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Mellon-Hawaii Fellowship for Native Hawaiian Scholars

"We are delighted to support the growing presence of indigenous Americans in the academy. Their perspectives, grounded in native cultural and scientific knowledge, will bring great richness and diversity to the arts and sciences. Native Hawaiian scholars have an important role to play in the development of new knowledge." - Dr. Lydia English, Program Officer for Higher Education, and Director, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The Kohala Center is pleased to announce the establishment of a new fellowship program for Native Hawaiian scholars. Made possible by a \$500,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the program will provide doctoral and postdoctoral fellowship opportunities for Native Hawaiian scholars who are early in their academic careers and others, who are committed to the advancement of scholarship on Hawaiian cultural and natural environments, Hawaiian history, politics, and society. Up to two postdoctoral fellowship awards in the amount of \$50,000 each, and up to three doctoral fellowship awards in the amount of \$40,000 each will be awarded to successful candidates for the coming academic year, spanning July 2008 through June 2009.

Native Hawaiian scholars in any residential or external degree program of a fully accredited U.S.-based institution, or institutions abroad, such as the native university system in Aotearoa (New Zealand), are eligible. Through the Mellon-Hawai'i Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship program, doctoral fellows will be given the opportunity to complete their dissertations before accepting their first academic posts. Postdoctoral fellows will be given the opportunity to publish original research early in their academic careers. Applications must be postmarked by Friday, March 28, 2008, and award notifications will be made on Friday, April 25, 2008. For more information, contact The Kohala Center at info@kohalacenter.org or at 808-887-6411.

Old Friends & New Faces

Photo: 2008 Cornell EES cohort in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. **(From left to right)** Katie Burns (Teaching Assistant and 2005 EES alumna), Jenn Bailard, Matt Connelly, Anna DeGolier, Andrew Soare, Kelly Thomas, Ty Huth, Alex Moore (EES Program Director), Kei Irie, Nakira Hernandez, Erika Freimuth, Hannah Kubica, Kourtney Reynolds, and Haru Tanaka.

"Feeling the aridity and thinness of the air, the changing terrain beneath my feet, the clouds rolling in to fill the crater; seeing endemic plants in their natural habitat; and watching the sunset at the east edge of the crater while endangered Nene geese roamed around our campsite -- these are lessons and memories that are impossible to recreate in lectures and textbooks. In the cabin at night, hearing native legends about Maui, the Hawaiian 'Supah Man,' to bring our surroundings closer and give everything a natural air of spirituality and historical power... I can't express how important this type of experience is, and how unique." - Tess Brandon, 2004 EES alumna and Cornell class of 2007



After a year's hiatus, the [Cornell University Earth & Environmental Systems \(EES\) program](#) is back on Hawaii Island. EES Program faculty are pleased to welcome twelve students, ten from Cornell University in New York, one from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, and one from Middlebury College in Vermont, to their new "campus" – which spans the diverse ecosystems of Hawaii Island. The students will spend five months here, studying the Island's land, water, climate, ecology, history, and culture - and the complex interplay among these various Earth systems.

All twelve students in the 2008 cohort are science majors or double majors, and all are undergraduates in college. For most of them, this is their first trip to the Hawaiian Islands. This year's EES program will emphasize the concepts and practices of sustainable living, and the coursework and student internships will seek to support local agriculture and businesses. For more information on the 2008 EES program or student internships, contact Dr. Alexandra Moore at am113@cornell.edu.

Up & Growing



Photo: Nancy Redfeather in her summer garden at Kawanui Farm.

"What better way to change the future than to begin with the children. Build the garden, create nutrient cycles, experiment with varieties, harvest, enjoy eating the fruits of one's labor, and share what is learned and what is grown with the community. School gardens are an incredible antidote to classroom stress, test taking, and less time for and emphasis on arts, music, and physical education. Additionally, the harvest adds depth to the school lunch menu. Children's gardens are one of the seeds of a sustainable future that is within our grasp. We must pull together as a community to support our passionate and talented Garden Teachers and to create school gardens from Kohala to Ka'u." – Nancy Redfeather, Project Coordinator, Hawaii Island School Gardens Network

School gardens are helping to revitalize the local food economy on Hawaii Island. By involving students, their family networks, and their communities in food production, school gardens are helping to create pathways of influence and behavior change which reach into homes around the Island. The gardens promote the message that our Island can and should increase its consumption of locally produced food.

