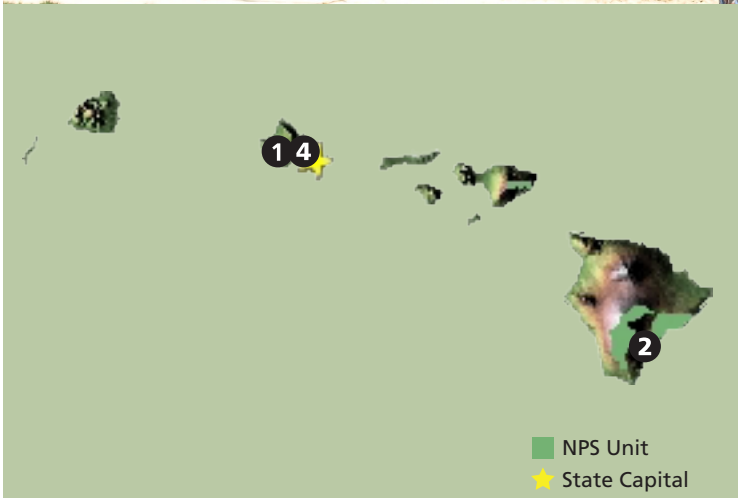




# Hawai`i News



Students hiking to complete dune restoration, Ka`ena Point State Park.  
Photo: Meredith Speicher



## Recent Successes

### The Next Generation of Stewards

When neighbors, concerned community members, and scientists saw the continued abuse and destruction of natural, cultural, and historic resources at their local park, they came together and formed a community organization called Friends of Ka`ena (FOK). As FOK worked to solve conflicts and issues impacting the park, they began to engage youth in their service projects. School groups and families participated in beach clean-ups, dune restoration, and outreach. With the success of these projects, FOK members saw new opportunities to reach out to the next generation of stewards and build awareness and opportunities for youth to learn and engage in activities to care for and restore parts of Ka`ena Point.

Ka`ena point is located on the northwest tip of Oahu and is protected as a state park and state natural area reserve. The Natural Area Reserve supports a unique dune ecosystem that is prevalent throughout the northwest Hawai`ian islands and is one of three locations in the world where the public can view the Laysan Albatros. Unfortunately, Ka`ena Point State Park experiences numerous destructive practices that degrade the natural, cultural, and historic resources, whereas the Natural Area Reserve has additional protection to keep these practices out. The differences between these two areas provide a unique

#### 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 2012

### CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Conservation Connections - Navigating Change  
YMCA Camp Erdman
2. Ka`u Gateway Community  
County of Hawai`i Planning Department
3. Hawai`i Environmental Literacy Plan (Statewide)  
Hawai`i Environmental Education Alliance
4. Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh Interpretation & Public Outreach  
Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

# Current Projects



Students learning about Hawaiʻian land management before the hike with Friends of Kaʻena. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

## 1. Conservation Connections - Navigating Change

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

### Project Goal

As described in the recent successes, the pilot year for Navigating Change proved fruitful. The project goals for this year are to develop a sustainable program that engages youth in the protection, restoration, and stewardship of Kaʻena Point State Park with dune restoration and trail improvements as key components of the program. Partner groups have come together and are developing a program, called Conservation through Connections, to create a long-term initiative that provides opportunities to improve environmental literacy, create positive change, and facilitate long-term stewardship of the land. YMCA Camp Erdman has partnered with Friends of Kaʻena, select schools, the State of Hawaiʻi Division of State Parks, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Papahānaumokuākea Marine National

Monument, to create a sustainable program that integrates stewardship and responsibility into an environmental education program. Through a classroom and field component, the project engages youth in outdoor, multidisciplinary education. The students engage in experiential learning, that allows them to identify issues that are impacting conservation and recreation at Kaʻena Point State Park. The students discover possible solutions to problems that are creating impacts to resources at Kaʻena. This is done with the aim to create the next generation of stewards who will learn, experience, and give back to their community jewel, Kaʻena Point State Park and Natural Area Reserve.

### RTCA Role

RTCA's role is to coordinate among partners, assist with funding strategies, develop outreach and marketing materials, and build partner capacity to assure a sustainable program. RTCA will also support the development of training materials and ensure that the program builds its capacity to steward the natural and cultural resources of Kaʻena Point State Park. Key partner-

ship with Friends of Kaʻena will support locally led efforts to conserve and support appropriate activities at the park.

## 2. Kaʻu Gateway Community

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

### Project Goal

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



# Current Projects cont.



Students exploring Kawainui, Oahu. Photo: Meredith Speicher.

and stakeholders to develop a shared vision for Ka'u'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'u district offering potential partnerships and support with conservation and recreation efforts. In addition, the Ala Kahakai National Historical Trail will include segments within Ka'u.

