

KAUAI PLANNING & ACTION ALLIANCE, INC.

"Bringing people together to create a better future for Kaua'i"

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HA`ENA STATE PARK MASTER PLAN FUNDED

(Lihue, Hawai'i, May 5, 2005) – Among the items that benefit Kaua'i in the biennium budget passed earlier this week by the Legislature is funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to complete the long-awaited Ha`ena State Park Master Plan.

Senator Gary Hooser championed the passage of this funding at the urging of the Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance's Parks Action Team.

"For many years Ha`ena State Park has lacked funding for improvements and adequate maintenance," acknowledges Senator Hooser. "Anyone who has visited the park in recent years knows the urgent need for better restroom and changing facilities, improved parking and signage, and cultural restoration. Unfortunately many of these improvements cannot be done without a comprehensive Master Plan. The funding just approved is the key step toward implementing long-term improvements for this beautiful and popular state park."

All of Kauai's state legislators worked to make this funding possible. As Vice Chair of the House Finance Committee, Representative Bertha Kawakami played an important role in its passage. Representative Hermina Morita, whose district includes Ha`ena, was also extremely supportive, and Representative Ezra Kanoho lent his assistance as well.

With over 740,000 visitors each year, Ha`ena State Park is among the three most visited state parks in Hawai'i. In the early 1990s, DLNR hired a consultant to work with the community to develop a park Master Plan. Dozens of community members participated in multiple meetings to develop a desired vision for the park. Before the plan could be finished, the consultant abandoned the project, leaving community members frustrated and the plan in limbo. As a result, no major improvements have been made at the park for years.

"We are grateful to Kauai's legislators for their help in securing this Master Plan funding," states Diane Zachary, President & CEO of the Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance. "Until the master plan can be completed and funding secured for long-term

improvements, the Parks Action Team will work with DLNR, State Department of Transportation, Hawai`i Tourism Authority, cultural groups and community volunteers on some interim measures to improve conditions at the park.”

The Parks Action Team is tackling other issues to improve Kaua`i’s parks, including sustainable park funding, improving the maintenance of all county and state park restrooms, supporting an update of the 1978 Kaua`i Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and restoring three Kaua`i state park positions cut in the 2004 legislative session. Fortunately, the state budget just passed includes temporary restoration of 11 positions statewide, and Kaua`i should receive one or more of these positions.

Kaua`i Planning & Action Alliance (KPAA) works with nonprofits, government agencies, and community groups to address island issues. In addition to its work to improve parks, KPAA is facilitating the work of dozens of volunteers to combat substance abuse and has recently formed a group to provide more community support for public education. KPAA believes that effective, long-lasting solutions to our island’s issues require collaboration and focused action by a broad cross-section of our population.

For more information on KPAA or the Parks Action Team, call 632-2005, email kpaa@kauainetwork.org or visit www.kauainetwork.org.

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