Koʻolau Mountains Watershed Partnership

Newsletter
Fall/Winter 2017

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We’re working together with some great organizations in our Koʻolau communities

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Part of our staff traveled to Papahānaumokuākea to do what we do best – take out invasive weeds

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Community Partnerships

For the past three years, we’ve been fortunate to create relationships with other organizations working in our Koʻolau communities. We’ve also been able to take on year-round and summer interns from Kupu’s Extended Internship Program/Conservation Leader Development Program. During the summer, we’ve taken on interns from Kamehameha Schools Kapili ʻOihana Internship Program (KOIP) and Teams from Kupu’s Hawaiʻi Youth Conservation Corps (HYCC). Here’s a look at the relationships we’ve built in the community and the future conservation leaders we’ve helped develop.

Mālama Maunalua is a community-based, non-profit stewardship organization committed to conserving and restoring a healthy and productive Maunalua Bay. This year we’ve joined their Educational Hukis where school groups of all ages come to help pull invasive algae in various plots off Paikō Beach. When the group is on land, we teach about the importance of native forests in our island watershed and bring a Mauka component to connect to their Makai experience. To join a Huki, check out their website: malamamaunalua.org

Papa Hōʻike Kuleana is an accountability program that provides meaningful opportunities for youth to do community service that promotes forgiveness, healing and empowerment through mentorship. We’ve been privileged to work with Papa Hōʻike Kuleana mentors Tracy Alcoran and Shannon Kayatani for over a year. They have brought many of their youth to our volunteer project sites to work including Pali Lookout, Mānana Trail and Willwilnui Trail.

Kapiʻolani Community College Kalāhū Professors During their summer break, KCC professors join a professional development seminar called Kalāhū, which aims to support faculty in the integration of ʻāina-based teaching and learning that is relevant to students’ upbringing and culture. For the past two years, we’ve been able to take the professors on a huakaʻi to our Pali Lookout site for some volunteer project sites to work including Pali Lookout, Mānana Trail and Willwilnui Trail.

Koʻolau Interns

Joshua Serrano
Kupu EIP intern 2014 - 2015
Currently pursuing a master’s degree in Botany, during his time with us, Josh created the KMWP Flickr account featuring native Koʻolau plants.

Kirk Deitschman
KOIP intern Summer 2017
With experience working with various age groups, Kirk worked with both the outreach program and field crew in our management units.

Darin Thorp
KCC Kupu Intern 2014 - 2015
During his summer with KMWP, Austin developed informational maps of our management units including cultural history and wahi pana.

Avalon Coley
Kupu EIP intern 2015 - 2016
Her enthusiasm for learning about the plants around her led to an informational weed booklet we still use today.

Austin Chang
KOIP intern Summer 2015
During his summer with KMWP, Austin developed informational maps of our management units including cultural history and wahi pana.

HYCC Oʻahu Team F 7 interns Summer 2015

HYCC Oʻahu Team E 7 interns Summer 2016

HYCC Oʻahu Team F 7 interns Summer 2017

The newest member of our crew, Will Durnin is this year’s Kupu CLDP intern. From Kāneʻohe, he comes to KMWP with background in Forestry and Wildland Fire Management. Welcome to the team Will!
Three of our KMWP staff travelled to Midway Atoll this past June. For two weeks, they joined the US Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct weed control work as the Invasive Species Strike Team (ISST). The ISST worked in several sections on both Sand Island and Eastern Island treating target weed species through herbicide application.

“The scope of work that we did is similar to what we would do normally in the Ko‘olau mountain range but the conditions we worked in were very different,” KMWP Field Tech Jordan Lewis observed. “We traded in our steep knife ridges for old dilapidated runways, and our clear mountain streams for white and turquoise shorelines; but still with the same goal to help restore a hurting ecosystem.”

The atoll is a highly disturbed ecosystem where invasive plant species, toxic materials, and remains of human development that have created significant impacts on indigenous species and their habitat.

The unfamiliar environment was a challenge for the ISST. KMWP Field Crew supervisor Alison Crowley comments, “Anyone who has been to Pihemanu (Midway) will tell you to bring a large quantity of sunscreen. The heat, lack of rain and exposure is harsh. While we were utilizing the back pack sprayers we were covered head to toe including our faces which enhanced the heat exponentially.”

With the help of KMWP’s ISST, over 25 acres were treated for beach wire grass (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), 13 acres on Sand Island and 12 acres on Eastern Island. Other target weeds included ironwood (Casuarina equisetifolia), beggarticks (Bidens alba), Chinese banyan (Ficus microcarpa), and golden crown-bread (Verbesina encelioides). At the end of the trip, the ISST had treated a combined total area of approximately 134 acres for all weed species.

