



Hawai'i & Palmyra

2025 IMPACT REPORT

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Kaulike Pono, Ho'onu'a Pono

Restoring Balance, Nurturing Abundance

JULY 2024-JULY 2025

MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS



Aloha mai kākou. Guided by our mission to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends, at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) we advance bold, collaborative and culturally grounded conservation across Hawai'i and Palmyra. Our efforts in fiscal year 2025 (FY2025)—which runs from July 2024–July 2025—reaffirmed the power of collective stewardship and the profound impact we can achieve when we work in partnership to care for the 'āina that sustains us.

All this is made possible through your generosity and partnership.

With community at the heart of our efforts, we strengthened relationships with local organizations, lineal descendants, cultural practitioners and government partners to steward nearshore coastlines and rainforests. Together, we continued restoring native forests from mauka to makai, enhanced the resilience of coastal reefs and fisheries, and protected threatened and endangered species that are essential to Hawai'i's ecological and cultural heritage. These achievements reflect not only conservation progress, but also the trust and shared purpose that define our partnerships.

Science continues to guide our strategies, helping us better understand and address the challenges ahead. At TNC, climate science, biodiversity science and Indigenous science are braided together and paired with Indigenous knowledge and leadership to co-develop durable conservation solutions that serve culture and community. This integration strengthens our ability to restore ecosystems, uplift local stewardship and ensure that conservation benefits both nature and people across the Hawaiian Islands, Palmyra and beyond. Our efforts also contribute to TNC's global goals for addressing the intertwined crises of biodiversity loss and climate change around the world.

We extend our deepest gratitude to you—our donors, partners, staff and volunteers. Your dedication fuels this work. Your support enables us to protect what is precious, restore what has been lost and envision a thriving future for generations to come.

Mahalo nui for standing with us in this vital mission to restore balance and nurture abundance.

Ulalia Woodside Lee, Executive Director
Brett MacNaughton, Board Chair

COVER: 'Ākohekohe in an 'ōhi'a at Waikamoi Preserve on Maui © Graham Talaber
OPPOSITE PAGE: Ka'ūpūlehu on Hawai'i Island © Kaikea Nakachi/Hui Kahuwai
THIS PAGE, INSET: Ulalia & Brett © Sean Marrs/TNC; RIGHT: Wainiha Preserve on Kaua'i © JC Watson/TNC



YOUR IMPACT:
RESTORING FORESTS

You're Revitalizing Native Forests

Across 84,000 acres on 13 TNC preserves and 18 managed areas, we restore and steward thriving native forest—some of the last in Hawai'i. With your support, we care for these remarkable places to safeguard globally unique birds and plants that are woven into Hawaiian culture and essential to forest health.

Our staff across the islands protect forests against invasive species and care for native plants and trees, using a holistic approach to restoration that brings cascading benefits. Native forests support native birds and other wildlife, healthy uplands are essential to healthy reefs, and thriving forests provide wai: fresh drinking water that enables life in these islands.

This year, we were thrilled to join with community members to plant native seeds at many of our preserves, growing both our native forests and our community. **For the first time in many years, the sounds of 'ōlelo Hawai'i are resounding through Waikamoi Preserve on Maui** as we partner with Aloha Pu'u Kukui and Kamehameha Schools to bring students into their native forest. In partnership with the Maui County Farm Bureau and Haleakalā Ranch, we also taught approximately a thousand second-grade school children how to make seed balls to help restore fire-scarred landscapes.

We are growing stewards of native forests by seeking and creating opportunities for people of Hawai'i to connect with them. Bringing keiki into the forest builds pilina and helps provide the children of Maui a sense of connection to and kuleana for their island home.

GROWING OUR FUTURE ▼

At our volunteer day at Kānepu'u Preserve on Lāna'i, more than 80 community members helped reintroduce native plants, including 'ilima, wiliwili and 'a'ali'i to the landscape.

We planted 3,000 māmane trees at higher elevation on Hawai'i Island to establish new forest bird habitat away from disease-carrying mosquitoes.

We hosted 60 Omidyar Fellows at Waikamoi Preserve who removed 1,300 fire-prone invasive trees and planted native species.



