



March 7, 2014

Contact: Toni Parras, 808-282-9332; Andy Collins, 808-347-8144

MEDIA ADVISORY: NOAA's Mokupāpapa Discovery Center reopens in Hilo

On March 14 and 15, NOAA's Mokupāpapa Discovery Center, an educational facility showcasing the remote Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, will reopen its doors in Hilo's historic Koehnen's Ltd. building after nearly a year of refurbishing. The 20,000 square-foot facility features new exhibits, artwork and a 3,500-gallon aquarium. The media is invited to cover two opening events – one for VIPs on Friday, March 14, and one for the public on Saturday, March 15. Both events will include speeches, mele and entertainment.

WHAT:

Grand re-opening of NOAA's Mokupāpapa Discovery Center

WHEN:

Friday, March 14 (VIP tour and reception; invitation only; open to the press)
Saturday, March 15 (public opening and reception), 10:00 am-12 noon

WHERE:

Mokupāpapa Discovery Center, 76 Kamehameha Ave., Hilo, Hawai'i 96720; 808-935-8358

WHO:

David Swatland, NOAA superintendent for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
Kālewa Correa, Mokupāpapa Discovery Center manager
Koehnen-Rohner families
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council members
State, county and city elected officials and other VIPs

VISUALS:

New artwork and exhibits in the center, new saltwater aquarium, opening speeches, blessings, mele and other live entertainment and activities

An important educational hub in the Hilo community for more than a decade, the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center hosts more than 60,000 visitors yearly and also provides off-site learning activities to schools and other groups. The new 20,000 square foot facility is located in the former Koehnen's furniture store at 76 Kamehameha Avenue in downtown Hilo. For more information, visit <http://www.papahanaumokuakea.gov/education/center.html>.

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