

FROM THE OFFICE OF

SENATOR STANLEY CHANG

East Honolulu Community Newsletter

October 2024



A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO A CLEAN AND HEALTHFUL ENVIRONMENT

Punahou School, Kapi'olani Community College and Our Children's Trust recently hosted a webinar (*Mālama 'Āina, Kia'i 'Āina, Aloha 'Āina: Navahine v. HDOT with Our Children's Trust*) about the historic Navahine v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) case. Presenter **Mat dos Santos**, Co-Executive Director and General Counsel at Our Children's Trust, provided an overview of the landmark case and settlement.

The Navahine v. HDOT lawsuit was filed by 13 young people on June 1, 2022, against HDOT, asserting that greenhouse gas emissions by the HDOT violated their constitutional right to a clean, healthful environment and a life-sustaining climate. They were represented by **Our Children's Trust** and **Earthjustice**, an organization based out of Eugene, Oregon. Dos Santos stated that Our Children's Trust "believes that young people deserve to be happy and safe today and in the future." The organization litigates cases with young people to empower them and raise their

voices. Within these cases, they present the best available scientific evidence while underscoring the vital role the government plays in protecting citizens.

The landmark settlement agreement was announced on June 20, 2024. It affirms that youth have the constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment. As a result of the settlement, HDOT has agreed to take all actions necessary to achieve **Zero Emissions by 2045** for ground, sea, and interisland air transportation. This includes:

- Establishing a greenhouse gas reduction plan within one year;
- Reforming HDOT, specifically their budgeting and programming;
- Creating positions to oversee implementation & create benchmarks;
- Providing a seat at the table for youth.

The Court will be able to hold HDOT accountable for its zero emissions targets to be achieved by 2045. This settlement is unique in its nature, scope, and length in terms of an implementation plan to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions. It also serves as a leadership model for other states and countries.

To learn more visit navahinevhawaiiidot.ourchildrenstrust.org.



