

PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA

STATEMENT
SUBSISTENCE TAKING OF THE HONU
(THE SEA TURTLE) BY NATIVE HAWAIIANS

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA RECOGNIZES THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN RIGHT TO TAKE HONU AS SUPPORTED BY OUR TRADITION, INCULDING THE OLI (OR CHANTS) AND THE MO'OLELO (OR LEGENDS) OF OUR ANCESTORS AND KUPUNA (OR ELDERS) TODAY

This tradition has evolved and developed a special relationship that the native Hawaiian today has with the honu. Chants, and the hula performed, and the many stories illustrate that the honu is an honored figure in Hawaiian thought. The following are a few examples:

- . The fishing god A'ia'i creates ko'a (fishing grounds) by constructing various structures throughout the islands. On Lana'i, Ka'ena Point is marked, and the honu are attracted to the waters of Hawai'i.
- . There are various interpretations of the legend of the hero Kana, who rescues his mother Hina from a Moloka'i Chief. Keauleinakahi, a monster turtle, is defeated first. Kana then competes with the hill called Haupu, which also is a gaint turtle named Kahonunuimaeleka. Kana breaks the turtle's flippers and crushes its back to pieces. These pieces become the turtles today in Hawaiian waters.
- . An unpublished Ka'u family chant and hula describe the honu as leading the people of the area to fresh water, and becomes the aumakua (family god) for the people there.
- . From an oli commemorating Pele's return journey from Tahiti, she feasts on honu at Polihua.
- . A Kauai hula pahu and the legend to which it belongs, tells of the sacred chief Kalani Kamanomano who is a kapua (demi-god) turtle with a horny shelled back. Kaahumanu, the kapu wife of Kamehameha I, is described in the same words as are in this chant, her rank and descent from the turtle god Kalani Kamanomano.
- . Many more chants and stories talk about the honu as as aumakua. The Pelekunu people would eat all but the honu with white spots on their shell, for these were their ancestors. From Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island, there are stories of honu aumakua who continue to lead fishermen to successful catches, who have provided for fishing families safety, and who have also been abused. Many stories heard today relate the apperance of the honu when called upon as a hoailona (physical sign).

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA IDENTIFIES PLACES THROUGHOUT HAWAI'I WHICH ARE NAMED FOR THE HONU, OR WHICH KUPUNA REMEMBER AS AREAS FREQUENTED BY THE HONU - BEACHES WHERE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND THE HONU HAVE BEEN FURTHER ESTABLISHED

. Some of these are: Honuapo at Ka'u, Hawai'i; Ka'ena and Polihua on Lana'i; Honukanaenae on Kaho'lawe, Haupu and Pelekunu on Moloka'i; and Keoneoi'o on Maui.

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA REAFFIRMS THE CUSTOMARY PRACTICES OF TAKING HONU

. Some of these are: the methods described by A.D. Kahaulelio in 1902 at Polihua - stepping on the flippers and turning the turtle over, or off the reefs - riding the turtle as soon as it begins to dive and flipping it over to surface and load, or as was done by Natives of Bora Bora living in Lahaina in 1850 or in Kona - by spearing; the method still used in Ka'u - hooking the neck or flippers from the cliff areas at night; and the method talked about by the people of Pelekunu - by lasso.

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA REAFFIRMS THE TRADITIONAL USES FOR HONU

. Some of these are: when there is a need to eat turtle meat; on occasion when determined by religious ceremony to the god Kanaloa; for medicinal purposes including limu honu for ulcers when pounded with 'alaea, or for burning eyes that come from fishing when pounded with popolo berry; and for the oil that is used as a vehicle mixed with noni or kukui for dermatitis or as a penetrant for lomi lomi; or for fish hooks and olena scrappers.

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA PROTESTS THE FACT THAT THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN ARE BLAMED FOR THE DEPLETION OF THE HONU SPECIES BECAUSE OF THEIR TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AND ADVOCACY OF THIS RIGHT. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHORELINE AREAS AND BEACHES AND COMMERCIALIZATION FOR "TURTLE STEAK", LIKE THE BOMBING OF KAHO'OLAWE, HAVE NOT BEEN HAWAIIAN PRACTICES, AND HAVE PROBABLY CAUSED MORE DAMAGE IN DISRUPTING THE ECOLOGY AND LIFE CYCLE OF THE HONU THAN THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN TAKING OF THE HONU FOR SUBSISTENCE PURPOSES

• THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA AGREES WITH PROPER MANAGEMENT OF THE HONU AS A TRADITIONAL RESOURCE. SINCE THE ABOLITION OF THE KAPU IN 1819, AND THE FAILURE OF THE KONOHIKI, TERRITORY, AND NOW STATE OF HAWAI'I TO REGULATE THE EXPLOITATION OF THE HONU BY NON HAWAIIANS, WE SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A GENERAL KAPU, AND WILL HO'OMALU THE HONU FOR REASONS AND PURPOSES STATED ABOVE

• FINALLY, THE PROTECT KAHO'OLAWE 'OHANA MAKES NOTICE OF YOUR FAILURE TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT TIME FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT OR TO SPONSOR AN ETHNO-HISTORICAL SEARCH, BY NATIVE HAWAIIANS SCHOLARS, THAT WOULD DOCUMENT THE PACIFIC ISLAND AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO THE HONU. WE OBJECT TO YOUR HEARING PROCEDURES, AS THEY ARE NOT REFLECTIVE OF THE OPINIONS OF MORE RURAL COMMUNITIES (KA'U, HANA, AND EVEN NI'IHAU), AND THE INCONSISTANT TREATMENT OF NATIVE HAWAIIANS WHEN COMPARED TO THE RIGHTS OF NATIVE AMERICANS AND THOSE OF THE PACIFIC TRUST TERRITORY ISLANDERS

• IT IS IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE THE HONU FOR THOSE WHO HAVE THEM AS AUMAKUA OR WISH TO REESTABLISH THIS ONCE WORKING RELATIONSHIP IN THEIR FAMILY, AND FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO EXERCISE THEIR TRADITIONAL FAMILY FISHING PRACTICES. THE IMPORTANCE OF RETAINING THESE PRACTICES AND RIGHTS (OR THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCH) IS THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO RETAIN THE LIVING KNOWLEDGE OF ANY CULTURE