the motto of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), makes use of two *kaona* (double meanings). First, Kanaloa is the Hawaiian god of the ocean and foundations of the earth, and Kanaloa is also an ancient name for Kaho'olawe; second, *ea* means "breath" and also "sovereignty." The translation, "The life and spirit of Kanaloa builds and takes form," reminds us of our mission.

*Rain ahu on the eastern rim of Luamakika. The ahu was built in 1997 (at the start of restoration efforts by KIRC) to attract the Nāulu rains from the clouds between Kaho'olawe and Maui. The clouds form a bridge between this ahu and another ahu at Pu'u Mahoe in Ulupalakua on the slopes of Haleakalā.*

### *KIRC Mobilizes for Navy's 2003 Cleanup Deadline*

As the Navy's cleanup enters its final three years, the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission is stepping up its preparations to establish a Native Hawaiian cultural reserve. The Navy's cleanup contractor will complete its work at the end of 2003, a deadline set seven years ago when Congress mandated the Navy to remove the unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other waste left on the island after fifty years of use as a target range.

The state legislature created the seven-member Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission in 1993 to safeguard the state's interests in the cleanup and to manage future use of the island and its surrounding waters. KIRC's primary mission is the environmental restoration of the island and provision for the public's safe, meaningful use of the cultural reserve. Although the state does not have oversight authority, the Navy consults with KIRC on limited aspects of the cleanup operation.



Shanton Enomoto

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is the cleanup behind schedule?

The Kaho'olawe cleanup was slow getting started. The cleanup contractor team, headed by the Parsons-UXB joint venture, was not selected by the Navy until the summer of 1997, nearly four years after Congress had mandated the cleanup. The Navy never conducted a UXO cleanup before the Kaho'olawe project. We have learned many lessons since the cleanup work began.

Kaho'olawe is a challenging, remote environment, with little infrastructure in place. All supplies and employees must be barged or flown to the island. An immediate priority in the cleanup efforts was the construction of a temporary road.

The Navy is required to remove UXO and construct infrastructure in a manner that protects endangered species and the sensitive cultural and archaeological sites. The island, which is on the National Registry of Historic Places, has more than 500 archaeological sites, containing several thousand artifacts. Many endangered species, such as Blackburn's sphinx moth (*Manduca blackburni*), inhabit the island and must be protected. Finally, the soil on Kaho'olawe is not geologically conducive to detecting UXO: its high iron content makes it difficult for subsurface detection instruments to distinguish rocks from bombs.

### Southern Beacon, Ko Hema Lamalama

A newsletter of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC)  
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Our Web site contains up-to-date information, minutes from our monthly KIRC meetings, agendas for upcoming meetings, documents, reports, and a wide range of photos. You are welcome to attend the regular monthly meetings of KIRC. Check the Web site or call our office for dates and locations.

## KIRC ACTIVITIES IN 2000-2001

During 2000, KIRC focused its work on four major program areas: Restoration, Ocean, Culture, and Remediation.

KIRC's Restoration Program's staff and volunteers planted native plants in areas already cleared of unexploded ordnance. This planting effort depends on the Navy allowing KIRC volunteers to access the island while the cleanup continues, and on the amount of acreage that has been cleared of bombs and made available to KIRC.

Restoration activities also include gathering baseline data on climate and the surviving communities of native plants and animals. Different methods for controlling soil erosion are being tested. In 2001, KIRC will begin building a rain catchment system on the rim of Luamakika, the crater at the top of the island. The system will collect and store water to support native plants and reforestation of the island summit.



KIRC volunteers and staff load sacks of kiawe chips to use in different locations to fight soil erosion.

