

Hawai`i Volcanoes Institute 2009

Historic Chapters in Park Resource Management

with Bryan Harry and Don Reeser

May 6, 2009 Wednesday, 8 am – 4 pm

Bryan Harry (retired NPS Pacific Area Director) and Don Reeser (retired Superintendent of Haleakalā National Park) recount challenges, failures and triumphs in natural resource management during the critical decade of the 1970s. Join these National Park Service pioneers, along with a panel of resource management successors, as they share their hands-on adventures, management discoveries and the development of world-class biological science in Hawaiian parks.

After a morning in the classroom, the group takes an afternoon field trip through the Park's varied ecosystems for on-site talks. At stops on Mauna Loa Road, view results of upland management history and along Hilina Pali Road look at restoration efforts in the dry coastal ecosystem.



In 1970, despite a half century of removing feral goats, more than 15,000 of these prolific grazers were chomping and stomping through the natural resources of Hawai`i Volcanoes National Park. Habitats of unique Hawaiian plant, bird and insect species were under attack and our Park, with its severely degraded ecosystems, was considered an “ecological basket case”.

By 1980, virtually all feral (wild) goats were gone from this park due to a grand experiment by then-Superintendent Bryan Harry and his Chief of Resource Management Don Reeser. They reversed this dire situation with dedication and ingenuity. Their work reaffirmed conservation values, encouraged scientific research and provided hopeful examples to land managers around the world.

Join us for this day-long, in-depth seminar to hear about the dramatic turnaround in Park resource management 30 years ago and how current challenges are addressed today.

Your Leaders:

Bryan Harry has had a long and distinguished career with the National Park Service that includes service at Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Hawai`i Volcanoes National Parks. In 1975, Bryan was appointed Alaska Area Director. A strong advocate for natural resource management as well as cultural conservation, Bryan headed the Alaska Task Force to assist native Alaskans in identifying historic places, which led to an increase in NPS units in Alaska from four to 16 units protecting over 54.6 million acres of land.

Now retired, Bryan served as Director of the National Park Service Pacific West Region, continuing his efforts to protect natural and cultural resources. In the early 1970s, Bryan led the way in planning and implementing management of Hawaiian ecosystems, including the control and removal of invasive alien species. This was the beginning of the modern era of resource management in Hawai`i. Bryan continues to work on critical conservation issues in Hawai`i and, in 2004, won the Hawai`i Conservation Alliance Distinguished Service Award.

Don Reeser has been a determined and inventive leader to preserve and restore native ecosystems in the National Parks of Pacific islands and other areas. As a young ranger at Hawai`i Volcanoes National Park from 1968 to 1979, Don was challenged by the huge number of goats and their damage to park native ecosystems. He developed successful techniques to control goat populations which have resulted in tens of thousands of ungulate-free acres at both Hawai`i Volcanoes and Haleakalā National Parks. From 1979, he worked for nearly ten years, at Redwoods National Park returning to Hawai`i to in 1988 to become the Superintendent of Haleakalā National Park. His long career in the Park Service secured restoration of native ecosystems and protection of native biodiversity as goals of resource management. His inventive resource management techniques and philosophy have been widely copied world-wide and he received the Hawai`i Conservation Alliance Distinguished Service Award in 1998. Now retired, Don stays actively involved in natural and cultural resource conservation efforts.

Seminar Agenda:

Participants meet at the Kīlauea Visitor Center at 8, register and then walk to the park's Education Center for the morning session to begin at 8:30. After greetings and introductions, Don and Bryan talk for about 45 minutes each using slides/PowerPoint.

After a break, Don and Bryan join a panel discussion with park land managers who have carried on this work from the 1980s through the present and future. Tim Tunison, Dan Taylor, Larry Katahira, Rhonda Loh, Howard Hoshide and Tanya Rubinstein are invited to add their experiences and perspectives. The panel discussion will last an hour or so, bringing the story up to date.

Around noon, enjoy a catered lunch outdoors on picnic tables. About 1 pm, participants walk back to Kīlauea Visitor Center to car-pool to selected stops along Mauna Loa Road and Hilina Pali Road, where Harry and Reeser stop to discuss management challenges and restoration successes and failures in park's upland and lowland ecosystems. End at Kīlauea Visitor Center at 4.

Who should attend?

This is a day for those interested in Park history, conservation and land management issues in Hawai`i. Park staff and other land managers will find this seminar of immediate interest.

Level of physical difficulty: Easy. Classroom setting and very short walks.

What to bring?

There's always a chance of rain so bring a jacket & hat, as well as sunscreen and wear walking shoes for the afternoon excursion. Binoculars and camera are optional.

What is provided?

The seminar includes snacks, water and soft beverages and a catered lunch.

Transportation:

Participants will carpool in their own vehicles for afternoon field trips on paved Park roads (Mauna Loa Road and Hilina Pali Road) for about 50 miles round trip.

Tuition: Friends' members - \$50 Non-members - \$60

Timeline for payment/cancellation:

Reservations and payment are due two weeks before the seminar on April 22, Earth Day. To receive a full refund, cancel by May 1.

To register:

Call the Friends' office at (808) 985-7373. The office is staffed part-time, so leave a message and your call will be returned. Or e-mail enrollment information to ainahou2@aol.com.

