Our profound aloha to each and every ~ ‘Olohe, Lo’ea and Loiloi Hula, Kumu Hula, Po’o Pua’a, Alaka’i, Paepae, and Haumāna Hula! Aloha pū to the ‘ohana, musicians, singers, chanters, lei makers, researchers, dresser people, seamstresses, and hair and makeup specialists who help us recreate and relive every hula, mele, and story in the best way.

My name is Kekuhi Kanae Kanahele Kealiʻikanakaʻoleohaililani. I am a granddaughter of a most beloved Tūtū and Kumu Hula who taught me, in every moment of my time with her, to BE IN LOVE with, and have a huge ALOHA for all of our ‘ohana. She dedicated her time with me to the simple task of making sure I knew how important ALL of our ‘ohana are.

When Grampa took us visiting with family around the island Gramma would say, “this is your ‘ohana,” then sit down to walaʻau or talk story. When we visited Háʻena, Halemaʻumaʻu or Punaluʻu she told me, “this is your ‘ohana,” and then told stories of those places. At the ocean when we fished she would say, “this is your ‘ohana,” and offer a chant to the water, and the fish on our hooks. At the māla she would say, “this is your ‘ohana,” and sing a song to the taro. At the forest she would pick liko from the Ōhiʻa, hold it in her fingers, and say, “Kekuhi, this is your ‘ohana,” and we would give a chant of thanks.

This memory has become an every moment practice ~ I continue to dedicate my life to dancing, chanting, singing, and teaching how to Aloha ALL of these ‘ohana...like many of you do in big and little ways through HULA. I am writing because our hula ‘ohana, the tree that is most used in our art form, the tree that is most responsible for making sure that we have water, the tree that is most used in the carving of kiʻi, the tree that we can find on almost every landscape on our island, the tree that many of our bird people depend on, the tree that Hopoe and Hiʻiaka made lehua lei from, the beloved ŌHIʻA...the tree that my Gramma introduced to me as ‘ohana ~ is being made sick by a fungus, Ceratocystis fimбриata (aka Rapid Ōhiʻa Death or ROD), that lives both in the soil and in the tree. OUR Ōhiʻa needs our attention, our awareness, and our aloha.

We don’t know how this particular strain of fungus got here or how to treat it properly...yet. But, we do know some simple, but effective things that everyone can do to help prevent the spread of the fungus to healthy trees on Hawaiʻi island and to other islands.

My friends of the forest from around the island and I are working together to care for and find ways to heal our beloved Ōhiʻa...the Ōhiʻa deserve that ~ anyone who has ever been sick deserves that! Here are some simple preventative actions that we as Kumu, dancers, lei makers, and ‘ohana can do:

• If you need to collect ōhiʻa wood avoid areas known to have the fungus, or areas that look to be sick from the fungus.

• Leave your lei and küpeʻe, that have liko and lehua in it, on Hawaiʻi island. When returning your lei and küpeʻe to our forest, return it to the same area that your liko and lehua came from. Or return your lei and küpeʻe to any of the forest areas identified on the attached map. In doing so you are giving your mana to a forest that needs healing.

For the 2016 Merrie Monarch Festival in Hilo, Hawaiʻi, the Hawaiʻi Island community is hosting the Puaʻenaʻena Ceremony. This fire ceremony will provide a way for people to offer their kinolau, hakina, lei, and küpeʻe with thoughts of full recovery for our Ōhiʻa to the fire of Ke Ahi O Hiʻiaka (see details on invitation announcement).

• Brush clean the dirt from your shoes and any tools you used, and spray everything with 70% rubbing alcohol when entering and leaving the forest (visit the DOFAW office in Hilo to learn more, and for some supplies).
• Wash your vehicle, its tires and the undersides if you drive off-road. Keep the inside of your vehicle clean of dirt, and spray the floors of your vehicle with 70% rubbing alcohol.

• Notice and report ʻŌhiʻa that are dying in any area that you go to pick, especially areas that are not already on the map of affected forests (contact the folks on the brochure).

Aside from all of those things above, as the hula community is well aware, our songs, hula, chants, prayers, and our thoughts of full recovery sent directly to our ʻŌhiʻa community are just as powerful!

