



As our Fellowship moves forward in 2019, we plan to keep focus on *Moloka'i Ranch* lands and the community engagement that goes with it. One of our main reasons for sticking with this goal is the implications the Ranch lands have for Moloka'i's sustainability. With 38% of all food consumed on Moloka'i coming directly from subsistence practices, there is much opportunity to grow this number and get Moloka'i sustainable. However, it is already evident that without governance over the Ranch, Moloka'i will not be able to access the agricultural lands and fishponds needed for food sustainability, making the Ranch issue especially prevalent as we move forward.



Without use of the Ranch lands and surrounding coastal regions, Moloka'i will not be able to reach a lasting level of sustainability. Not only does the Ranch take up an enormous percentage of land on the island, but it is also home to some of the most significant cultural sites and most valuable natural resources. After decades of poor management, we feel it is high time to see these lands taken care of so they can continue to be a resource for future generations. It is our goal to see these natural and cultural resources preserved and protected, not depleted and lost for good.

‘ĀINA MOMONA

2018-2019 Updates

More than any other island, Moloka'i has shown to be a rural, grassroots community that is committed to living sustainably with the land. The community prioritizes their aloha 'āina and subsistence practices over the prospects of commercial development and urbanization. This commitment to the land accounts for the abandoned resorts, golf courses, and town on the Ranch lands, all of which were closed due to community protesting. The Moloka'i community has made it clear they want the Ranch land to be conserved and used for the well-being of the community, not for tourism or commercial progress. For Moloka'i, the answers for the future are located in the past, and community members are committed to returning to a more traditional, land-based economy and lifestyle. It is our goal to continue work with our Fellows that will enhance this worldview and give the Moloka'i community more opportunities to achieve a sustainable future.



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ALOHA 'ĀINA FELLOWS & MOLOKA'I COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As environmental and economic crises rise, communities like those on Moloka'i demonstrate that natural and cultural resources can be protected through social innovation, steadfast activism, and dynamic community engagement.

In order to meet the unique challenges Moloka'i faces, **'Āina Momona**, in partnership with Kamehameha Schools and Maui Community College, started the Aloha 'Āina Fellows program. This program takes emerging young professionals on Moloka'i and gives them hands on training opportunities to work on community issues in real time.

Fellows receive training in community organization, community planning, natural and cultural resource management, professional writing, presentation making, data collection, finance and politics. They receive a stipend for their hard work and college credit through our partnership with MCC, in addition to getting hands on opportunities to help their community and surrounding landscape.



From water to land, Moloka'i faces a variety of issues on the horizon, making this project a relevant and timely community tool. In particular, Fellows focused on the potential sale of Moloka'i Ranch, conducting civic engagement to reach a consensus on how the community would like to see the land used. Their research revealed that the vast majority of Moloka'i residents want the Ranch managed by a responsible land owner, who recognizes their responsibility to the wider community.

Due to climate change-induced storms, winds, and rains, as well as decades of mismanagement from private owners, the soil on the Ranch lands has become heavily eroded, creating dangerous coastal runoff that puts Moloka'i's abundant fringing reef at risk. Invasive species have also become an issue, as well as exacerbated erosion caused by uncontrolled deer populations. The legacy of mismanagement has transformed these lands into a fragile ecosystem, that requires much conservation effort to protect. Fellows thus did service projects and natural resource management to help prevent the soil erosion and overall deterioration of the Ranch lands, which make up 30% of the entire island.

To broaden their conservation knowledge, our Fellows were notably able to travel to Kaho'olawe, where they learned how to mitigate erosion and the deterioration of coastal areas, bringing back knowledge to apply to their own community.



By engaging the community to find solutions, utilizing ancestral conservation and subsistence practices, and working to enhance natural and cultural resources rather than deplete them, our Fellows and organization demonstrate an indigenous response to climate change and conservation, recognizing our duty to protect and mālama the land we depend on.



Through the Fellowship, **'Āina Momona** has worked to bring up young Hawaiian leaders and give them opportunities to instill meaningful change in their community. Since this Fellowship has been so successful, we would like to see this program replicated in other communities where environmental and cultural problems pose challenges for local residents. In this way, we can continue to do leadership capacity-building within the young Hawaiian community, working towards goals centered on food, conservation, and community engagement. We plan to continue this amazing Fellowship on Moloka'i through 2019, and beyond.

