



For Immediate Release: July 9, 2021
HTA Release (21-23)

Hawai'i Tourism Authority Supports Program to Mitigate Visitor Impacts at Pololū Valley on Hawai'i Island

HONOLULU – Pololū Valley is a majestic and historical area in North Kohala on Hawai'i Island. Recently, there has been a rapid increase of visitors to the Pololū Lookout, Trail, and coastal shoreline, and there is a growing need to mitigate the impacts to the community and natural and cultural resources.

In response to requests from the community, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority is funding the Pololū Trail Steward Program – a pilot project in collaboration with KUPU, Nā Ala Hele Trails and Access Program, and the lineal descendent community of Pololū, Mekanikahiō and neighboring ahupua'a. The goal is to utilize local "stewards" to assist with interpreting the natural and cultural history of the area, as well as mitigate unwanted behaviors and ensure safety. Partners hope that this project can serve as a model for collaborations with local communities to manage the impact of tourism on Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources, to include steering visitors towards safe, responsible behaviors while enjoying the destination.

The Nā Ala Hele Trails and Access Program, which is part of the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources will be hiring four part-time stewards, through KUPU, for the pilot project. From August 2021 through January 31, 2022, the stewards will assist with visitor management, safety, and trail maintenance as well as sharing their knowledge of the Pololū area with visitors.

Pololū Valley is one of the hotspots community members and stakeholders identified as part of HTA's [Hawai'i Island Destination Management Action Plan](#) (DMAP). Action A in the DMAP calls to protect and preserve culturally significant places and hotspots.

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Editor's Note: Pololū Valley images are available for download at <https://hawaiitrails.hawaii.gov/trails/#/trail/polol-trail/9>.

About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The [Hawai'i Tourism Authority](#) is the State of Hawai'i agency responsible for strategically managing its support of the tourism industry. Established in 1998 to support Hawai'i's leading industry and largest employer, HTA continually strives to help ensure tourism's sustainability and the benefits it brings to residents and communities statewide.

For more information about HTA, please visit www.hawaiitourismauthority.org. Follow updates from HTA (@HawaiiHTA) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and its new [YouTube Channel](#).

About Kupu

Established in 2007 as a Honolulu-based 501(c)3 non-profit, Kupu empowers future generations to create a more sustainable Hawai'i. The organization provides hands-on training and national service programs that educate and mentor youth to become stewards of culture and environment. Kupu has trained more than 4,500 youth in conservation, sustainability and environmental education. These young adults have supported Kupu partners to provide more than 3 million hours of service, which has culminated in planting over 1 million native plants and removing over 100,000 acres of invasive species.

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For their service, Kupu has presented close to \$7 million in education awards to support the continued growth of its members. To date, Kupu has generated more than \$150 million in economic benefits to the state of Hawai'i. For more information, follow Kupu on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube, or visit kupuhawaii.org.

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