



## DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### **KAIWI SCENIC COASTLINE *FIRST DAY HIKE* RETURNS AFTER COVID HIATUS**

(HONOLULU) – As one of the best attended *First Day Hike* events in the country, the trek to the Makapu‘u Overlook for the first sunrise of 2023 is back.

2012, was the kick-off of Hawai‘i participating in and celebrating the nationwide *First Day Hike*. This is the 10th anniversary of the Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline hike, though COVID caused the cancellation of events the past two years.

46 states are hosting a multitude of hikes in 2023. The Hawai‘i *First Day Hike*...a walk really... is along the paved roadway to the summit of Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline and provides incredible views mauka to makai and has attracted as many as 700 people on previous New Year’s Days.

“It is a unique and moving experience. It’s a spiritual way to usher in a new year. Watching the first sunrise of the year peak over the Kaiwi Channel and Moloka‘i, synchronized with the blowing of a pu in the 4 cardinal directions by Gabriel Spencer of Ke Leo O Laka I ka Hikina O Ka La, followed with an oli by Dr. Sam Gon of Halau Mele, is a chicken skin experience. It all exemplifies Hawai‘i’s unique culture” said Curt Cottrell, Administrator of the DLNR Division of State Parks (DSP).

Sunrise is followed with a rousing taiko performance of the Taiko Center of the Pacific by students of Sensei Kenny Endo. In previous years, Scottish bagpipes have been part of the mix – providing a trilogy of sound and meaning that is an audible representation of Hawai‘i’s cultural influences.

DSP is grateful for the community partnership that adds cultural elements to the striking natural landscape.

The summit viewing platform will be closed before and during sunrise to provide space for the pu, oli and the taiko drummers. It reopens for after the performance.

#### **FIRST DAY HIKE AT KAIWI STATE SCENIC SHORLINE**

- Gates to the park open at **5:30 a.m.** to give provide ample time to get to the top and in position along the route for the **7:10 a.m.** sunrise.
- Staff will arrive in advance to drive to the summit with drums and performers before hikers start to ascend.

- The paved footpath is one-mile each way.
- Flashlights, blankets, and warm clothes are encouraged. In addition to darkness, Kaiwi can be windy top to bottom.
- Parking is limited at the trailhead so overflow vehicles must park along the highway. Carpooling is encouraged.
- Exercise extreme caution when crossing the highway.
- There are no restroom facilities at Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline, but for this event DSP will provide portable toilets at the trailhead.
- Please carry out all rubbish and bring poop bags and leashes are required for dogs

“Hawaii’s *First Day Hike* ‘Ohana and DSP are excited to bring this stirring event back to Kaiwi. While many other states have more challenging (and colder) hikes to offer on New Year’s Day, few can match Kaiwi for stunning scenery, to possibly catch a glimpse of a humpback whale, and to participate in a cross-cultural celebration. With the pu heralding the sunrise, a mele oli to shepherd in the new year, and powerful taiko to stir the heart and galvanize our intent for the upcoming year, it’s always a memorable start,” Cottrell added.

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## RESOURCES

(All images/video courtesy: DLNR)

HD video – *First Day Hike* feature, Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline (Jan. 1, 2020):  
<https://vimeo.com/382321191>

HD video – *First Day Hike* media clips, Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline (Jan. 1, 2020):  
<https://vimeo.com/382313796>

Photographs - *First Day Hike* media clips, Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline (Jan. 1, 2020):  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9w2q7mo5z44klek/AABYrSQbfClvISoOAT4gOw5sa?dl=0>

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