

Wahi Pana Essay

This is the very interesting backstory of the Nāpali coast in my grandpa Patrick Tortovella Malama's eyes as well as my own. My grandpa first visited Nāpali coast when he was young and while he doesn't remember the age of when he first went there, he does remember that he went there to help his father Joseph Ku Malama and his uncle Joaquin Ku Malama clean the state park of the coast as well as the trails that go into Nāpali Coast. In the interview, He explained that "I remember that the first time I went to Nāpali Coast, it was very adventurous for me when I could explore Nāpali Coast with my father and my uncle, hiking up on all of the dirt paths and hunting wild goats and fishing in all of the ponds up there." When I first went there with my grandpa, I just sat in his boat while he inspected the coast to make sure no trash/fishing nets were left behind while I was in the boat, enjoying the view of the coast and seeing all of the Hawaiian turtles swim by. It was one of the best experiences I had as well as my first memorable one with my grandpa.

In my research and the things I've learned from my interview, there was no known native species that lives in Nāpali Coast besides all of the native fishes in Hawai'i that we know of today that often swim by the coast as well as the Hawaiian sea turtles and Hawaiian monk seals that often swim by and rest on the beach side of Nāpali Coast. If you are lucky, you may find the Hawaiian *nēnē* fly by the Nāpali Coast beach area or the state park area. The only animals that you see when hiking Nāpali

Coast are wild goats and wild chickens but they were brought here by Captain Cook. The wild pigs do not go up on Nāpali coast due to how rocky the trails are. From what I could find and the information on my interview, there is no traditional place name for the Nāpali Coast, it is just called the Nāpali or Nāpali Coast and there is no Hawaiian name for it according to my research or what my Grandpa could remember. In terms of changes to the Nāpali Coast, there wasn't much that changed. My grandpa quoted in the interview that "When I first went there, I remember that it was mostly sunny all of the time and the waters were rough getting to the state park by boat." When I first went there as well as going there recently, there wasn't much weather change either. When I asked my grandpa about what has changed about Nāpali Coast from when he first arrived there, he said that "All that changed about the coast is that there are a lot of tourists hiking up there, visiting all of the Hawaiian graves and there is a lot of boat tours coming in and coasting by the beach and coastal area for the view." When I did the interview with my grandpa, I learned quite a bit about what he does about Nāpali Coast. As I have stated in my introduction paragraph, he went there with his dad and uncle to be his "little helpers" to clean up the coast and the state park. In the interview, he said that "When I got old enough and my dad passed away, I took upon his mantle and I go every summer to help clean up the coast state park and all of the trails in Nāpali Coast because that is what he loved to do so I am doing it too." Later in the interview, he said that "After a while of cleaning up the coast, a non-profit organization came in and helped me clean up the coast as well."

Since I failed to ask him what the organization was named, all I know is that they clean up the coast from time to time and my Grandpa appreciates them very much. When I asked him about what he does on the Nāpali Coast, he says that “I went there to mostly clean up and to go hunting and fishing by the Nāpali Coast.” He sometimes brings his family including us to the beach to cruise as well as riding his boat along the coast and I sometimes go with him and I have loads of fun even to this day.

From what I have researched and interviewing my grandpa about the issues and problems about Nāpali Coast, there are more problems with Nāpali Coast than I had expected. When I researched about any problems in Nāpali Coast, I found a website that explained some problems with Nāpali Coast. What surprised me is the fact my grandpa is mentioned in this article and some problems that are explained on this website are from his own words. The biggest problem that the Nāpali Coast is dealing with is the fact that their budgets for cleaning and maintenance of the area has been shortened and it continues to shorten to this day. What is quoted in the website about the problems in the words of my grandpa, it quotes that “These illegal campers,” he says, “continually come from across the globe to find that little piece of paradise, in turn destroying and re-arranging archaeological sites and leaving behind untold tons of abandoned campsites and trash in the farthest extremes of Nāpali.” Keep in mind that there is a law to stop and prevent this from happening but it’s extremely expensive. Since they have to haul all of this garbage from Nāpali Coast to Kekaha, they need Helicopters since it’s not possible by vehicle. According to the website, it takes 1 hour for them to search through Nāpali and it costs them \$650 per hour to do so. My grandpa is helping these people by going to the coast from time to time to help clean as

well as the non-profit organization I mentioned earlier but sadly, it's not enough since people still do this despite it being illegal. One personal problem that my grandpa has is the fact that he now only can do private interviews with unpublished pieces about the coast. Due to unfortunate circumstances with a mainland author who falsified parts about the Nāpali Coast that led to serious legislations with him and that author, his attorney advised him to not share personal knowledge about the area to outside sources. When I have heard this in the interview, I was disappointed to the fact that all of the stories/information I somewhat remember him telling me about is not exactly known anywhere else and I presume that when he passes away, that knowledge is going to be buried with him as well and I as well as my family are never going to get the full picture again or at least to my knowledge of the information he explained to me. One additional piece of information that he explained in the interview that wasn't on the website was that "The people today are exploiting Nāpali Coast for the money and they never care about it personally." From that quote, I was surprised that out of all of the people who claim to care about the coast, some don't care about it personally like my grandpa does and just go there for the profits.

In conclusion, my grandpa really cares about the welfare of the Nāpali Coast, which is why I chose it to be my *wahi pana*. While I may not know or care about it as much as my grandpa does, when I finished the interview with him, it really motivated me to want to do the same as well once I'm done with school and college and other life stuff and maybe one day take the mantle that my grandpa holds dearly about. In all honesty, I don't know much about Nāpali Coast besides from what Google has

explained to me what it is, which is why I only shared my memories of the place. Since I haven't been there much, I don't have any personal feelings about this place except being very important to my grandpa. But despite my lack of knowledge, my grandpa cares about Nāpali Coast so much that despite being 73, he still goes there and cleans up after the people who trashed it in the first place and contribute to Department of Land and Natural Resources efforts to help solve this issues that arise with the Nāpali Coast. I am hoping that one day, I can do the same about Nāpali Coast and do the same/similar things that my grandpa goes through to protect and help take care of.