

Nā Ala Hele

Hawai'i Trail & Access System

Program Plan

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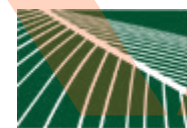
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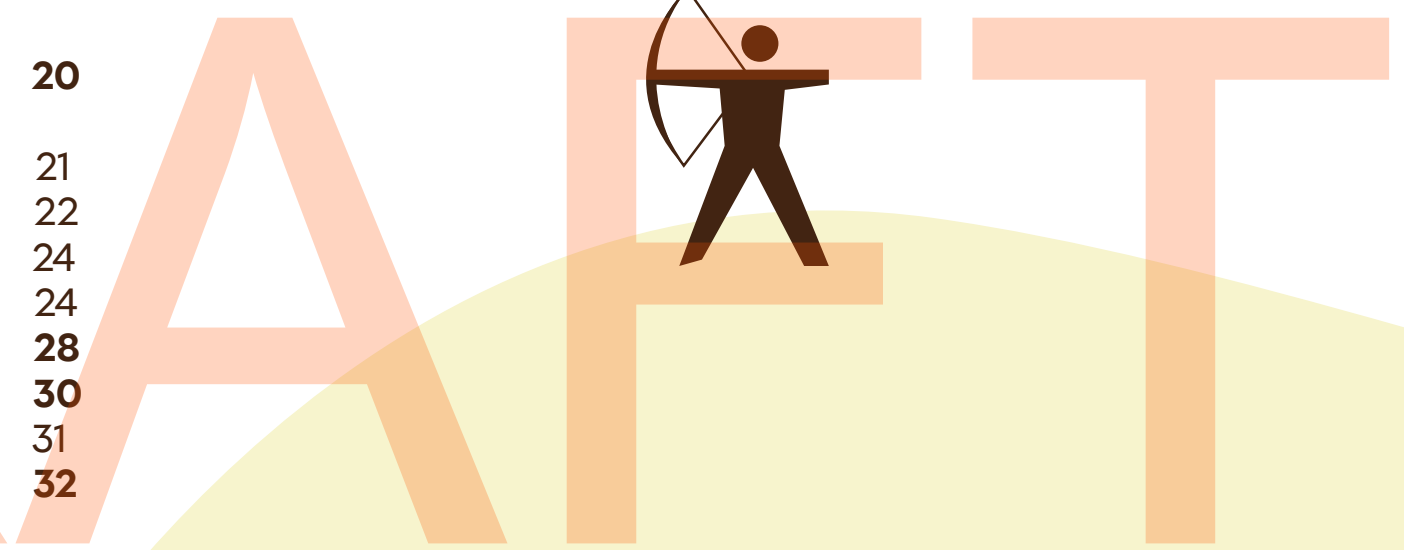
*Prepared with the Department of Land & Natural Resources, and
the Department of Forestry & Wildlife by*



PBR HAWAII
& ASSOCIATES, INC.

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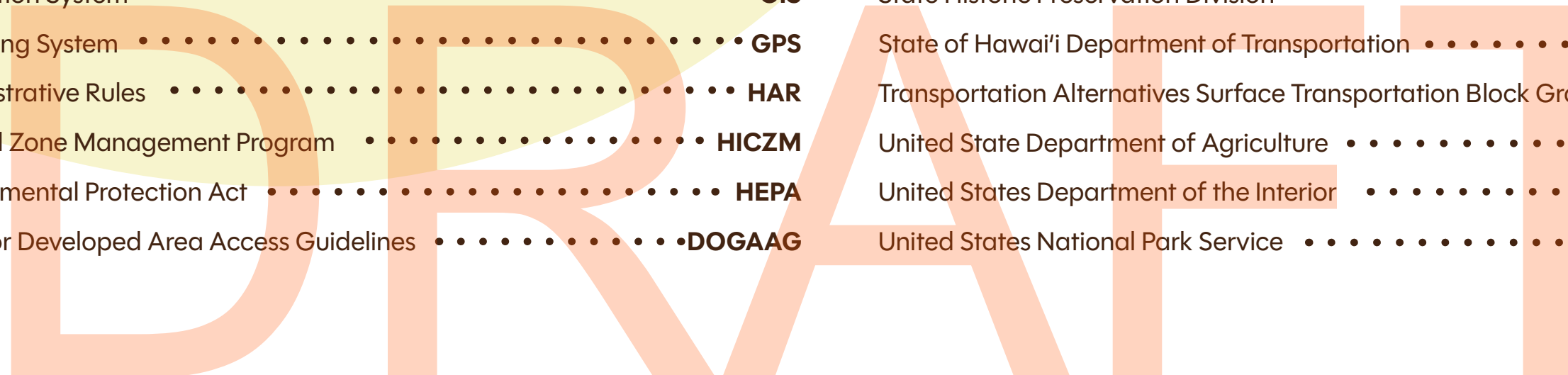
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Abbreviations

Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program	ATIIP	Hawai'i Revised Statutes	HTA
Americans with Disabilities Act	ADA	Hawai'i Tourism Authority	IAC
Board of Land and Natural Resources	BLNR	Island Advisory Council	KMLAC
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity	BUILD	Ka'ūpūlehu Marine Life Advisory Committee	KAC
Code of Federal Regulations	CFR	Kupu 'Āina Corps	LLCP
Department of Accounting and General Services	DAGS	Legacy Land Conservation Program	LLF
Department of the Attorney General	AG	Legacy Land Fund	NAH
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands	DHHL	Nā Ala Hele	OHV
Department of Land and Natural Resources	DLNR	Off-Highway Vehicles	OCCL
Disability and Communication Access Board	DCAB	Office of Coastal and Conservation Lands	OHA
Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement	DOCARE	Office of Hawaiian Affairs	OPSD
Division of Forestry and Wildlife	DOFAW	Office of Planning and Sustainable Development	RTP
Forestry and Wildlife Technician	FW Tech	Recreational Trails Program	SMP
Forestry and Wildlife Worker	FW Worker	Special Management Area	SHPD
Global Information System	GIS	State Historic Preservation Division	HIDOT
Global Positioning System	GPS	State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation	TA
Hawai'i Administrative Rules	HAR	Transportation Alternatives Surface Transportation Block Grant	USDA
Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management Program	HICZM	United State Department of Agriculture	DOI
Hawai'i Environmental Protection Act	HEPA	United States Department of the Interior	NPS
Hawai'i Outdoor Developed Area Access Guidelines	DOGAAG	United States National Park Service	



Glossary of Terms

Access (HRS 198D-1): An easement or way (1) over which the general public has the right to travel; and (2) which is used by the general public or intended for use by the general public primarily to reach or depart a public beach, shore, park, trail, or other public recreational area. It includes a lateral easement along the shoreline, coastline, or beach.

Access (HAR 130): An easement, route, way, or portion thereof, including course maintained, one which the general public has the right to travel; and which is used, or has been used by the general public, or is intended for use by the general public, primarily to reach or to depart a public beach, shore, park, trail, forest, historic or cultural site, or other public recreational area. It includes a lateral way along the shoreline, coastline, or beach.

Ancient Trails: Those pathways established or created prior to the Highway Act of 1892.

Bicycle: Any type of non-motorized bicycle including mountain bikes.