Photo: 6th grader Darnee Brighter digs in, using a "shaka" to measure the distance between the tiny lettuce seedlings that she is transplanting into a garden bed as part of her job during class at Mala`ai Garden at Waimea Middle School. Photo by Craig Elevitch.



The Kohala Center is coordinating the Hawaii Island School Gardens Network and helping to identify and expand exemplary garden projects in communities around the Island. There are currently 30 projects, at varying stages of development, participating in the Gardens Network, with new gardens joining every week or so. The goal of the Network is to support fledgling school garden programs, and to bring garden staff and teachers together to share curricula, funding opportunities, and educational resources. The hope is that school gardens will become a focal point for community workshops, where garden staff and students share their knowledge about how to grow better gardens and orchards.

"We are returning to something we know is the right thing to do," says Nancy Redfeather. "We are learning again how to grow and process and cook real food, and in so doing, we are learning once again to connect with the land and with each other," she says. Nancy recalls seeing old photographs of the Holualoa School Garden, which successfully fed that school community for years.

[Take a virtual tour](#) of four school gardens around the Island.

Spring Break Camp Is Coming...



Photo: Waimea Nature Camp explores the rivers of Waipi`o Valley. Photo by Melora Purell.

Waimea Nature Camp returns on March 24-28, this time with a new twist: spring break camp is for middle school age kids only! Students in grades 7-9 are encouraged to apply. Camp runs from 9 am to 4 pm daily, from its home base at Ulu La`au, the Waimea Nature Park, located in central Waimea. Campers will also travel into the field, to explore upland forests, lowland valleys, and coastlines. Middle schoolers with a love of the outdoors will have the chance to do some real science, including chemical testing to determine nutrient levels in stream water, calculating flow rates, and learning the names of key native forest species of Kohala.

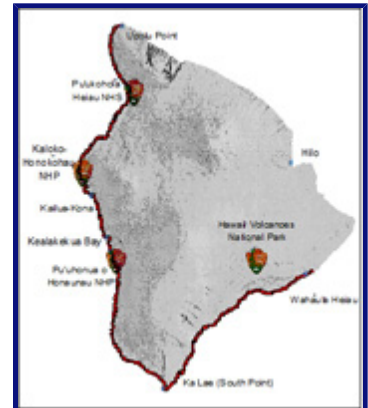
"Winter Camp was a blast," says Camp Director Melora Purell. Melora is currently Coordinator for the Kohala Watershed Partnership (see the *"Public Comments Invited: Kohala Watershed Plan"* story below) and a former science teacher who loves playing with kids. She shares these highlights from the January Nature Camp: "We experimented with dissolved organic matter by making forest 'tea,' measured the temperature of stream water from source to mouth, flooded model villages to see the effects of deforestation, and tried to create natural filters that would clean the water as well as the forest does. (We didn't even get close!) We also challenged ourselves to net little fish and walk through cold mountain streams."

The fee for the five-day session is \$50. [Learn more and download registration information.](#)

Crafting a Trail

Image: The 175-mile corridor of the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail. Image courtesy of the National Park Service.

The Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail (NHT) is the most ancient of any designated historic trail in the U.S. The trail spans 175 miles of continuous coastline on the Island of Hawaii, from Upolu Point in North Kohala along the entire west coast to Waha'ula Heiau, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, in the Puna District. The Ala Kahakai passes through four national parks as well as several State & County parks. Nearly half of the trail traverses private lands.



The Draft Ala Kahakai NHT Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement describe the proposed management alternatives for the 175-mile trail corridor. The management alternatives respond to many of the ideas and concerns shared by members of the community in two rounds of public meetings, surveys, and discussions over the past several years. The most common desire expressed by the community was for preservation of the trails, the places, and the resources that were built and cared for by the ancestors of today's native Hawaiian families - many of whom still continue to practice their culture and lifestyle. Also expressed was the need to preserve in perpetuity native Hawaiian beliefs, history, values, and stories associated with the special places and the natural resources located within the trail's corridor. Learn more about the [preferred management alternative](#) for the Ala Kahakai NHT from Superintendent Aric Arakaki.

Public Comments Invited: Kohala Watershed Plan



Photo: The effects of conservation fencing and feral animal control in the native cloud forest of Kohala. The 10-acre fenced preserve at Kilohana Stream, on the right in the photo, has been pig-free for three years. Recovery of native vegetation is most obvious in the re-growth of ferns, mosses and young trees, while pig activity on the left of the fence has eliminated almost all understory vegetation. Photo by Melora Purell.

