

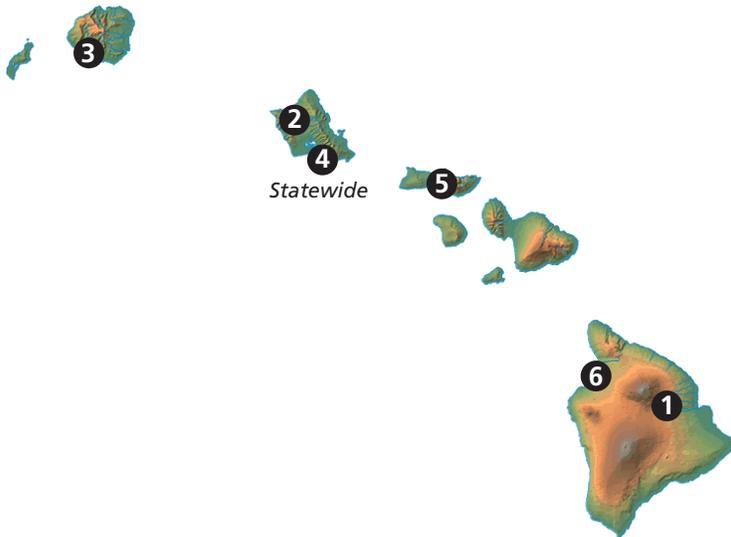


# Hawai'i News



Local residents plant native species that overlook Kalaupapa. Photo: William Garnett

## PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2009



### CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Hawai'i Island Trails and Railway  
PATH - Peoples Advocacy for Trails Hawai'i
2. Kaena Point Restoration and Recreation  
Friends of Ka'ena
3. Mānā Plain Wetland Conservation Reserve  
State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources
4. One Voice for Livable Islands  
AARP, Hawai'i Bicycle League, Sierra Club
5. Ala Pala'au  
Ke Aupuni Lokahi, Inc.
6. PIKO-Caretakers Cottage & Trail Development  
Ala Kahakai Trail Association

## Recent Successes

### A' ohe hana nui ke alu 'ia - It's not a big job if we all work together

There has been a vision on the island of Moloka'i to provide improved trails and opportunities for the Moloka'i community on the state park that overlooks Kalaupapa National Historic Park (NHP). Ke 'Aupuni Lōkāhi, Inc. (KAL), the National Park Service (NPS), and local community groups have come together to support a planning effort to turn this vision into reality. The project, Ala Pala'au, has received a grant from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority that will allow them to engage the community, conduct research and prepare the necessary planning documents to implement the project. KAL, a non-profit entity made up of elected community volunteers, is tasked to work with Moloka'i residents to empower themselves to implement their community strategic plan and, thereby, control their own destiny.

The vision of this project is to develop a plan to restore and maintain native habitat and provide additional facilities for residents and visitors to learn about the natural resources, methods to sustain the resources, provide a place for people to learn about the native forests, view historic cultural features, and learn about the practices held by Hawaiians. It also serves a place for people to learn the Kalaupapa colony, its people, as well as Father Damien, who will be canonized into sainthood. As there is limited access to Kalaupapa NHP, it will also provide a place for people to learn and observe the legacy of Kalaupapa while not impacting the patients and their lives. In addition, it provides a unique

# Current Projects



Restoration efforts at Ka'ena Point State Park. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

## 1. Hawai'i Island Trails and Railway

Location: Island of Hawai'i

Project Partner: PATH-Peoples Advocacy for Trails Hawai'i

PATH is working to establish 43.5 miles of historic trails and railway corridors on Hawai'i Island for non-motorized recreation, transportation and natural resource conservation. PATH seeks to work with local partners to identify the opportunities, constraints, and next steps needed to preserve and protect the trails. RTCA will provide the technical assistance needed to develop reports and training to allow PATH to create official, on the ground trails. The project will also work with the Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition to enhance opportunities for healthy recreation.

## 2. Ka'ena Point Community Restoration & Recreation Partnership

Location: Island of O'ahu

Project Partners: Friends of Ka'ena

Ka'ena Point is one of the last undeveloped areas of Oahu and provides an example of an ecosystem that supports nesting seabirds, migratory shorebirds, the Hawaiian Monk Seal, and many native plants. Ka'ena Point includes a Natural Area Reserve (NAR) with Ka'ena Point State Park on either side. Friends of Ka'ena is working with RTCA to address threats to the area, improve trails and the native habitat, work to bridge the gap between government and concerned users, and improve the area for recreation, education, and improved habitat for both marine and terrestrial species. Ka'ena Point is one of the last undeveloped areas of O'ahu and is utilized by many different user groups including cultural practitioners, scientists, fishers, hikers, divers, mountain bikers, and education groups.

