

Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program Awards Grants to Seven Projects

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The Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry program, part of the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), has awarded funding to seven projects across the Hawaiian Islands. These projects aim to strengthen community connections with trees and promote urban forestry initiatives.

The selected projects will receive funding over the next three years to support various activities, including:

- **Community Education and Engagement:** Projects will engage community members in native forest restoration and tree planting initiatives.
- **Urban Forestry Management:** Projects will develop and implement urban forestry management plans and guidelines.
- **Fruit Tree Cultivation:** Projects will provide technical support to fruit tree growers to maximize yields and minimize waste.

DOFAW Administrator David Smith said, “The department recognizes the cultural, ecological and economic values that community trees provide. We are proud to partner on these projects and support expanded work to foster vitality in communities of trees and people.”

The awarded projects include:

- **Kaua’i:** Mālama Kaua’i’s Village Harvest project

- **Maui:** The County of Maui Department of Management's Maui Urban Forest Management Plan and Mālama Hāmākua Maui's Restoring the Hamakualoa Coast project
- **O'ahu:** The City and County of Honolulu's Updating Honolulu Rules, Regulations, and Practices for Urban and Community Forestry project and Kōkua Kalihi Valley's Ulu Koa project
- **Hawai'i Island:** Hiki Ola's Ola i ka 'Āina project and Waikōloa Dry Forest Institute's Waikoloa Community Forest Expansion project

"Commitment to urban and community forests is critical at all scales, from global to local," said Dr. Heather McMillen, Kaulunani program coordinator. "Federal funding for urban and community forestry projects has been at record levels and now the state of Hawai'i has stepped up to demonstrate its commitment here at home. People increasingly recognize the need to grow the forest around us—where we live, work, learn and play. Communities that are growing healthy trees understand that trees grow healthy communities."