## RTCA Role

RTCA has been providing expertise through research and building key partnerships to support locally led conservation strategies, geotourism opportunities, gateway planning and support of green infrastructure planning. The final CDP is anticipated to be adopted in the beginning of the 2012 calendar year. Once the CDP is adopted, implementation assistance from RTCA will include technical assistance in developing a more detailed action plan and implementation with key community stakeholders focused on conservation, locally-led stewardship, geotourism opportunities, and gateway planning.

## 3. Hawai'i Environmental Literacy Plan

Project Partner: Hawai'i Environmental Education Alliance

RTCA Contact: Meredith Speicher  
Location and Congressional District: State of Kaua'i (HI-1, 2)

### Project Goal

The project goal is to create a plan for Hawai'i that supports the integration of environmental education into formal and non-formal education for students in Hawai'i.

### RTCA Role

RTCA will work to build partnerships, bring in NPS Park units, and facilitate greater youth engagement to support the plan and the National Park Service Call to Action.

## 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 overall goal for the project is to develop draft alternatives that support interpretation of the Kawainui-

Hamakua marsh complex (Kawainui) to increase awareness, understanding and stewardship of the marsh. The goals for the first year for Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi (AML) and their partners was to obtain public input on how to best interpret the natural, cultural, and historic resources at Kawainui. Over the past year, AML and partner groups involved with the preservation and management of the 800+ acre Kawainui Marsh Complex planned and implemented an outreach and education campaign followed by a series of community meetings to listen to the communities in and around the marsh. A local 8th grade science class participated in one of the meetings by presenting their ideas for interpretation and education. The community meetings will help AML and their partners develop draft alternatives that support interpretation of the marsh. These alternatives will be considered in the update of the Kawainui Master Plan updated through the State Department of Land and Natural Resources.

### RTCA Role

RTCA is providing technical assistance to AML and their partners to develop recommendations for interpretation at the marsh. The alternatives will be provided to the state for analysis and decisions. The project will continue to engage local organizations, the Hawaiian community, local community members, and youth in the development of alternatives.



Rainbow over Kawainui-Hamakua Marsh  
Photo: Meredith Speicher

## We're Here For You.

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

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## 2011 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,991 Miles of Trail Developed

1,925 Miles of River Conserved

33,230 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



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## Recent Successes cont.

opportunity to highlight how humans impact the environment. It also provides opportunities to stop these destructive practices and become involved in the restoration of these ecosystems. Youth are our future stewards and FOK supports efforts to engage this next generation, inspiring them to become stewards, today.

Navigating Change is an education and environmental stewardship program that incorporates traditional knowledge with western science to inspire the next generation of conservation leaders. Students study the differences between the main Hawai'ian islands and the uninhabited islands, atolls, and marine ecosystems in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The students gain a better understanding of human impacts and are empowered to restore and protect our unique natural spaces. The program includes curriculum and resources to assist teachers and administrators. It also incorporates service learning, outreach, and giving back to their community. FOK members witnessed the impact that Navigating Change had on other communities and decided to pursue the development of a project at Ka`ena Point, given the unique opportunities the area could bring to the program.

The Navigating Change pilot program for Ka`ena point began in the 2010-2011 school year. A partnership was formed to bring the students to YMCA Camp Erdman at the end of their school year to experience Ka`ena point and the many natural, cultural and historical resources that embody this special location. Prior to their overnight adventure, there were classroom sessions that utilized the Navigating Change curriculum, as well as speakers brought in from various disciplines. This provided student's with the necessary foundation to understand the issues and unique environment once they arrived at Ka`ena Point.

The students engaged in a number of activities including native plant restoration efforts for the dunes, dissection of a Laysan albatross bolus, a mountain hike, and navigation using the Hawai'ian star compass. For the students, the program allowed them to learn by getting out into the natural environment. During the planting, they gave back to Ka`ena and could see the change they created. On the mountain hike, the students not only learned about the land but were told mo`olelo's (Hawai'ian legends) and the reasons why this place is so sacred. They learned about the connections between the land and the sea and then had the opportunity to experience the very places that held the spirit of Ka`ena. Students saw and touched the enormous amount of plastic that the Laysan Albatross ingested and made a real connection between their actions and the impact to the birds. As night fell, partners with the Polynesian Voyaging Society explained the basic mechanics of star identification and navigation to students and their teachers. The Navigating Change team hopes that by providing this enriching program to children, creating community partnerships, and developing Ka`ena Point as a safe learning and restoration site, local schools and the community will continue to support and expand the efforts to restore Ka`ena to its natural beauty.

Due to the success of the pilot year, Camp Erdman, FOK, and the Navigating Change program are working this year to further develop the program, expand the connections between issues and action, and train staff and volunteers to continue the unique lessons and approaches to experiential, place-based learning.