

# Resource Kona

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Summer 2017

KONA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

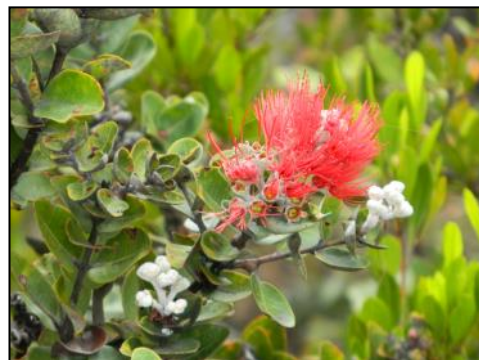
## ***How to Help Prevent the Spread of Rapid Ohia Death***

The last edition of our newsletter contained an article on Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD). It described ROD as a fungus that gets into the sap wood of 'ōhi'a trees and prevents the tree from circulating water and nutrients resulting in the death of the tree. The article also discussed how the disease is spread: through the dust created by a beetle that bores into the sap wood of 'ōhi'a trees. If a tree has ROD, the dust has ROD and when the dust becomes airborne then the fungus enters another tree through a wound.

To prevent or slow the fungus, hopefully in time to find a real solution, there are 5 steps we can all take to help prevent this disease from spreading.

- 1) Don't move 'ōhi'a wood or 'ōhi'a parts.** If you don't know where the 'ōhi'a material is from, don't move it.
- 2) Don't transport 'ōhi'a inter-island.** Follow the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture quarantine rule and don't move 'ōhi'a off of Hawai'i Island.
- 3) Avoid injuring 'ōhi'a.** Wounds serve as entry points for the fungus and increase the odds that the tree will become infected and die from ROD. Avoid pruning and contact with heavy equipment wherever possible.
- 4) Clean gear and tools, including shoes and clothes, before and after entering forests.** Brush all soil off of tools and gear, then spray with 70% rubbing alcohol. Wash clothes with hot water and soap.
- 5) Wash your vehicle with a pressure-washer and detergent if you've been off-roading or have picked up mud from driving.** Clean all soil off of tires and vehicle undercarriage.

To help protect the 'ōhi'a tree please ***Practice The 5.***



Left: An 'ōhi'a tree at Volcanos National Park near a steam vent.

Center: A red lehua flower

Right: An 'ōhi'a tree with yellow lehua flowers.

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### ***Special points of interest:***

- Kona SWCD meetings take place the second Tuesday of the month from 8am-10am and you are invited.
- Would you like a site visit to your farm for GPS and photo documentation purposes? Call 322-2484 x100 to set up an appointment.
- This newsletter is produced with funding from the Hawaii County Department of Research and Development

### ***EQIP Funding Being Obligated***

Our local agricultural producers who applied for EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) are starting to find out whose applications were funded. Once funding has been obligated a couple of reviews must take place as a function of law.

It is illegal for the federal government to fund any project that will potentially harm cultural resources or bring additional harm to species that are already recognized as Threatened and Endangered. To prevent either of those things from occurring, once a project is funded, a Cultural Resource Review and Threatened and Endangered Species review must take place. Generally, once those are completed and the project is found to have no impact, then work may begin.

If you turned in an EQIP application in and have not heard whether you received or were denied funding give the NRCS staff a call. The District Conservationist in the Kealahou office, Jessica Schmelz, can be reached at 322-2484 ext. 109. If you did receive funding, congratulations! The Kona SWCD's advice to you, stay in touch with your Soil Conservationist and if you have any trouble contact them for assistance. The worst thing you can do if you have a problem with your contract is to ignore it. The NRCS staff in the Kealahou Field Office wants you to succeed in your natural resource improvement efforts. If you are struggling call them, they will do whatever they can to help you be successful, and successful is what they want you to be.



Practices you can receive financial assistance for include, but are not limited to, installing tree and shrub site prep, tree and shrub establishment, mulching, conservation cover, troughs for stock water, brush management, irrigation, catchment for stockwater, water storage for stockwater and more. Stop in and talk to us to learn more.



## International Farmer to Farmer Program

Jeff Knowles, retired Kona NRCS District Conservationist and current director with the Kona SWCD, encourages Hawaii farmers to check out the Farmer to Farmer program at, [www.farmer-to-farmer.org](http://www.farmer-to-farmer.org). Over the last 2 years Knowles went on 9 short term international assignments to assist farmers in developing countries through the Farmer to Farmer program (F2F). F2F is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and is administrated by a number of organizations worldwide including *Catholic Relief Services (CRS)* and *Partners of the Americas*. Knowles has worked with CRS personnel in a variety of locales, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and 2 assignments in Uganda. CRS has staff in each country to administer and work with volunteers for the F2F program in East Africa. Knowles also completed three assignments in the Dominican Republic and one in Nicaragua. *Partners of the Americas* is the organization that coordinates volunteers who want to work in Central America and the Caribbean. *Winrock International*, *Land O' Lakes* and *Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)* administer the program in other countries of the world.