## 3. Mānā Plain Wetland Conservation Reserve

Location: Island of Kaua'i

Project Partner: State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources

The state, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and community partners are working together to ensure long-term protection of the Mānā Plain Wetland Conservation Reserve. They plan to restore 141 acres of coastal wetland habitat to support the recovery of endangered endemic Hawaiian waterbirds, and to provide opportunities for public stewardship, education, and recreation at the reserve. RTCA is working with the planning team to engage the local community in the planning, restoration, and stewardship of their reserve. This will include working with schools to plan and support the outdoor recreation and environmental education components of the reserve. RTCA will also aid with funding proposals for these components, and help facilitate a planning process for incorporation of trails and interpretive elements into the larger wetland restoration plan.

## 4. One Voice for Livable Islands

Location: Island of O'ahu & Statewide

Project Partners: AARP, Hawai'i Bicycle League, Sierra Club.

Partners in the One Voice for Livable Islands Hui, or alliance, are devoted to making the Hawaiian Islands bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The alliance is committed to promoting healthy, livable communities and are seeking firm commitments from county and state governments to include safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities in transportation improvement projects. One Voice is working to secure bike paths such as

*"We are very grateful for the technical support and continuing guidance that RTCA is providing to build a strong organizational foundation for 'One Voice for Livable Islands.'"*

- Sue Sakai, Injury Prevention Advisory Committee & American Planning Association, HI Chapter

the 14-mile Leeward Bikeway on O‘ahu and is working to achieve healthy neighborhood design through advocacy, communication, and mobilization. RTCA is helping this highly successful but rapidly-formed coalition with organizational development, growth, and strategic planning. RTCA also provides meeting facilitation, and aids in preparing and implementing the group’s annual action plan.

## Additional Community Support

### 5. Ala Pala‘au

Location: Island of Moloka‘i  
Partner: Ke Aupuni Lokahi, Inc.

RTCA is working closely with a local non-profit community organization and Kalaupapa National Historic Park on the Ala Pala‘au project. The project was recently awarded a grant to develop a comprehensive plan to restore native forest habitat and rare species, provide interpretation of these resources, and restore historic trails to improve access and views of Kalaupapa. It will include a natural resource management and restoration training program for youth and residents that will build local capacity to enable them to implement and sustain the project while increasing stewardship of the natural, cultural, and historic resources.

### 6. PIKO-Caretakers Cottage and Trail Development

Location: Island of Hawai‘i  
Partner: Ala Kahakai Trail Association

PIKO has been established to provide Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail and the Association a focus and central location for community groups to form partnerships for the preservation of social, cultural, educational, recreational, and environmental resources. RTCA will work to help the Ala Kahakai Trail Association organize and develop a plan for creating a trailhead, meeting space, and cottage renovations for Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail which will also serve Pu‘u Kohola Heiau National Historic Site.



Mānā Plain Wetland Conservation project partners on a fieldtrip to learn about invasive fish, removal options, and research on native plants underway by a University of Hawai‘i doctoral student.  
Photo: Joana Flor Tavares



One Voice for Livable Islands advocates for safe bicycle and pedestrian paths that safely link people to parks, businesses, and places of residence. Photo: Helen Felsing.

## We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.

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### THE RTCA PROGRAM

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

Find more information online at  
[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



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## Recent Successes cont.



MEPO students experience native forest restoration and the importance of the rare plants of Moloka'i. Photo: William Garnett

opportunity to engage youth and allow them to participate in the process from planning to long term maintenance.

The Moloka'i community began their efforts to restore native species near the Kalaupapa trail head before the grant was awarded. Volunteers meet the last weekend of every month to do what they can to promote native species around Moloka'i. On Arbor day, over 25 community members and over a dozen members of Moloka'i Environmental Preservation Organization (MEPO), a student group at Moloka'i High School, gathered to plant a variety of native species at the Kalaupapa trail head. The Ala Pala'au project hopes to expand these efforts through the development of trails and native forest restoration.

For the MEPO students involved in the project, it was a great way to get outside and do their part for the environment. It was also an opportunity for them to experience places of historic, cultural, and environmental value they might not otherwise get to see. "We get to see places like Kalaupapa and Ko'olawe!" explains one excited MEPO student. For these kids, getting their hands dirty and their shoes caked with mule mud is more than just another day's work. The Ala Pala'au project will expand these efforts and provide new opportunities for youth to learn natural resource management, restoration of native forests and the endemic plant species, Hawaiian practices, culture, ancient sites, and learn about the people and history of Kalaupapa.

The planning process for Ala'Pala au will address the needs of the community by incorporating past recommendations on improvements to the Pala'au State Park for use by residents. It will address the community needs of improving natural resources, addressing an increase in visitors as a result of Father Damien's Saint-hood, and provide training and new employment opportunities. The project will develop training to increase the skills of the residents and when implemented, the project will provide employment for restoration and management of the site. In addition, it will utilize local nurseries for plant restoration, providing economic support to the community. The site has also been recognized as an area ideal for walking and exercising and will benefit the health of the community.