

THE GARDEN ISLAND

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Preserve parcel acquisition funded

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Photo contributed by Kaua'i Public Land Trust

The Kaua'i Public Land Trust was recently awarded \$700,000 from the Legacy Land Conservation Program that will go toward the acquisition of a 20-acre parcel in Kilauea. The parcel will become the final part of the Kilauea Coastal Preserve.

The Kaua'i Public Land Trust recently received \$700,000 in funding through the Legacy Land Conservation Program that will complete the \$3.4 million purchase of a 20-acre parcel in Kilauea that borders Kahili Beach.

The LLCP, a new program within the state Department of Land and Natural Resources, provides funding from the Land Conservation Fund for the acquisition of state resources.

The resources include watersheds, coastal areas, beaches, ocean access, habitat protection, cultural and historic sites, parks, open spaces and scenic resources.

"We're excited," said Jennifer Luck, executive director of KPLT. "It's the culmination of a lot of hard work and effort."

The parcel will become the final part of the Kilauea Coastal Preserve. KPLT will now begin the process of finalizing the deal, Luck said.

Gary Blaich, KPLT board president, said it feels wonderful to receive the funding from LLCP.

"The 20-acre piece is just gorgeous," Blaich said. "It's a beautiful piece of coastal land that will stay as it looks for generations."

Public access to the land won't change, he added.

"The goal is to try, over time, to replace invasive vegetation with native, Hawaiian vegetation," Blaich said.

Native birds will also be add-

ed, Blaich added.

Blaich said the owners of the property, Louise and Monte Zweben, have been extremely patient throughout the acquisi-

tion process.

"They've been very supportive of the idea of preserving

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open coastal areas," Blaich said. "They are terrific benefactors to the public of Kaua'i."

According to Blaich, along with the 20-acre parcel, the couple sold an additional 3 acres to KPLT in November 2005. The Zweben's donated a 5.43-acre parcel to KPLT in December 2003, which was appraised at over \$4 million.

In order to be considered for funding, project applicants must be able to provide at least 25 percent of the total project cost in cash or by in-kind services.

Project applications are reviewed by the Legacy Land Conservation Commission; the commission will then nominate projects for funding. The commission will then recommend awards to the state Board of Land and Natural Resources. The BLNR, along with the attorney general and the governor, will approve final awards.

The BLNR approved an award of \$4.7 million for county and nonprofit land acquisition projects in the state for the 2007 cycle.

The approved projects, including the KPLT, consist of an 11-acre acquisition by the Wai'anae Community Re-development Corporation of O'ahu,

a 550-acre acquisition by the county of Hawai'i, a 128-acre acquisition by the Maui Coastal Land Trust and a 196-acre acquisition by Ke 'Aupuni Lokahi of Moloka'i.

"Many cultural, natural and historical resources in Hawai'i are under threat of degradation or destruction," Laura Thielen, land board chairperson, said in a press release. "I am proud that the state is participating in these five partnerships to preserve and protect Hawai'i's resources for future generations."

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