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Kohala Watershed Partnership (KWP) Management Plan has been published and is open for public review and comment. The primary goal of this 20-year management plan is to protect the health of the watershed of Kohala Mountain, through various actions occurring across 65,000 acres of public and private land.

The plan designates 6,600 acres of public and private forested land on the summit and windward slopes of Kohala Mountain as "high-yield watershed units" in order to protect zones of high rainfall. These remote areas provide the greatest inputs into local streams and groundwater. Additionally, the plan calls for the protection of unique biological communities (forests and bogs) within "biodiversity units" totaling 3,600 acres. The management of these conservation areas involves fencing, and within the fences, the removal of feral animals as well as ongoing weed and pest control. The plan also involves maintenance of existing trails, public outreach and education, improved access to *mauka* (upland) sites, outplanting and restoration of native forest, monitoring, fire management, and surveys.

The Draft EA and Draft Management Plan are both available at www.dofaw.net under the Announcements section. Comments on the project should be sent to Melora K. Purell at Melora@Purells.net by February 22, 2008. Purell is Coordinator of the Kohala Watershed Partnership. A copy of the comments should also be sent to the *Office of Environmental Quality Control, 235 South Beretania Street, Suite 702, Honolulu, HI 96813* and to the *Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Attn: Christine Ogura, 1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 325, Honolulu, HI 96813*.

Your input will help to ensure that all biological, cultural, and socio-economic issues regarding the project are identified and addressed. Mahalo!

Movers & Shakers

Photo: Roberta Fujimoto Chu, new President of The Kohala Center's Board of Directors.

"I am here to ensure that The Kohala Center fulfills its potential to build research and teaching programs of the very highest quality that truly serve Island communities and enhance Island environments." – Roberta Chu

Roberta Fujimoto Chu, Senior Vice President of the Bank of Hawaii, was recently elected president of The Kohala Center's Board of Directors. A graduate of Hilo High School and Mount Holyoke College, Chu is the 2007 recipient of the Athena Award in recognition of her accomplishments as an international business woman. "Widely recognized as a business leader who is committed to excellence, Roberta brings a new level of financial rigor and organizational innovation to our work," remarks Matt Hamabata, The Kohala Center's Executive Director.



Among the other movers and shakers on The Kohala Center's board are three new members:

- **Richard Ha**, a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a leading figure in sustainable agriculture. Ha's recent recognitions include 2006 Hawaii Farmer of the Year and the Rainforest Alliance's ECO O.K. Award;
- John Powers, a graduate of Harvard College and Stanford University Law School, and an expert in estate planning and trust and non-profit law; and

- James Takamine, a graduate of the Kamehameha Schools, Macalester College, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, and the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. Takamine is Market Manager for American Savings Bank on the Island of Hawaii. In 2007 Takamine was chosen by *Pacific Business News* as one of "Forty under Forty" in the State, for achievement in his business career as well as for his commitment to community service.

After seven years of outstanding service, Dr. Christian L. Gulbrandsen, Professor Emeritus and former Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, and Carl A. Carlson, former Trustee of the Parker Ranch and former Regent of the University of Hawaii, are resigning from the Board of Directors. "I have greatly appreciated these two individuals' steadfast guidance and inspiration as we started this ambitious project called The Kohala Center," says Hamabata. "Chris's and Carl's leadership and generosity have been invaluable to our efforts and to our early successes."

Continuing on the Board of Directors are Marni Herkes, a private consultant working for the Kona Executives Association and the West Hawai'i Fisheries Council as well as other community efforts, notably as a member of the Steering Committee of the Kona Community Development Plan; Robert Lindsey, Jr., Trustee of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Monty Richards of Kahua Ranch; and Ian Robertson of the Robertson Company.

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The Garden Is the Greatest Teacher



Photo: Michael Mitts in the greenhouse at Paauilo School Garden. Photo by Donna Mitts.

"Gardens teach patience and perseverance, two qualities which are certainly needed for the future, and they illustrate nature's creative force." - Nancy Redfeather, Project Coordinator, Hawaii Island School Gardens Network

In the past, Hawaii had many school gardens. Now they are popping up everywhere once again, in towns and villages around the Island. The County Council recently passed a resolution providing conceptual and financial support for the Hawaii Island School Garden Network. Resolution 506-08, sponsored by Council member Angel Pilago, earmarks \$5,000 of his district's discretionary funds to support "the successful development of on-site gardens, curriculum, resources, and further education for the teachers of school-community based gardens at a minimum of 20 (grades K through 12) schools on Hawaii Island." Council member Dominic Yagong has also pledged financial support to the Garden Network. The outpouring of community support for these programs has been overwhelming.

