

Background on the Hui Maka‘āinana O Makana:

In 1998, key members of the native community who had been discussing how to restore Hawaiian values and stewardship practices for some years, began the formal process of organizing into a group that could obtain IRS 501(c)(3) status. As they proceeded, they realized the need to be very clear and focused in their mission. After meeting for several months, they ultimately adopted the following mission statement:

The Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana is dedicated to perpetuating and teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of the natural and cultural resources that are located within the Hā‘ena State Park.

The Hui, recognizing the great potential that the Limahuli Garden Ahupua‘a Project offered them, chose to focus the efforts of this new organization on the land known today as Hā‘ena State Park. The Park is a very strategic location since it abuts the property owned by Limahuli Garden and runs contiguously to the ocean, making a complete *mauka – makai* (mountain to ocean) connection so critical in the concept of ahupua‘a. This ‘āina (land) is also a *wahi pana* (storied place) famous throughout the islands. Many ancient *mo‘olelo* (legends), *oli* (chants), *mele* (songs), and *hula* (dances) have preserved a record of this sacred land. Regaining a stewardship relationship with this ‘āina is also very important to the Hui because this is land from which the *kama‘āina* (literally, children of the land - born and raised in the area for many generations) of Hā‘ena were forcibly evicted in the late 1960s when the State acquired it through purchase and condemnation. This eviction effectively severed the traditional relationship the *kama‘āina* of Hā‘ena had with the ‘āina that had nourished them for over 1,500 years.

In spite of the deep pain that the State’s ownership of this cultural important property has created, the mission of the Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana is not to regain ownership of the Park, rather, it is to restore an indigenous system of land stewardship. Together with the Garden, we aspire to re-establish the ability of our Hawaiian community to once again farm traditional lands, regulate and care for the adjoining fisheries (salt and freshwater), and restore, care for, and perpetuate the practices of our ancestors at the sacred places located within this area. We intend to plan and implement programs that will allow us to realize our goals in such a way that the resulting system will not only contribute toward perpetuating the ability of this place to continue to feed, sustain, and protect our people but will also provide employment, educational, and economic benefits to our community.

In mid 1999, the Hui filed the necessary papers with the state of Hawaii and became incorporated as a nonprofit organization. At that same time, the Hui received a \$5,000 Eagle

Staff Fund grant from the First Nations Development Institute that assisted the Hui with formulating a written vision statement, forming an 'Ohana Council (representatives of all families who have ancestral ties to Hā'ena), and filing our 501(c)(3) application with the IRS. In April of this year, the Hui received notice from the IRS that they had approved our nonprofit application and that we could operate as a 501(c)(3).

The members of the initial group that did the work of drafting the documents of incorporation and filing the 501(c)(3) application, and that continue to lead the Hui are from several 'ohana (families) who are *kama'āina* of Hā'ena. The Hui is structured so that it has a board of directors and officers like most other nonprofits, but it also has an 'Ohana Council and regular Hui members.

The 'Ohana Council's main function is to provide counsel, direction, and oversight to the Hui's board of directors. The Hui also depends upon the Council to provide communications and connections to the various families in the community for the resources and manpower that will be necessary for the many foreseeable projects that are components of our overall vision and goals. The 'Ohana Council also provides a medium within which our elders contribute the wisdom of their years to the organization and thus to the community.

Last, but not least, is the General Hui Membership. The Hui membership is open to all people who wish to support the goals and mission of the organization. Members do not need to be from Hā'ena or have any Hawaiian ancestry. This gives the larger community an opportunity to support and participate with the Hui's projects and fulfillment of our mission.

Over the last few years, Limahuli Garden's Ahupua'a Project has evolved into a very successful partnership with the Hui Maka'āinana O Makana, and fully supports the Hui's goal of restoring the traditional relationship of the *kama'āina* to this ancestral land. We recognize that this is an essential step toward our common goal of creating a stewardship model, for if we can restore the traditional relationship of the *kama'āina* to the land and sea, we will also restore the ability of our community to work together, revive cultural knowledge, and restore our ability to *mālama* the 'āina of Hā'ena. In essence, our Ahupua'a Project is striving to give our community the modern tools and the ancient wisdom needed to care for these precious resources in today's competitive and often exploited world.