

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Kilauea Volcano Runs in 2009

According to Volcano Art Center executive director Phyllis Segawa, the issue of exploring alternate routes to replace the annual Kilauea Volcano Runs in 2009 has been completed and the decision has been made to not pursue an alternate site at this time.

The Volcano Art Center and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park announced earlier this year that 2008 marked the final running of the annual Kilauea Volcano Runs within the park.

The necessity and appropriateness of the three races—a 26.2 mile marathon, 10 mile rim run, and 5 mile caldera run and walk—being held within the national park had been under discussion between the two agencies for the past several years. Volcano Art Center was aware that 2008 would be the final year of the race in the park.

The event, conducted under a federal special use permit, required strict compliance to ensure protection of the park's natural and cultural resources and adherence to national park policy and law, and wilderness regulations.

The summit eruption of Halema'uma'u Crater that began in March nearly forced the cancellation of the race this year, but park officials and race organizers worked together to reroute the marathon and 10-mile course to avoid the volcanic fumes and fallout. Sulfur dioxide gas and ash from the ongoing eruption continues to inundate several miles of the former race routes.

Segawa stated, "The park and art center have received many letters and phone calls about the status of the race. The uniqueness of the runs being held in the park was its biggest draw, but we fully understand the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's concern and desire to protect the environment and cultural resources of the park. The cooperation and help we enjoyed over the past 26 years from the park has been outstanding, but at this time it is just not feasible for us to find an alternate site and the amount of manpower needed for such an event."

The Volcano Art Center is a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1974 to promote, develop, and perpetuate the artistic and cultural heritage of Hawai'i's people and environment through activities in the visual, literary, and performing arts.