Commercial or Commercial Purpose: The receipt of compensation by any person for services rendered to customers or participants in conjunction with a use of or activity on a program feature, which compensation is more than actual expenses incurred in the pursuit of the use or activity.

Course Maintained: The area within a trail or access corridor that is paved, leveled, or otherwise improved for transport, camping, or travel, or that is marked as the path for transport or travel.

Electric Bicycle/E-Bike: A one-, two-, or three-wheeled cycle with fully operable pedals that meets the requirements of one of the following three classes:

Class 1 E-Bike: shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, has an electric motor of not more than seven hundred and fifty watts, does not have a throttle, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.

Class 2 E-Bike: an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, has a throttle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.

Class 3 E-Bike: an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty-eight miles per hour.

Equestrian: horses, mules, and any other animals used to ride or used to transport food, equipment, or cargo.

Historic Trails: Unique and separate category. Included in the definitions of 'historic property' and 'historic preservation' in Chapter 6E, HRS.

Inventoried Trails: Trails and accesses that are included in the Nā Ala Hele Program inventories, as required under section 198D-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Mode of Transport or Travel: Any method used to move humans along trails, including, but not limited to, walking, running, bicycling, skating, skate boarding, roller blading, riding equestrian animals, motorcycles, trucks, and automobiles.

Motorized Vehicle: A vehicle of any shape or form that depends on a motor (gas, electric, or other fuels) for propulsion, excluding Class 1 electric bicycles, wheelchairs, and other power-driven mobility devices.

Nā Ala Hele: Nā Ala Hele (NAH) is the State of Hawai'i Trail and Access Program. Literally translated as "Trails to Go," the program manages trail access and conducts maintenance to provide important public services including recreational opportunities, experiences related to cultural history and historic trails, and economic opportunities where possible for commercial trail vendors.

NAH Trail and Access Network: All trails and accesses currently under the jurisdiction of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (Forestry and Wildlife) which qualify for ongoing maintenance and development efforts, as funding permits.

Non-Motorized Vehicle: A vehicle of any shape or form that depends on human, animal, wind, spring, or other non-motorized means for propulsion.

Program Access: The accesses designated pursuant to HAR Chapter 130, subchapter 3, as amended.

Program Feature: Trails, accesses, mountain bike parks, off-highway vehicle parks, campsites, facilities, parking lots, and any other site managed by the Nā Ala Hele Program.



Program Trails: Program trails are those trails and accesses designated and sanctioned pursuant to HAR 130, subchapter 3, as amended. Program trails consist of a corridor that is subject to a right-of-way, license, memorandum of agreement, or any other agreement with another public agency or a private landowner pertaining to the use or disposition of the land for a program trail or access (HRS 198D); The NAH program shall maintain a list of program trails, as it may be amended, and maps delineating and defining the trail location and route. Program trails are subject to the trail use rules set forth in HAR 130, subchapters 4, 5, and 6.

Trail (HRS 198D-1): An identifiable linear course or portion thereof, including course maintained, used primarily for or used to get a recreational, educational, or inspirational experience. It includes, but is not limited to: (1) a corridor trail, which is a designated route, segregated from a highway, providing a continuous linkage between or among major urban areas, fragmented accesses, and major trail areas; (2) a segment or connector trail, which is a designated route from one locale to another; and (3) a special use trail, which is a designated course for a special activity or function.

Trail Classification: All trails and accesses in the inventory shall be described by: (1) function; (2) type; (3) theme; (4) actual and desired use intensity; (5) any other classification deemed necessary.

Trail Inventory (HRS 198D-3): A comprehensive record of all trails and accesses within the purview of the State. This includes those trails and accesses not designated as Program Trails and those not solely under Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) (Forestry and Wildlife or NAH) control. "The department shall establish, maintain, and amend, as required, an inventory of all trails and accesses in the State, whether wholly or partly on public or private lands and whether or not under the jurisdiction of the department, and a separate inventory of all trails and accesses to public hunting areas in the State."



Introduction

For Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), trails have always been essential pathways linking mountain (mauka) and coastal (makai) regions and connecting different ahupua'a. Chiefs (ali'i), deities (akua), and supernatural figures (kūpua) were said to travel along these routes, which also served as vital social and information networks for families and communities. In many places, these traditional practices of movement and connection endure.

The cultural and practical significance of trails is also reflected in the Kānāwai Māmalahoe, or the Law of the Splintered Paddle. Established by King Kamehameha I in 1797, the law arose from a personal encounter he had with fishermen in Puna. While pursuing them during a military campaign, Kamehameha's foot became caught in a lava crack, and the fishermen struck him with a paddle in self-defense. Though seriously injured, Kamehameha later pardoned the men and drew upon the advice of an elder he encountered at the time. After uniting the Hawaiian Islands, he declared that all people—whether chiefs, commoners, or travelers—should be able to move freely and without fear along the roadways and trails of his kingdom.

The law was famously written:

**E nā kanaka, e mālama 'oukou i ke akua a e mālama ho'i i
kānaka nui a me kānaka iki; E hele ka 'elemakule, ka luahine,
a me ke kama a moe i ke ala, 'a'ohe mea nānā e ho'opilikia.
Hewa nō, make!**

This decree ensured that the vulnerable— elders, women, and children— could rest safely along pathways without harm. Centuries later, the Kānāwai Māmalahoe was incorporated into Hawai'i's 1978 State Constitution, underscoring the state's enduring commitment to public safety, community welfare, and guaranteed access to trails and roadways across the islands.

In October 1892, Queen Lili'uokalani furthered the importance of trails and accesses by enacting what became known as the Highways Act of 1892. This law established that ownership of all public highways— along with the lands, real estate, and properties tied to them—was vested in the Hawaiian government in fee simple. The term "public highway" was defined broadly to include existing trails at that time, as well as any trails or roads later created by the government or private parties and formally dedicated or abandoned for public use.

The Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program was established in 1991 in the spirit and continuance of these efforts to ensure open, safe, and responsible public access on trails, rights-of-ways, and other public accesses. The Nā Ala Hele Program is a testament to the work and dedication of many individuals and professionals, including founding individuals Debbie Chang and Edwin Petteys. Collaboration between the program founders, DLNR staff, and the many organizations and individuals representing various trail user groups has made the plan update process possible. The original Plan is the solid foundation on which the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program has operated to protect and enhance the State's natural and historic trail and access features. The Plan update process brings the original plan into a new outdoor recreation landscape with ever-evolving challenges. It is with gratitude and reverence that the updated Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program Plan is brought forth to uphold the legacy and work of those that have come before for the benefit of those who will enjoy Hawai'i's natural resources well into the future.

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Executive Summary

Greenways, linear parks, open space and recreation corridors, trail networks and systems, scenic and exercise byways, and urban trails, are among the words used to refer to America's growing interest in trails. These are not single pathways but rather networks which link people to outdoor experiences.

Residents of Hawai'i have long had a tradition of using trails and accesses for subsistence activities, such as hunting and fishing. While Hawaii may lack the extensive railroad rights-of-way and river and stream corridors of the American continent, there are trail/ access potentials, such as ancient Hawaiian trails, historic roads, old homestead roads, and lateral shoreline trails.