_Ulu ka ʻOhiʻa...a lau ka wai_

Kekuhi

DOFAW IDENTIFIED HOʻIHOʻI FOREST RESERVE LOCATIONS

**SADDLE ROAD**
The Division of Forestry and Wildlife hoʻihoʻi zone (in red on map) located between mile markers 12 and 16. Safe pull-outs are located at MM 12 on right side of road, and at MM 16 on left and right sides of road. Please hoʻihoʻi no more than 20ft in from forest edge.

**STAINBACK HIGHWAY**
The Division of Forestry and Wildlife hoʻihoʻi zone (in red on map) located three miles from Highway 11 (Kanoelehua) along Stainback Highway to North Kūlani Road. Please hoʻihoʻi no more than 20ft in from forest edge.

SADDLE ROAD LOCATION

STAINBACK HWY LOCATION
A disease that is new to science and new to Hawai‘i has killed hundreds of thousands of ‘ōhi‘a trees (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) across more than 34,000 acres of Hawai‘i Island. Known as Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (ROD), it is caused by a fungus called *Ceratocystis fimbriata*. We can all help minimize further spread, and buy time to help researchers find answers and potential treatments. New information is being uncovered almost every week.

This disease has the potential to kill ‘ōhi‘a trees statewide. The most important thing we can all do now is help prevent ROD from spreading.

‘Ōhi‘a lehua is the backbone of Hawai‘i’s native forests and watersheds which are our source of fresh water in these islands. ‘Ōhi‘a trees cover more than 1 million acres statewide—they are perhaps the most important tree in Hawai‘i.
NEW QUARANTINE RULE

Because this disease could have devastating impacts on Hawai'i’s ‘ōhi’a forests, and people could accidentally spread it, the Hawai’i Department of Agriculture passed a new quarantine rule that prohibits interisland movement except by permit of all ‘ōhi’a plant or plant parts including:

- Logs, wood, leaves, twigs, flowers, seeds, stems, cuttings.
- Untreated wood, green waste, mulch, sawdust, wood chips and frass (wood dust from boring beetles).

The movement of soil is also prohibited except by permit.

All these materials could carry the fungus and spread the disease. The fungus can stay viable for over a year.

To apply for permits to move ‘ōhi’a products that can be demonstrated to be free of disease or soil, please visit: HDOA.HAWAII.GOV

Symptoms of the Disease

- Crowns of ‘ōhi’a trees that appear healthy turn yellowish or brown within days to weeks; dead leaves remain on branches for some time.

- All ages of ‘ōhi’a trees can be affected and can have symptoms of browning of branches and/or leaves.

- If a tree with ROD is cut down, or a section of the tree is removed, the fungus shows up as dark staining in the sapwood along the outer edge, and there may be an over-ripe fruit-like odor.

- Trees within a given stand die in a haphazard pattern; the disease does not appear to radiate out directly from infected or dead trees.

Radial staining of sapwood

DON’T MOVE ‘ŌHI’A

Do not move ‘ōhi’a wood, firewood or posts, especially from an area known to have ROD. If you don’t know where the wood is from, don’t move it.

DON’T TRANSPORT ‘ŌHI’A INTER-ISLAND

Comply with the new quarantine rule to help prevent ROD from spreading. Don’t move ‘ōhi’a plants, wood, or other ‘ōhi’a plant parts inter-island without a permit.

CLEAN YOUR TOOLS

Use only these proven cleaning methods—other methods have been tested and they don’t kill the fungus. Tools used for cutting ‘ōhi’a trees (especially infected ones) should be cleaned with 70% rubbing alcohol.

CLEAN YOUR GEAR

Clean your shoes, and clothing. Decontaminate shoes by dipping in 70% rubbing alcohol to kill the ROD fungus. Other gear can also be sprayed with 70% rubbing alcohol. Wash clothing in hot water and detergent.

WASH YOUR VEHICLE

Wash the tires and undercarriage of your vehicles with detergent and remove all soil or mud, especially after traveling from an area with ROD and/or if you have traveled off-road.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: rapidohiadeath.org