

Ahihi-Kina'u, Keoneo'io Advisory Group  
November 16, 2004  
Group Memory

The meeting began with an opening pule.

The following updates were given on continuing projects.

- Enforcement
  - Randy Awo (DoCARE) passed out and went over enforcement statistics that covered fiscal year '04 – he noted that many enforcement actions in the NARs may be caught in the statistics for the various divisions noted in the handout and that to separate them out by area is not possible
  - Matt Ramsey (Ahihi-Kina'u/Keoneo'io Ranger) passed out a summary of what he had observed since coming on board and noted that violations occur at all times and days of the week and vary from selling hand crafts, to poaching of fish and lobsters, taking lava rocks etc.
- Dave Gulko (DAR) will be repeating the assessment done at the coves in December of 2003 with the same team and methodology to help establish the impacts on and health of the resources at these areas. DLNR noted that this should be the last assessment needed to make some determinations about the health of the resource and that results should be available in late January 2005
- Maui Revealed – DLNR passed out copies of the comments they had submitted to the publisher to be considered during the reprint of the publication. The Advisory Group discussed submitting comments and it was moved onto the agenda under other business. The issue of closing the coves was raised at this point and DLNR responded that they felt it would be premature at this point especially in light of the pending assessment of the health of the area. The issue was placed on the agenda under other business for discussion. There was frustration expressed by the group over DLNR's position as there is already a study stating that there is an adverse impact from human activity in the area and that the group has been discussing this since its first meeting with no progress. Some members felt that it should be shut down and allowed to rejuvenate. DLNR stated that this could be a consideration but that the results of the assessment should be available before such a decision is discussed.
- Matt Ramsey has been selected to permanently fill one of the ranger positions for the area. The second position is in personnel and the list of qualified individuals should be forwarded to the Department soon.
- The Coast Watch group held a meeting of interested individuals to assess the interest and decide how to move forward. The group was smaller than initially thought but was sufficient to move forward. Three boats from the private side were identified as being available to assist DoCARE. DoCARE will be scheduling a training with the group in January for both water and land side assistance. Anyone on the Advisory Group that is interested should contact Randy Awo or Hannah Bernard.

- DLNR reported that they are pleased with the progress being made by the various initiatives in place the Advisory Group, Ranger position, Educational piece and Coast Watch.
- Educational update included that the display board will arrive on December 7<sup>th</sup>. They also noted that the original concept of being small and subtle is not working and that increased visibility is necessary to attract people to stop by. The group is working on increased signage and other options to increase their visibility to the public. It was noted that the information should be based on Hawaiian culture, names for the area and values. The group noted that they are looking at setting up training for their folks in this area in January. They also noted that they count cars from 9 to 1 and average about 300 cars and only 20 to 50 stop to talk to them – this is another reason they are looking at visibility issues. They also noted that most of the cars in the lot are local and that only the tourists stop for information. They noted that those they talk to about the area they are usually able to redirect them away from the coves. They are looking at better ways to get the information out. They also noted that the Big Beach signs do not work. They noted that there is a lot of concern especially on the part of fishermen about the gating issue and that many feel it is a done deal – they are hungry for a definitive answer. Some recommendations that came up during the discussion were: to have directions to the cove trail heads taken out of Maui Revealed and to look at speed bumps at the entrance to the dumps parking lot so that cars would slow down and noticed the educational station instead of zooming right past. There was also a comment that the entrance should be cleaned up and made to look attractive. Also ways to make the information/education area look more official and not just like a roadside activities desk also need to be looked at.
- In another update, Pat Borge noted that he had stopped someone from taking lava rock and that this activity needed more attention. DoCARE noted that they have given citations and done investigations but because there are so many places to pull off for this activity it is difficult. Several suggestions were made:
  - Get some press and information out that the activity is illegal
  - Ask the County Building Department if there is a way they could regulate this practice by the construction industry – the County Representative said he would follow up and report at the next meeting.
- An underwater cleanup was done and they found plenty stuff, especially fishing equipment. The fishing club also did a beach clean up. The Ranch is planning to put up a gate and it was suggested that the State coordinate with them and see if something could not be worked out on the gate issue that the Advisory Group has been discussing for several meetings. This issue was also moved for discussion later in the meeting.
- Cultural Surveys has been awarded the contract for the cultural assessment of the area.
- Matt Ramsey noted that he and others have been redirecting snorkelers to the Bay that were headed to the coves by explaining that it is better, more accessible and safer – he does not have hard numbers but he and Bill Evanson (NARS) feel that about 75% comply with the suggestion. They also noted that the sign discussed at the last meeting that was not installed has now been installed.