Image Credit: Elyse Butler

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808-586-0193

City Homelessness
complaints@honolulu.gov
808-768-4381

Abandoned Vehicles
808-733-2530

Building Permits
808-768-8000

Poison Control
800-222-1222

Trash Collection
808-768-3200

Street Light Repair
808-768-5300

Domestic Abuse
Hotline
800-799-7233

Public Assistance
Information Line
855-643-1643

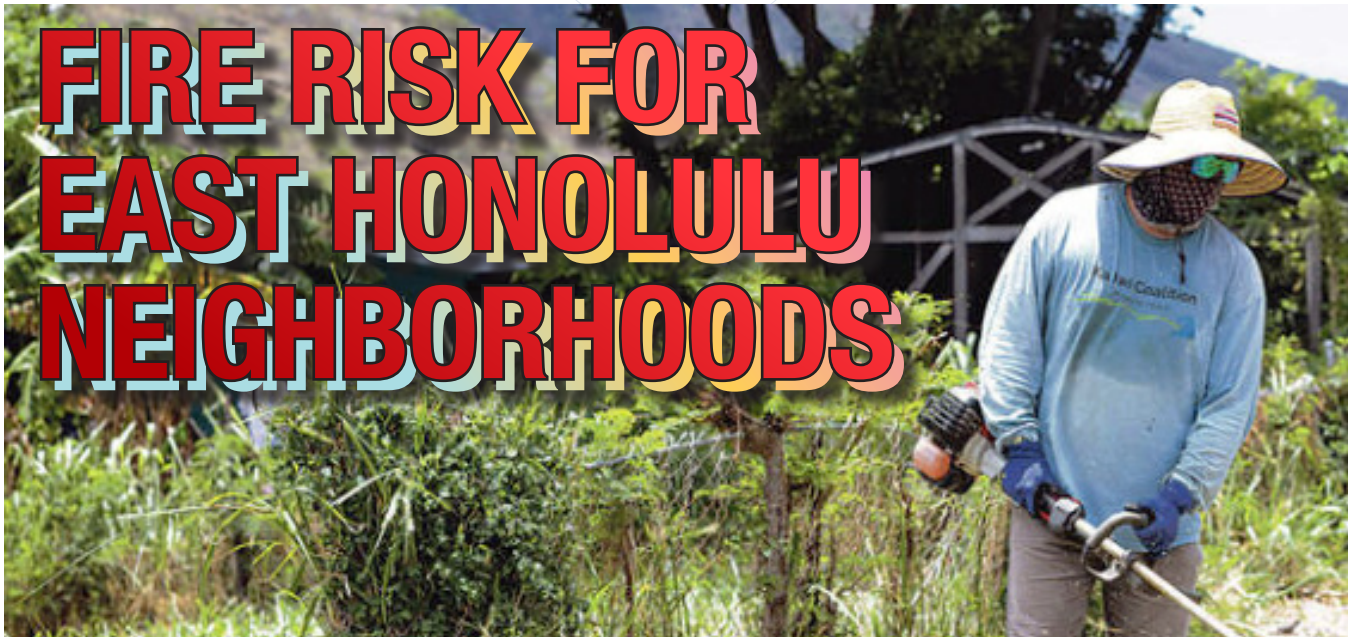


Image Credit: Cindy Ellen Russell

In late July, the **Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization (HWMO)** published the *East Honolulu Community Wildfire Protection Plan*. According to the plan, East Honolulu is considered at a moderate to high risk of wildfire. However, many individual neighborhoods including St. Louis Heights, Maunalani Heights, and Wai'ala'e Nui are rated as either high or extremely high risks for wildfires.

"Wildfires have repeatedly been a problem in East Honolulu, particularly in Hawai'i Kai which is exposed to tradewinds that originate from the north and wrap around the eastern end of the island," says the plan. Alongside East Honolulu's high density, topography, and frequent human-caused ignition, the warmer weather and recurring drought conditions puts this region at a higher risk for wildfire.

Elizabeth Reilly, president of **Livable Hawai'i Kai Hui**, hopes this report will jump-start actions and that more neighborhoods will become designated "Firewise" communities. Following the Kamilo Nui fires in 2017, her group worked with

HWMO to establish O'ahu's first Firewise community. To qualify, a community must form a board or committee of residents and local partners (such as fire departments and environmental groups) to conduct a wildfire risk assessment with the help of a local wildfire expert. Based on this assessment, a three-year action plan to reduce wildfire risks is created (see right for recommended actions to reduce wildfire risks). At minimum, each site is required to annually invest the equivalent of one volunteer hour per dwelling unit in wildfire risk reduction actions. To maintain the Firewise designation, the action plan must be updated at least every five years.

HWMO's report also highlighted the dense, dry, and flammable vegetation across East Honolulu. Some of the many examples include invasive fountain grass in Diamond Head and the ignitable vegetation growing behind the firing targets at Koko Head District Park. Various nonprofits, including the **Sierra Club** and **808 Cleanups**, have been diligently working to restore vulnerable lands across the Ka'iwi

coastline – clearing out invasives and replacing them with natives. But much work remains to be done.

Recommended actions to reduce wildfire risk and emphasized in the HWMO's report include:

- Reduction of invasive vegetation;
- Creation of more firebreaks (barrier of cleared land intended to stop the spread of a fire);
- Evacuation plans that ensure communities have two ways in and two ways out;
- Alternative water resources if needed for firefighting;
- Creation of a reporting system to highlight and contact landowners with overgrown vegetation on their properties.

View the East Honolulu Community Wildfire Protection Plan at: tinyurl.com/easthonoluluwildfireplan.

To learn more about what East Honolulu neighbors can do, contact HWMO at 808-885-0900 or admin@hawaiiwildfire.org. If you're interested in designating your neighborhood as a Firewise community, HWMO can also support in that.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Founded in 2005, Mālama Maunaloa is a non-profit stewardship organization committed to conserving and restoring a healthy and productive Maunaloa Bay.

This past year, Mālama Maunaloa was awarded an \$8.1 million grant from the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** for ahupua'a management. The project looks at each aspect of the **Niu, Wailupe, and Kuli'ou'ou** watersheds to conduct restoration from the ridge to the reef. This 3-year grant is a partnership between eight organizations active in Maunaloa Bay including; **Mālama Maunaloa, Kuleana Coral Restoration, Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology Coral Resilience Lab, Ko'olau Mountain Watersheds Partnership, Protect and Preserve Hawai'i, The Aloha Tree Alliance, Inter-Fluve Inc., and Roth Ecological Design International LLC.**

According to Project Manager Daniel Arencibia, Mālama Maunaloa and the eight organizations have accomplished the following since the project started in June 2024:

- **Coral Resilience:** “With help from our Core Volunteer Leaders and partners at the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology's Coral Resilience Lab, Kuleana Coral Restoration, and the Ocean Alliance Project, we've fragmented 60 thermally resilient 'Corals of Opportunity' into 1503 fragments. We expect to have these fragments outplanted in Maunaloa Bay by the end of September 2024.”
- **Infrastructure Projects:** “We've been working with our partners at Roth Ecological Design International to identify and design eight green infrastructure projects in the Maunaloa Bay region. We are collecting the field data we'll need to design each of these projects, and we expect to have these designs finished over the course of the next few months. These

projects will serve to help capture stormwater on-site, preventing it from running off, flooding, and impacting water quality in Maunaloa Bay.”

