



Hawaii Forest & Trail
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GOOGLE TREKKER

When Hawaii Forest & Trail was called upon as a partner to bring Google's Trekker technology to Hawaii, the Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau cited the company's impeccable reputation, decades of experience, and knowledgeable, educated, and capable guides.

Led by Rob Pacheco, his Hawaii Forest & Trail guides completed Google Trekker training and practiced on Pololu Valley Lookout and Akaka Falls State Park trails. They then got to work traversing many miles of trails on Hawaii Island with the Android-powered Google Trekker.

After reviewing a list of 29 Hawaii Island trails, Rob Pacheco narrowed down the list to 15 trails that his team would film. These Google Trekker trails included:

- Hawaii Volcanoes National Park trails
- Puu Huluhulu Trail
- Upper and Lower Glover Trails at the Kahuku Unit of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
- Onomea Bay
- Akaka Falls State Park
- Pololu Valley Trail
- Ala Kahakai sections including Hapuna Beach State Park
- Kaloko Honokohau National Historical Park
- Puuhonua o Honaunau Loop Trail

Total miles trekked with the trekker:

We collected 45.5 miles of trails plus 23 miles of trails we backtracked on without collecting data. We hiked a total of 68.4 miles with the trekker.

Rob Pacheco Quotes:

"Our team looks forward to the Google Trekker Hawaii Island launch. Visitors will discover for themselves the wonder and beauty of Hawaii Island's most scenic trails," said Hawaii Forest & Trail President and Founder Rob Pacheco.

"For us the Google Trekker adventures brought Hawaii Island trails and hiking adventures to life. To be a part of this new technology trend was another amazing chapter of adventure for Hawaii Forest & Trail!"

"It was great to hit the trails with a new mission and purpose. Normally when we're in the field we are focused on the "here and now," but collecting with the Trekker added much more depth to our time on the trail. We had to consider lighting, incline, weather (especially rain) and terrain. In addition to being a guide, we also got to play director, producer and cinematographer."

"Revisiting some of our favorite, but less-traveled trails, was like reconnecting with old friends."



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As noted from Rob Pacheco's Trekker Trail Blog Post

"Sunday we finally got out with the Google Trekker and collected data! Our first Trekker outing was to Puuhonua o Honaunau National Historic Park. We started from the Visitor Center then hiked the 1871 trail to the boundary of the park at Kiilae. It was hot with the 43 pound pack but lots of fun. We had the trail to ourselves until near the lava tube and rock ramp where a local couple was fishing from the rocky cliff. Once we trekked over to the picnic area and the Royal Grounds it was busy with Sunday beach goers and park visitors.

Along with the inspiring ancient sites and rock work, swaying coconut trees, and the crystal-clear waters of South Kona, it was wonderful to see some of the rare native Hawaiian coastal shrubs thriving under the NPS's care. Especially exciting were the dense stands of Naio Papa and Ohai, both in bloom.

Months from now Google Map users will be able to see these rare endemic plants from their computers or smartphones anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, the sweet smell of nectar in the air today won't make it to the virtual world of Google Maps.

The Trekker attracted lots of positive attention.

"Hey, are you the Google man?" and "We love Google Maps!", were just a couple of the many friendly shout-outs that came our way.

Folks are fascinated with the sci-fi looking contraption.

Everyone wants their picture with the Google Man and his Trekker. We took pictures with families, couples, kids, and individuals.



One here with Ranger Chris Scheid and another with a good friend, malo-clad, Park Interpreter Charlie Hua. We told Charlie the Google folks automatically blur faces and license plates but not malo's. Looks like his red loin cloth will be forever immortalized on Google Maps."

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