



For Immediate Release

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Community invited to celebrate Earth Day at Kahalu‘u Beach Park *Park tour, beach and bay cleanup, and sunscreen swap will offer participants deeper engagement with place and aloha ‘āina*

KAHALU‘U, HAWAI‘I ISLAND, Hawai‘i—April 4, 2019—For Earth Day 2019, The Kohala Center is providing community members with an opportunity not only to honor and give back to the Earth, but to deepen their relationship with one of West Hawai‘i’s most beloved environmental and cultural treasures as well.

In partnership with the Kona Kai Ea Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, and with support from Hawai‘i Tourism through its Aloha ‘Āina Program, The Center will hold a “Hoa‘āina Stewardship Day” at Kahalu‘u Bay and Beach Park on Saturday, April 20 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. The morning will begin and end at The Center’s Kahalu‘u Bay Education Center, located in Kahalu‘u Beach Park at 78-6710 Ali‘i Drive in Kailua-Kona.

The family-friendly event will include an opening circle, a guided cultural and stewardship tour of the park, a beach and park cleanup, tips on how beachgoers can support the health of coral and marine ecosystems, a reef-friendly sun protection education tent with sunscreen samples, and closing reflections on the day’s accomplishments and learning experiences.

The offering of Hoa‘āina Stewardship Days marks a shift in how The Center is approaching typical community volunteer days. Rather than focus on tasks that can be accomplished with volunteer help, Hoa‘āina Stewardship Days honor a more traditional, reciprocal relationship between people and place. “The work isn’t viewed merely as labor, but also as a means to provide learning opportunities and to help participants develop kinship with the places and natural resources that sustain us all,” said Cheryl Ka‘uhane Lupenui, president and CEO of The Kohala Center. “The idea of ‘hoa‘āina’ is to cultivate loving caretakers who wish to know the land, deepen their stewardship knowledge, and become advocates and leaders who can inform and inspire others.”

Cleanup participants will comb the bay, beach, and park to collect litter and microplastics in an effort to keep Kahalu‘u a welcoming place and to protect the bay’s delicate and vibrant marine ecosystem. Gloves, buckets, bags, tools for picking up litter, and light refreshments will be

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provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring reef-friendly sun protection such as protective clothing and mineral-based sunscreens, reusable beverage containers, and swimming and snorkel gear to enjoy the bay after the event.

Participants are also encouraged to bring any chemical-based sunscreens they may have containing oxybenzone, octinoxate, and other “hard-to-pronounce” active ingredients. In partnership with the County of Hawai‘i, The Center offers environmentally safe disposal of sunscreens containing ingredients proven or suspected to inhibit coral health and regeneration. Free samples of reef-friendly, mineral-based sunscreens will be available for participants to try and take home. More information about reef-friendly sun protection and chemical-based sunscreen disposal is available at koha.la/reef-friendly.

About The Kohala Center

Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center (kohalacenter.org) is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and ancestral knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.

-30-