Hawaii recognized the people's need for a comprehensive trail and access system in 1988 with the passage of Act 236 (subsequently amended by Act 53) and codified in the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) as Chapter 198-D HRS. "Nā Ala Hele", the Hawaii Statewide Trail and Access System, was established to develop and improve mountain and shoreline trails and accesses throughout the State of Hawaii, while helping to conserve Hawaii's environment and cultural heritage. A successful trail and access system also contributes to Hawaii's environment and cultural heritage. A successful trail and access system also contributes to Hawaii's economy by adding diversity to Hawaii's job market, enhancing Hawaii's attraction to visitors interested in outdoor recreation, stimulating recreation-oriented businesses, and purchasing a wide variety of supplies and services.

Trails and accesses need to be made available to a wide range of user groups and skill levels. At the same time, traditional trail and access uses and sensitive resources unique to Hawai'i must be protected. The demand for public access may conflict with the need to conserve limited and fragile resources... Disagreements arise when land development projects involve relocation or destruction of historic trails, or results in a loss of informal open space that was previously enjoyed by the public. Balancing these many and varied public interests and ensuring that trails and accesses are properly developed, maintained, and managed are major challenges for Nā Ala Hele.

Hawai'i 'Elepaio Photographed by Bret Mossman



Nested within the State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (Forestry and Wildlife), the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program has an incredibly expansive mandate. Program staff are responsible for managing trails, public access routes, off-highway vehicle and mountain bike parks, and other access corridors for public recreational use. While most of these recreational resources are on State land, some trails and access are on private land while the access itself is publicly owned. The program is required by statute to maintain a database of all trails and access across the state, regardless of jurisdiction. These management responsibilities are herculean and crosscut work that is done throughout the DLNR and public recreation.

Importantly, the management of trails and accesses goes beyond facilitating recreational enjoyment and is an integral part of ecosystem management. Trails are used by Forestry and Wildlife staff to address wildfire prevention and abatement, invasive species control, and the protection of native species. The resources that Forestry and Wildlife manage exist in a cultural context that is critical to their management. The agency also focuses on legal requirements pertaining to traditional and customary practices. Trails and accesses are an integral part of land and resource management including ecosystem and watershed health, historic preservation, and wildlife conservation efforts.

Since the inception of the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program, the imperative to steward the State's accesses to mauka and makai lands has grown more urgent. More visitors and new residents arrive to Hawai'i every year, increasing the demand to experience the State's natural and cultural resources. Many have described managed trails and accesses as "loved to death" due to the increasingly prominent impacts of high volumes of people on trails.

Future estimates of climate change impacts have driven an increased state focus on climate change mitigation efforts, such as shifting transportation investments to more active modes, including biking, walking, and rolling. The Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program can contribute to these efforts by expanding the trail system into urban and rural trail and greenway networks that improve active mobility, increase recreational opportunities, and expand the types of individuals and families that can enjoy trails.

The Plan refocuses efforts on managing increased visitor and recreationalist volumes to emphasize natural and cultural resource protection. The Plan also clarifies and expands upon the State mandate to maintain, preserve, and protect native Hawaiian access rights and better integrate the historic and cultural significance of many of the State's trails into trail interpretation. Future opportunities to improve trail networks for mobility, accessibility and transportation are also explored as ways of expanding the trail network while protecting sensitive native flora and fauna.





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VISION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

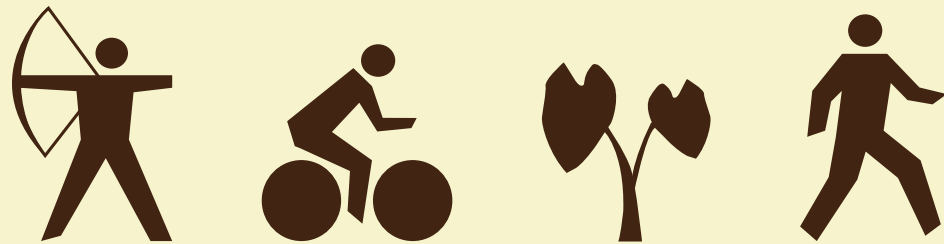
NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

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1.1 Vision Statement

To advance, via the Nā Ala Hele program, a trail and access network and management system which:

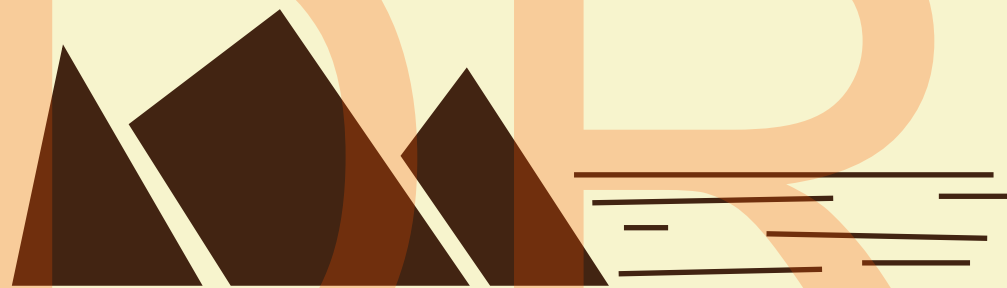
- › Provides a broad range of recreational, subsistence, educational, & mobility opportunities for all of Hawai'i's people



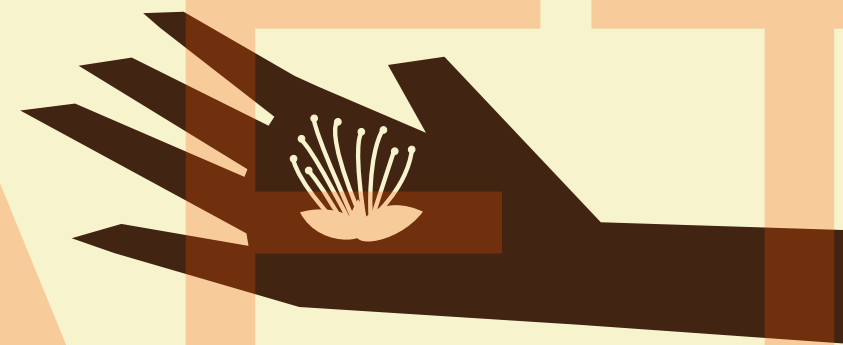
- › Helps to conserve Hawai'i's cultural & historic heritage, preserves historic trails & features, & supports traditional & customary practice uses



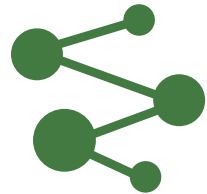
- › Preserves access routes to Hawai'i's mountain & ocean resources for public use & enjoyment in perpetuity



- › Supports the conservation of Hawai'i's natural resources



1.2 Goals & Objectives



1. ORGANIZATION To Expand Program Resources & Networks that Help to Achieve Nā Ala Hele's Goals & Objectives.

Objective 1A: Build into the program designated roles that foster intra-agency collaboration on shared objectives within the DLNR Divisions.

Objective 1B: Be the primary resource for trail use, management, and access needs.



2. PLANNING To Identify & Select Trails & Access for Acquisition, Preservation, Development, & Improvement.

Objective 2A: Prioritize the identification, preservation, and acquisition of historic trails.

Objective 2B: Collaborate with other public and private landowners and organizations to preserve and protect public trails and accesses from adverse impacts of climate change, natural disasters, and development pressures.

Objective 2C: Consider how social, economic, and physical barriers impact public use of trails and accesses. Prioritize plans, policies, and actions that are inclusive of all backgrounds.



