



Pa'auilo Mauka Kalopa Community Association

Photo courtesy of Karl Backus

## Monthly News & Updates

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### May 2022 Newsletter



## ***An Update on Kamehameha Schools Lands and Activities in our Area***

**By Joe Clarkson,  
PMKCA President**

The PMKCA board of directors held its first in-person meeting in over two years recently. It was a joyous event. Everyone had a chance to engage with one another in an atmosphere that just can't be duplicated on Zoom. We are all looking forward to the general membership meeting this coming July, pandemic variants permitting.

One of the topics that got a lot of attention was Kamehameha Schools (KS), the largest owner of privately held land in Hamakua, and their many ongoing projects and programs. There were a lot of questions that couldn't be answered at the meeting, so I volunteered to engage with Marissa Harman, the KS director of asset management for the estate's agricultural and conservation lands statewide, to get more information.

Her response was very comprehensive and very much appreciated. The following question and answer format is the result. Questions from the PMKCA board are in bold.

**Q. What type of land is included in the pasture leases promoting fire protection? Jim Millar, a board member and captain of the local volunteer fire department, noted that the most dangerous areas were not under the forest plantations, but in the areas that had been logged but not grazed.**

A. Our focus on issuing pasture leases to promote fire protection was around areas that had been logged but not grazed. We issued new pasture leases for grazing in Pa'auhau and Pa'auilo totaling approximately 1,700 acres. We also issued new pasture leases for grazing under the standing eucalyptus trees in 'Ö'ōkala on approximately 2,000 acres.

**Q. Is something happening with the old Earl's Store location? One board member says he thought he saw new construction fencing in the area.**

A. Infrastructure upgrades and site improvements are currently underway for many of our properties at Pa'auilo. Improvements began, and are continuing, with our rental homes in the area.

We also recently shifted to starting improvements to the Post Office building and surrounding site, including a complete upgrade of the waterline that services all of Kamehameha Schools' properties in the area. The cement slab where the old Earl's Store once stood will be removed to accommodate additional parking for customers. The existing walkway and ramp along the Post Office mailbox wall will be replaced with a new ADA-accessible ramp that will serve both the Pa'auilo Post Office and existing Earl's Pa'auilo Store. There are also several vacant spaces within the Post Office building that require minor upgrades to become functional for future tenants and/or community use.

During this time, vehicular traffic flow through the site will be redirected to avoid areas under construction. The Pa'auilo Post Office mailboxes will not be accessible from May 16 – June 30, 2022 due to ramp reconstruction. The Post Office disseminated notices about this temporary change directly to their customers around mid-February. Pa'auilo Post Office customers will need to collect their mail directly from the Postmaster during business hours while the mailboxes are inaccessible.

Finally, the entire site will be resurfaced and landscaped with native vegetation which will complete the project. Estimated completion is mid-summer 2022. We thank the community for their patience as we bring these needed upgrades to Pa'auilo.

**Q. Can KS clarify the hours and days of operation of the upcoming tree removal project along the highway in our area?**

A. The powerline trim work began on Wednesday, April 20, 2022. Trimming will be conducted between the hours of 8:00a to 3:30p Monday through Friday for approximately two months. It has yet to be determined if any trimming will need to be conducted on Saturdays. There will be no trimming conducted on Sundays or during night time hours. Other work that may take place outside of the Mon-Fri 8:00a-3:30p schedule may include mobilization of equipment and transportation of logs.

**Q. What are the current plans for tree plantation management? Any word on if or when they might be used by Honua Ola?**

A. In June 2021, Kamehameha Schools sought proposals from nearly six dozen potential bidders to harvest the remaining, uncommitted stands of eucalyptus. Bids were due in August 2021. After assessing all the bids, we selected two bidders to move on to the negotiations stage of the process in late 2021.

Selected bidders are CN Renewable Resources LLC and Hawai'i Federated Industries. CN Renewable Resources LLC is a sister company to Hu Honua Bioenergy LLC (dba Honua Ola Bioenergy), so it is possible that Honua Ola will be a user of these lands. Hawaii Federated Industries is a benefit corporation with a mission to reverse climate change and create a circular economy.

The harvest of these lands will enable us to move closer to our goal of improving the well-being of our Lāhui by allowing more diversified use of our lands to provide a mix of opportunities in the future. We are currently negotiating with both bidders and our goal is to issue land use agreements by the second half of 2022.

**Q. Board members had a general awareness of the KS commitment to diversified agriculture, but were not aware of the locations and acreage of ag projects sponsored by KS or on KS leases. What is the latest update?**

A. Kamehameha Schools dedicates more land to sustainable agriculture than any other private landowner in Hawai'i and is deeply committed to keeping its Hāmākua lands in productive agriculture.

In 2018, we issued a license to harvest 3,000 acres of eucalyptus in Hilo, Pa'auilo ma kai and near the rim of Waipi'o Valley. Those acres encompass 'āina we want to transition to other uses such as community education programs and other diversified agricultural

activities. While those acres have not yet been harvested, we have community collaborators such as Pōhāhā I Ka Lani and huiMAU on the ground implementing cultural educational programming in those spaces.

Additionally, we have transitioned about 1,700 acres of formerly harvested lands in Pa'auhau and Pa'auilo plus 2,000 acres of standing trees in 'Ō'ōkala under grazing leases with local ranchers.

We welcome the community to browse our 'āina website (<https://www.ksbe.edu/aina/>) to learn more about Pauahi's legacy, including our online mapping tool to navigate the location of Pauahi's 'āina: <https://www.ksbe.edu/aina/maps/overview/>.



## **Coming PMKCA Meetings**

### **PMKCA Summer Membership Meeting Potluck Picnic & Bingo Bonanza! *in the Kalopa Park Pavilion!!* Saturday, July 30, 2022, 11 AM**

We are planning to hold our summer Meeting and Picnic in the Kalopa Park Pavilion this year! After two years of cancellations of this happy, informative, delicious, and rewarding occasion, it would be a joy to see our members and friends in person again. (Of course, we will take seriously any COVID health concerns that might arise.)

### ***Join PMKCA or renew your membership for 2022!***

*Membership in PMKCA is on a calendar year basis. Dues are only \$20 and support the activities of PMKCA and the contributions we make throughout the year. If you were a member last year, now's the time to renew for 2022. Bring your checkbook to the July Picnic meeting!!*

**You can find payment options, including an easy PayPal link, on our website, [www.PMKCA.org](http://www.PMKCA.org). Under "Home", click on "Membership/Dues".**

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