



*Preserving America's Heritage*

## **ACHP Policy Statement on the ACHP's Interaction with Native Hawaiian Organizations**

Adopted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
May 13, 2008  
Washington, DC

### **Introduction**

The history of the United States is enhanced by the many cultures and peoples that make up this nation. These cultures and peoples bring together diverse languages, ceremonies, practices, rites and stories; all of which add to our nation's vibrancy and strength, engender our compassion, and define our collective history.

Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of our 50th state, bring a culture to this country that is unique. Theirs is a history of a proud people who, like other Native peoples of our country, have struggled to maintain their culture amidst other prevalent influences of American society.

Native Hawaiians have begun to more assertively recall their heritage as a great Polynesian people. Their ceremonies and cultural practices have been reborn and their language is thriving. Their historic sites are reminders of their prowess as ocean navigators, agricultural innovators, and as a successful multi-tiered, complex society that existed for hundreds of years before Europeans left their homelands.

Native Hawaiians bring their values to the historic preservation dialogue, values that are often shared by other Native peoples. Among others, these include:

- A deep love and understanding of the land;
- A respect for the powerful forces of nature;
- An understanding of an ever-evolving society and the need to reflect that in sites and buildings;
- A need to minimize their footprint on the Earth, so as to leave it capable of accommodating many generations to come;
- A historic view that Native Hawaiians stand on the work of past ancestors and have a responsibility to their children to appreciate that context;
- A deep obligation to their ancestors, to their memory and to their resting places; and,
- An enjoyment of their very brief time on this earth and all it has to offer.

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