All of Knowles's assignments took place in tropical regions with the same tree crops, annual crops and similar vegetation as Hawaii. Knowles believes within the United States, Hawaii farmers are often the best qualified to assist farmers in tropical regions. The similar crops, growing conditions, life styles and challenges of farmers in tropical regions give Hawaii farmers a unique opportunity to assist farmers in developing countries. All expenses are covered for what are typically 2-3 week assignments. Expertise in a wide range of skills is needed including mentors in; leadership training, record keeping, strategic planning, farm management, etc. Knowles assignments dealt with soil degradation, soil erosion, soil conservation and soil fertility problems.

Check out [www.farmer-to-farmer.org](http://www.farmer-to-farmer.org) and if you have any questions or concerns about this opportunity please contact Jeff Knowles. He is willing to answer any questions you may have and can be reached at [jknowl12@yahoo.com](mailto:jknowl12@yahoo.com)



Top left: In the Dominican Republic laying out contour lines.



Top right: In Kenya spreading biochar.



Bottom right: In Uganda with leaders of rural cooperative after training on soil conservation.

## Something for Your Ice Cream

### Recipe: Coffee Sauce for Ice Cream

Makes  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup

#### INGREDIENTS:

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup medium grind coffee

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup boiling water

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar

2 tsp cornstarch

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup half & half

dash of salt

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp vanilla extract

#### Preparation

Stir the sugar and cornstarch together in a saucepan. Pour the boiling water over the coffee in another saucepan; reheat to almost boiling and let sit for two minutes. Strain through cheesecloth. Combine just  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the coffee with the half & half, and stir into the sugar mixture. Place over moderate heat and stir and cook till thick and smooth. Stir in salt and vanilla and let cool.

Serve over ice cream.

Credit and thanks to the Kona Coffee Farmers Association newsletter, *The Independent*, for this recipe. You can access *The Independent* at the Kona Coffee Farmers Association web page [www.konacoffeefarmers.org](http://www.konacoffeefarmers.org)

## Kona Coffee Expo

Another year and another very successful Kona Coffee Expo. The Kona SWCD has been attending the expo since the first one and they are always fun. We get to see folks we haven't seen in a while and talk story about most everything.

We had our usual handouts including our Kona's Native Hawaiian Plants booklet. It can be found here too:

<http://www.kswcd.org/PDF/konasnativehawaiianplants.pdf> (sorry it is not a link, you have to cut and paste it into your browser address bar.) There were folks at the Expo that had obtained copies of this booklet at past Expos and needed a new copy because theirs was so dog eared. We were happy to hear how worn their booklet had become and happy to provide a new one.



Some of the USDA office staff. From left to right: Soil Scientist Jacky Vega; District Conservationist Jessica Schmelz, Civil Engineering Technician Carl Rossetti and Kona Soil and Water Conservation District staffer Mary Robblee.

## ***New PIA Director***

One of the positions every state has, except Hawaii, is a State Conservationist. Hawaii has a State Director. A State Conservationist, no matter the size of the state, administers NRCS policy and programs on the state level. Our Director not only administers the programs and policies on a state level but also across the Pacific Ocean. He is then the Director for the Pacific Island Area, the PIA. This area is as large as the continental United States with field offices in Guam, Saipan, Palau, American Samoa, and Pohnpei, as well as field offices in Hilo, Waimea, Kealahou, Oahu Service Center, Kahului (Maui), Lihue (Kauai), Hoolehua (Molokai) and the state office in Honolulu. That is a lot of offices over a large area of the planet, hence our State Conservationist is a Director.

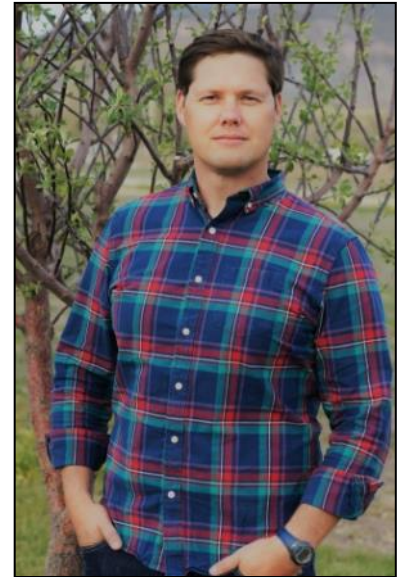
Bruce Peterson, our previous Director retired last year and despite the federal government hiring freeze NRCS was able to pursue filling the position. On May 5th our new PIA Director, Travis Thomason came on board. Travis is originally from Idaho and is coming to us from a position within NRCS in Utah, the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations. Travis has also been a District Conservationist in Utah and Pennsylvania and he has held other leadership assignments such as acting State Conservationist in Idaho, and acting Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Team Lead in Washington D.C. Travis was also a member of the agency's pilot leadership program, the Strategic Leadership Development Program in 2014.