Lehua Abrigo

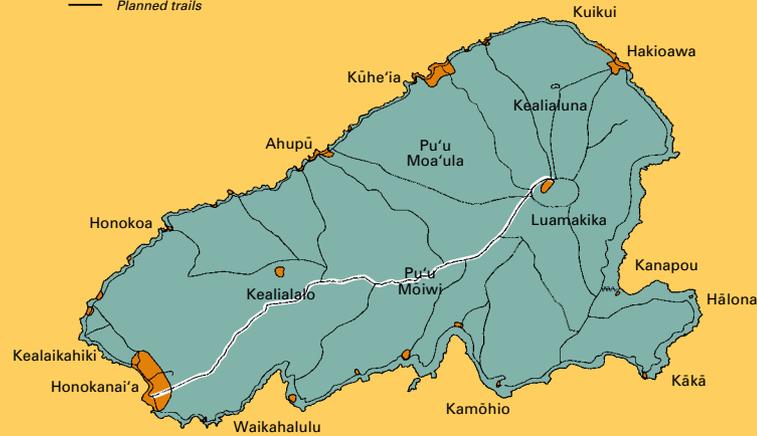
KIRC's Ocean Program activities have focused on monitoring the resources of the 90 square miles of water surrounding Kaho'olawe. Regular trips in KIRC's work boat, *Hakilo*, have facilitated fish-tagging efforts, close observation of spinner dolphins, and initial assessments of the overall health of the coral reefs. In 2001, the Ocean Program will hold public hearings on new rules that seek to balance a Native Hawaiian approach to fishery management with scientific findings on resource availability and the desires of recreational and subsistence fishermen.

In 2000, KIRC's Cultural Program provided cultural orientation to all new cleanup employees and consultation to the Navy on cultural sites. Cleanup workers appreciate learning about why the island is significant to the people of Hawai'i. The Cultural Program's staff takes responsibility for respectfully re-interring burials encountered by cleanup crews. In 2001, the Cultural Program will begin developing details for cultural and educational programs planned for the island after the cleanup.

KIRC's fourth program area, Remediation, is the program concerned with the progress of the cleanup and with planning for the public's safe use of the island. In March 2000, the Navy advised KIRC that the cleanup was falling behind schedule and asked KIRC to redefine its priorities for the cleanup. (A 1994 state-Navy cleanup agreement specified that 100 percent of the 45-square-mile island would be surface cleared and up to 30 percent of the area would be subsurface cleared.) KIRC responded to the Navy's projected work shortfall with revised priorities for the final three years of cleanup. The Remediation Program team also began working on a "risk management" program, which will allow for limited public use of the island in the context of an incomplete cleanup.

## Use Plan for Kaho'olawe Island

- Kuamo'o Road, the cross-island gravel road
- Kahua Kauhale, future cultural and education centers; Kahua Ho'omoana, future campsites
- Planned trails



## CURRENT STATUS OF THE CLEANUP

The Navy's cleanup contractor has made tremendous strides in accelerating the cleanup since the fall of 2000. Innovations to project logistics and operations have resulted in higher productivity and improved worker morale. The Navy is testing an aerial detection method for UXO that could save millions of dollars and result in more acres cleared. However, as of March 2001, less than 20 percent of Kaho'olawe's 28,800 acres had been cleared of unexploded ordnance.

The Navy projects that by the 2003 cleanup deadline, the island will not be cleared to the levels specified in the 1994 cleanup agreement between the State of Hawaii and the Navy. This situation raises the question of an unfulfilled federal obligation, and the need for some form of continuing UXO cleanup.

KIRC must determine the best possible course of action for the state to achieve meaningful, safe use of the island by the people of Hawai'i. Amendments to the State-Navy cleanup agreement may be one option. New federal legislation may be another option. (The Navy assumes ongoing responsibility for any ordnance detected after the Navy cleanup is over.) In the meantime, the state must plan for managing Kaho'olawe with fewer accessible areas than anticipated, a continuing UXO hazard, and restrictions on land uses.



### What's the difference between KIRC's revised priorities and its original priorities?

KIRC transmitted its original list of cleanup priorities to the Navy at the end of 1995. Those priorities are not very different from the revised priorities of July 2000. In 1995, when 100 percent surface clearance seemed feasible, the priorities followed a logical sequence of collecting field data, followed by surface and subsurface clearance across the island from east to west. The east side was a top priority because it receives more rain than the west side, with better chances for revegetation, and has the greater number of archaeological sites. The eastern third of the island will still be cleared, but fewer acres will be cleared below the surface.

Adhering to KIRC's list of revised priorities for the remaining three years of the cleanup project will result in the following:

- A stable cross-island road, free of UXO
- Important environmental and risk data collected from the entire island
- Surface clearance
  1. Areas of greatest future use, such as coastal trails
  2. Areas most heavily bombed
- Subsurface clearance
  1. Honokanai'a, Hakioawa, and Kūhe'ia, all former settlement and ranching areas, which have become points of public entry
  2. Luamakika (the island summit), to facilitate reforestation efforts
  3. Other limited areas for camping and cultural use

What may not be cleared, because of the projected Navy shortfall, is open land on the western two-thirds of the island and gullies and rough terrain across the whole island. KIRC will control access to these areas and will seek to have the areas eventually cleared.

