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NEWS RELEASE

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HTA ANNOUNCES 2010 NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM AWARDS

HONOLULU—The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state agency for tourism, has announced the selection of 27 community-based projects throughout the state to receive funding in 2010 through its Natural Resources Program (see attached list of programs).

“Visitors from all over the world continue to choose Hawai'i as a premier travel destination to experience the natural beauty of our islands and the aloha spirit of our people,” said Mike McCartney, HTA's President and Chief Executive Officer. “HTA remains committed to supporting product development initiatives that showcase Hawai'i's unique tourism product.”

HTA's Natural Resources Program began in 2002 in response to a legislative mandate, stated within Chapter 201B of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, that directs the HTA to provide at least \$1 million annually to assist projects and programs that support efforts to manage, improve, and protect Hawai'i's natural environment and areas frequented by visitors.

Projects selected must also aim to address the goal identified in the *Hawai'i Tourism Strategic Plan: 2005-2015 (TSP)* for the Natural Resources Strategic Initiative: “to respect, enhance and perpetuate Hawai'i's natural resources to ensure a high level of satisfaction for residents and visitors.” Programs were chosen by the HTA with guidance from its Natural Resources Advisory Group (NRAG).

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority was created in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with our economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. For more information, please visit www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org.

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Organization	Project Title	Description
Community Work Day Program	Lā'ie Wetland Restoration Project	A two-year restoration process in partnership with the County of Maui, government agencies, residents, community sponsors, and visitors to preserve and enhance one of the last wetland areas in South Maui including botanical inventory, baseline water quality assessment, litter and invasive species removal, native planting, and periodic water quality monitoring.
County of Kaua'i, Office of Economic Development	Po'ipū Beach Restoration Study for Po'ipū Beach Park	A long term comprehensive restoration study to determine the feasibility, sand sources, necessary volumes, short and long terms costs, and overall logistics of long term beach restoration of Po'ipū Beach including recommendations for the disappearing tombolo which is causing safety issues and a plan of action to mitigate future beach erosion for Po'ipū Beach.
DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Conservation and Education in the Waimea District of Kaua'i	Enhancements to the Ku'ia Natural Area Reserve, Nāpali Kona Forest Reserve, Mānā Forest Reserve, and Kōke'e State Parks in the Waimea District of Kaua'i by repairing trails and boardwalks, installing educational displays, eradicating invasive weeds, planting native and endangered species, and organizing volunteer conservation activities and tours.
DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Miconia Surveys and Control in the Ko'olau Range	Ground surveys on 500 acres of the miconia seed bank in the Mānoa watershed and control of the highly invasive tree, <i>miconia calvescens</i> , the greatest threat to Hawai'i's forests by hand-pulling young miconia, cutting older trees and treating them with herbicide, and removing any flowers or seeds to prevent them from sprouting.
Friends of D.T. Fleming Arboretum at Pu'u Mahoe	Pāhana Ho'ōla - Seeds of Hope	An educational public outreach program that promotes stewardship of the environment through monthly tours of the D.T. Fleming Arboretum, propagation workshops, volunteer field work training, volunteer workdays, and public presentations, and provides up-to-date educational materials through FOFA's website and annual newsletter.
Friends of the Future	Waipi'o Valley Education & Information Officer Program	An educational and information program led by trained staff at the Waipi'o Valley Lookout to welcome visitors, share knowledge about the history and significance of the valley, increase awareness of the fragile nature of the valley's ecosystem, and provide safety information about visiting the area. A credit card kiosk will be installed to allow visitors to the site to make donations to support the program.
Garden Island Resource Conservation & Development, Inc.	Kōke'e Resource Conservation Program-Roadside Work	A Conservation program to remove incipient weeds on the road that accesses Waimea Canyon & Kōke'e State Parks by using herbicide and/or pulling. Two staff and enlisted volunteers will walk the road three days each quarter to prevent the incipients from invading the native forest and crowding out endemic and indigenous plants.
Hawai'i Ecotourism Association	Development of a Certification Program for Ecotourism Operators	A certification program for ecotourism operators utilizing natural resource areas throughout the State to educate them on certification process and best management practices for the responsible use of natural resources. Ten key stakeholders to be members of HEA's certification panel will be trained and free certification workshops and public forums will be held statewide.