3. MANAGEMENT To Provide Adequate Management of All Trails & Accesses Within Nā Ala Hele.

Objective 3A: Spearhead a collaborative network of agency and community partners in a trail stewardship program.

Objective 3B: Establish and implement a statewide visitor use management framework that balances access and natural resource preservation.

Objective 3C: Strive for the implementation of sustainable best practices for the planning, design, construction & maintenance of all Program features.



4. EXPANSION To Study & Utilize a Variety of Options & Approaches to Expanding the Trail & Access Network.

Objective 4A: Strategically develop and connect trail networks for greater connectivity, mobility, and recreational opportunities.



5. EVALUATION To Evaluate All Aspects of the Program to Identify Where Improvements Need to be Made.

Objective 5A: Create and maintain an adaptive management strategy and protocols aligned with the Vision, Goals, and Objectives established.

Objective 5B: Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.



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2

THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE OF THE PROGRAM

NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

2.1 Hawai'i Statewide Trail & Access System

Pursuant to HRS Chapter 198D, DLNR is mandated to plan, develop, and acquire land for public use, or acquire rights for the public use of land. The Program shall engage in coordination activities to implement the statewide trail and access program, otherwise known as Nā Ala Hele. The management, maintenance, and development of trails and accesses under DLNR's jurisdiction shall be funded from the following sources: a portion of the highway fuel taxes collected under HRS Chapter 243; federal government grants; private contributions; and fees established pursuant to Administrative Rules and charged by the department for the commercial and other use of trails and accesses under DLNR's jurisdiction.

DLNR must establish and maintain an inventory of all trails and accesses, which should be amended on an ongoing basis with updates and corrections. This inventory should include the name and length of each trail and access; a description and map of the trail or access; the person or agency with management jurisdiction over the trail or access; the development standard, condition, grade, and predominant transportation mode for each trail or access; and information about its availability to the general public. Each trail or access should be classified in the inventory according to its function, type, theme, actual use intensity, desired use intensity, and any other classification deemed necessary or desirable by the government. The department shall make public the portion of this inventory identifying trails and accesses available for the use of the general public.

HAR Chapter 13-130 outlines rules for designated program trails and accesses. Trails and accesses in the inventory but not classified as a Program trail are not subject to the rules in Chapter 13-130.

In addition to the aforementioned inventory, DLNR shall identify and maintain a listing of proposed, potential, and needed trails and accesses; trails and accesses to public hunting areas; and recreational areas to which access is unavailable or inadequate. In consultation with the Attorney General, the department shall examine legal issues, theories, options, and doctrines by which trails and accesses may be placed into or retained for public use, and the extent of liability exposure of the State, counties, and private landowners when allowing trails and accesses under their respective jurisdictions to be used by the general public.

Other powers and duties of DLNR include establishing volunteer advisory councils from whom advice and assistance should be solicited; acting as a centralized information agency, an advocate, and a coordinator for matters relating to the statewide trail and access system; and serving as an advisor and assistant to other agencies.

Mandatory Actions of the Program:

Increase public access to land

Plan, develop, acquire land or rights for public use of land, construct, and engage in coordination activities to implement the statewide trail and access system

Maintain an inventory of all trails

Establish, maintain and amend, as necessary, an inventory of all trails and accesses. The inventory is to include maps of each trail and access, a description of the trail or access including the agency with management jurisdiction over it, and its availability to the general public. The department must also publish and update periodically the portion of the inventory which identifies trails and accesses that are open to the public.

Classify trails

Classify each trail and access according to its function, type, theme, actual, and desired use.

Identify needed trails & accesses

Identify proposed, potential, and needed trails and accesses. This compilation is to include a listing of all recreational areas to which public access is unavailable or inadequate.

Consult with Attorney General

Examine in consultation with the Attorney General, legal issues as theories, options and doctrines by which trails and accesses may be placed into or retained in public use, and the extent of liability exposure.

Establish volunteer advisory councils

Establish volunteer advisory councils from whom advice and assistance should be solicited.

Act as an information agency, advocate, & coordinator

Act as a centralized information agency, as an advisor and assistant to other agencies, as an advocate, and as a coordinator for matters relating to the statewide trail and access system.

Annual report

Submit an annual report to the Governor.

2.2 Regulation of Trails & Accesses

Section 198D-6, HRS, states that "The department, by rule adopted in accordance with Chapter 91, may regulate the use of trails and accesses under the department's jurisdiction." Regulation of the use of trails and accesses shall be established for the following purposes:

Regulation is Needed to:

1. *Preserve the integrity, condition, naturalness, or beauty of the trails or accesses*
2. *Protect the public safety*
3. *Restrict or regulate public access to protected or endangered wildlife habitats, except for scientific or educational purposes*

Regulation of trail and access use by DLNR or other state agencies requires the adoption of rules which involves official adoption of an appropriate section of the Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR). Such rules must be in compliance with Chapter 91, HRS.

How regulations are implemented varies according to which agency has jurisdiction over the trail or access. Enforcement of regulations will in many instances require the cooperation of agencies, organizations, or individuals outside of Forestry and Wildlife. Where Nā Ala Hele does not have direct jurisdiction, trail and access regulation must be pursued on a cooperative basis. This will apply to lands which are privately owned or leased, or owned or leased by agencies other than DLNR. When direct regulation of use is chosen as the preferred management strategy, managers should not focus solely on the regulations. Considerations should also be given to how the regulations will be put into effect, how they must be explained to the public, and how they will need to be enforced. Trail managers and staff should be familiar with complementary statutes and rules established for other Forestry and Wildlife programs and DLNR lands. There will be specific conditions and rules guiding the use and appropriate activities for trails within different DLNR jurisdictions.

Section 13-104, HAR, regulates activities within Forest Reserves and applies to all trails/accesses located within Forest Reserves. For example, activities such as the operation of motorized vehicles or use of non-motorized vehicle or animal on roads or trails that are not designated for that purpose is prohibited (Chapter 13-104-11, HAR). Section 13-146, HAR, governs the use and protection of all lands and historical and natural resources within the State Park System. Section 13-146 through 154, HAR, govern how preservation of historic properties in the State is to be accomplished. Section 13-209 regulates activity within natural area reserves.

2.3 Highways Act of 1892

In relation to trails, the following two citations describe legal tools used by the Nā Ala Hele Program to identify and possibly claim public ownership of specific features.

Hawai'i, unlike any other U.S. state, was originally a sovereign nation. Certain laws of the Hawaiian Kingdom were incorporated into what became laws of the U.S. Territory, and then ultimately, of the State. The Highways Act of 1892, written into law in October of that year by Queen Lili'uokalani, is one such law. The Act determined that the ownership of all public highways and the land, real estate, and property of the same, shall be in the Hawaiian Government in fee simple. The definition of public highway included all existing trails at the time and those "hereafter opened, laid out or built by the Government, or by private parties, and dedicated or abandoned to the public as a highway." Furthermore, the Act stated that "All public highways once established shall continue until abandoned by due process of law."

HRS Chapter 264-1(b) furthers the intent of the Highways Act of 1892. All trails, and other non-vehicular rights-of-way included in the Highways Act of 1892, or opened, laid out, or built by the government or otherwise created or vested as non-vehicular public rights-of-way at any time in the future, are declared to be public trails. A public trail is under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Land and Natural Resources, unless it was created by or dedicated to a particular county, in which case it shall be under the jurisdiction of that county. All State trails once established shall continue until lawfully disposed of pursuant to HRS Chapter 171.

