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**Contact:** Janis Wong, media relations  
The Kohala Center  
[jwong@kohalacenter.org](mailto:jwong@kohalacenter.org)  
direct: 808-325-1114, office: 808-887-6411

### *Hawai‘i—a model for understanding life, land, and culture*

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—[March 17, 2010]—Professor Peter Vitousek discusses Hawaiian ecosystems and Hawaiian society in a *Puana Ka ‘Ike* (Imparting Knowledge) lecture in Kona and an *Eia Hawai‘i* presentation in Hilo.

Vitousek will speak on “Hawai‘i as a model for understanding life, land, and culture” from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Friday, March 26, at the Keauhou Beach Resort Kahalu‘u III in Kona and in Hilo from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 29, at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Campus Center Plaza.

Vitousek will also lead a field study to Puanui, a Kohala Field System site located along the Kohala Mountain Road, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 27. Participants will depart for Puanui at 8 a.m. from the Waimea Starbucks, and should bring a lunch, light jacket, and wear covered shoes; beverages will be provided. Space is limited; for reservations and details, contact Natalie Deisroth, 322-0088 ext. 100.

“Scientists think of islands in general, and the Hawaiian Islands in particular, as spectacular model systems that help us to understand how the worlds works—in areas as diverse as evolution and the origin of species, the structure and functioning of ecosystems, and the development and sustainability of human societies,” Vitousek said.

His research interests include evaluating the global cycles of nitrogen and phosphorus and how they are altered by human activity; determining the effects of invasive species on the workings of whole ecosystems; and understanding how the interaction of land and culture contributed to the sustainability of Hawaiian society before European contact.

Born in Honolulu, young Vitousek frequently visited Kona where his father was raised. He graduated from Hawai‘i Preparatory Academy, received his bachelor’s degree in political science from Amherst College, and his doctorate in biology from Dartmouth. He taught at Indiana University and the University of North Carolina before joining the faculty of Stanford University in 1984.

He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, was awarded the Japan Prize in 2010, and is director of Stanford’s Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources (EIPER), co-director of the Hawaii

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Ecosystems Project (a research consortium that meets annually on the Big Island), and co-director of the First Nations Futures Program (a leadership training consortium of Stanford, Kamehameha Schools, and the Ngai Tahu Tribe in Aotearoa/New Zealand).

For more information on Vitousek’s presentations, contact Deisroth at 808-322-0088, ext. 100, or e-mail [info@kohalacenter.org](mailto:info@kohalacenter.org). For lecture schedules and webcasts of previous lectures, visit <http://kohalacenter.org/puanakaike/about.html> and [www.keauhouresort.com/learn-puanakaike.html](http://www.keauhouresort.com/learn-puanakaike.html).

The Puana Ka ‘Ike and Eia Hawai‘i lecture series are presented in partnership with Kamehameha Investment Corporation/Kamehameha Schools, The Kohala Center, Kīpuka Native Hawaiian Student Center at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, Keauhou Beach Resort, and Hawai‘i Tourism Authority.

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[photo caption]

Peter Vitousek