



Hawai'i News



Levee trail through Kawainui Marsh, Kailua Oahu. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

Recent Successes

Hawaii Safe Routes to School Hui

Throughout the Hawaiian Islands, there is a movement to remove the barriers to walking and bicycling. A network of 20 organizations and agencies have come together to form the Safe Routes to School Hui. This group, led by PATH – Peoples Advocacy for Trails Hawaii, has had tremendous success in mobilizing support and implementing policies that are changing the way youth travel to school and beyond. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) State Networks in nineteen states and DC are working to increase physical activity, ensure that federal SRTS funds are spent on quality projects, work to leverage additional state resources for SRTS initiatives, and advocate to remove barriers to walking and bicycling to schools.

NPS RTCA's history goes back to the early days of this movement, when the One Voice for Livable Islands (One Voice) coalition reached out for assistance. NPS RTCA provided much needed facilitation, resources and guidance in the early days of this coalition. Since then the One Voice coalition has merged with the Safe Routes to School Hui to form a 30+ member strong coalition focused on advancing bicycling and walking through Safe Routes to School policies and programs.

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.

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PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

CURRENT PROJECTS

- 1. Navigating Change**
Friends of Ka`ena
- 2. Ka`u Gateway Community**
County of Hawaii Planning Department
- 3. Friends of Mānā**
State DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
- 4. Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh Interpretation & Public Outreach**
Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Current Projects



Beach Clean-up results by Friends of Ka'ena. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

1. Navigating Change

Project Partner: Friends of Ka'ena
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location and Congressional District: Island of Oahu (HI-2)

Project Goal

The project goals are aimed at improving and protecting the natural resources of the Ka'ena Point area through an education and stewardship program that engages youth. Through a program called Navigating Change, Friends of Ka'ena, in partnership with National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, are fostering a new generation of stewards who will learn, experience, and give back to their community jewel, Ka'ena Point State Park and Natural Area Reserve.

RTCA Role

RTCA's role is to help facilitate the process and work with the many different project partners to implement and develop a Ka'ena Point Navigation Change Guide. This guide will outline

how to implement and sustain the program to allow Friends of Ka'ena to continue the program once NOAA has stepped down as the lead.

2. Ka'ū Gateway Community

Project Partner: County of Hawaii Planning Department
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location and Congressional District: Island of Hawaii in the Ka'ū Community Planning area (HI-2)

Project Goal

The Ka'ū Gateway Community Project goals are to increase the preservation of open space, scenic byways, view planes, and recreation opportunities for the Ka'ū district. The County of Hawaii is engaged in the development of an updated Community Development Plan (CDP) that translates the broad general plan goals, policies, and standards into implementation actions for the judicial district of Ka'ū. The vast majority of the land in the district of Ka'ū is publicly managed and has a wealth of natural and cultural resources. Conservation and recreation are central to Ka'ū's economic future. The CDP process engages the community

and stakeholders to develop a shared vision for Ka'ū's future that includes improved stewardship, management, and use of natural and recreational resources for residents and visitors. The majority of the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is located within the Ka'ū district offering potential partnerships and support with conservation and recreation efforts. In addition, the Ala Kahakai National Historical Trail will include segments within Ka'ū.

RTCA Role

RTCA is providing expertise in gateway planning and building partnerships among the various stakeholders involved in the development of the CDP. Once the CDP is adopted, implementation assistance from RTCA will include technical assistance in developing a more detailed action plan focused on conservation, recreation, and gateway planning.

3. Friends of Mānā

Project Partner: State DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location and Congressional District: Island of Kaua'i (HI-2)

Current Projects



Cleaning up Ka'ena Point State Park, Oahu. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

Project Goal

The state of Hawaii, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and community partners are working together to restore native wetlands to Mānā Plain. Friends of Mana have formed to assist the State in stewardship and interpretation of the Mānā Plain Wetland Conservation Reserve. The Reserve will be a 141-acre coastal wetland habitat that supports recovery of endangered endemic Hawaiian waterbirds and provides new opportunities for public education and recreation.

RTCA Role

RTCA is working with the planning team to engage the local community in the planning, restoration, and stewardship of their reserve. This will include developing Friends of Mānā group into a functioning group who will be able to work with schools to plan and support the outdoor recreation and environmental education components of the reserve. RTCA will also aid with funding proposals for these components, and help facilitate a planning process for incorporation of trails and interpretive elements into the larger wetland restoration plan.

4. Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh Interpretation & Public Outreach

Project Partner: Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi

RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher
Location and Congressional District: Island of Oahu (HI-2)

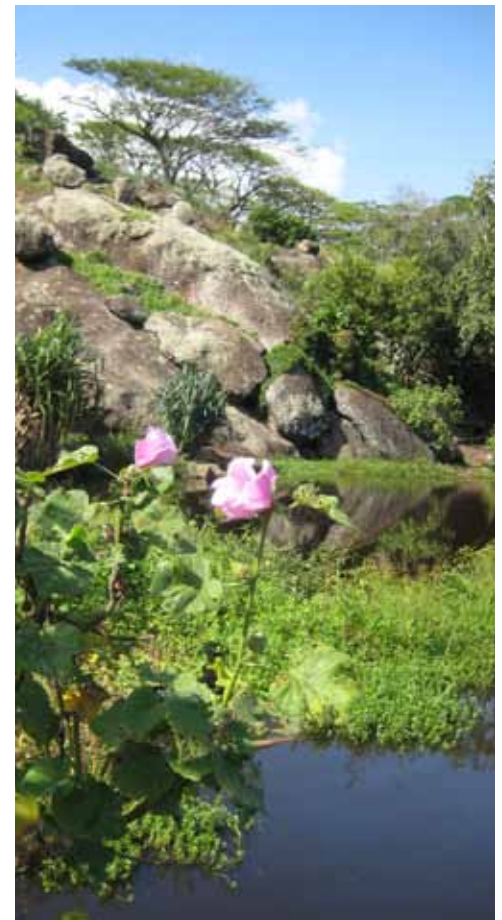
Project Goal

The goals of Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi and their partners is to obtain public input on how to best interpret the natural, cultural, and historic resources at Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh. The overall goal is to utilize interpretation to increase awareness, understanding and stewardship of the marsh. AML and partner groups involved with the preservation and management of the 800+ acre Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh Complex have been meeting for 6 years to network on issues affecting this marsh complex. Early in the process, the group identified an interpretive plan as a critically needed element of the larger 1994 Master Plan and recognized the positive role that interpretation can play in heightening public awareness and promoting stewardship. Representatives

of these partner groups have worked to inventory the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of the marsh, compile background information about the resources and marsh, identify interpretive themes and the audience for an interpretive program, and develop some very conceptual ideas for interpretive facilities and programs.

RTCA Role

RTCA is providing technical assistance to Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi (AML) to assist them and their partners on gathering public input to improve stewardship and awareness of the Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh Complex in Kailua. RTCA will help design and implement the outreach. The project will engage youth in the outreach and development of alternatives.



Wetland restoration site at Nā Pōhaku o Hauwāhine in Kawainui Marsh, Kailua Oahu. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit
from RTCA Staff Assistance?
Contact us to find out.

Meredith Speicher
808.541.2693 x725
meredith_speicher@nps.gov

2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251 Miles of Trail Developed

1,694 Miles of River Conserved

25,369 Acres of Open Space and
Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community
Partners Satisfied

Find more information online
at

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Recent Successes cont.

Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System reports that approximately one-third of Hawaii's students consider themselves to be overweight, with another 16 % at risk for becoming overweight. For certain communities in Hawaii, studies show that childhood obesity rates may be twice that of the national average. Physical inactivity is one of the major contributing factors. The Hui includes health organizations, businesses, and government agencies who are working to increase physical activity through a number of different initiatives. The Hawaii State Network effort is working to remove barriers to walking and bicycling to schools by implementing complete streets, enacting the Hawaii Statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan, changing statewide school siting, and by implementing existing laws that would result in funding or improved safety.

PATH, a Hawai'i Island-based bicycle and pedestrian organization began Safe Routes to School programs in Hawai'i in 1999. PATH's studies with 15 schools island wide over a 12 year period has found that 6.4% of students walked to school, less than 1% biked, while 71.8% were driven to school and 16% rode the bus. Improvements brought about by the program include the creation of pathways and sidewalks, pavement striping, and crosswalk installation, among other safety improvements. Pre and post studies at Kahakai Elementary School showed a doubling in the number of students walking and a 100% increase in the number of students biking after two years of intervention. The Hui hopes to see these improvements throughout the islands as a result of their efforts.

The early work in Safe Routes to School programs continues with the HO'ALA project, one of the largest Safe Routes to School studies in the country with 14 schools and over 6,000 students, faculty and staff funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Active Living Research Program. The HO'ALA project is studying the impact of Complete Streets policy, bicycle and pedestrian planning, and the PATH "Three-Steps to Success" Safe Routes to School implementation model on reducing childhood obesity in Hawaii County, as a model for the rest of the country.

The Hawaii State Network is committed to the success of the Hawaii Department of Transportation's (HDOT) Safe Routes to School program and has worked diligently with leadership at HDOT, Federal Highway Administration Hawaii Division office as well as other partners to advance the program. The Hawaii Network has become a resource for grantees seeking guidance on how to complete the required evaluation to obtain final reimbursement for Federal funds and has also become a resource for applicants seeking information on the status of their awards.

The Hawaii State Network celebrated the completion of Complete Streets policy recommendations on September 15th as part of the eight-month legislatively mandated Complete Streets Implementation Task Force. This task force was responsible for drafting recommendations on how to implement a Complete Street Policy throughout the islands. The recommended policy strongly supports Safe Routes to School concepts throughout. The Network was very successful in getting the Hawaii Department of Education's representative to attend the Complete Streets Task Force meetings, thus ensuring that an educator's perspective was included in the formation of the model policy and report to the Legislature.

¹ For a detailed list, go to: <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/network/hawaii#network>