If the State can document the existence of a trail prior to 1892, and the feature has not been disposed of pursuant to Chapter 171, the State may claim the trail. This applies even if the trail does not currently exist on the ground physically—in many instances, trail sections have been destroyed over time due to various land uses or natural processes. While a landowner may not adversely possess State land, the burden of proof is upon the State to document ownership. This can adversely affect adjacent private landowners and may create the necessity for legal action.

Prior to promotion for public use, a necessary (and sometimes costly) step is to reconcile the historic documentation of the trail with an on-the-ground metes and bounds survey. It is imperative to confirm that the identified trail is the same alignment that was originally in existence prior to 1892. Trail routes can migrate over time for numerous reasons, creating legal challenges to the application of the laws cited above. Other necessary steps include the creation of a cultural survey and management plan, and the establishment of a trail restoration, maintenance, and signage program.

'Āinap'o Trail, Hawai'i



2.4 Ka Pa'akai o Ka'āina

Article 12, Chapter 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution reaffirms and protects the customary and traditional rights of native Hawaiian ahupua'a tenants to support subsistence, cultural, and religious practices, which are subject to reasonable regulation by the State. Furthermore, under HRS Chapter 1-1, the Courts are instructed to use American common law decisions as guidance for law interpretation and rulings, excluding areas where English common law conflicts with Hawaiian judicial precedent and Hawaiian custom and usage. Under the Kuleana Act of 1851, which was codified into state law under HRS Chapter 7-1, where any individual may obtain land title and ownership, the owners may not deprive native Hawaiians of, "the right to take firewood, house-timber, aho cord, thatch, or ki leaf from the land on which they live, for their own private use..." The law further states that "The people shall also have a right to drinking water, and running water, and the roads shall be free to all, on all lands granted in fee simple; provided that this shall not be applicable to wells and watercourses, which individuals have made for their own use." (Akutagawa, 2024)

Thus, under the Hawaii State Constitution and legal statutes, the State of Hawai'i has a legal obligation to protect native Hawaiian customary and traditional practices while reasonably accommodating competing private interests. In 2000, the State's obligation was reaffirmed by the State Supreme Court with its decision on the landmark case Ka Pa'akai O Ka 'āina vs. Land Use Commission.

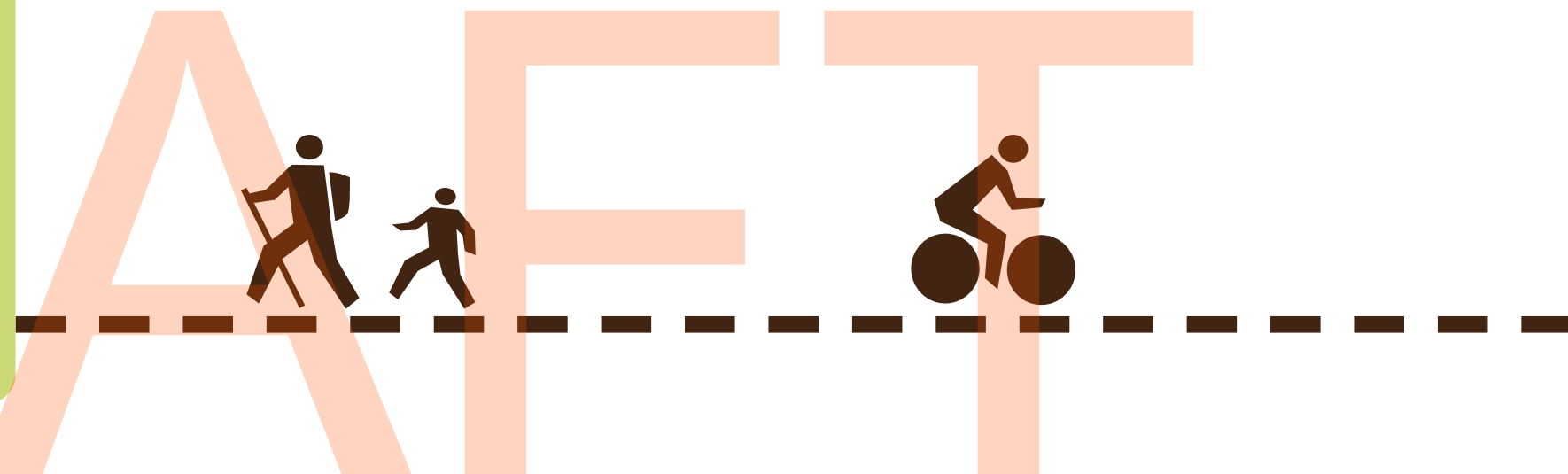
The Court ruled that the BLNR must evaluate the following conditions to meet its obligation to protect native Hawaiian customary & traditional practices:

1. The identity and scope of 'valued cultural, historical, or natural resources' in the petition area, including the extent to which traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights are exercised in the petition area
2. The extent to which those resources – including traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights – will be affected or impaired by the proposed action
3. The feasible action, if any, to be taken to reasonably protect native Hawaiian rights if they are found to exist.

Ancient Hawaiian tradition, custom, practice, and usage doctrine permits the public's right of access over private property, based on ancient Hawaiian custom and practice. To claim public rights of access based on ancient Hawaiian custom and practice, it must be shown that customary usage was established prior to November 25, 1892. The kind of customary usage needs to be defined: i.e., was usage in ancient times restricted to just "native tenants" who worked and resided in the land division where the trail is located or was use of the trail open to all people. Customary use of the trail by "native tenants" is not interpreted to have been used by the "public". Under Hawai'i law (Section 7-1, HRS) native tenants have the right of access to their kuleana along with certain gathering and other miscellaneous rights, including the right-of-way, over the ahupua'a (an ancient Hawaiian land division) in which their kuleana is situated. "Kuleana land" means land which was granted in fee simple to native tenants during Hawai'i's Great Mahele, pursuant to the provisions contained in the Act of August 6, 1850.

Significantly, public rights of access to and along Hawai'i's shorelines have been established through ancient Hawaiian custom.

As a state program, Nā Ala Hele is uniquely positioned to be an active partner in upholding the spirit of the law regarding the preservation of access to mauka and makai lands for native Hawaiians and native Hawaiian customary practices. Program staff should ensure that access rights are not diminished under trail planning or management actions, particularly those pertaining to visitor use and abating recreational and natural resource impacts due to higher visitor volumes. Recommendations for how to better integrate Ka Pa'akai analysis can be found under 4.7 Planning Recommendations and Objectives.



2.5 Americans with Disabilities Act

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 29, Part 32, outlines the regulatory standards for non-discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance (Title 29 CFR Part 32, 2003). The statute defines a handicap to mean, "any condition or characteristic that renders a person a handicapped individual as defined in this section." A handicapped individual is defined as, "any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment..." (Title 29 CFR Part 32, 2003).

While these definitions guide the Program regarding compliance under these provisions, there are distinctions and preferred terms that are used within the disability community which should be taken into consideration.

