

The Exploration of Hualalai Ranch Cave

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Hualalai Ranch Cave is the third longest lava cave in the world at 17.256 miles or 27785 meters long and 441.7 meters deep. It is also the third longest lava cave system. The cave is located in the North Kona District of Hawaii County and is owned by the Hualalai Resort. The cave is not open to the public; however, the Resort will give permission under for responsible cavers to enter under certain conditions.

Our talk with discuss some of the scientific interests in the cave as well as a brief history of the exploration which lasted over ten years. Most of the mapping occurred from 1995 to 2005. John Rosenfeld was the expedition leader, and he relied heavily upon Butler Cave Conservation Society

members which included many of the twenty-five people who helped with the mapping and others who did some of the scientific work. The paper map was drawn by Nevin Davis in 2005. HRC provided some data for the William White article in “Secondary Minerals in Volcanic Caves: Data from Hawai‘i,” William B. White. Journal of Cave and Karst Studies, v. 72, no. 2, p. 75–85.