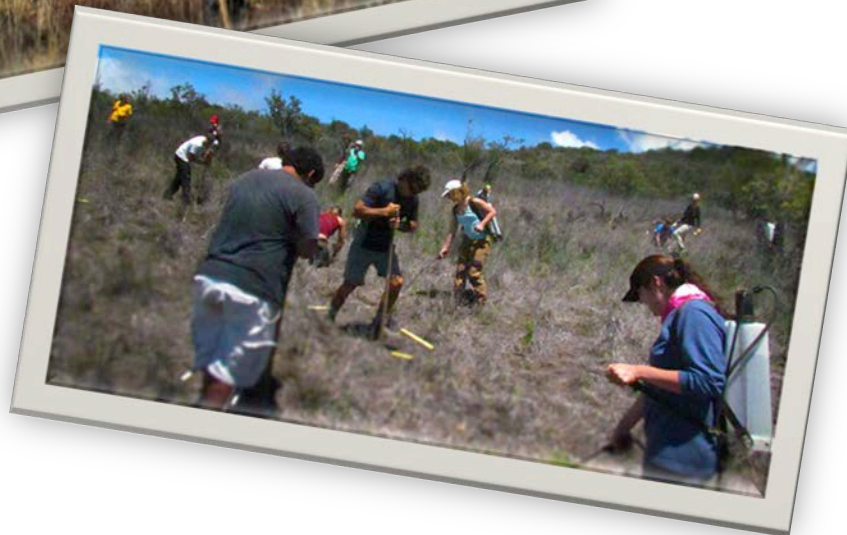


MY MAUNA KEA

A COLLABORATIVE FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

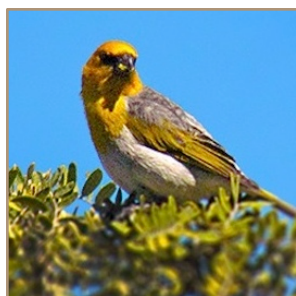


INTRODUCTION

Mauna Kea, Hawai'i's tallest mountain, and the world's tallest when measured from its base under the sea, is truly a special place. Revered by Hawaiians for centuries as a place fitting only for the gods, this majestic mountain harbors a unique and precious part of Hawai'i very few ever experience, even today. It was within this awe that Mr. Laurance Rockefeller founded the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel along the Kauna'oa beach down-slope from its lofty namesake. And it was within the mountain's distinctive forest that the Mauna Kea Forest Restoration Project (MKFRP) works to protect this irreplaceable piece of Hawai'i.

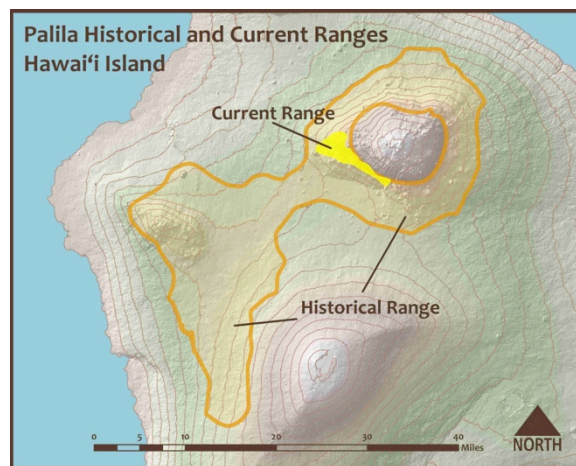
BACKGROUND

The high-elevation forest of Mauna Kea is a forest like no other. Unlike the wet tropical forests typically associated with Hawai'i, this forest is very dry because of its elevation on the slopes of Mauna Kea—above the rain producing clouds. At this elevation, not only is it dry, but in winter months, the native plants and animals have to cope with frost. Because of this unique climate in an otherwise tropical location, the plants and animals here have developed like nowhere else. One bird in particular, the palila, is found only on the southwestern slopes of Mauna Kea—nowhere else in the world! Unfortunately due to centuries of land transformation, they are listed as critically endangered, with only 2,000 left.



The critically endangered palila is found only on Mauna Kea.

To kick off the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel's 50th anniversary, the Hotel is committed to a new stewardship program for their guests and employees that directly benefit Hawai'i's exceptional natural areas. As the palila's forest home is the closest native forest on Mauna Kea to the Hotel, a collaborative project with the MKFRP and Hawai'i Forest and Trail is proposed.



COLLABORATORS

The **MY MAUNA KEA** stewardship program is a collaborative initiative of the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel, MKFRP, and Hawai'i Forest and Trail. The program aims to support MKFRP's restoration efforts of Mauna Kea's high-elevation dry forest while at the same time strengthening the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel's commitment to Hawai'i's natural and cultural heritage.