ABOVE: Aloha Pu'u Kukui © TNC
LEFT: Waikamoi Preserve on Maui © Zach Pezzillo



YOUR IMPACT:
SAFEGUARDING FRESH WATER

You're Protecting Hawai'i's Drinking Water

Our native forests make life possible in Hawai'i. When forests thrive, they gather rain and mist, which trickles into the 'āina and feeds the streams and aquifers that supply our fresh water, sustaining our communities, farms and reefs.

Invasive animals and weeds are among the most significant threat to our native forests and vital island watersheds, along with climate change. Invasive pigs, goats and deer can reduce native forests to bare dirt. As a result, rather than seeping into aquifers, rains and loose soils flow into streams, inundate communities living in makai areas and smother nearshore coral reefs. Impacts of climate change, such as drought and wildfire, exacerbate erosion and coastal flooding. To restore balance in our native forests and watersheds and ensure an abundant supply of fresh water, we have pioneered leading practices for native forest protection in Hawai'i, from more effectively managing invasive species to improving wildfire management. And we're seeing their success: **In FY2025, the 1,100-acre Halehāhā unit on Kaua'i's Alaka'i plateau is free of all invasive animals for the first time ever.**

These management approaches have been widely adopted by partners across more than 2.2 million acres—nearly half the land in Hawai'i—that are managed collectively through ten Watershed Partnerships. Today, we are working with partners to incorporate these best practices into the State's next five-year plan to address Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD), the existential threat to 'ōhi'a trees, which are the backbone of our native forests. Safeguarding 'ōhi'a means safeguarding both the biodiversity and cultural traditions that define Hawai'i. 'Ōhi'a trees are central to spiritual, medicinal, and hula practices. And they play a vital role in capturing water, supporting forest biodiversity and preventing erosion.

Research shows TNC's forest management practices prevent the spread of ROD. This is starkly illustrated at the boundary of our fenced and managed Kaiholena Preserve on Hawai'i Island. Outside the fenced area, invasive animals have spread ROD throughout neighboring lands with devastating results. But within the protected preserve, these beautiful native trees continue to show their fiery red blossoms, supporting native birds such as the 'apapane, 'ōma'o, 'īiwi, 'elepaio, and 'amakihi.

Volunteers repairing a fence in Kaiholena Preserve on Hawai'i Island © Evelyn Wight/TNC





You're Supporting Coastal Communities

In Hawai'i, coastal communities have been caring for their marine resources for centuries. Guided by Indigenous stewardship principles and inspired by partners across the Pacific, we have focused on a collaborative, community-led marine conservation model that currently engages three dozen community leaders, businesses, and other partners across three peer networks. Together with their communities, these leaders are advancing sustainable fisheries management, restoring traditional agriculture and aquaculture systems, improving ridge-to-reef conditions, and reducing land-based stressors on coastal ecosystems.

We celebrated a major milestone at the Ka'upulehu Marine Reserve, a 10-year rest area in North Kona on Hawai'i Island established to replenish fish abundance. To support community management of the reserve, TNC introduced FishPath, a decision-support tool originally created for government planning. We facilitated its adaptation into our user-friendly app FishKit, which places real-time fisheries data and automated analyses directly in the hands of community managers.

“This is the route to go: communities taking the lead in knowing what their resource looks like, knowing what it needs, and doing their best to manage the resource.”

Kaikea Nakachi, Hui Kahuwai member

We also **completed a seven-year collaboration with community nonprofit Hui Kahuwai, facilitating the development of their draft Ka'upulehu Fisheries Management Plan.** Using FishKit, the group assessed management options and trade-offs based on available fisheries data, enabling informed and culturally grounded decisions that enhance food security and protect the reef habitats essential to local fisheries. The draft plan, designed to support sustainable subsistence harvest while maintaining the gains from the rest area, was submitted to the State in 2025 and is expected to be finalized in 2026 to guide fishing practices and harvest once the area reopens. FishKit has since been shared with community groups at our Kiholo Preserve on Hawai'i Island, in East Maui, and across French Polynesia to support the development and evaluation of local fisheries management plans.

Thanks to support from TNC donors and decades of on-the-ground partnership, we are proud to support these processes and other community-led management efforts across the Hawaiian Islands and around the world. This work demonstrates that community leadership is not peripheral to conservation success; it is foundational.