We asked the staff at four school gardens (Pa'auilo School Garden, Mala`ai Garden at Waimea Middle School, Kaiao Garden at the Hilo Boys and Girls Club in Hilo, and Wonder Gardens at Innovations Public Charter School in Kona) to share why these programs are generating so much positive energy and hope for the future. Read their thoughts below.

Nine Years & Growing: Paauilo School Garden

By Donna Mitts, Agriculture Program Coordinator

Photo: Zach Tadio tilling a bed at Paauilo School Garden. Photo by Donna Mitts.

"Donna Mitt's comprehensive school garden program has been a blessing for the students and their families at Paauilo Elementary School for the past nine years and an inspiration for all of our school garden teachers." - Steve Coffee, Field Science Specialist for The Kohala Center

The Paauilo School agriculture program began in September 1999 when parent volunteers Jeanne Keller and Donna Mitts led the second grade class through the basic steps of preparing soil, planting seeds, and harvesting produce. They continued with that same class as third graders and beyond.



In January 2004 the agriculture program took a giant step forward when two greenhouses were

completed with help from the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant (a federal DOE program to fund afterschool learning opportunities). One greenhouse is used for landscape plants, and the other for organic tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers, as well as a place to start trays of vegetables. Raised organic vegetable and flower beds were added to the area surrounding the greenhouses, and the whole garden was eventually fenced to keep turkeys and pigs out.



Photo: Piper Selden of Hawaii Rainbow Worms leading a compost/vermicompost workshop at the Paauilo School garden .

Every week students in grades K-9 get to harvest vegetables and herbs to sell to teachers and staff. Through this program students are learning leadership skills, building character, and getting practical hands-on experience in farming, harvesting, and marketing produce and livestock. The money the students raise from produce sales is put right back into the program to pay for seeds, soil amendments, and tools.

In 2004 a fenced poultry pen was built to house a flock of laying hens. Each spring, a local 4-H club led by Jeri Moniz helps interested Paauilo School students to raise sheep and hogs.

The Paauilo School garden is the site for regular composting and vermi-composting workshops. Led by Piper Selden of Hawaii Rainbow Worms, these workshops are open to the public and well attended. The Paauilo School garden is also recognized by the USDA as a fruit fly bait test site.

Mala`ai: The Culinary Garden of Waimea Middle School

By Amanda Rieux, Malaai Garden Program Coordinator

Photo: Having just finished adding compost and cultivating a garden bed for planting, these sixth graders are learning how to handle and transplant red and green lettuce seedlings. Photo by Craig Elevitch.



Dr. Michelle Suber conceived of Mala`ai: The Culinary Garden of Waimea Middle School in response to food-related health issues that she repeatedly encountered in her practice as a Naturopathic Physician in Waimea. Modeled after the Edible Schoolyard at Martin Luther King Middle School in Berkeley California, Mala`ai (which translates as food garden) functions as an independent organization which works in partnership with Waimea Public Conversion Charter School. In February 2005 Amanda Rieux moved to Waimea from the Edible School Yard in Berkeley and held the first garden class in a windswept pasture behind the school.

Under Amanda's direction as garden teacher, and with the assistance of teachers and community volunteers, Mala`ai provides classes for more than 200 students each academic quarter. The students have carved their own organic garden from the pastureland behind the school. Today, after three years, the garden is flourishing with plantings of taro, sweet potato, banana, herbs for tea as well as for cooking, lettuces, cooking greens, beans, and edible flowers. Windbreaks have been planted and built out of materials at hand. The harvest is used in class to make salads, salad dressing, and lemongrass mint tea for the students. Often the garden's bounty is also shared at school and community events.

For many students, work in the garden provides a sense of accomplishment and discovery that they do not experience in the classroom. In the garden the students' relationship with food is deepened by growing, harvesting, preparing, and sharing healthy food. The students have created and are responsible for sustaining their own organic garden, located in their school yard. The aim is to teach students how to organically grow and harvest food, as well as the qualities of spirit with which this food should be shared.

