



Ka 'Ahahui 'O Ka Nāhelehele

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President Mary Metcalf - Vice President Elliott Parsons - Treasurer Sally Rice - Secretary Peter Van Dyke
Marian Chau - Susan Cordell - Jen Lawson - Jodie Rosam - Ron Terry - Jill Wagner

Aloha e Dry Forest Partners and Community:

“Ua ho‘omakua ka lā‘au.”

The plant has become a tree.

‘Ōlelo No‘eau 790

It has been 30 years since restoration began in earnest at the Ka‘ūpūlehu Forest Preserve initiated by the kuleana of the North Kona Dryland Forest Working Group. This diverse community group, united through the diligent effort of Hawaiian lineal descendant and cultural practitioner Hannah Springer and spouse Michael Tomich, worked to demonstrate that the extremely rare and endemic Hawai‘i dry forest ecosystem could be restored and saved. Precipitating this kāhea or call to action, was the loss of over 90% of this once vast ecosystem, with only scattered, barely surviving remnants remaining.

Through concerted effort, slowly but surely restoration success was achieved, and the hard learned restoration methods replicated and transplanted to other dry forest remnant sites across the Hawaiian Islands. Ka ‘Ahahui ‘O Ka Nāhelehele was formed in 2005 by members of the North Kona Dryland Forest Working Group to continue the education, advocacy, and support for the native dry forest. Annual dry forest educational symposiums were held, dry forest restoration in the Pu‘uwa‘awa‘a Ahupua‘a supported, a dry forest educational website launched, the Hawai‘i Island Seed Bank nurtured and bolstered, and advocacy and guidance shared with other groups to continually expand dry forest protection and restoration. Many new groups have since formed throughout Hawai‘i nei to mālama the dry forests.

“Make no ke kalo a ola i ka palili.”

One lives on in their children.

‘Ōlelo No‘eau 2107

Like everything in life, cycles begin and end, and the ending has now arrived for Ka ‘Ahahui ‘O Ka Nāhelehele as its key founding members retire. We are honored that the kuleana of the Dryland Forest Working Group lives on in the numerous dry forest groups that have evolved since the early days at the Ka‘ūpūlehu Forest Preserve. The Nāhelehele Dryland Forest Symposium will now live on under the capable hands of the Waikōloa Dry Forest Initiative, and the Hawai‘i Island Seed Bank will now be stewarded by the Akaka Foundation for Tropical Forests. We hope all dry forest groups continue to heed the kāhea, support the dry forests and one another, and continue the important work of advocacy and education of Hawai‘i’s native dry forest.

Me ka mahalo piha,

Ka ‘Ahahui ‘O Ka Nāhelehele