Working on coastal surveys in West Hawai'i © John De Mello



You're Helping Secure \$100 Million Each Year for Hawai'i's Natural Resources

We were thrilled to be a part of the Care for 'Āina Now coalition, which helped secure the historic passage of the Green Fee (Act 96). With a 0.75% tax increase on lodging, the Green Fee will raise approximately \$100 million each year for the State of Hawai'i.

The passage of the Green Fee is the culmination of more than seven years of hard work by the Hawai'i legislature, TNC and hundreds of partners. The Green Fee creates a dedicated revenue stream to address environmental stewardship, climate and hazard resilience and sustainable tourism.

This funding will create new jobs, build long-term climate resilience statewide and fill critical gaps in caring for our lands and waters, particularly for community-led efforts. This noteworthy legislation ensures that visitors to our state each year can contribute directly to the place they love to visit, joining the 1.4 million residents of Hawai'i in embracing our kuleana to care for our 'āina.

“Mālama 'āina means to care for the land. But 'āina is more than land: 'āina is our identity, it's our sustenance, it's our spirit, it's the cultural foundation of who we are as Hawaiians.”

Sam 'Ohu Gon,
Senior Scientist and Cultural Advisor,
The Nature Conservancy,
Hawai'i & Palmyra



LEFT: Alaka'i Summit Plateau on Kaua'i © Grady Timmons/TNC
INSET: Gov. Josh Green signed Green Fee (Act 96) © Courtesy of Office of the Governor, State of Hawai'i



YOUR IMPACT:
CREATING SOLUTIONS

You're Creating Climate Solutions

In Hawai'i, coral reefs are central to our culture, economy, coastal security and way of life. Reef-related tourism contributes over \$1.2 billion to the Hawai'i state economy annually. Hawaiian reefs support more than \$13.4 million in nearshore fisheries each year and provide flood protection to people, jobs and property valued annually at more than \$836 million. But these reefs are under increasing threat.

As climate change intensifies coastal storms, TNC is taking unprecedented action in the United States by purchasing an insurance policy for Hawai'i's coral reefs. Thanks to the support of generous donors and our Climate Solutions Fund, this policy has been in place for three years to fund emergency coral reef repair and restoration following hurricane and severe tropical storm damage.

In October 2024, our Reef Insurance Program was awarded the Climate Solution Innovation Award at the Inaugural Climate Leadership Awards hosted by Climate Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Executive Collaborative. Being recognized with this innovation award underscores the immense value of coral reefs and the critical importance of addressing climate risk in Hawai'i.

To ensure Hawai'i can provide immediate reef repair not just after hurricanes, but also after severe storms or other events that damage coral, TNC founded the Hawai'i Emergency Reef Restoration (HERR) Network. The HERR Network developed statewide, rapid-response protocols and a trained, interdisciplinary coalition to immediately assess and repair coral reef damage. HERR Network partners rescued and attached more than 800 mature coral colonies to build reef resilience during fiscal year 2025.

Climate action requires the collective effort of all of us. We are proud to stand alongside our government, private sector, non-profit and community partners to respond to the increasing climate risks posed by increasingly severe storms. Together, we can support an equitable and climate-resilient future for Hawai'i.

REEF RESTORATION SUCCESSES ▼

We rigorously assessed four restoration techniques at two sites on Hawai'i Island and found that, compared to more widely used techniques, direct reattachment of whole corals is:

17x more cost effective, with up to a 94% survival rate



YOUR IMPACT:
SUPPORTING HEALTHY OCEANS

You're Restoring Coral Reefs

“Palmyra Atoll is a powerful example of what we can achieve when science, stewardship, and partnership come together. Palmyra's living laboratory demonstrates how balanced ecosystems thrive and provides tangible steps we can take to boost coral reef health in Hawai'i, across the Pacific, and around the world.”

Ed Case, Congressman

TNC purchased remote Palmyra Atoll in 2000 to protect its stunning coral reefs and the wide-open ocean surrounding it. Today, through the support of our donor community, TNC's purpose-built research station supports world-class science with modern laboratories, researcher housing, and fully equipped facilities, which has helped it become one of the most pristine ecosystems on Earth. Palmyra serves as a living laboratory where we develop and test strategies to help oceans, islands, and communities adapt to climate change.