The U.S. Forest Service published their own Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails which provides its own definitions for disability, handicap, and accessible facilities, while also noting inappropriate terms that should be avoided when creating localized guides and standards. In the guidebook, a disability is defined as, "a medically definable condition that causes a limitation in one or more of a person's major life activities, such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, thinking, and so forth." (Zeller, Doyle, & Snodgrass, 2012). A handicap is defined as, "a barrier or circumstance that makes progress difficult, such as a flight of stairs that may be impassable for a person using a wheelchair or a negative attitude toward a person who has a disability." (Zeller, Doyle, & Snodgrass, 2012). Accessible facilities are understood to be a concept which cannot be done in half measure; either a facility is accessible or it is not. The guidebook recommends refraining from using the terms "partially accessible," "accessible with assistance", "barrier free", "ADA accessible", and "handicap accessible". These distinctions are incorrect because an accessible facility is any facility that complies with federal and state regulations and design standards. Therefore, any terms that imply that design considerations for disabled and handicapped individuals were implemented, but that also indicate that it is not fully accessible, can lead to confusion or misunderstanding by the general public.

2.5.1 State of Hawaii Disability & Communication Access Board

HRS Section 103-50 requires that all public buildings and facilities constructed by the State and Counties conform to the "American Standards Specifications for Making Buildings and Facilities Accessible to and Usable by the Physically Handicapped." The State of Hawai'i, Department of Health, Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is responsible for administering disability programs, services, and activities for the public and ensuring equitable access for persons with disabilities. The agency functions to ensure that people with disabilities are not denied access to the programs and services offered by the State of Hawai'i solely due to their disability, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Commission on Persons with Disabilities, 2023).

As stated on the DCAB agency webpage, "In providing access to programs and services of the State of Hawai'i, departments and agencies must ensure that individuals with disabilities are: (1) not denied an opportunity to participate in and benefit from any program or service; (2) afforded an opportunity that is equal to or as effective as that provided others; and (3) not required to meet criteria for participation that screen out people with disabilities either directly or indirectly, unless such criteria are necessary for the provision of the program's activities." (Commission on Persons with Disabilities, 2023). However, modifications to State facilities are not required if those modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or activity. Paved trails to accommodate wheelchairs are an established example of modifications that would alter the nature of the activity and thus are not a required accommodation. To distinguish between the types of accommodations that would be appropriate for outdoor recreation facilities, the DCAB established the Hawai'i Outdoor Developed Areas Accessibility Guidelines (HODAAG) which outlines ADA compliant outdoor facilities such as parking stalls, grills and picnic areas, restrooms, and other facilities.

Therefore, while the State is required to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities within built facilities, not all trails and accesses are required to be accessible. Nā Ala Hele should strive to make any associated built facilities, such as restrooms and picnic areas, accessible.



*Pololū Trail,
Hawai'i*





DRAFT



3

THE NEED FOR COORDINATION & COOPERATION

NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

DRAFT



3.1 Nā Ala Hele within the Department of Land & Natural Resources



The DLNR is responsible for managing, administering and exercising control over public lands, water resources, ocean waters, navigable streams, coastal areas (excluding commercial harbors), minerals, and all interests therein. To achieve this broad mandate, the DLNR is further subdivided into 12 distinct divisions and offices which are responsible for state parks, historical sites, forests and forest reserves, aquatic life and its sanctuaries, public fishing areas, boating, ocean recreation, coastal programs, wildlife and game management, and public hunting and natural area reserves. The full list of divisions include the Division of Aquatic Resources, the State Historic Preservation Division, the Division of State Parks, the Bureau of Conveyances, the Division of Conservation & Resources Enforcement, Land Division, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (Forestry and Wildlife), Office of Coastal & Conservation Lands (OCCL), the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, Engineering Division, Commission on Water Resource Management, and the Boating & Ocean Recreation Division.



The responsibility for carrying out the spirit and letter of Chapter 198D, HRS, has been assigned to the DOFAW, which manages approximately 900,000 of the one million acres of state-owned lands within the conservation district through a system of reserves, sanctuaries, and wilderness areas. DOFAW also provides technical input to the DLNR which has regulatory control for an additional million acres of private conservation land, much of which is forested. Game management, wildland fire suppression, endangered species, and wildlife protection responsibilities further extend DOFAW's area of responsibility to all corners of the State.



While administratively housed within DOFAW, Nā Ala Hele must rely on the assistance of other divisions and offices in order to accomplish trail and access projects. The working relationship among the top administrators in DLNR relies on the understanding of each division's and office's functions. The Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) conducts biweekly meetings with top administrators, during which pending issues are discussed. Certain division heads and their island representatives have been included as ex officio members of Nā Ala Hele's island and statewide advisory councils to promote coordination between key divisions.



*Koa Flowers seen on
Kaluakauka Trail*



DLNR divisions & offices with which Nā Ala Hele most often works:



› Bureau of Conveyances

Maintains an accurate, timely, and permanent record system for title to real property. The Bureau examines, records, indexes, and microfilms over 344,000 Regular system and Land Court documents and maps annually; issues Land Court Certificates of Title; certifies copies of matters of record; and researches Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) requests.



› Land Division

Is responsible for the management of State-owned lands in ways that will promote the wellbeing of Hawai'i's people and ensure that these lands are used in accordance with the goals, policies and plans of the State. Lands that are not set aside for use by other government agencies come within the direct purview of the division. The division also serves as an office of record and maintains a central repository of all government documents dating back to the "Great Mahele" of 1848.



› Division of State Parks

Manages and administers 53 state parks encompassing nearly 25,000 acres on the five major islands, and issues camping permits. These parks offer varied outdoor recreation and heritage opportunities. The park environments range from landscaped grounds with developed facilities to wildland areas with trails and primitive facilities.



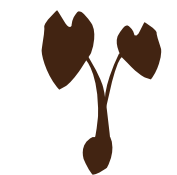
› State Historic Preservation Division

Works to preserve and sustain remainders of earlier times which link the past to the present. SHPD's three branches, History and Culture, Archaeology, and Architecture, strive to accomplish this goal through a number of activities including the preservation of burial sites, maintaining a listing of all Historic Sites, and reviewing projects with potential to impact historic properties under HRS 6E and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



› Engineering Division

Provides engineering services and technical assistance to other Departmental divisions and other State agencies to implement capital improvement or repair and maintenance projects and administer programs for Water and Land Development, Mineral Resources development, and prevention of Natural Disasters.



› Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE)

Is responsible for enforcement activities of the Department. The division, with full police powers, enforces all State laws and rules involving State lands, State Parks, historic sites, forest reserves, aquatic life and wildlife areas, coastal zones, Conservation districts, and State shores, as well as county ordinances involving county parks. The division also enforces laws relating to firearms, ammunition, and dangerous weapons.

3.1.1 Division of Forestry & Wildlife Organizational Structures

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife is comprised of over 200 employees across the four division programs: Forestry and Forest Health, Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program, Native Ecosystems Protection and Management, and Wildlife. Forestry and Wildlife is managed under a system of District Managers on Kauai, Oahu, Maui Nui, and Hawai'i who report to the Forestry and Wildlife Administrator. It is a decentralized organization with District Managers having the responsibility for the management of all forestry and wildlife programs within their district. Each program is represented, at both the staff and operational levels, by a program manager who serves as the Administrator's or District Manager's principle staff.

