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Lecture focuses on coral reef at Kahalu‘u Bay

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—April 5, 2012—Marine biologist Kaipo Perez III provides an updated ecological evaluation of coral reef resources at Kahalu‘u Bay in an *Eia Hawai‘i* presentation in Hilo and a *Puana Ka ‘Ike* lecture in Kona.

The lectures will be from noon to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, April 12, at the University of Hawai‘i Hilo, Campus Center (CC) 301, and from 5:30–7 p.m. Friday, April 13, in the Keauhou Beach Resort ballroom.

“Kahalu‘u Bay is a dynamic and unique area within the Hawaiian Islands and therefore has been selected as the site of scientific investigation,” Perez said.

In the past three years, over 200 sites in or around the bay area have been surveyed for a range of physical and biological factors by the Coral Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program (CRAMP) and its partners, the Center for Conservation and Research Training and The Kohala Center. They have surveyed the impact of climate change on water resources, while trying to work with the community to sustain these resources for future generations. The goal is to evaluate coral reef resources and integrate this research into the cultural, community, and educational efforts.

Perez, a member of CRAMP, presented the preliminary results of these surveys in a 2010 Puana Ka ‘Ike lecture. He returns to provide an update and to discuss the project, research summary, preliminary baselines, integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with science, and future directions.

“I grew up in an *‘ohana lawai‘a*, or fishing family, who are great stewards of the terrestrial and marine environment. Their passion to conserve and protect the land and sea is their gift to me,” said Perez, who received a marine biology degree at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH) and is pursuing his doctorate in zoology with a focus in coral ecology at UH.

For more information on Perez’s presentation, contact Joy Cunefare at 808-534-8528 or e-mail 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.

The Puana Ka ‘Ike and Eia Hawai‘i lecture series are presented in partnership with Keauhou-Kahalu‘u Education Group of Kamehameha Schools, The Kohala Center, the Kīpuka Native Hawaiian Student Center at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, and Keauhou Beach Resort.