Monitoring reef health across large areas has long been difficult and resource intensive. At Palmyra, we're addressing this challenge by leading an international consortium that is creating innovative drone and machine learning-based tools to track reef health over vast spatial and temporal scales. We are now sharing these breakthroughs with marine managers who need better, faster, and more scalable ways to safeguard critical reef ecosystems, with applications already expanding to Hawai'i, across the Pacific, and to reef systems worldwide.

Recent monitoring at Palmyra also delivered a rare message of hope. The atoll's reefs experienced a major warming event in 2023 that caused significant coral bleaching, which can lead to coral death. However, likely due to the absence of local stressors such as pollution and overfishing, many corals recovered, making Palmyra's reefs among the most resilient in the world.

Now, TNC and partners are working across the globe to study and protect heat-resistant corals, or "Super Reefs." Our Hawai'i team hosted a Super Reefs Open House at the Maui Ocean Center with partners Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Stanford University. During this event, community members were invited to learn about and participate in hands-on research to identify corals that may be better able to withstand ocean warming.



 YOUR IMPACT:
SAFEGUARDING SPECIES

You're Saving Endangered Species

In August 2024 we worked closely with the Sihek Recovery Project team to translocate nine critically endangered, extinct-in-the-wild Sihek chicks to Palmyra Atoll. Also known as the Guam kingfisher, these colorful birds are native to Guam, where they have deep cultural and spiritual significance to the Indigenous CHamoru people. In the 1940s the invasive brown tree snake was accidentally introduced to Guam and devastated native wildlife like Sihek, which became extinct in the wild.

For the first time in 40 years, Sihek are now flying free in the protected tropical forests of Palmyra Atoll. Thanks to decades of protection and restoration work made possible by TNC supporters, including the removal of invasive rats from the atoll, Palmyra was selected as the most ideal location on the planet to reintroduce these critically endangered birds to the wild. This is a powerful demonstration of our ability to create strongholds for nature and help resist extinction.

All nine birds are doing well, and eight have formed mating pairs and have laid eggs. Because the birds are still young, their eggs were not viable. But we expect chicks in the coming years!

This work is being done in partnership with the Sihek Recovery Project, which includes our California Island Resilience team, Hawai'i & Palmyra team, the Zoological Society of London, Guam's Department of Agriculture's Division of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This work was also done in consultation with Indigenous CHamoru people, who we hope through this project will be able to plan for the return of the Sihek to their island home in the years to come.

TOP: Hinanao, a male Sihek (Guam kingfisher), at Palmyra Atoll © Jonny Shepherd
INSET: A Sihek named Lānget © Mollie Ginther



 YOUR IMPACT:
GROWING YOUR LEGACY

Grow Your Legacy for Nature

“We proudly became Legacy Club members many years ago. It was surprisingly easy to give our children the priceless inheritance of a beautiful and healthy planet.”

Dr. Ken Robbins & Dr. Tana Burkert,
Honolulu, O'ahu

TOGETHER, WE CAN MĀLAMA HAWAII'Ī FOR GENERATIONS TO COME ▼

We know that conservation is a long-term proposition, and The Nature Conservancy will be here to see it through. We see a future where restoration of natural systems, rooted in science and Indigenous worldviews, creates a flourishing Hawai'i. We invite you to join us. TNC is here to be your philanthropic partner and a steward for your legacy. It's in our nature.

When you join The Legacy Club in Hawai'i, we plant a loulu palm tree in your honor. These graceful trees are the only native Hawaiian palms, and they have provided bright flowers, fruit and shelter for wildlife and people for centuries. Today, our legacy grove includes more than 175 beautiful loulu palm trees.

To speak with one of our planned giving specialists or to notify us of a legacy gift you have planned, contact LegacyHI@tnc.org.





TOP: Loulu palms in Ka'ū Preserve © TNC
INSET: Lori Lorenzo planting a loulu palm at Kona Hema Preserve on Hawai'i Island © TNC

Corporate Council for the Environment

In Hawai'i, the environment is the economy.

That's why these leading companies invest in The Nature Conservancy. They understand that our environment and economy are intrinsically linked: native forests collect fresh water, coral reefs protect our coastlines and provide nourishment, and native species are fundamental to a living Hawaiian culture.

Mahalo to members of the Corporate Council for the Environment for their commitment and generosity. To learn how your company can join the Corporate Council, please contact Lori Admiral at lori.admiral@tnc.org or (808) 587-6249.

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