A Hawaiian cultural component has become an integral and important part of learning and teaching at

Mala`ai. In order to nurture a sense place and a sense of identity in our students, we provide personalized, relevant, hands-on, place-based cultural learning opportunities. Mala`ai has formed an official partnership with *Ike Hawaii*, a school-wide initiative at Waimea Middle School to integrate Hawaiian cultural practices into all aspects of learning. In the garden students learn about and practice cultural traditions, while listening to the legend of *Kalo*, singing *Hiki Mai* (the sun chant), or making cord from banana fiber. Students also discuss and reflect on their personal experience of Hawaiian cultural values, as expressed in our weekly "wisdom words from a Hawaiian perspective," such as *kokua*, *lokahi*, *malama*, *kuleana*, and *mahalo*.



Photo: In the outdoor classroom at Mala`ai, Shelby Santos's 6th grade science class eagerly volunteers for the day's garden jobs during opening circle. Photo by Craig Elevitch.

We track students' learning and attitudes with intake and exit surveys: the data we collect and collate helps us focus the lessons in the garden. Mala`ai Garden filed for nonprofit status in December of 2007 and is funded by grants from private foundations and individuals, as well as by some discretionary funds from Waimea Middle School.

The mission of Mala`ai Garden is to deepen Waimea Middle School students' relationship with food, their culture, and their environment by creating and sustaining an organic garden and kitchen classroom that engages them in all aspects of growing, harvesting, preparing, and sharing nourishing, healthy food. Ultimately, we intend for all food served at the school be wholesome, delicious, and just.

Kaiao Gardens - Hilo Boys and Girls Club

By Manulani Aluli Meyer (Head Cheerleader) and Bodhitara Diane Searles (Head Gardener)

Photo: Inside the Kaiao Green House. Photo by Bodhi Searles.

Ua kaiao kakou.

It is dawn for us; we are enlightened.

Wehe - The Beginning

Kaiao as an image depicts a rising sun with the Hilo moon. It is a light that is cast during dawn on lands and water as the Hilo moon rises directly with it (as new moons do). Kaiao is a quality of illumination guiding us to a sun and moon directed way of being that integrates with the needs of soil and the production of food. The balance of sun/moon; male/female; night/day; old/new; individual/collective is our practice at Kaiao Gardens and the name infers this devotion.



Kaiao Gardens at the Boys and Girls Club in downtown Hilo is a collaborative project with the aunts and uncles of the surrounding community. The Garden began with a proposal in 2005 and, after initial funding from the People's Fund (Oahu) and help from the UHH Agriculture Department, we began the garden in February 2007.

`Ike A`o, a non-profit grass-roots organization, accepts donations on behalf of Kaiao Gardens and assists with the purchasing of equipment, etc. The garden is staffed with volunteers, students from education classes at UH Hilo, and now one year later, with one Boys and Girls Club staff member who began as a youth volunteer, Eric Knutson.

MA`O Farms has been instrumental in supporting and inspiring our efforts. Five members came with director Kukui Maunakea-Forth in 2006 to talk with students to inspire them to get involved. Twenty-five teens gathered to participate in a half-day event facilitated by the MA`O Farms staff. Master farmer/educator Vince Dodge then came at the initial land clearing to help guide our efforts. On that day 60+ community members pitched in to pull back a six-foot tall weed mat that was covering the

soon-to-be garden site.



Photo: Keiki o Uncle Jerry Konanui. Photo by Bodhi Searles.

Uncle Jerry Konanui prepared our foundation by bringing huli kalo to plant along with uala. It was our second large-scale gathering with over 50 people participating in this planting extravaganza. Kalo was at the heart of Kaiao Gardens during the first year of implementation. Volunteers and youth felt inspired by the expansion of the garden from this central point. We now have our own mala kalo that was cleared specifically for this purpose. It has been adopted by Auntie Mina and Uncle Dave who have been helpful in teaching us more about the planting and care of haloa-naka-lau-kapalili.

Ho`oulu - Growing

As we are now a year into the project we have been supported in our efforts through personal and university donations that have supplied a greenhouse, tools, soil amendments and, really, all we needed to get the garden going.

Kaiao Gardens - Hilo Boys and Girls Club

Ulu a`e ke welina a ke aloha.

Aloha is the essence within the soul.

We meet with keiki three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3:30-5:30 pm, weather permitting, and then with the community on Saturdays from 9:00-11:00 am. Usually there are 8-25 students working with 1-5 adults. There are rituals that have formed to open and close participation in the garden, along with rules of safety and how to nurture an attitude of affection for all living things.

The beauty of this organic garden program is that we are **not** restricted by grant parameters or the necessity to complete any educational standards. Students come running and skipping to enjoy their exploration in soil. We are dedicated to having fun in an open, joyful experience after school with the kids. It is our goal to give keiki a great experience with the aina and to also give them a fresh supply of interesting foods to take home to eat with their families. Students are always thrilled to cut eggplants, lemon grass, and greens to bring home. They keep returning to learn more about other growing things, and, slowly, we see a growth in their stewardship interests.

