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Hawai‘i’s Ke Ala Hele Makālae Recognized as One of Nation’s Top Trails with Hall of Fame Honor

***Rails to Trails Conservancy points to trail as a stunning example of the role walking
and biking infrastructure plays in the well-being of people and places***

WASHINGTON—Rails to Trails Conservancy, the nation’s largest trails advocacy organization, today announced that [Ke Ala Hele Makālae](#) on the Hawaiian island of Kaua‘i is the newest member of the organization’s Hall of Fame—an exemplary group of multiuse trails celebrated for the social, economic and quality-of-life value they bring to the communities they serve.

“Hawai‘i’s trails are in a class of their own, providing access to some of the country’s most picturesque and revered nature, while simultaneously creating the framework for walkable, bikeable communities valued by the people who live there and inspiring for the millions who visit every year,” said Ryan Chao, RTC’s president. “Ke Ala Hele Makālae captures the breadth of opportunity that trails deliver to the nation—through the joy it brings to everyone who experiences it and its transformative impact as part of the region’s active transportation strategy.”

Ke Ala Hele Makālae trail, whose name translates to “The Path that Goes by the Coast,” stretches 8 miles from Lydgate Beach Park to Kuna Bay (Donkey Beach) on the Hawaiian island of Kaua‘i. This stunning trail was nominated for its scenic value, community connections and accessibility—creating new opportunities for people of all abilities to access nature and to walk or bike in the community where they live, supporting the region’s public health, mobility and quality of life goals. Currently the trail connects the coastal communities of Ahihi Point, Wailua Beach Park, Lydgate Beach Park and Kapa‘a, the most populous town on Kaua‘i, and is planned to expand to 17 miles between Nāwiliwili and Anahola, extending its active transportation and recreational impact.

“On behalf of the County of Kaua‘i, we are honored that Ke Ala Hele Makālae has been inducted into the Rails to Trails Conservancy Hall of Fame,” said Mayor Derek S.K. Kawakami. “Mahalo to our team with the Department of Parks and Recreation, former Mayor Maryanne Kusaka, our partners with Kauai Path, our Eastside community, Rails to Trails Conservancy, and everyone who voted to make this possible. We thank you so much! The trail continues to be a pathway

that improves public health and is an accessible corridor for physical activity, social interaction, and exemplifies the beauty of Kaua‘i.”

Ke Ala Hele Makālae is frequently hailed as a prime example of the collaboration between government, private and community partnerships. The trail offers island residents a safe, paved and scenic space for exercise, transportation and opportunities to gather insight into local culture, ecology and history through wayfinding and interpretive signage. The trail’s ADA-compliant design makes it accessible to people of all ages and abilities, including those in wheelchairs and strollers. The trail currently connects with Lydgate Beach Park, which is also home to two lagoons perfect for calm ocean swimming, and the Kawaihau Elevated Boardwalk, providing the most densely populated residential area on the island with a connection to the coast.

The trail was among three nominees voted on by the public between Jul. 26 and Aug. 4, 2024, securing nearly 45% of the vote. The other nominees were the [Razorback Greenway in Arkansas](#) and the [Santa Cruz Loop in Arizona](#). [Hawai‘i’s Ke Ala Hele Makālae](#) joins an iconic list of Hall of Fame trails recognized for their outstanding scenic value, use, amenities, historical significance and community benefit.

For more information about RTC’s Hall of Fame, visit RailstoTrails.org/HallOfFame.

Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).