### Why isn't KIRC doing more to speed up the cleanup?

The federal law that returned Kaho'olawe to the people of Hawai'i and directed the U.S. Navy to undertake the UXO cleanup gives management authority to the Navy. The state has no oversight authority on how the Navy runs the project.

## MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

Each of these special leaders was appointed to the commission by the governor, based on a process outlined in the law creating the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (Chapter 6-K of Hawaii Revised Statutes). They meet monthly and are not compensated for their time.

**Dr. Isabella Abbott** is an ethnobotanist with a specialization in *limu* (seaweed). She served on the faculty at Stanford University for many years and now holds emeritus status at the University of Hawai'i, where she continues to conduct research. Dr. Abbott was appointed from a list of nominees submitted by Native Hawaiian organizations.

**Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli** is a physician from Moloka'i. Dr. Aluli has served as the commission's chairperson since its inception in January 1994. He was one of the first protesters to occupy the island in 1976 and is a founder of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO).

**Jeffrey Chang** represents the County of Maui on the commission. He has worked for the county for many years as a planner and administrator.

**Gil Coloma-Agaran** is the new director of the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources. KIRC is administratively attached to his department. Agaran is an attorney from Maui.

**Robert Lu'uwai** fills one of three positions on the commission reserved for nominees from the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. He works for the Federal Aviation Administration and is a well-known Maui fisherman.

**Colette Y. Machado** is a trustee of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, representing the island of Moloka'i. She is a community organizer and a member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. She represents the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on the commission.

**Burt Sakata** is from the island of Maui. He is a member of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana and fills one of the positions reserved for nominees from PKO.

*KIRC commissioners (left to right):*

*Jeffrey Chang, Noa Emmett Aluli, Isabella Abbott, Colette Machado, and Burt Sakata (Commissioners Gilbert Coloma-Agaran and Robert Lu'uwai were unavailable.)*



*Stanton Enomoto*

*Kamohio Bay on Kaho'olawe's south coast*

### Vision Statement

*KIRC has adopted a vision statement for Kaho'olawe that offers detailed guidance for where we are headed with the future of the cultural reserve.*

The *kino* (physical manifestation) of Kanaloa is restored. Forests and shrublands of native plants and other biota clothe its slopes and valleys. Pristine ocean waters and healthy reef ecosystems are the foundation that supports and surrounds the island.

*Na po'e Hawai'i* (Hawai'i's people) care for the land, recognizing the island and ocean of Kanaloa as a living, spiritual entity. Kanaloa is a *pu'uhonua* and *wahi pana* (a refuge and a storied place), where Native Hawaiian cultural practices flourish.

From the *piko* (navel) of Kanaloa—the crossroads of past and future generations—the Native Hawaiian lifestyle spreads throughout the islands.



*KIRC's logo represents the curled tentacle of the he'e (octopus), one of the kino lau, or body forms, of the god Kanaloa. It also represents the curled shoot of the hāpu'u fern, symbolizing kūkulu, or the beginning of a life force. The logo was designed by former KIRC commissioner Craig Neff, owner of "The Hawaiian Force" in Hilo.*

## INTRODUCING THE KIRC TEAM

*Meet the people behind the programs. Here's a look at three members of the KIRC staff, each working in different ways to restore life to the island and waters of Kaho'olawe.*

### Carol Marie Ka'ōnohi Lee Commission Assistant

Joining the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission is a homecoming for Ka'ōnohi Lee, on several different levels. As a child growing up in Mākena, Kaho'olawe was part of her backyard, just 6 miles away. She heard bombs exploding, felt tremors, and remembers the military



*Staff photos by David Ulrich*

maneuvers at Mākena that often accompanied the bombing. At an early age, she knew that her family, the Kukahiko clan, had special knowledge of and familiarity with the ocean, and with fishing in the channel between Maui and Kaho'olawe.

Only a few years ago, Ka'ōnohi learned that her grandfather John Kauwekane was an important resource for Kaho'olawe place-names and names of 'ili (subdistricts) that are used today for the cleanup and planning.

Ka'ōnohi returned to Maui last fall to assist the commission. She had been living in Honolulu, working for the State Department of Transportation.