Travis focuses on collaboration with NRCS and its partners, like the soil and water conservation districts, and believes a better product can be provided our farmers, ranchers and forest land owners when we all come together with ideas. He feels it is a better way to implement programs and provide customer service.

Travis visited the Kealahou Field Office recently and we brought him to visit three cooperators who are also NRCS EQIP clients, Home O Kahului was the first farm we visited. Home O Kahului was our 2014 Cooperator of the Year award winner for agro forestry and the land owners have continued to improve their land with additional native plantings. We also visited The Nursery, Inc., a cooperator with a vanilla nursery in the Kealahou Agricultural Park area. The first thing Travis commented on when we arrived at The Nursery, Inc. was the rock drill being used to dig a hole to plant a tree. It seem like he was not at all familiar with the rock drill method of site prep for planting.

Finally we took him to a forest site on Kaloko Road, nearly to the top. It was 86 degrees at the Ag Park and 62 degrees at the forest site. Travis mentioned how much it reminded him of back home. He seemed genuinely impressed with the diversity of sites he was introduced to and he is looking forward to visiting more sites around the Pacific Island Area.

Travis is married to a gal named Amy and they have six children, who will surely be joining him here soon. Please join all the SWCDs in welcoming Travis to the PIA.



Our New PIA Director,  
Travis Thomason



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Kealahou, HI 96750  
322-2484 ext. 100  
Fax: 322-3735

Board of Directors:  
Chairman: Greg Hendrickson  
Vice Chairman: Jeff Knowles  
Treasurer: Pepe Miranda  
Secretary: Keith Unger  
Director: Rick Robinson,

Staff: Mary Robblee, Conservation  
Assistant

Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd  
Tuesday of the month from 8am-10am  
at the USDA Kealahou Service  
Center below the post office. All are  
welcome and the facility is ADA  
accessible.

Organization: The Kona Soil and Water Conservation District (KSWCD) is a government subdivision of the State of Hawaii organized under Hawaii State Law, HRS Chapter 180

Function: To utilize available technical, financial and educational resources to focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land users with regards to conservation of soil, water, and natural resources.

Service: The District serves the communities and land users within North and South Kona

Why: The District is committed to the promotion of wise land use and resource stewardship.

**We are on the web at**  
**[www.kswcd.org](http://www.kswcd.org)**

### ***Would You Like...?***

Maps of your land? To know how far it from your home or farm to the coast, as the crow flies? To know what native plants or introduced plants would do well on your land? Would you like to know more about the soil on your land?

We, the staff at the NRCS office, can help answer those questions for you. We can provide maps and measure the distance from anywhere on your parcel to the coast. We have a software program that will produce a list of plants that can grow at your elevation, with your rainfall and your soil. We can do that for native and introduced plants.

Would you like some help improving your soil, we can give you direction on how to do just that. We can also give you lots of articles to read on soil and how best to treat it.

Give us a call 322-2484 ext. 100 and we will do our best to help you earn your success as a farmer, rancher or forest land owner.

### ***Volunteer Planting and Trail Maintenance Opportunity***

In the 1819 Battle of Kuamo'o, Hawaiian forces clashed over the traditional kapu religious system. The dispute pitted the forces of Kekuaokalani, nephew of Kamehameha I, who sought to preserve the traditional system, against his cousin, Liholiho (Kamehameha II), who had abandoned the kapu system. Liholiho was victorious, but many warriors from both sides perished in battle and were buried on the property, including Kekuaokalani and his wife, Chiefess Manono. With her dying breath, Chiefess Manono is said to have uttered "Mālama kō aloha" "keep your love" a plea to both sides that no matter what obstacles come to Hawai'i, keep your love of one another

Aloha Kuamo'o `Aina (AKA) acquired the land where the battle took place located by the End of the World near the Sheraton Resort. It has part of the Ala Kahakai trail running through it and every Wednesday is a trail maintenance/native plant planting day. If you want to learn more about the history of this area, native plants and dryland forests stop on by any Wednesday and join that day's group. Dr. Richard Stevens, organizer of the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery reforestation project meets volunteer trail workers at 7am. Monika Frazier, Executive Director for AKA meets volunteers at 8am so whenever you get there they will show you the way. The graves on the south side of the road to the End of the World are graves of Hawaiian warriors who lost their lives during that battle. You can learn more about the battle and this land at <http://www.kuamoo.org> and if you have any questions you can email them at [info@kuamoo.org](mailto:info@kuamoo.org)