The Forestry and Wildlife Administration staff in Honolulu has no line authority over the districts but is linked through core groups made up of staff and district representatives in each major program area. The Nā Ala Hele Core Committee brings together the Nā Ala Hele Program Statewide Manager with all the district representatives responsible for program implementation, such as each Nā Ala Hele Program branch manager. This committee meets regularly to review all program plans, budgets, and projects. It discusses important decisions prior to making recommendations to the Forestry and Wildlife Administrator. The Nā Ala Hele Core Committee brings all districts into the planning and decision-making process, resulting in greater cooperation, better program implementation, and more efficient use of funds.



3.1.2 Current Staffing Roles

The Nā Ala Hele Program is led by the Trail and Access Specialists for each island district, and each Specialist works collaboratively with the other division program staff. Staff either occupy civil service permanent positions or contract positions, the latter of which are renewed annually based on need and funding availability. A brief breakdown of current staff roles and responsibilities is detailed herein.



State Civil Service Positions



Trail & Access Specialist

- › Develops & implements the trail & access network, & management systems
- › Coordinates between public & private stakeholders
- › Manages volunteer efforts & public participation



Within the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program, Specialists are responsible for the development and implementation of the trail and access network and management systems. This requires coordination and negotiation between public and private stakeholders, including other agencies, private individuals, organizations, and businesses. Specialists also manage volunteer efforts and public participation through leadership of the Island Advisory Councils. Specialists are responsible for high level program coordination and leadership efforts including, but not limited to:

Responsibilities:

- › Determining program priorities and developing policies and procedures based on overall program goals and objectives.
- › Representing the program at island or statewide advisory council meetings and providing support and technical assistance on matters pertinent to the functions of the council and information on planned projects, activities, and accomplishments.
- › Preparing and justifying capital improvement project and operating budget requests for Trails and Access Program requirements.
- › Directing the review of conservation district use applications and other land use matters and providing comments and recommendations pertinent to potential impacts on the district or the statewide Trails and Access Program.
- › Developing and promoting the program's trails and access volunteer program, including the identification and development of incentives to attract and maintain a stable volunteer corps.
- › Planning, coordinating and directing the development of information and education activities relevant to the Trails and Access Program.
- › Providing technical consultation and advice to other natural resource professionals on resource management and related matters pertaining to the Trails and Access Program.
- › Representing the Trails and Access Program at meetings, planning activities and community events.



Forestry & Wildlife Technician

- › Addresses trail maintenance & development concerns
- › Is responsible for performance & supervision of natural resources technical work
- › Collects & reviews field data

While not housed within the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program, the Forestry and Wildlife Technician (FW Tech) addresses trail maintenance and development concerns and works closely with Trail Specialists. FW Techs are responsible for the performance and supervision of specialized technical work in conservation and development programs, and in the utilization and protection of forest, wildlife and other natural resources. FW Techs collect, review, consolidate, and summarize field data within controls established by professional standards and management plans.

Responsibilities:

- › Practical knowledge of the characteristics and limitations of practices and techniques established by professional foresters, wildlife biologists, and natural resources management personnel.
- › Personal contact skills, as a representative of division programs;
- › Selected instrumental, graphic, laboratory and/or manual skills.

Forestry & Wildlife Worker

- › Supervises & participates in natural resource management operational activities

Like the FW Tech, the Forestry and Wildlife Worker (FW Worker) is responsible for the performance and/or supervision of operational activities in the support of multiuse forestry, wildlife, natural area reserve, trails and other natural resource management programs.

Responsibilities:

- › The propagation and planting of forest tree seedlings and endangered plant species, and improvement of forest trees through pruning and thinning.
- › Development and maintenance of forest and wildlife structures and facilities, trails, accesses, and roads; the propagation of wildlife species; and the development and management of wildlife sanctuary and natural reserve areas.
- › Participation in related operational activities of the forestry and wildlife and other natural resource management programs.
- › The provision of information and data collection; coordination with or obtaining the cooperation of forest users, hunters, landowners and managers, contractors and the public, when such contacts are based upon standards and guides established by professional personnel.
- › Inspection and evaluation of commercial operations, and making decisions or securing compliance in relation to specific forestry, wildlife or other natural resources program contracts and/or agreements when such judgements do not require intensive scientific knowledge more characteristic of professionals.
- › Training and orientation of lower-level staff, volunteers, and summer help in the practical day-to-day aspects, techniques, details, and operations of forestry, wildlife and natural resources management; and receiving training including continuing on-the-job training and formal group instruction sessions, as well as job-rotation and other career development experiences.
- › Participating in forest fire prevention, pre-suppression, and suppressions which may include being a crew leader, section boss, or being in other specialized fire suppression roles.

Contract Positions

GIS Research Data Technician

- › **Maintains trail inventory, & compiles research & field data**
- › **Prepares graphics, maps, & other materials**

The GIS Research Data Technician is an integral part of Nā Ala Hele fulfilling the statutory mandates of the program. This position is responsible for compiling and updating the public and private trails inventory and forestry information using ArcGIS (Global Information System) computer mapping software, Field Data Recorders, and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) for recording field data. The GIS Research Data Technician compiles research and field data used for the preparation of GIS layers, maps, graphics and other printed materials including historic data sets such as old maps to extract trail and associated historic feature data to compile into a Geodatabase.

Responsibilities:

- › Maintaining a geodatabase of captured data.
- › Working with partner agencies to expand capacity and work in tandem on similar project.
- › Field-correcting data by visiting trail sites and capturing GPS data.
- › Analyzing map findings and results. Assisting the Nā Ala Hele Trails and Access Program in monitoring and maintaining recreational trails.
- › Designing and developing content for informational brochures, interpretive signage, and other media resources.

A limitation of the role identified by staff and stakeholder consultation indicates that Forestry and Wildlife staff may also maintain a separate geodatabase with pertinent information to the roles and responsibilities of the WF Technicians, Workers, and Trail Specialists. The geodatabase maintained at the Division level may not include more detailed information than that at the island offices. Additional efforts are required to address potential incongruence between databases.

Trail Community Outreach & Education Associate

- › **Develops & implements public outreach & education activities**
- › **Creates social media content**
- › **Presents to schools & community groups**
- › **Leads volunteer events & workshops**

Each island office has contracted a Trail Community Outreach and Education Associate or a Trail and Access Volunteer Coordinator. These roles assist with developing and implementing public outreach and education activities to raise public awareness about trail safety and hiking ethics and generate support for the project's efforts. Staff members in this role assist with developing and delivering presentations to community and school groups, attends public events, creates relevant content for social media posts, leads volunteer events and workshops, and communicates with partner organizations and communities in joint outreach efforts.

Responsibilities:

- › Assisting the trail technician with accomplishing the annual trail maintenance schedules.
- › Quickly responding to the mitigation of natural or unnatural hazards associated with program trails or roads, such as washouts, bees, falling rocks, or degraded bridges.
- › Overseeing and supporting all program projects, including volunteer projects, in close coordination with program objectives and staff including Specialist, Technician and Worker positions.
- › Special assignments like public presentations, attending meetings to better understand the program and its mission, and/or facilitating the recruitment of volunteers.



