



Hawai'i News



Marie Ayabe, NPS RTCA Fellow, in the field. Photos: NPS

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2013



■ NPS Unit
★ State Capital

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Conservation Connections - Navigating Change
YMCA Camp Erdman
2. Hele On!
Cycle On Hawai'i
3. Wailua River Blueway - America's Great Outdoors
Hawai'i State Parks
4. Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh Interpretation and Public Outreach
Ahahui Malama I Ka Lohaki

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

Exploring our youthful side

We often hear that our youth are not getting outside enough, lacking sufficient exercise, are too connected to their electronic devices, and don't value our natural spaces. The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) embraces the challenge and necessity of engaging youth in our projects and in our culture. When young people are substantially and actively involved in shaping the future, they are empowered to be the next generation of stewards of the natural world.

When the RTCA Hawai'i field office was presented with the opportunity to host a young professional through the RTCA national fellowship program, we jumped at the chance. A fruitful partnership with the Hawai'i Environmental Education Alliance (HEEA), a partner receiving assistance from RTCA, helped enrich the depth and feasibility of the Fellowship. Marie Ayabe really made a difference when she joined the RTCA and HEEA team.

"Marie was instrumental in helping connect school and youth groups to the planning process."

Meredith Speicher, NPS

As part of the fellowship, fellows are responsible for helping their local RTCA office engage youth in projects. For Hawai'i, this meant working closely with project partners on a variety of engaging projects. Some examples of how the fellowship benefited our partners and our mission in Hawai'i are detailed on the last page.

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Current Projects

1. Conservation Connections - Navigating Change

Project Partner: YMCA Camp Erdman
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location: Island of Oahu
Congressional District: HI - 2

Project Goal

The Navigating Change program at Camp Erdman has grown from a pilot project into a refined program that engages youth throughout their school year to learn about the natural and cultural resources found in the northwest Hawai'ian islands and in their own backyard. Through the Navigating Change program, which partners with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, local non-profit organization, and the schools, students experience a place-based, interdisciplinary environmental education camp. Students stay at the camp overnight to fully experience Ka'ena Point State Park. The project goals for this year are to enhance the existing program to make it a year-round, sustainable program that engages youth in the protection, restoration, and stewardship of Ka'ena Point State Park. Dune restoration and trail improvements are components of the program.



Conservation Connections. Photos: NPS/Marie Ayabe

NPS Role

Coordinate among partners, assist with funding strategies, expand the native plant nursery, and develop agreements for expanded restoration, hiking, and camping opportunities.

2. Hele On!

Project Partner: Cycle On Hawai'i
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location: Island of Oahu
Congressional District: HI - 1

Project Goal

Creating safe areas to recreate within an urban environment can result in creative concepts such as opening the streets and parks to all kinds of

physical activity. Cycle On Hawai'i hosted Hawai'i's first Cyclovia event which provided the opportunity for the community to take to the streets, which were closed to cars, and enjoy safe and fun physical activity in an urban area. Cycle On Hawai'i strives to create a model for cyclovia events throughout the islands by developing a sustainable design that can be replicated across the islands. The goal of the project is two-fold: to educate the public about opportunities for complete streets and the Safe Routes to School program and to organize a Cyclovia in Kaka'ako that demonstrates the benefits of these concepts.

NPS Role

NPS is providing technical assistance to Cycle On Hawai'i to develop a plan to support the implementation of the new State SRTS program. NPS will work with Cycle On Hawai'i and Kaka'ako advocates to identify on-the-ground improvements in Kaka'ako that could be highlighted at the Cyclovia event. NPS will work closely with Cycle On Hawai'i to develop a replicable model for events throughout the islands.



