



June 2026 PMKCA Newsletter

Never a Dull Moment

An Update on PMKCA's Projects and Teams

Ruth Bennett, PMKCA

Our newsletter this month presents a recap of PMKCA's activities and a forecast of our future plans. While this article is of interest to our mauka Pa'auilo and Kalōpā residents, we share many of our projects and plans with other Hāmākua Coast communities dealing with similar issues and opportunities.

If you love Kalōpā Park, or support our local Volunteer Fire Company 8 Alpha, or are concerned about rural communities that may be isolated and at risk during natural disasters, read on.

Kalōpā Park and the Park Team

Since the volunteers with the Kalōpā Park Team completed an Adopt-a-Park Agreement with Hawaii State Parks in July of 2025, some wonderful improvements have been made there. Jaime Raduenzel, Hawaii Islands Park Interpretive Specialist, has been instrumental in making much needed changes in the park. Through Jaime, the Park Team has received an amazing "tool tub" containing a host of practical tools and materials to aid them in their regular maintenance of the Native Forest Trail, a popular introduction to Hawaii's native forests and the invasive plants and pests that threaten them.



Scouts, scoutmasters, and the Kalōpā Park Team preparing for a morning in the forest.

The Team has established ongoing partnerships with Hawaii Scout Troops – a win-win for both groups. Young Scouts “learn while helping” as they work side by side with the Team in removing invasive plants and experiencing Hawaii’s native forest environments. In turn, the Team (whose members often are in their elder years) benefits from the energy and enthusiasm of young folks – a “kūpuna and keiki” alliance.

Kalōpā Park’s cabins and other structures have recently been undergoing renovations to improve safety and increase accessibility by all visitors. While the State Parks division hasn’t given a clear completion date for the

renovations, we hear that the cabins will reopen for at least part of the summer. In the meantime, the Park and its trails have been open to visitors, and the Park Team continues its regular maintenance activities.

If you have an interest in helping with the maintenance of the Native Forest Trail, the team meets regularly in the park at **9am on the first Thursday and third Saturday of each month** (weather permitting). For details, direct an email to Sarah Brown at PMKCA's email news.PMKCA@gmail.com.

Paauilo Volunteer Fire Company 8A

Jim Millar, captain of our local VFC 8A, reports that the rains of the last few months have reduced the threat of wildfires substantially, but we are seeing an explosion of growing greenery that may become FUEL for wildfires later in the year. He reminds us to keep our awareness of fire risk fresh, and to keep our weeds trimmed (by tools or livestock) should our late summer conditions become more dry.

Recently, Company 8A received a refurbished heavy-duty "Brush Truck" from the county Fire Department – an improvement in their ability to fight wildfires. The truck has already been used in dealing with a couple of small fires in our area. Company 8A took the truck and other equipment to a recent "Keiki fire awareness" event at a Honoka'a credit union to introduce children to firefighters and fire safety.

PMKCA, which has supported the Volunteer Fire Company since its creation decades ago, was pleased to donate the funds to create a new sign at the VFC's fire station in makai Pa'auilo.



A new sign installed on the Volunteer Fire Company 8A fire station in Pa'auilo.

Pa'auilo CERT and Emergency Preparedness

Denning Powell and Anthony Martin, members of PMKCA and the Paauilo CERT, have been actively engaged in the testing and roll-out of PMKCA's General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) network which will provide "when all else fails" communication capabilities to the mauka Pa'auilo and Kalōpā communities in a major disaster.

Over 24 members of the community have acquired GMRS radios, been certified by FCC as operators, and have received local training in their purpose and use. The range of these radios has been increased substantially by the installation of a "Repeater" which boosts any signal it receives, solving the issues created by our ridge-and-gulch topography.

PMKCA has been actively preparing for what may be an active storm summer, enhanced by El Niño weather conditions (see our May article). We are working on a pilot project to form neighborhood groups which can prepare for their own unique local conditions presented by serious emergencies – wildfires, windstorms, hurricanes. Each local group would build on the strengths, skills, and resources their residents have in common, and would identify and address their risks and vulnerabilities. Disasters like the Oahu flash floods have pointed to the importance of neighbors helping neighbors, especially in often-neglected rural areas like ours.

Other Events and Projects

Our fabulous, popular **“Summer Membership Meeting”** will be coming up in early August. *We will be looking for a new, equally pleasant, venue for our meeting, since we have just been told that the Pavilion in Kalōpā Park will not be available for the rest of 2026, due to repairs and renovations needed.*

We will be organizing another **“Love your Road Day”** for a summer Saturday. We encourage residents along our rural roads to meet for a morning of trash pick-up and other problem-solving tasks. The morning’s activities will be followed by a picnic event with food, music, and other delights.

~~~~~ **COMING UP!** ~~~~~

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Thursday, July 9, 2025, 6 PM**  
**At Denning’s house – 44-3220 Kula Kahiko Rd.**  
*(All members are welcome to attend.)*

***Annual Summer Membership Meeting***  
***UPDATE!! Seeking a venue for our meeting..***  
**Saturday, August 8, 2025, 11 AM**  
*(Potluck picnic, music, games, and special guests.)*

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Pa’auilo Mauka Kalōpā Community Association

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