



Supreme Self-sufficiency: The Way It Should Be

So how refreshing it is to read about a group of residents and business owners near Polihale State Park on the island of Kauai. CNN.com reported on April 9, 2009 how this group of citizens took action to do what needed to be done.



Polihale was closed in December 2008 due to severe flooding that destroyed some facilities and an access road. As it is a state park, the government was the logical first choice to repair the damage. The Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources estimated the repairs would take two years and cost \$4 million. However, as the state did not have the \$4 million, the construction was put off indefinitely.

When several business owners whose livelihoods depend upon the park heard this, rather than whine and moan about it, they decided to take on the responsibility themselves. One of those business owners is Ivan Slack, whose company, Napali Kayak, relies solely on kayak tours at the park. “If the park is not open ... bankruptcy would be imminent” for his business. So “we can wait around for the state or federal government to make this move, or we can go out and do our part,” he told CNN.

Slack and several other residents donated their own time, funds, and equipment, and got busy repairing the park’s damage themselves. Work that the government estimated would take two years to complete took private citizens only eight days!

Once the repairs are inspected, the park will be open again in time for the busy tourist season, and no business will be lost due to the damage. “We got together — the community — and we got it done,” said Troy Martin, whose company, Martin Steel, donated machinery and steel to the effort. The community has demonstrated what can happen when the government gets out of the way and private capital, labor, and ingenuity are allowed to “get it done.” Which is the way it should be!



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