Try Wait: Kaʻūpūlehu’s Efforts to Protect Its Marine Resources

For over twenty years on Hawai’i Island, Kaʻūpūlehu’s community members have struggled to preserve their diminishing marine resources. Most recently, the group partnered with the State to create a marine reserve to restore its ma' Kai reaches and sustain traditional, subsistence, and cultural practices for future generations. Although the community has taken a cultural approach to kapu (or rest) the area, the reserve has garnered opposition from those who claim it infringes on traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights to fish and gather. Join us for a discussion on how this pioneering community has stepped forward to put their resources and children first, in an effort to exercise their traditional and customary practice of mālama ʻāina.

Hannah Kihalani Springer
Hannah is a lineal descendant of Kaʻūpūlehu and a founding member of the hui supporting its marine reserve. She played a key role in Ka Paʻakai O Ka ʻAina v. Land Use Commission, a landmark case protecting traditional and customary rights and practices, and works to preserve the natural and cultural resources in North Kona, including Puʻukoholā Heiau and the Kaʻūpūlehu Dryland Forest.

Kuʻulei Keakealani
Kuʻulei is a kup a of North Kona on Hawaiʻi Island and an integral part of the hui supporting Try Wait and the Kaʻūpūlehu marine reserve. She was born and raised in Puʻuanahulu, and spent much of her childhood at the base of Mauna Kea in the Kīpuʻupuʻu winds and rains in the cool uplands of Waimea. Kuʻulei actively cares for North Kona’s resources, including the Kaʻūpūlehu Dryland Forest and Kīholo fishpond.

Wayne Chung Tanaka
Wayne is a Public Policy Advocate at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, where he develops policy recommendations and advocates for the protection of cultural practices and nearshore marine and fresh water resources. He has participated in Kaʻūpūlehu Marine Life Advisory Committee meetings on behalf of OHA, and is a proud graduate of this Law School.

Moderator: Rhiannon Tereariʻi Chandler-Īao
Post-J.D. Research & Teaching Fellow at Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law.