



# News Release

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## HLPC members take a hike at PTA forest

POHAKULOA TRAINING AREA, Hawaii—Members of the Hawaii Leeward Planning Conference came to Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) to gain some first hand knowledge of its natural and cultural resources.

Twenty-nine members held their HLPC Board of Directors meeting at the installation Recreation Center. After a brief lunch, the members were divided into two groups.

One group, led by Bill Godby, PTA archaeologist, visited an area of largely Mauna Loa pahoehoe lava. Members toured the site that had lots of volcanic glass, several firepits, walls, and caves.

The second group, led by Steve Evans, PTA natural resources program manager, was taken to a native Ohia forest area along Pohakuloa's Redleg Trail 91, with lots of pahoehoe lava, too. The participants were able to see the native-dominated habitat and endangered plant species, including ungulate and weed control efforts by the Army's natural resources staff.

Evans said it was important to share these natural features to all visitors.

“We talked about lava flows, forest development, endangered and threatened plants and animals, threats to the species, and management for listed species. There isn’t a good understanding of these processes by the public,” Evans said. “It gives us the opportunity to highlight the unique features of PTA and the way the Army is protecting these natural resources.”

Many of the Ohia trees are spread out throughout the area and sprout out from the cracks of the pahoehoe lava. After a short hike out of the forest, it was time to go and remember the uniqueness of PTA’s environment.

“It is hard to know for sure, but many of these trees are probably at least 200 years old. I believe our visitors took away a better understanding of the unique environment at PTA and the Army’s commitment in protecting natural resources,” Evans said.