Wildlife on the Atoll
Pihemanu is the place name for Midway, in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i meaning loud din of birds. Appropriate name for this place where twenty bird species native to the Hawaiian archipelago - nearly 3.5 million individual birds - nest on virtually every square foot of available habitat on the atoll’s three islands. Some species our staff spotted there included Noio (Noddy Tern), Manu o Kū (White Tern), Ka‘upu (Black-footed Albatross), Sooty Terns, endangered Laysan Ducks and the world’s largest population of Mölī or Laysan Albatross. The efforts made by researchers and the US Fish and Wildlife Service have helped restore these species’ habitat and increased their population numbers.

Highlights and Thanks Yous
When asked about the entire experience, KMWP Program Assistant Janice Jensen recalls, “There wasn’t any one moment that was the highlight of the trip for me, but a lot of little moments strung together each day made the entire trip a memorable one. I think the collective experience of my everyday interactions with the wildlife and just the raw, sometimes harsh, beauty of the place made the biggest impression on me.”

Jordan Lewis remarks, “Every activity from freediving, to walking beaches looking for cool marine debris I just felt the extraordinary mana that this special place emits and it made me feel lucky to have been given the opportunity to experience it all.”

We’d like to thank Jason Hanley of the US Fish and Wildlife Service for providing this opportunity for our staff. The ISST would also like to thank Ann Humphrey of the US Fish and Wildlife Service for her guidance as they tackled new weeds in a new environment and navigated their way around the island. “Her knowledge of the atoll and passion for her job was evident in every conversation, and she encouraged us to weigh in on the work with our own experiences,” emphasizes Janice. And finally they would like to thank Kupu intern Wieteke Holthuijzen for her spirit and encouragement.
To all those who have supported KMWP this year, we are thankful for your contributions. Here’s a look at the work we’ve accomplished in 2017!

**Ho‘omaika‘i**

grateful, gratified, thankful

- **40,000 Weeds Removed**
- **255 Volunteers**
- **1,205 Volunteer Hours**
- **800 Acres Surveyed and Treated**
- **28 Volunteer Workdays**
- **255 Volunteers**
- **1,205 Volunteer Hours**
- **350 hours given by Partners**
E Ola Koa with Coca-Cola

In early December, nine volunteers from the Coca-Cola Company joined KMWP staff for a hike up the Mānana Trail on a mission to plant 40 koa seedlings.

The excited volunteers headed to the Boy Scout Shelter where fires had erased the native landscape and the hillsides had become infested with paperbark trees. The koa planting took place nearby in a clearing made by KMWP staff and volunteers on previous trips to the area.

This workday was a continuation of Coca-Cola’s national commitment to replenish 100% of the water it uses in its bottling operations. In April, the company announced it was donating $200,000 to the Waiawa fence project which would set up an ungulate-proof fence around the upper portion of the Waiawa watershed.

Throughout the hike, volunteers learned about koa and other common native plants found in the Ko‘olau watershed forests which help to efficiently retain water and recharge our aquifers. KMWP staff shared their knowledge of how invasive plants change the forest ecosystems and affect the functionality of our watershed. Volunteers were also able to observe some of the restoration work that had already taken place along the Mānana Trail, including our Hō‘oholo outplant site.

“The koa being planted will help restore the area and in just a couple of years these trees will grow, dramatically changing this area,” explained Pua Heimuli, KMWP’s Community Outreach Liaison.

After finding new homes for the 40 koa seedlings and leaving them with a bit of encouragement (as one enthusiastic volunteer put it “Grow, baby, GROW!”) the group moved back down the trail to remove some invasive paperbark before heading out for the day.

We are grateful to the volunteers who came out to help plant and give back to our Mānana worksite, and we hope to continue our partnership with Coca-Cola in the protection of our island watersheds.

All photos courtesy of DLNR DOFAW
## Events Calendar

Volunteer workdays and events KMWP is attending in the Koʻolau

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<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
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<th>June</th>
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<tr>
<td>15 Kupu MLK Day @ Mālama Maunalua</td>
<td>17 Pali Lookout Workday 9a - 12:30p</td>
<td>17 Pali Lookout Workday 9a - 12:30p</td>
<td>21 Mauka to Makai Clean Water Expo Waikīkī Aquarium 9a - 2p</td>
<td>19 Pali Lookout Workday 9a - 12:30p</td>
<td>16 Pali Lookout Workday 9a - 12:30p</td>
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<td>31 Mānana Trail Workday 9a - 3:30p</td>
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Please Note: This is a tentative schedule. All dates subject to change.

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**From our KMWP ‘Ohana to yours,**

Mele Kalikimaka a me Hauʻoli Makahiki Hou

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**Puaʻaʻehuʻehu**

With the help of longtime KMWP volunteer, Malia Heimuli, we were able to enter a wreath in the City and County’s 32nd annual wreath contest. Keeping with this year’s theme: Merry Menagerie, we showcase a collection of ferns you’ll find in the Koʻolau. The wreath is entitled “Puaʻaʻehuʻehu”, the poetic name for ferns in ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi.

If you’re going to Honolulu Hale to see the Christmas lights, stop in and take a look at the wreath among the other entrees this year!
Working together to protect and sustain the forests, waters and people of the Koʻolau Mountains

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