- **Wailupe Stream Restoration:** “Inter-Fluve Inc. has finalized their design for the Wailupe Stream Restoration project, which will reduce the volume of sediments entering Maunaloa Bay by reinforcing the stream banks and repairing headcuts.”
- **Ko'olau Mountains Fencing Restoration:** “With separate funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, our partners at the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership successfully helped install ungulate fencing that will protect roughly 24 acres of the Protect & Preserve Hawai'i restoration site in Pia Valley, which includes 10 acres of high-intensity restoration area. The enclosed space will also establish a safe space to grow/reintroduce native plant species.”
- **Kuli'ou'ou Hiking Trail Preservation:** “In the first year, Protect & Preserve Hawai'i hosted 831 volunteers to help outplant 3517 plants in Pia Valley. The Aloha Tree Alliance has hosted 361 volunteers to help outplant 880 plants along the Kuli'ou'ou Hiking Trail. The preservation of native forests is critical for restoring our watershed, because the multi-layered canopies of native forests help capture moisture from clouds and reduce the force of rainfall on the soil surface. This allows water to gently infiltrate into the soil and recharge our aquifers instead of running off on land, carrying sediments and pollutants that ultimately end up in the Bay.”

This is the largest grant Mālama Maunaloa has ever received, and “provides us with a significant step forward in restoring the health of Maunaloa Bay and the region,” says Executive Director, Doug Harper. To learn more about these efforts, see their 2023 Annual Report: malamamaunaloa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023-Malama-Maunaloa-Annual-Report-1.pdf.

YOUR CONCERNS

ADD YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE OR STATE ID TO YOUR IPHONE!

Hawai'i residents can now add their REAL ID-compliant Hawai'i driver's license or state ID card in their **iPhone** or **Apple Watch Wallet**. This is an easy, safe, secure, and simple option for presenting your ID. **Digital driver's licenses cannot be used as proof of name and address to fulfill the lawful order of a police officer.**

In Hawai'i, digital driver's licenses and state ID's are currently accepted in the following areas:

- At the **Transportation Security Administration (TSA)** checkpoint in **HNL's Terminal 1**;
- **Apple Stores**;
- In select apps that require identity or age verification.

The Department of IT, who runs Hawai'i's driver's license and ID system, says the verification process can between

10 minutes and three weeks, if the information needs to be manually verified for security purposes. Mark Wong, Honolulu Chief Information Officer, suggests users take clear pictures of themselves and their cards—make sure there are no reflections.

Once on your device, your data is encrypted and stays encrypted when transmitted during a wireless scan. However, there is always a chance of someone loading malware on another person's phone and making copies of the data stored. You can protect your device by:

- Turning Bluetooth off when you don't need it;
- Avoiding downloading unknown content;
- Running antivirus software;
- Powering off regularly to flush memory of malware.

Security experts remind users to protect their mobile wallet like a physical wallet. For more details go to hidot.hawaii.gov/highways/mobile-driver-license.

SUSTAINABLE GHOSTLINES FESTIVAL

Join the **Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i (SCH)** for their largest sustainable festival of the year, the Sustainable Ghostlines Festival. SCH will have a neighborhood cleanup and restoration by day and a community market and festival by night. There will be live music, food trucks, sustainable vendors, crafts and games for the keiki, and an upcycle costume contest with prizes for those who are really feeling the spirit! This event aims to empower volunteers and

community members to invest in their community, dig deeper into SCH's mission of inspiring communities to care for coastlines by joining their membership program, and take proactive action to mitigate plastic pollution by bringing reusable containers.

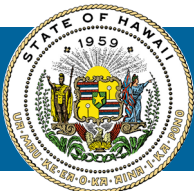
Learn more at sustainablecoastlineshawaii.org/schtory/sustainable-ghostlines-festival-2024.

When: **Saturday, October 19, 3pm–8pm**

Where: **Ali'iolani Elementary** (1240 7th Ave, 96816)



Image Credit: Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i



FROM THE OFFICE OF
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