

## 2016 Dryland Forest Symposium

By Big Island Now Staff

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Dryland forest ecology and restoration efforts in Hawai'i will be the focus of the 2016 Nahelehele Dryland Forest Symposium.

This year's day-long symposium will take place on Feb. 26 at the Courtyard by Marriott King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel in Kailua-Kona from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dryland forests in Hawai'i are fragile habitats that are the homes to some of the rarest plants in the world. At one point in time, they were considered to be one of the most diverse forest ecosystems in the Hawaiian Islands. After decades of deforestation and degradation, only patches of the habitats of highly diverse communities of plants and animals are still alive.

The Dryland Forest Symposium will provide a forum to discuss recent developments in dryland

forest conservation and restoration, and an opportunity to interact with others interested in dryland forest ecology.

Under the theme "Dryland Forest Conservation: Where We've Been and Where We're Going," this year's symposium will feature presentations by scientists and conservationists who are working to learn about and preserve Hawaiian dryland forest plants and ecosystems.

Ku'ulei Keakealani, a cultural ecology specialist from North Kona, will start the symposium with a presentation entitled "Wiliwili, my relation." She will be followed by keynote speaker Dr. Doug Jacobs, professor of forest biology and associate head of the department of forestry and natural resources at Purdue University, who will present "Restoring forests: What constitutes success in the twenty-first century?" Jacobs' keynote will examine how the future of forest restoration will depend on effective technology transfer and community-based approaches, as well as adaptive management approaches to design resistant and

resilient ecosystems that can adapt to emerging circumstances.

Other presenters will address the ongoing rapid 'ohi'a death epidemic on the Big Island, conservation gardening for Hawaiian dry forest restoration, dryland forest management in a whole-island context, and future directions for forest restoration in Hawai'i.

The symposium is open to the public. Early bird registration is available for \$65 per person until Feb. 16. After Feb. 16, registration is \$80 per person. The Hawai'i Forest Institute is sponsoring discounts for students with a valid ID, who may register for \$35 before Feb. 16 or \$50 after. All registration fees include lunch and parking at the hotel. More information and registration is available on the symposium [website](#) or by contacting Stella Caban at The Kohala Center via

e-mail at [scaban@kohalacenter.org](mailto:scaban@kohalacenter.org) or by calling (808) 887-6411.

In addition, two optional half-day field trips will also be offered on Thursday, Feb. 25 to the Ka'ohe Restoration Area on Mauna Kea and Saturday, Feb. 27 to the Palamanui Dry Forest Preserve. The field trips will provide participants with opportunities to engage in hands-on service work to "give back to the forest." Each field trip is \$35 per person and includes lunch, water, and/or pupu. The Nahelehele Dryland Forest Symposium is a project of Ka'ahahui 'O Ka Nahelehele, a nonprofit organization dedicated to dry forest advocacy and partnerships.

**Source:**

<http://bigislandnow.com/2016/01/26/2016-dryland-forest-symposium/>