

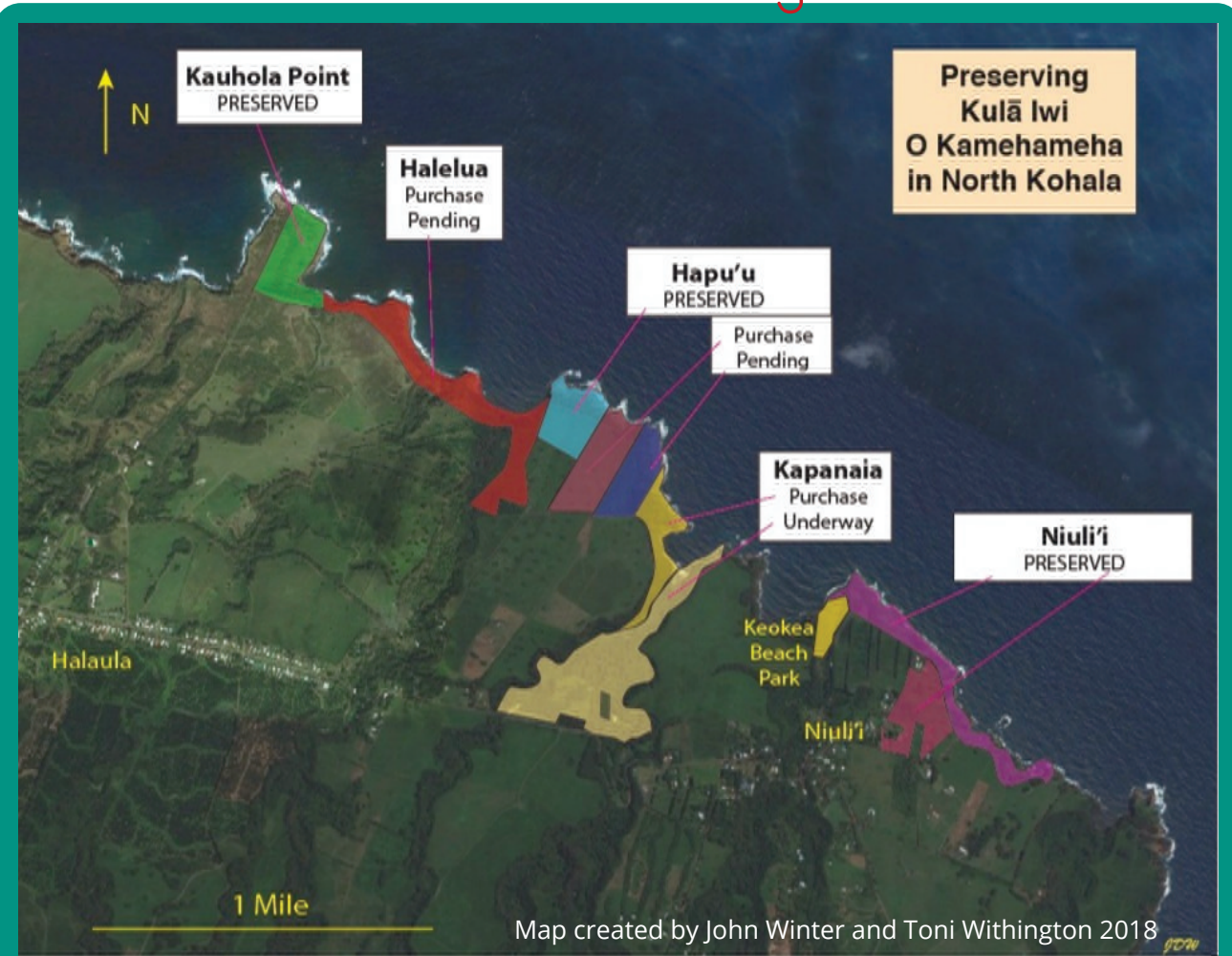
# Protecting The Homeland

of King Kamehameha



# Success

at keeping the coast open for the people of Kohala



The homeland of Hawaii's first king – the Kula Iwi O Kamehameha – spans over four miles of north coast land and is a favorite place for fishing, surfing and community recreation. Keeping it free of development has taken years of cooperative work.