Ka'ōnohi was surprised to feel so at-home on her first visit to Kaho'olawe last December. The trip helped her picture how her ancestors lived and made her

*Ka'ōnohi Lee (continued on page 6)*

### Kalei Tsuha KIRC Cultural Technician

Kalei Tsuha watches people make a connection to Kaho'olawe, beginning with their first visit. She sees it with many of the people who attend her cultural orientation sessions for cleanup employees. She believes that with the few distractions on Kaho'olawe, and a quiet work envi-



ronment, people have time to think. "People learn first to deal with themselves. Then they get in tune with the people around them, and then with the things around them. They get attuned to the island."

Kalei provides continuing lessons on Kaho'olawe in a monthly column in the cleanup workers' newsletter. "Kalei's Corner" is a mixture of Kaho'olawe stories about gods, rains, plants, and adventurers. Readers tell her they are eager to see each new installment.

Kalei grew up on Maui, in a Hawaiian home, but it was not until she had her

*Kalei Tsuha (continued on page 6)*

### Samantha Whitcraft KIRC Ocean Manager

Samantha Whitcraft knew she wanted to be a marine biologist by the time she was seven or eight years old. Sam was swimming before she could walk, and was known to become grumpy when she wasn't in the water or on the beach. Watching Jacques Cousteau specials on television made her realize she could be involved with the ocean and introduce others to the water. From then on, marine biology became her "ticket."

Sam studied biology and marine conservation at Harvard University and has since performed field work in the Caribbean, the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, and Costa Rica. She became KIRC's Ocean Manager this past October.



*Top left to bottom right: Ka'ōnohi, Kalei, and Dr. Isabella Abbott with Sam*

Sam believes the KIRC Ocean Program does a good job of helping people to understand Kaho'olawe's status. Ocean people understand that activities within the boundaries of the cultural reserve are unique in the Islands.

Sam enjoys KIRC's work boat, the

*Sam Whitcraft (continued on page 6)*

*Ka'ōnohi Lee (continued from page 5)*

feel closer to them. It was also Ka'ōnohi's first chance to look back across the channel to her Makena Home.

Ka'ōnohi makes travel arrangements for the KIRC commissioners and staff; supports commission meetings, workshops, and sometimes on-island sessions; and assists Keoni Fairbanks, KIRC executive director.

Ka'ōnohi describes her job as “fulfilling,” giving her “the opportunity to help restore something that was once beautiful” so future generations can learn and practice their culture.

*Tom Kakhara, a volunteer with KIRC's restoration program, plants at Luamakika.*



Jim Ichiikawa

*Kalei Tsuha (continued from page 5)*

own children that she became interested in Hawaiian culture. The turning point came a little more than ten years ago. “I decided that if I was enrolling my daughter in Hawaiian-language immersion school,” Kalei said, “I should study the language, too, so I could at least be supportive of her.”

At the same time Kalei began learning Hawaiian, “a whole lot of other neat things” started happening. She made a trip to Kaho'olawe with the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana and became a PKO volunteer. She also met Hōkūlani Holt-Padilla and eventually joined Pa'u o Hi'iaka, Hōkūlani's *hālau*.

Kalei learned much more about Kaho'olawe in 1994, when she worked as a “sweeper” in the Kaho'olawe Model Cleanup. She carried a metal detector and walked back and forth across wide areas of the island, picking up surface debris. She enjoyed going to parts of the island she had never seen before, meeting interesting people, and learning about cleanups and helicopters. Just when she thought her work couldn't become any more interesting, it did. She came to work for KIRC.

What's the most magical moment in her KIRC work experience? Kalei said it happened when she was diving at Kamōhio Bay in a school of thousands of curious *pāpio*.

*Sam Whitcraft (continued from page 5)*

*Hakilo*. “*Hakilo*'s a great boat—she can go into shallow waters, she can handle rough water, she can hold a large crew and equipment, and she's safe.”



*Hakilo, KIRC's work boat*

In the coming year, Sam is looking forward to mapping the resources of specific bays on Kaho'olawe. The Ocean Program will look at resources that are significant both culturally and biologically. The information will help shape meaningful use of ocean resources in the reserve. Sam believes in studying resources from both their traditional, cultural use and a Western, scientific perspective. She knows this will lead to some exciting questions and eventually to greater use of the resources in sustainable ways.



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