The next agenda item was long range planning for the area. The Advisory Group decided the following:

- They need to review existing literature – a summary of the pertinent parts of the existing larger plan will be prepared by staff and sent to members.
- The group needs to develop a Mission Statement for the area that includes as its prime focus preservation of the resource.
- Develop goals and in doing so address the question of how much public use and the cultural aspects of the area
- They decided that this was a separate agenda and should be scheduled for its own meeting and not mixed with updates and shorter term more immediate issues

#### Other Business

Discussion on the coves:

- Need to close immediately for 1 year to allow them time to heal – after this period of healing can look at reopening for guided tours –perhaps 3 a day with an alaka'i.
- Carrying capacity of the area should not solely be based on science but should also factor in aesthetics and Hawaiian cultural values
- DLNR has always considered public lands for public use if the resource can sustain the use – recommendations dealing with limiting public use of the NARs area would most likely have to go to the NARs Commission – DLNR will let the committee know the process for advising on these kinds of decisions.
- If the public access cannot be shut down maybe we can limit the activities at the coves such as banning all water activities such as snorkeling – if folks can't snorkel they are unlikely to go
- Eventually all activities and access to the area should be supervised
- Although folks have said that diverting folks from the area by talking to them is successful this activity can not be sustained 24/7
- The question comes down to one of public access versus protection of the resource
- Dan Davidson committed to find out when the next meeting of the NARs Commission is and ask that the issue of closing the coves be on the agenda for discussion – he noted that an activity ban may need a rule change but that he will check on this and the process – enforcement personal in the room noted that an activity ban would be difficult to enforce
- A suggestion was made that closing the parking areas at the trail heads may provide a large deterrent as folks would then have to walk quite a distance just to get to the trail heads

Although the group tried to reach consensus on a recommendation on the issue of use and access to the coves none was achieved. Several motions were made the results are noted below.

*Motion:* Prohibit water-based activities within the coves (an attempt was made to amend the motion which was subsequently withdrawn). Results: 4 in favor, 5 opposed - motion failed.

*Motion:* Immediately close the coves and trails that lead to them. 8 in favor, 1 opposed. The advisory motion will be forwarded to DLNR and the NARs Commission. Members of the Advisory Group will be copied on the letter.

The Advisory Group also by consensus decided to endorse the DLNR letter to Maui Revealed and add three issues from the group:

1. That strong statements on not harassing the dolphins need to be included
2. That the Group is recommending closing of the coves and trails and that the publication should be aware of this as it moves forward with its next printing
3. That the publication should include strong statements on protecting private property rights and identify clearly what is private property in the area and that trespassing on this property is a crime.

Matt Ramsey will draft the letter and Charlie Maxwell and Pat Borge will review it for the Group.

Public Comment:

Closing of the area to commercial use is the best thing that ever happened to the area and the types of steps I have heard today are encouraging – keep going.

Closing of Advisory Group meeting

The Group noted that many of the agenda items were not addressed due to time constraints and requested that they be on the next agenda.

The meeting closed with a pule

next meeting formalize names

Hokuna - Fishbowl  
Kalaibar - Ag  
Kaukahi Cove  
Royal Bala - sunset  
Lili Maui