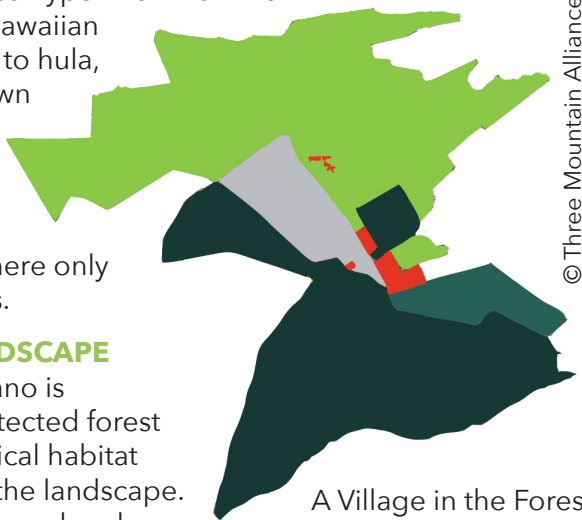


## WHAT'S HERE?

Hawai'i is the most isolated island group in the world; home to tens of thousands of plants, birds, fish and coral that are endemic—found nowhere else on earth—and has almost every ecosystem and forest type known on the planet. Sacred to Hawaiian culture and central to hula, the forests are known as the Wao Akua, or place of the gods. Prior to western contact, people ventured there only for specific reasons.

## A FORESTED LANDSCAPE

The village of Volcano is surrounded by protected forest that serves as a critical habitat connection across the landscape. As more lots are cleared and homes are built “forest holes” break up the habitat, making it more and more difficult for native plants and birds to survive.



© Three Mountain Alliance

A Village in the Forest

- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park
- State Forest Reserve
- Kamehameha Schools
- Natural Area Reserve
- Residential Areas



## LEARN MORE, GET HELP

Go to  
**[www.VolcanoCommunity.org](http://www.VolcanoCommunity.org)**  
for more resources



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Produced by the  
**Volcano Community Association**  
PO Box 600  
Volcano, Hawaii 96785-0600  
email: [vcainfo@yahoo.com](mailto:vcainfo@yahoo.com)  
[www.VolcanoCommunity.org](http://www.VolcanoCommunity.org)

Originally printed in 2009;  
Updated/reprinted in 2021

Designed by  
Hawai'i Lit Production Co.  
[www.hawaiiilit.org](http://www.hawaiiilit.org)

# Building in the Forest

A guide to forest-friendly  
building in  
Volcano, Hawai'i

©Ken Goodrich

## NATIVE FOREST MAKES VOLCANO SPECIAL

Volcano is one of the few places left where the songs of native birds still echo among the ‘ōhi‘a trees. Each of us living in Volcano can help prevent further loss by preserving as much forest as possible.

## COSTS AND BENEFITS

Some lots in Volcano are so small that it is difficult to meet building code requirements without substantial clearing and grading. While clear cutting and lot scraping may appear to offer benefits and seem to be required under current laws, it can generate unanticipated costs, damage trees, and destroy the habitat that makes Volcano special. Often ‘ōhi‘a trees become infected with Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (ROD) after their roots are damaged by aggressive clearing. The Volcano Community Association has compiled a list of resources to help when building.

## RESTORE AND PROTECT THE FOREST

Some areas are already clear cut or covered with invasive weeds such as faya trees, christmas berry, kahili ginger, princess flower (tibouchina), guava, & Himalayan raspberry. Relatively healthy forested areas need help to fight back against invasive weeds. Seek out native plant nurseries and choose species appropriate to Volcano’s climate so your plantings will thrive.



## BEWARE OF INVASIVE SPECIES AND DISEASE

Plants, cars, equipment and tools can carry diseases and hitch hikers like coqui frogs, fire ants, and stinging-nettle caterpillars. Check all plants before bringing them home. Test for fire ants with peanut butter on a chopstick. Clean all tools, cars, dozers, equipment and shoes with 70% rubbing alcohol or hot water and soap to kill the fungus that causes ROD.

## PREVENT STANDING WATER

Mosquitoes breed in containers of standing water, and the avian malaria they carry is deadly to native birds. Turn over empty pots, buckets, & tires. Stock ornamental ponds with comet goldfish or other fish that eat mosquito larvae. Never release fish or any other non-native animal into the wild in Hawai‘i.

## REDUCE LIGHT POLLUTION

Keep native seabirds safe by limiting exterior lighting, which disorients birds as they overfly forest at night to feed their young. All outdoor lights should face the ground (by law), not outward or upward. This also keeps our night skies visible.

© Tupouveiongo Potauaine Kulihā ‘apai

Prevent invasive species that can quickly take over cleared or dozed lots: saving time, money and possibly the use of herbicides later

Avoid flooding problems which can be created by improper or excessive grading

Existing native forest can guide both house placement and additional landscaping

Careful clearing on the south side and selective thinning in other areas of the lot can let in enough light to limit household mold and keep the home warm



Hand clearing helps you get to know your land’s history and treasures

If machine-clearing or grading parts of your lot: small, maneuverable dozers, excavators, and front-end loaders will help preserve mature trees and shrubs