MAUNA KEA BEACH HOTEL



Philanthropist, financier, and conservationist Laurance Rockefeller opened the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel in 1965. After a site visit to Kauna'oa beach, he looked upslope at the towering summit of Mauna Kea and was inspired to create a great hotel that reflected the spirit of this special place. It is with this same spirit that the hotel continues Mr. Rockefeller's legacy of stewardship.

MAUNA KEA FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT (MKFRP)



MKFRP protects and restores the high-elevation dry forest of Mauna Kea. In particular, the forest restoration goals are to improve and expand the critically endangered forest bird, the palila's (*Loxioides bailluei*), forest habitat. One of the main aspects of MKFRP's work on the mountain is to actively restore areas where forest has been displaced at two areas: Pu'u Mali

Restoration Area and Ka'ohe Restoration Area. This work includes seed collection, seed processing, seedling growth in the nursery, outplanting, and follow up monitoring and watering. MKFRP is a project of the State of Hawai'i's Division of Forestry and Wildlife, but is funded through grants and donations. Because of this, volunteers are an integral part of the work MKFRP does.

HAWAI'I FOREST AND TRAIL



The award winning eco tour and adventure company Hawai'i Forest and Trail was founded by Robert Pacheco in 1994. Their team of naturalists takes visitors all across Hawai'i Island to experience Hawai'i's endangered natural and cultural areas. Forest & Trail routinely takes visitors to Mauna Kea's high-elevation dry forest, interpreting and bird watching.

MY MAUNA KEA

At the center of the **MY MAUNA KEA** program is the connection between the guests and employees of the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel and the fragile native forest



Volunteering is a great way to connect with the real Hawai'i.

on the slopes of Mauna Kea. This connection not only deepens the guests' experience but also expands and grounds the support for and understanding of restoring and preserving Hawai'i's native forests.

There are several options and activities that can be folded into the **MY MAUNA KEA** program. Supporters can choose how they want to be a part of the stewardship: through monetary contributions or direct volunteerism. And within these methods of support are several options of acting on that support.

MONETARY SUPPORT

- **Adopt an Acre** – Supporters can choose to underwrite the restoration of an entire acre at MKFRP's Pu'u Mali Restoration Area. The area will be GPS catalogued and supporters can track their acre over time via Google Earth and the **MY MAUNA KEA** program website. Each acre is planted with approximately 1,000 seedlings and marked with a custom sign showcasing their commitment. An underwriting of \$10,000 will pay for seedlings, tools and equipment, and planting and maintenance labor for each acre. Other increments of support can also be available (i.e., 1/4-acre for \$2,500 or 2-acres for \$20,000, or even one hectare for \$25,000 for metric-minded supporters)



Pu'u Mali Restoration Area on the remote northern slope of Mauna Kea is being reforested for future palila habitat.

- **Adopt a Tree** – Supporters can choose to “buy a tree” (figuratively speaking) in support of the restoration. There are two tiers that are offered:



Seedlings can be sponsored and their locations tracked..

- 1) **“PLANT A TREE”** - \$10 certificates that pay for a seedling and its planting at MKFRP’s Ka’ohe Restoration Area. Donor names will be included on the **MY MAUNA KEA** program website.
- 2) **“PLANT A MEMORY”** - \$20 certificates that pay for the planting as well as an individual plant tag with a custom message and a GPS point once the seedling is planted that can be tracked on the **MY MAUNA KEA** program website.

- **Adopt a Trail** – Supporters can choose to be a part of the Palila Forest Discovery Trail, a self-guided interpretive trail that guides visitors through the heart of the palila’s high-elevation dry forest home. Monetary support builds and maintains the trail in 100-ft segments at \$100 denominations. Supporters’ names would be displayed at the trailhead sign and on the **MY MAUNA KEA** program website.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

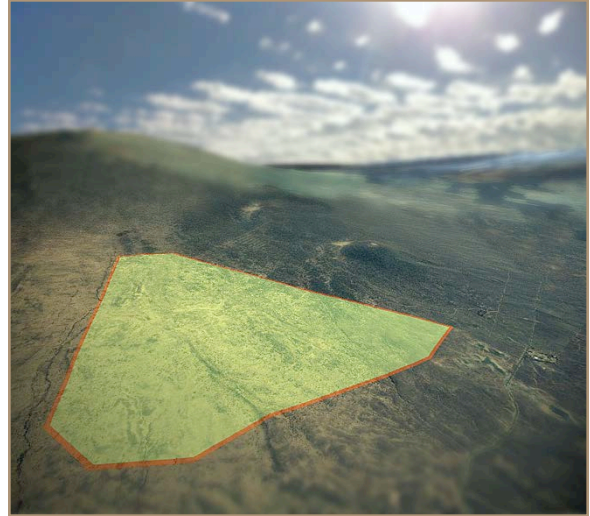


Volunteers are an integral part of MKFRP’s restoration effort.