**Kauhola Point** - The 28 acres of land at Lighthouse, were acquired in 2012 with money from the State Legacy Land Conservation Fund and local fundraising by Maika'i Kamakani O Kohala, the non-profit that holds title for the people of Kohala. The Trust for Public Lands helped arrange the purchase, which included a hefty discount by the land owners.

**Halelua** - This mile-long stretch of coast, whose 50 acres includes much of Halawa Gulch and the remnants of O'hau Heiau has been listed high on the County Priority List since 2012, and has been approved by the County Council. Negotiations are expected to start soon.

**Hapu'u** - The County of Hawaii purchased the first 22 acres using Open Space funding in March 2018. This is a very popular fishing site and home of Hale O Ka'ili Heiau. Two other parcels on the cliffs, totaling 42.5 acres, are also County Council approved and awaiting the beginning of negotiations.

**Kapanaiia** - Work has begun to find funding for 93.5 acres that includes Kapanaiia Bay, Kapalama Heiau and most of Walaohia Gulch. With County Council approval, the County is seeking matching State Legacy Land funding this year.

**Niuli'i** - The critical habitat between Keokea Park and Neue Bay was listed high on the County's Open Space Priority List for five years. In 2016 the owners donated the 48 acres of land to The Kohala Center, a Waimea-based non-profit dedicated to land stewardship, conservation of native species and educational activities.

The North Kohala coastline has always been a place for fishing, gathering and recreation. But economic pressure is changing that. The story of Kohala's local community effort to protect its access to the ocean spans almost 50 years and engulfs many generations of people. What started in the 1970s as protests against the zoning of large resort developments has evolved into the purchase and conversion of hundreds of acres of private land to open space held for the benefit of the people. Miles of coastal trails have been opened officially for access across private land. And as a consequence, the stewardship of the coast and its many historical and cultural treasures has become a legal as well as a continuing volunteer activity.

The 29-mile coast was populated seven hundred years ago, but archaeologists are just beginning to understand the treasure trove of knowledge about early Hawaiian life on the undeveloped leeward coast and the northern coast, which was the homeland of Kamehameha the Great.

Through the efforts of five Kohala community organizations in partnership with the County, State and Federal governments, two Hawaii land trusts and generous land owners, 390 acres of coastal land have been dedicated to open space in perpetuity during the last seven years. In addition to the donations of land owners, the partners raised a total of \$20.9 million to make the transfers happen.

The County's 2% Open Space Fund and the State's Legacy Land Preservation Program accounted for much of the funding. The Trust for Public Lands and Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, as well as federal grants, added to that. Private donors pitched in. But it was the cooperative work of the Kohala groups that kept focus on the goals, stated clearly in the North Kohala Community Development Plan, which was, and continues to be, the driving force. What's truly remarkable is that the accomplishments were achieved with all volunteer labor and little publicity.

The five groups are Malama Na Wahi Pana O Kohala, led by Fred Cachola; Ka Makani O Kohala Ohana -Kako'o, led by Kanoa Withington; Malama Kohala Kahakai, led by Gail Byrne Baber; Maika'i Kamakani O Kohala, led by Stephanie Naihe Laxton, and the Kohala Historic and Cultural Preservation Group, led by the late Mike Isaacs. Together they have annually nominated Kohala lands to the County's Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Commission (PONC) priority list since 2006. The current 2017 list of nine properties around the island has six coastal projects in North Kohala.

Also together they formed the non-profit corporation Kohala Lihikai, which has since its inception in 2012 stewarded many acres of land, with the vision of turning the entire coast into a recreational and educational resource for future generations of residents and visitors.



Kaiholena shore