

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Ka'ena Point Fence Project

*Q: Where is Ka'ena Point?*

A: Ka'ena Point is located at the very northwest tip on the island of O'ahu. It is about 10 miles west of Waialua on the North Shore and 10 miles north of Wai'anae on the Leeward coast. Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve as well as the adjacent Ka'ena Point State Park are owned and managed by the State of Hawai'i.

*Q: What's so special about Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve?*

Ka'ena Point is an excellent example of the type of environment that can be found in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The difference is that anyone on O'ahu can get to Ka'ena Point to see one of the largest seabird colonies in the main Hawaiian Islands and also a variety of rare and endangered plants and animals. There are also cultural sites including the Leina a ka 'Uhane, a spirit leap important to Hawaiian culture.

*Q: What's the problem at Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve?*

A: The special resources at Ka'ena are under threat. Animals like dogs, cats, and mongoose have killed ground-nesting seabirds like the ua'u kani (Wedge-tailed Shearwater) and mōlī (Laysan Albatross), especially the young before they can fly. Rats eat seabird eggs and chicks and even attack adult birds. Rats and mice also eat native plants and seeds. Despite intensive efforts to control these predators, they still pose a major threat to the survival of native species.

*Q: Why are dogs not allowed?*

A: It's understandable to want to exercise your dog and enjoy beautiful natural areas at the same time. Perhaps some people feel that their dog would never attack birds. However, it is an instinct of dogs, no matter how well trained, to go after birds on the ground. Signs about keeping dogs out are posted but they are often ignored. It takes just one dog to potentially kill hundreds of birds. This has happened several times including each of the last two years. Dogs could also harass resting Hawaiian monk seals. Although some dogs are wild, most are brought by their owners.

*Q: Why build a pest-proof fence?*

A: This idea to build a pest-proof fence at Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve was developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State of Hawai'i, and the Wildlife Society, Hawai'i Chapter, who are cooperating partners. The fence is a tool that will help reach the goal of restoring the area to provide a safe place for Hawaii's native plants and wildlife by removing destructive alien species that harm them. New technology in pest-proof fencing holds promise to keep out all kinds of pests- from large animals such as pigs and dogs, to small animals such as mongoose and rats. By removing these alien species, we have a chance to preserve a precious piece of Hawai'i for future generations.

*Q: What will the fence look like?*

A: The fence will run along the base of the Wai'anae Mountains following the existing upper roadbed. It will come down to the high tide line at either end where there are existing entrances to the Natural Area Reserve, but will not fully encircle the reserve. It will use a wire mesh strong enough to keep large animals out and fine enough to prevent baby mice from entering. It will stand approximately 6.5 feet high with a rolled hood at the top and a skirt buried underneath the ground. The fence will be painted to blend into the background.

*Q: Will the fence be an eyesore that takes away from the beauty of Ka'ena Point?*

A: Every effort will be made to reduce the visible impact of the fence. Because it will be above the peninsula for the majority of its length, it will not be visible when looking toward the ocean. And looking toward the mountain, it will blend into the hillside. It is hoped that the visual impact will be worth the value of creating an even more beautiful refuge for native plants and animals found nowhere else on O'ahu.

*Q: How will the fence affect access?*

A: Access will remain the same. People will still be allowed to visit the reserve both during and after construction, with only a few short closed periods for safety measures (e.g. when equipment is brought in). There would be unlocked gates allowing people on foot and on mountain bikes to enter the reserve at entrances on both ends. People will still be able to visit the Reserve for fishing, hiking, bicycling, and other recreational and educational activities.

*Q: Will the very birds you are trying to protect fly into it and get injured or die?*

A: This is obviously an important consideration. The fence is planned to follow the contour of the hill behind the breeding colony and should be out of the main flight path of the birds. There are ways to improve the visibility of the top and back of the fence for birds and place flexible meshing in potential strike areas, if necessary.

*Q: Where birds at Ka'ena before people?*

A: Seabirds have lived at Ka'ena Point for thousands of years and were once an important source of food for early Hawaiians inhabiting the area as evidenced by bird bones found in ancient campfires. While the birds abandoned nesting at Ka'ena for a time, with recent protection, they are now returning.

*Q: What will the effects of the fence be in Pueo, the Hawaiian Owl?*

A: A predator-proof fence would provide one of the only safe nesting areas for pueo in all the Hawaiian Islands. Like seabirds, pueo nest on the ground and are vulnerable to cats, dogs and mongoose. Pueo naturally used to eat mostly birds and insects prior to the arrival of humans, so by improving seabird habitat, pueo will have more of its natural food source

*Q: Will cultural sites be impacted?*

A: It is important to protect cultural sites from any harm, fence or no fence. Archaeological surveys have been completed. The current design of the fence will avoid impact to any known Hawaiian cultural sites and discussions will be held with people who have general interest in cultural sites to minimize impact. A fence may actually protect cultural sites from damage.

*Q: How do you know these fences work?*

A: While this type of pest-proof fence is new to Hawai'i, it has been tested and applied in New Zealand with great results in many projects. Hawai'i's environment shares many similarities with that of New Zealand. We are confident it will work with proper design and maintenance.

*Q: When will the fence be built?*

A: The construction date will be determined by a number of factors, including obtaining necessary permits and logistics, however the goal is to complete the fence in 2009.

*Q: How does the community feel about this project?*

A: There is generally strong support for this project. Since 2007, we have conducted a wide range of activities including site visits, presentations at organizations and schools, educational booths, surveys and individual meetings. We have also produced newspaper articles, television stories, a video, brochure and website. We have spoken to almost 2,000 people and reached thousands more indirectly through the media.

*Q: Will the public be able to comment on the plans for the fence?*

A: Absolutely. As part of the public review process, the public was given the opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Assessment. While the formal comment period has closed, we would still like to hear from you. Contact us at: [kaenapoint@yahoo.com](mailto:kaenapoint@yahoo.com) or write to: DLNR Natural Area Reserves System, 1151 Punchbowl St., Honolulu, HI, 96813. For more information, please see our website at <http://www.state.hi.us/dlnr/dofaw/kaena/index.htm>.