Another method of support is through direct volunteer service. In partnership with Hawai’i Forest and Trail, volunteer supporters will be transported to the Ka’ohe Restoration Area for an all-day experience of bird watching (hopefully spotting a palila or two!), an interpretive hike through their forest home, and a volunteer work project. Hawai’i Forest and Trail’s Dryland Birding Adventure tour serves as the interpretative basis by transporting and leading volunteers through the forest. MKFRP will then lead the volunteer activity.

- **Adopt an Acre** – The **MY MAUNA KEA** program will have a specific area designated within the Ka’ohe Restoration Area. During the months of March and April, volunteers would plant native seedlings in this area. In subsequent years, volunteers would replace any dead seedlings and maintain healthy seedlings as well as continue to fill out the parcel. As the parcel fills up, additional “acres” can be added. During other times of the year, volunteers would assist in collecting seeds. These seeds will eventually be used in the

following year's outplantings. Additionally, volunteers may assist in collecting green māmane pods to be used in the feeding of captive-reared palila at the Keauhou Bird Conservation Center near Volcano.



Ka'ōhe Restoration Area on the southwestern slope of Mauna Kea is near the old Saddle Road and palila habitat.

TYPICAL “ADOPT AN ACRE” VOLUNTEER WORK DAY

- 8:00 AM Depart Mauna Kea Beach Hotel.
- 9:00 AM Arrive at Kilohana Checking Station. Introductions, restrooms, and overview of day.
- 9:45 AM Explore and learn about the forest, birding along the way.
- 11:30 AM Lunch.
- 12:30 PM Volunteer planting trees, collecting seeds, or trailwork.
- 3:00 PM Photos and mahalos. Head back to Mauna Kea Beach Hotel.
- 3:45 PM Arrive at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel.

- **Adopt a Trail** – Volunteers in the **MY MAUNA KEA** program will assist in the building and maintenance of the proposed Palila Nature Trail. Initially, tasks will be to assist building the trail, installing informational signs, and planting native species along the trail. In subsequent visits, volunteers would maintain the trail by clearing brush, cleaning informational signs, and continuing to plant along the trail. This is also the time when Mauna Kea Beach Hotel staff will engage with the program.



An interpretive trail takes bikers into the palila's home.

PROMOTION

The My Mauna Kea program is a multifaceted program with several complementary support options and ways for supporters to stay engaged.

WEBSITE

A mini website, www.MyMaunaKea.com, will be the main hub of the program. This is where supporters can learn more about the many ways they can support the restoration of Mauna Kea's high-elevation forest. This is also the clearinghouse for follow up and progress information at the restoration sites. Monetary supporters will see their names displayed as donors with maps to the adopted trees and acres. Volunteer supporters will see the progress of their work area as other volunteers contribute to the cause.

SOUVENIR ITEMS

To further the supporters' connection to Mauna Kea, a line of custom **MY MAUNA KEA** items will be offered at the Hotel's gift shop. A portion of the proceeds from their sale will help to continue restoration efforts. These include, but are certainly not limited to:

- *Timeless Magic* Mauna Kea Beach Hotel 50th Anniversary book (\$5 from each sale is donated to MKFRP's restoration efforts)
- Plush palila with song.
- Signed prints of Kathleen Kam's palila mural design
- Post cards of Kathleen Kam's palila mural design
- Stainless steel water bottles with a special palila design
- "I ♥ Mauna Kea" t-shirts
- Palila-shaped earrings



Prints of Kathleen Kam's palila illustration are a perfect take-away.

CONCLUSION

The **MY MAUNA KEA** program is a collaborative forest stewardship program focusing on restoring the high-elevation dry forest of Mauna Kea. With the Mauna Kea Forest Restoration Project's experience in restoring this area, Hawai'i Forest and Trail's knowledge of visitor interpretation, and the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel's deep commitment to conserving Hawai'i's natural heritage, the **MY MAUNA KEA** program is a win-win for all, especially the palila and its forest home.



CONTACT:

Vicky Kometani, Mauna Kea Beach Hotel
808-882-5155; ykometani@maunakeabeachhotel.com

Jackson Bauer, Mauna Kea Forest Restoration Project
808-756-7910; jmbauer@hawaii.edu

Rob Pacheco, Hawai'i Forest and Trail
808-334-9555, rob@hawaii-forest.com