Organization	Project Title	Description
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association	Pana'ewa Zoo Discovery Forest	Development of a three-acre Discovery Forest that consists of a one-acre native forest demonstrating native, cultural, medicinal, and understory plants and aviaries with native Hawaiian birds, and a two-acre plantation forest demonstrating high value hardwoods and agro-forestry. Volunteers will be recruited to help remove invasive species, clear trails, and plant native species. A new Discovery Forest brochure will be created.
Hawai'i Wildlife Fund	East Maui Makai Watch - Nahiku	A ma kai watch program to re-establish an education station at Ulaino Road to protect "Blue Pool" that will be manned by rangers, residents and volunteers of the area. An internet search will be conducted to identify sites that refer visitors to "Blue Pool" and the host of these sites will be contacted with information about the status and ecology of the area and key Hawaiian values.
Hui Aloha Kīholo	Kīholo State Park Interpretive Ranger and Visitor Information Program	Interpretive rangers will provide interpretive and regulatory information to visitors and coordinate volunteer projects that restore and enhance the quality of the natural resources at Kīholo State Park. Basic directional and interpretive signage to inform visitors about wayfinding and proper use of Kīholo and waste management stations (rubbish and recycling bins) will be installed in the park.
Hui o Ko'olaupoko	Ka'elepulu Storm Water Retrofit	Implementation of two Best Management Practice treatments to address polluted runoff before it enters into Ka'elepulu Stream in Kailua by installing 2,500 square feet of pervious concrete over existing fill and a bio-swale/rain garden to filter polluted runoff. Educational interpretive signage on site will be installed to increase public awareness of watershed issues and enhance visitor experience.
Ka 'Ahahui o Ka Nāhelehele	Po'o Ho'oho'o Mauka Nēnē Habitat Enhancement Project	Replacement of an outdated livestock fence of the protected habitat for Hawai'i endangered State bird, the nēnē, with an ungulate-proof barrier that will protect the 21 acre habitat and allow additional planting of native upper elevation forage plants. Interpretive signage for the increased protection of nēnē as well as increased visitor understanding of the birds and their habitat will also be installed.
Ke 'Aupuni Lōkahi, Inc.	Ala Pālā'au	Development of a one-half mile trail in Pālā'au State Park to restore native forest habitat and rare species, and provide interpretation and education of these unique natural and cultural resources. Major tasks include developing the native Hawaiian cultural component, seed collection and propagation, curriculum development, and educational outreach within the local community and schools.
Mālama na Honu	Mālama nā Honu Education and Conservation Project	A volunteer based guardians program at Lāniakea Beach to protect the honu against inadvertent harassment by placing red ropes around basking honu and providing beachgoers with education on the honu's past plight, its comeback, and how to protect the honu. An educational outreach coordinator leads and schedules the volunteers, and coordinates volunteer training and community outreach programs at public events around O'ahu.