Hele On Kailua! The first Cyclovia/Open Streets for Hawai'i. Photo: NPS/Meredith Speicher

Current Projects

3. Wailua River Blueway - America's Great Outdoors Project

Project Partner: State of Hawai'i
Department of Land and Natural Resources State Parks Division
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location: HI - 2
Congressional District: Island of Kauai

Project Goal

The island of Kauai has stunning natural beauty and rich resources, including endemic species, cultural heritage, and dynamic history, that make it unique. The Wailua River is the only navigable river in the State of Hawai'i and provides a diversity of passive and active outdoor recreation opportunities and educational experiences. Designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1962, the traditional landscape represented one of the most economically productive and important religious and political centers on Kauai. Today, the area experiences heavy recreational use that bring public safety concerns and impacts on natural and cultural resources. As the demand for public recreation access has increased, there is a need to better manage and steward the site so that it can remain both a recreational and educational resource for residents and visitors alike.

During the first year, partners gathered data, conducted field visits, assessed site conditions and opportunities, met with stakeholders, and evaluated recommendations for improvements in and around the state park. The goal of this second year is to vet suggestions for a needs assessment with stakeholders and prioritize actions



Kayaking the Wailua River to Uluwehi Falls. Photo: NPS/Meredith Speicher

with State Parks. In addition to the needs assessment, a Resource Development Strategy will be produced to address funding needs and sources for implementation.

NPS Role

NPS is assisting the State of Hawai'i, Division of Land and Natural Resources, Division of State Parks (State Parks) through the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

4. Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh Interpretation & Public Outreach

Project Partner: Ahahui Malama I Ka Lakahi
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location: Island of Oahu
Congressional District: HI - 2

Project Goal

Develop draft alternatives that support interpretation of the 800 plus acre Kawainui-Hamakua marsh complex (Kawainui) to increase awareness, understanding, and stewardship of the marsh. To date, NPS has provided support for the public outreach and reporting. The results from eight community meetings were summarized and provided to the State to update their Master Plan for Kawainui and Hamakua. Ahahui Malama I Ka Lakahi (AML) and their partners were able to obtain public input on how to best interpret the natural, cultural, and historic resources at Kawainui.

NPS Role

This year, NPS will work to develop the final recommendations for programming to be included in the Master Plan Update. The information provided to the state reflected the public and organizational priorities. The final year will focus on developing a framework for the programs that will support the interpretive plan. This will provide the final component to allow interpretation and education to become an integral part of the master plan.

“NPS has guided diverse and often contentious groups to a final report that fairly reflects community recommendations and concerns. NPS has kept us on schedule and focused on achieving our goals with the public outreach.” - Bill Sager, Board Member Kawainui Heritage Foundation

We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance?

Contact us to find out.

Meredith Speicher

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2012 Nationwide Partnership Success

2,154 Miles of Trail Developed

1,074 Miles of River Conserved

70,385 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at

www.nps.gov/rtca



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Recent Successes cont.

Building Community Collaboration

Marie was instrumental in assisting with the development of monthly professional and stimulating e-newsletters and novel social media for HEEA, a renewed collaborative effort among environmental educators in Hawai'i from all sectors (government, non-profit, business). This network helps connect and advance professionals in the field and generate overall improvement of environmental education and environmental literacy in Hawai'i.

Environmental Education Symposium Focus on Green Jobs

The Environmental Education Symposium brought together partners begin implementing the Hawai'i Environmental Literacy Plan (HELP) Marie developed strategic outreach, media, and evaluation for the Symposium. Working with Hawai'i's leaders in green jobs and student/youth internship programs, Marie led one of the all-day sessions entitled: Green Jobs in Hawai'i: Building a Community that is College and Career Ready. Her leadership and thoughtful planning resulted in a very successful and meaningful experience for presenters and participants.

New Case Studies on Kids to Conservation Website



Uluwehi Falls on the Wailua River.
Photo: NPS/Marie Ayabe

The National Park Service RTCA program and the University of Las Vegas Public Lands Institute created a website to serve as a tool for planning professionals and educators to better engage young people in stewardship of natural resources and in conservation and recreation planning. The website, Kids to Conservation, provides an opportunity to learn how to involve youth in conservation of our natural resources through community planning, environmental education, service learning, outdoor recreation, restoration projects, and more.

Marie led efforts to update the website, edit materials, and author and edit case studies, the most popular component of the website. She also developed recommendations to improve the website and keep it relevant and more interactive. She worked with the other fellows to encourage and guide them in the development of case studies that serve as learning tools as well as inspiration.

ABOUT US

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.