`Ike Aina - Lessons from the Land

This garden project has many possibilities for how it can expand, including the option of adding an animal component (chickens, goats, bees). We are being moved step-by-step by the interest and hands-on/minds-on learning that we are all engaged in.

Wonder Gardens at Innovations Public Charter School

By Krista Donaldson, IPCS Garden Leader

Photo: Innovations School third and fourth graders enjoying their first pok choy harvest.



Innovations Public Charter School (IPCS) is thriving, and so are our Wonder Gardens. Germinated last year, Wonder Gardens now provide all 147 IPCS students, grades 1-7, the experience of growing food. On average, students spend one hour per week in garden class. Our mission is to provide an outdoor classroom where students gain hands-on experience researching, growing, harvesting, sharing, using, and eating wholesome, nutritious, sustainably-grown plants. We believe the process of growing gardens empowers students and changes lives.

Healthy choices are already out-growing our gardens. Among other new developments, first and second graders are munching raw collard greens - without flinching. Third and fourth graders are exploring the uses and propagation of bamboo. As the "garden government" (re-enforcing their systems of government studies), fifth and sixth graders are recycling the school's uncolored paper and lunch scraps for composting. Seventh graders are studying plant and insect mutations and learning about GMO's (genetically modified organisms).

Our "garden classroom" consists of a shade structure with lauhala mats for seating, located on a lawn between some of our gardens. At the start of each garden lesson, we center ourselves with a "garden reflection." The garden reflection is a theme picked by our student government group and referred to in various classroom settings throughout the school. For example, December's reflection was "This season, think about what you can give to others," so we talked about what our gardens give to students and what students can give to our garden. Because our student government themes change monthly, our garden reflections might focus on terms like "bio-degradable" or the Hawaiian concept of "pono."

After we introduce our reflection, we divide up the garden jobs. Because our school is often blessed by the hot Kona sun, I provide at least one "shade job," and a few "sun jobs." For our younger grades, shade jobs are attended by lead teachers. For our older grades, children are introduced to their jobs, and then I circulate from group to group as students work. Science, social studies, and nutrition are integrated through garden reflections, shade jobs, and guest speakers.

As class comes to an end, we regroup in the shade, discuss our garden reflection in more depth, eat salad, soup, or tea made from garden foods the kids foraged, or eat local fruit I bring in from farmer's markets. Our gardens are thriving and our students are discovering new connections between humans, food, nature, and culture.

It's amazing what lessons grow in a garden! Please come join us. To learn more about Wonder Gardens, call Krista at 808-557-9085.

Ala Kahakai: The Preferred Management Alternative

By Aric Arakaki, Superintendent of the Ala Kahakai NHT



Photo: Kealakehe High School students clearing weeds on the Mamalahoa Trail, built by the Kingdom of Hawaii in the mid-1800s. The dominant weed is fountain grass.

The population explosion along Hawaii's western shoreline continues, bringing many newcomers who are unfamiliar with Hawaii's customs, traditions, history, and special places. Much of Hawaii Island's shoreline is unmanaged, leaving many places, plants, and marine species vulnerable to harm. Greater demand for public access to the shoreline has the potential to negatively impact the Island's cultural and natural resources.

The preferred management alternative articulated in the Draft Management Plan for the Ala Kahakai NHT proposes that management, planning, and implementation of the trail be community-based and centered on supporting families who accept their land and community stewardship *kuleana* (responsibilities) as passed on by their *kupuna* (elders). The preferred management alternative includes the preservation of *mauka-makai* (mountain-to-ocean) trails that intersect with shoreline routes and shifts the focus to the *ahupua`a*, the mountain-to-sea land division, as the cultural landscape that served as the basis for a flourishing Hawaiian culture.

I am confident that this preferred alternative provides the best choice for the long term management success of the trail. This success is dependent on the community taking 'ownership' and on the continuing participation of government agencies, private organizations, landowners, and other partners.

The draft plan will be further revised to address concerns and questions raised during the public comment period. A final draft will be published by mid year, and the public will have another opportunity to comment on this draft. The management plan will then be adopted, hopefully by this summer. For more information on the trail, visit the [trail website](#) or contact Superintendent Arakaki at 808-326-6012 or aric_arakaki@nps.gov.

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