

**DPH SCC Resolution 2019-1, adopted August 3, 2019**

**Protect *Pa‘akai* (Salt) Cultural Practice of Hanapēpē, Kaua‘i**

Whereas, Article XII §7 of the Hawai‘i Constitution provides:

The State reaffirms and shall protect all rights, customarily and traditionally exercised for subsistence, cultural and religious purposes and possessed by ahupua‘a tenants who are descendants of native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778, subject to the right of the State to regulate such rights.

Whereas, Waimakaohi‘iaka, in the ‘ili of ‘Ukulā, in the ahupua‘a of Hanapēpē, in the moku of Kona or also known as the salt ponds of Hanapēpē is a *wahi pana*, a culturally significant sacred site specifically for the making of *pa‘akai* (salt), which has been traditionally cultivated and gathered by Native Hawaiians since time immemorial; and

Whereas, Waimakaohi‘iaka, is the only area in all of Hawai‘i that continues to harvest *pa‘akai* using traditional methods which are passed generation to generation by Native Hawaiian ‘*ohana* who are exercising their constitutionally protected traditional and customary salt-making knowledge and skills; and

Whereas, In keeping with centuries-old traditions, the *pa‘akai* gathered at this location cannot be bought nor is it sold, but is generously shared or traded by the twenty-two families who are the lineal descendants of past salt-makers whereby this resource is distributed throughout Kaua‘i, statewide, nationally and internationally for subsistence, cultural and religious purposes; and

Whereas, The Hawai‘i Register of Historic Places is an official list of properties that have been recognized for their significance to the history, architecture, archaeology, or culture of Hawai‘i communities; and

Whereas, The Hanapēpē Salt Pans is listed in the State Inventory of Historic Places as SIHP #50-30-09-00049 and was added to the Hawai‘i Register of Historic Places on September 30, 1988 and is also recommended for placement in the National Register of Historic Places; and

Whereas, The Waimakaohi‘iaka parcel is zoned Conservation (State Land Use), and is identified as an Open/Special Treatment Resource and Cultural District by the County of Kaua‘i; and

Whereas, Urbanization and commercial and increased recreation activities adjacent to Waimakaohi‘iaka are also causing a storm of other threatening factors such as dust, noise, and potential contamination from sources ranging from an ill-placed helicopter operation sited at Port Allen Airport, also known as Burns Field, and vehicles trying to drive on the beach, to broken beer bottles and trash left by beach users or homeless camps; and

Whereas, The aloha for and threats to this *wahi pana* were highlighted on June 25, 2019 when the Kaua‘i Planning Commission considered an application submitted by Smoky Mountain Helicopters, Inc. for after-the-fact permit applications where over 100 people testified in person,

over 100 written testimonies were submitted and 24,000+ signatures supported the online petition found at <http://change.org/protectpaakai>, to protect this last of its kind, salt making in Hanapēpē; and

Whereas, Subsequently, the Kaua‘i Planning Commission is now holding a contested case hearing for the after-the-fact permit applications and granted intervenor status to the Hui Hana Pa‘akai o Hanapēpē, a Native Hawaiian organization organized in 1964, comprised of the 22 ‘ohana that continue the salt-making and gathering practice; and now therefore

*Resolved*, That the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i stands in solidarity with Hui Hana Pa‘akai o Hanapēpē, the salt-makers of Kaua‘i, and urges the following:

- Kaua‘i Planning Commission reject the after-the-fact permit applications for Smoky Mountain Helicopters, Inc.;
- State of Hawai‘i Department of Transportation move the operations of Smoky Mountain Helicopters, Inc. from Burns Field to the more appropriate Līhu‘e Airport where all other Kaua‘i helicopter tour businesses operate;
- State of Hawai‘i Department of Transportation provide adequate security to discourage illegal trespassing and camping in the areas under its jurisdiction;
- State of Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the County of Kaua‘i also control, regulate and enforce illegal beach access impacting the salt ponds in the areas under its jurisdictions;
- State of Hawai‘i Department of Health investigate the restroom facility at Burns Field that is currently utilizing an unpermitted cesspool as stated in their “after the fact” permit application‘
- all relevant State and County agencies cooperate and collaborate to require the necessary environmental disclosure needed to assess impacts and evaluate the implementation of mitigation measures and/or adequate buffer zones from adjacent, non-compatible uses to ensure the protection and preservation of the Hanapepe Salt Pans

*Ordered*, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to all members of Hawai‘i’s Congressional Delegation, the Governor of the State of Hawai‘i, the Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai‘i, the Director of the State of Hawai‘i Department of Transportation, the Chairperson of the State of Hawai‘i Department of Land & Natural Resources, the Chairperson of the State of Hawai‘i Department of Health, the Kaua‘i Board Member of the State of Hawaii Board of Land & Natural Resources, the Kaua‘i Planning Commission, all members of the Hawai‘i State Legislature who represent Kaua‘i and who are members of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i, the Mayor of Kaua‘i, all Kaua‘i county elected officials who are members of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Hui Hana Pa‘akai o Hanapēpē.