

## Hawaii Environmental Restoration 2022 Report



With several new hired forest technicians, restoration efforts in Keau'ohana were strong this year of 2022. *Hawaii Environmental Restoration's (HER)* focuses now on more effectively caring for the forest by aspiring towards two or more passes of its most promising portions within a year. The growth rate of weeds is extremely rapid in the forest from loss of primary native canopy due to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD), and swifter passes are allowing the crew to maintain leverage

over invasive species, while offering better support to areas with a stronger native component. Though every year we have made two to three passes of many important areas of need within Keau'ohana, in July we began its 6<sup>th</sup> systematic pass of the entire site since 2015. *HER* long term commitment reveals a realistic approach to this cherished forest in crisis.

Community outreach and education this year has gained a post-pandemic momentum for a total of **22 Special Volunteer Events** in celebration of Earth week/National Volunteer week/Hawaiian Native Plant month, our usual Solstice and Equinoxes quarterly event, and other special school and/or community group events (Taylor University, Indiana; Trinity University, BC Canada; Lake Champlain Waldorf, Vermont; BIPOC, international; and our local UHH as customary).



Adding to that, the summer was booked with weekly volunteer events through *Rustic Pathways*, an organization that operates intentionally designed transformative student-travel programs that empowers students through innovative and responsible travel experiences to positively impact lives and communities around the world. We brought in 6 groups over 6 weeks for a total of 90 volunteers who together accomplished 381 volunteer hours in Keau'ohana! It was a meaningful summer experience where students from all over the world received a



hands-on opportunity to learn about our environment and culture. When considering all volunteer events this year, *HER* has accumulated **879 volunteer hours** from **218 volunteers**, and we planted a total of **247 seedlings**.



HER is developing growing alliances with other organizations that have similar visions and dedications on the planet and for the environment. New current affiliations involve global conservation initiatives with the United Nations *Ecosystem Restoration* environment as well as the LEMU program; Hawai'i Cooperative Studies Unit at UH-Hilo; Water Resources Research Center at UH Mānoa; USGS Pacific Island Ecosystems Research Center; Natural Environment RCA; Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), and the Hawaii Tourism Authority/ *Malama Hawaii* program, attracting tourists meaning to give back to the land during their travels.

We value these growing collaborations for providing support to us on mental, emotional as well as physical levels. We at *Hawaii Environmental Restoration* face the future with growing inspiration and are sincerely grateful to all who recognize *HER* contribution to Hawai'i's challenged environment. This work can only be accomplished by joining forces with like-hearted people. We encourage you to please view our website blog to learn more about the details of our year's accomplishment made possible by you, our caring community.



Have a look at our newly recorded youtube presentation (<https://youtu.be/gB22srZoZ5U>) on what it means to “Malama O Ka ‘Āina” / Take Care of the Land”, here in Hawai'i. It also shares about our environmental work in the forest and how this relates to questions of sustainability.

