



# HIKA'ALANI

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Re: Support for the efforts of the Trust for Public Land, Ho'okua'āina, Kauluakalana, Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, and Hawai'i Land Trust to Purchase and Protect Palawai and Makali'i, in Kailua, Maunawili, O'ahu

Aloha nui,

I am writing on behalf of Hika'alani, a Kailua community-based non-profit, in strong support of the efforts of the Trust for Public Land, Ho'okua'āina, Kauluakalana, Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, and Hawai'i Land Trust to purchase and protect Palawai (approximately 116 acres) and Makali'i (approximately 59 acres) in Kailua, Maunawili, O'ahu.

Hika'alani, along with other Kailua organizations and individuals, formed the Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, to protect the forest and lands of Maunawili from sub-division and possible conversion to "gentlemen agricultural estates." In recent years in Hawai'i, we have seen agricultural subdivisions turn into "fake farms" too often. They all result in the same outcome: the loss of our most fertile lands that can increase local food production and decrease our dependency on imported food. Fortunately, the Hui and others were able to voice opposition to these subdivision efforts, and eventually, the landowner abandoned those plans.

Protecting Palawai and Makali'i is part of the long-term effort by Hui Maunawili-Kawainui and the Kailua community to protect approximately 1,084 acres in Maunawili, including Maunawili Forest & the Queen's Retreat. Being able to mālama Palawai and Makali'i would preserve the Maunawili stream system, freshwater springs, ancient lo'i kalo and 'auwai, fertile Hanalei soil, a section of the Olomana ridge, and a deep agricultural and cultural landscape. We support Ho'okua'āina as the proposed future owner and steward of Palawai and Kauluakalana as the proposed future owner and steward of Makali'i.

Hika'alani was founded by Hawaiian cultural leaders of Kailua, O'ahu, to restore cultural identity to places and practices that once defined Kailua as a land of abundance and excellence. The mission of Hika'alani is to reestablish centers of stewardship and learning at storied places in Kailua where the community can again gather, as Hawaiians did in centuries past, to restore and revive cultural practices. Maunawili is one such area within Kailua, with ancient and historic sites throughout the valley that include heiau (places of worship), sacred stones, petroglyphs, Hawaiian burials, trails, house sites, grinding stones, irrigated and dryland agricultural terraces, irrigation ditches related to extensive taro fields, and nineteenth and early twentieth century structures related to agriculture and food production.

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Maunawili is also the natural habitat for native and endangered species, including three species of Hawaiian damselflies, the 'ōpe'ape'a (Hawaiian hoary bat), the O'ahu 'elepaio (monarch flycatcher), and numerous native plants. In addition, several endangered species of Hawaiian waterbirds traverse the area seeking water and nesting spaces.

Hika'alani is very familiar with the work of both Ho'okua'āina and Kauluakalana. Ho'okua'āina has been growing kalo at Kapalai in Maunawili for over a decade. Its vision is to create a gathering place for people in the community to connect with and care for the 'āina, to perpetuate Hawaiian culture through the cultivation and preparation of kalo, and to be a place that brings healing to people. Kauluakalana was founded by kama'āina of Kailua, and has been the steward of Ulupō heiau (place of worship) and the surrounding lo'i kalo. Kauluakalana seeks to restore and grow healthy relationships between people and place through retelling our Kailua stories, replanting and eating our ancestral foods, and caring for the sacred sites, lands, and waters of Kailua.

Under the stewardship of Ho'okua'āina and Kauluakalana, Hika'alani envisions our youth being able to help clean and maintain the heiau found in Maunawili, help control the invasive species and revitalize the native species in the area, restore plots of kalo or taro and the irrigation systems that feed them, and learn the important stories and history of this area. In this way, the next generation will understand and appreciate the struggles of their ancestors to survive and can celebrate their resilience, and keep their stories alive.

We strongly support the efforts of the Trust for Public Land, Ho'okua'āina, Kauluakalana, Hui Maunawili-Kawainui and Hawai'i Land Trust to purchase and conserve the Maunawili lands to protect the forested foothills from development and to avoid any further damage to Maunawili's precious natural and cultural resources. Acquiring and being able to steward these lands would fulfill our community's long-standing goal of protecting our beloved mountains, forests, streams, and sacred places.

Mahalo,



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