

Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge

Trail Stabilization Project Update – May 18, 2016



The completion of a trail stabilization project and reopening of the Refuge was followed by a celebration that included hula and Hawaiian music.

This is the fourth and final article in a series of updates about a trail stabilization project at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge. The purpose of the project is to stabilize the walking trail between the visitor parking area and the Daniel K. Inouye Kīlauea Point Lighthouse.

“That’s a wrap!” The newly-stabilized trail to Kīlauea Point was completed earlier this month, an extensive project that began in mid-January. A number of associated components were also finished, allowing the Refuge to open back up to the public with some big improvements now in place at the wildlife refuge known for its dramatic vistas and wildlife viewing.

While new infrastructure remains largely out of view, the visiting public can enjoy a paved walkway from the Visitor Center driveway up to the bricks at the Point. The hillside and slope near the work site was planted with native Hawaiian plants provided by Garden Island Shrub and Turf Care, Inc. and Kīlauea Point Natural History Association, with students from Pu‘ukumu School helping to transplant the vegetation. With the native plants now filling the areas disturbed during the construction, the walk out to the Point and lighthouse has a whole new look and feel.

Completing the project within the proposed deadline was a bit tentative as rainstorms hit the island, delaying



Kumu hula, Naomi Yokotake, leads the group in song and dance.



A construction worker prepares the area near the lighthouse for final paving.

subgrading along the trail prior to the final paving. At times, a pump was needed to help remove and control standing rainwater along the subgrade cuts. The rain did, however, offer a chance to test the flow of water in and out of the new infiltration basin that will provide better drainage than in the past and reduce future damage to the trail.

In the interim during the storm, other tasks were done in preparation for the Refuge reopening, including general clean up, sign removal, smoothing of gravel surfaces, and the installation of curb stops and reflectors for the overflow parking areas.

The Refuge reopened to the public on May 3, followed by the Refuge's annual event, Lighthouse Day, on Saturday, May 7. Nearly 1,400 people attended this year's Lighthouse Day, a fee-free day held on the first Saturday each May. The event celebrates the initial lighting of the Daniel K. Inouye Kilauea Point Lighthouse in 1913 on May 1st, also known as "May Day" or "Lei Day."

book signing by Refuge volunteer and newly-published author, Hob Osterlund, with her book on Laysan Albatross titled, "Holy Mōlī!" The public celebration culminated with the lighting of the lighthouse at dusk.



Hob Osterlund signs copies of her new book, available through the Kilauea Point Natural History Association.



Students from Pu'ukumu School help with native planting along the trail.