Organization	Project Title	Description
Moanalua Gardens Foundation	Kamananui (Moanalua) Valley Improvements	Improvements to the newly opened Kamananui Valley including removal of invasive species, old signs and markers, site preparation, and installation of a new entry gate and educational interpretative signs at historic and cultural sites along the Kamananui Valley Road Trail to enhance the hiking experience for residents and visitors and to add a measure of security for all users.
Nā'ālehu Main Street	Pavilion at Na'ohulelua Historical Garden	Support for a pavilion with meeting space, mini-kitchen and bathroom at the Na'ohulelua Historical Garden, and a place to house a collection of native Hawaiian plants tended by a group of volunteers, the only such collection in the Ka'ū District. The pavilion is key to attracting tourists who pass through en route to the volcano, with an added educational opportunity for visitors to learn about native plants at the garden.
National Tropical Botanical Garden	Lāwa'i Kai Protection Initiative	A proactive approach to safeguard the restored ecological integrity of Lāwa'i Kai to create a true ahupua'a-based management strategy that integrates and balances the management of the cultural, terrestrial, aquatic and marine resources. Main tasks include assembly of a resource advisory committee, development of the Lāwa'i Kai Management Plan, continued revegetation and control of invasive species, and public education.
Pacific Whale Foundation	Onsite Coral Reef Naturalist Program	An environmental education station at Uluā Beach, Wailea, led by a professional naturalist and volunteers to provide free information about the reef in a friendly and personalized manner to help visitors understand, appreciate and fully enjoy Maui's unique marine environment.
Pacific Whale Foundation	Volunteering on Vacation	A voluntourism program that provides free, year-round opportunities for visitors to preserve Hawai'i's natural resource, enhance their vacation experience, interact with residents, and gain a deeper understanding of Hawai'i's environment and host culture. Reusable tote bags, brochures, and a website will be used as marketing tools for this program.
Po'ipū Beach Foundation	Kōloa Heritage Trail	Continued bi-monthly maintenance of trail markers at sites of significant cultural, historical, geographical and environmental interest at Kōloa Heritage Trail, and edit of website, and edit and re-print of the brochure to protect the current trail, provide interpretive information, and provide a cultural experience for both the resident and visitor communities, increasing awareness of and respect for this district's unique history.
Save Honolulu Coalition	Project Port-a-Potty (Mālama Honolulu)	Rental of temporary toilets to address concerns for sanitary conditions and protection of natural resources at Honolulu Bay, a heavily used recreational area by residents and visitors. This one year port-a-potty service will be accompanied by quarterly community clean-ups, daily trash removal, and educational outreach for visitors to Honolulu Bay.

Organization	Project Title	Description
The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)	The Coral Reef Sustainable Destination Model: Promoting the Hawaiian Values of Lōkahi and Laūlima through Marine Resource Conservation	A coral reef sustainable destination model that provides education, outreach and leadership of coral preservation so that local stakeholders, marine recreation providers, Hawai'i visitors, and key tourism businesses adopt best environmental practices. Training workshops to inform and empower volunteers, youth groups, and marine operators, will be conducted throughout the year. Additional Reef Etiquette signs will also be installed throughout the State.
The Kohala Center	The Kahalu'u Bay Project	An ongoing educational and outreach program at the Kahalu'u Bay to inform users about appropriate ways of enjoying the bay without negatively affecting the coral reef environment. Program includes ongoing training for volunteers and visitor industry staff, presentations to groups working to preserve other oceanfront sites, expansion of water quality monitoring, and upgrades to the park facilities.
The Nature Conservancy	Restoring Nearshore Fisheries and Coral Reefs at Ka'ūpūlehu, Hawai'i Island	A collaborative multi-stakeholder process to establish a biologically resilient marine reserve to revitalize traditional fishing practices specific to Ka'ūpūlehu ahupua'a. Main tasks include design of the marine reserve, training community members to monitor resource health, document current uses, report illegal activity, and educate visitors and residents about responsible practices in a culturally appropriate manner.
University of Hawai'i	Building Community Capacity Through Education & Outreach To Address Land-Based Pollution In Maunaloa Bay	A campaign called <i>Every Drop Counts</i> for East O'ahu to help restore the impaired water body of Maunaloa Bay, which supports abundant local recreation and tourism industry, with two startup elements: community workshops to teach residents how to install residential Best Management Practices and school program for teaching students about storm water management.
Vacationland Hawai'i Community Association	Marine Resources Protection Program	An ongoing protection program at the Wai'ōpae Marine Life Conversation District with a trained visitor information officer onsite on all weekends and major holidays to greet visitors with aloha, manage vehicle access, provide information on proper reef etiquette and safety, and uphold private residential rights and peace. This program also includes volunteer education and outreach and litter clean-up projects.