

Engaging Local Communities in Community-Based Marine Management

SUMMARY REPORT 2015-2017



The Nature Conservancy and leaders from the Maui Nui Makai Network led a community event at Olowalu, Maui to gauge interest in conservation action planning. *Photo © TNC*

This work was supported by The Nature Conservancy under cooperative agreement award #NA15NOS4820097 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA, the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Engaging Local Communities in Community-Based Marine Management Summary Report: 2015-2017

Introduction

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i (TNC) partnered with the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and the State of Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) to engage local communities in marine management planning and implementation. In addition to the communities that TNC already works with through the Maui Nui Makai Network, Kai Kuleana Network, and Hui Loko (fishpond network), this CRCP partnership supported TNC in engaging three specific communities, as they each took initial steps towards establishing formal rule-making processes for their sites. It is a privilege to work with the communities of Lāna'i, Olowalu and Ho'okena as they address needs that resonate not only in their places, but across the State of Hawai'i: to restore and maintain the vital components of island environments and communities.

Island of Lāna'i

The Nature Conservancy worked with residents of Lāna'i through a collaboration with Maunalei Ahupua'a CMMA to provide technical assistance and consultation for community-based conservation. With the support of this CRCP partnership and other funding sources, TNC helped to facilitate a series of planning meetings that resulted in the *Lāna'i Island Makai Draft Community*



Sol Kahoohalahala of Maunalei Ahupua'a CMMA. Photo © TNC

Action Plan (CAP). The CAP was written by, and for, the residents of Lāna'i and those who care for the island. It identifies the targets and threats for the makai (ocean/coastal) resource future of Lāna'i. By creating and committing to this plan, this community joined conservation-minded groups around the world working to buffer coastal resources against climate change and other threats. The plan is an opportunity to create an ocean management framework that recognizes and values local subsistence fishing, tourism, economic growth, Hawaiian culture, and Lāna'i's marine ecosystem.

In February 2017, TNC staff met with Sol Kaho'ohalahala, the head of Maunalei Ahupua'a CMMA, to review the draft version of the Lāna'i CAP and finalize it for upcoming meetings with the planning group, landowner and the Lāna'i community. TNC's Dr. Alison Green also met with Mr. Kaho'ohalahala to provide consultation on the CAP and reef resilience planning for Lana'i. Next steps will be for Maunalei CMMA to get input and comments on the CAP from the State of Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources, community members and partners. The CAP review is the first in a series of steps that DAR asked this group to embark upon as they research and solicit community input on the types of fishing rules that could be considered by DAR for the island of Lana'i.

Olowalu, Maui

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) assisted with an initial meeting in Olowalu, Maui on January 24, 2016, to build community engagement and participation in the management of this important coastal area. The event was organized by Maui Nui Makai Network members Ekolu Lindsey and Sol Kaho'ohalahala, who used techniques that TNC had taught them in 2010-2011 during a Conservation Action Planning Train-the-Trainers workshop. The event was targeted towards individuals who live in or have ancestral ties to Olowalu, and was designed to gauge interest in conservation action planning and introduce attendees to a participatory framework by which they could bring people together to actively manage a marine area.

The event was attended by 50 people and was held as part of a one-man canoe race and a visit by one of the Polynesian Voyaging Society's double hulled voyaging canoes, Hikianalia. The organizers also promoted the event widely on social media. Mr. Lindsey led a training and activities called a Participatory Aquatic Resource Transect, including a review of a 60-year time series of aerial photos. Mr. Kaho'ohalahala led a training and talk-story for a historic timeline process with long-time Hawaiian family members and kūpuna (elders) from Olowalu. He also took time to explain to the large gathering about the importance and responsibility of protecting customary knowledge, and how some things discussed in the group may not be appropriate to freely share.

TNC received positive feedback on the event, and several people expressed the usefulness of the participatory framework. While the event was well-received, there has not been a level of interest of community members or groups to begin a formal Conservation Action Plan. TNC continues to engage with Olowalu community members who attend the Maui Nui Makai Network meetings, and the TNC team is available to provide more individualized technical assistance when it is needed.

Ho'okena, Hawai'i Island: TNC engaged with the community of Ho'okena through the community group Kama'aina United to Protect the 'Āina (KUPA) and the Kai Kuleana Network. KUPA has a co-management agreement with the County of Hawai'i to perpetuate cultural and natural resources of Ho'okena. As a step towards the development of management initiatives in partnership with the State, TNC encouraged the community to host a West Hawai'i Fisheries Council meeting at Ho'okena, which TNC staff attended. KUPA and local residents are working on a community-based subsistence fishing area process, meeting with fisherman to identify their needs and opportunities, with a focus on the 'opelu fishery, a nearshore, meso-pelagic fish traditionally harvested/farmed for food. KUPA is interested in refining the rules they wrote several years ago and building support within the fishing community of their area.