Temporary Positions Using Soft Funds

Soft funded positions, those roles that rely on external grants, contracts, or other funding sources to cover salaries, have proven to be another excellent source of support to core program staff. In instances where funding comes in the form of grants that are location, project, or goal specific, the ability to mobilize on the opportunity quickly will be essential. Ideally, Program staff will have a civil service position dedicated to identifying and applying for grants, but this activity may be relegated to an existing staff member on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Program managers. In either case, once funding is secured, the Program should have a structure in place that allows trail managers to quickly onboard and mobilize new employees. Recent examples of how this structure can be formalized in the future can be found in the 2021 Job Corps Program passed under House Bill 1176, AmeriCorps-funded internships, and the Nā Manu 'Elele Trail Stewards funded by a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

Forestry and Wildlife has leveraged supplemental grant funding to partner with Kupu, a local nonprofit, in support of two complementary state priorities: addressing the rise in unemployment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and advancing Hawai'i's renewable energy and carbon sequestration goals. Through this partnership, Forestry and Wildlife established the Kupu 'Āina Corps (KAC) — a workforce program that provides additional staffing capacity across divisional programs. KAC members have contributed to a wide range of field and community activities, including trail maintenance, GIS/GPS data collection, invasive species management, wildlife conservation, and community outreach and education.

A standout initiative within this partnership is the Nā Manu 'Elele Trail Stewards program, which offers a strong model for future workforce development efforts and cross-sector collaboration. Stewards report to both their Kupu KAC Program Coordinator and the Nā Ala Hele Host Site Manager, a dual-reporting structure designed to sustain clear communication and ongoing collaboration between organizations. In this role, stewards are assigned to a specific site or trail, where they engage directly with visitors and serve as ambassadors for the natural and cultural values of the area. Stewards document visitor interactions through biweekly reports, providing valuable data to support program evaluation and site management.

Nā Manu 'Elele Trail Stewards

Nā Manu 'Elele — also known as the Hawai'i Land Steward Program — is a collaborative initiative between Kupu and the DLNR. The program's name draws from traditional Hawaiian culture, in which birds (nā manu) are regarded as messengers, guardians, and spiritual embodiments of a place. 'Elele refers to individuals who serve as ambassadors on behalf of their community.

In keeping with this tradition, the Nā Manu 'Elele program provides temporary employment and training opportunities for local community members, equipping them to interpret the natural and cultural history of sensitive areas, communicate safety information to visitors, and address behaviors that may harm these environments. The program is rooted in the principle that the communities closest to these places are best positioned to care for them — empowering local stewards to manage and protect high-use heritage sites within their own sense of place.

As a result, Trail Stewards have proven that direct trail user engagement is extremely effective. Fatalities and major rescues have dropped significantly where Stewards are stationed, in many cases down to zero. Additionally, illegal activities, such as camping, littering, and defecation, have been reduced. In addition, there is a value-added benefit for the trail users as the Trail Stewards share their direct connections to the place and instill a deep appreciation to the areas the trails pass through.

Recommendations for capitalizing on future soft funded opportunities based on previous experiences with the KAC and Nā Manu 'Elele Trail Stewards:

1. Have an ongoing, well maintained list of activities, skills, and positions needed should staff become available
2. Identify and maintain workforce development skills that the Program would like to see future staff trained before applying for roles
3. Identify Program staff who will be responsible for the management or coordination of additional staff members. Ensure that management staff are properly trained and supported so that the experience is enjoyable and effective



3.1.3 Advisory Councils & Ex Officio Representation

HAR Chapter 13-130-4 outlines the Advisory Council Procedures. As stipulated therein, Advisory Councils function for the purpose of "providing advice and assistance to the department in the implementation of the Nā Ala Hele program..." The Nā Ala Hele Program maintains a statewide advisor council as well as four island or regional advisory councils. The statewide council consists of seven voting members, with representation from each of the island or regional advisory councils. The island or regional councils are currently organized by the islands of Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Maui Nui, and O'ahu and each council must consist of nine voting members. The law requires that members of the statewide, island, and/ or regional councils represent an interested constituency of users of a program feature. Those members may include representatives of hikers, hunters, bicycle riders, equestrian riders, off-road motorized vehicle users, Hawaiian cultural representatives or practitioners, fishers, [environmentalists] environmental advocates, [affected] private landowners, and other trail and access advocates as determined by the advisory council chairperson in consultation with [Na] Nā Ala Hele staff and existing advisory council members. Members are appointed by the Chairperson of DLNR.

Advisory Council Representation

The members shall be representative of interested constituencies such as hikers, hunters, bicycle riders, equestrian riders, off-highway vehicle (OHV) users, Hawaiian cultural representatives or practitioners, fishers, environmentalists, affected landowners, and other trail and access advocates as determined by the advisory council chairperson in consultation with Nā Ala Hele staff and existing advisory council members.

The island councils of Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui Nui, and Hawai'i Island each consists of nine voting members and a varying number of ex-officio members, representing governmental agencies and DLNR divisions. Ex-officio members are non-voting. Forestry and Wildlife District Managers and Nā Ala Hele staff serve ex-officio in council meetings. The councils operate under a set of guidelines and procedures established by Forestry and Wildlife and the Attorney General. They are also bound by the requirements of Chapter 92, HRS, Hawai'i's "Sunshine Law".

An expanded ex-officio membership of the statewide council now includes representatives from State Parks, Historic Preservation, Land Management, and DOCARE to promote effective communication between divisions. Ex-officio members on island councils may include the district Land Agent of Land Management, State Parks or National Park Service representatives, DOCARE officers, and county planning and parks representatives.

Advisory Council Roles & Responsibilities

Councils meet on a monthly basis, take field trips as necessary, and are asked for their input on existing or potential new trails, program plans, and the trail and access inventory. Councils are asked to advise Nā Ala Hele on trail and access concerns and issues, discuss and make recommendations on legal issues, and promote communication and cooperation between government and community representatives.

The councils should form subcommittees as practical working groups in order to avoid bogging down the decision-making process. Councils should call upon additional individuals as resources on particular subjects or issues. Nā Ala Hele is a program which requires public input as well as support, and the advisory councils can be helpful in that regard by holding public meetings to receive public comments and recommendations. Council members also have a responsibility to consult with their constituencies when needed.

Term Limits

As outlined in HAR 13-130-6, Advisory Council Members are expected to serve one-year terms and may be reappointed for consecutive terms. Reappointments for current members are limited to no more than four terms, unless an extension of an additional two terms is authorized by the department in consultation with Nā Ala Hele staff and existing advisory council members. It is recommended that protocols for an annual review along with expectations and evaluation criteria, similar to an annual performance review, is created and communicated to new and existing members. The annual review will help to assess whether reappointments should be approved for additional term of service. Performance review criteria should be tied to the mission, vision, and expectations of the Advisory Councils.

All Advisory Council Members Will...

- ▶ Represent their constituencies in a respectful and objective manner, without favoritism to a specific group, individual, company, or other representative or institution.
- ▶ Maintain a membership contact list of interested parties or constituents and periodically provide public communications on pertinent actions, activities, or other updates.
- ▶ Review and revise, as needed, prepared meeting minutes, and approve, revise, or deny the meeting minutes as part of the council meeting agenda.
- ▶ Be well versed in the Nā Ala Hele Program Plan
- ▶ Be prepared to dedicate at least 10 hours a month to the activities of the advisory council including attending regularly scheduled meetings, reviewing meeting materials, and drafting or review of recommendations to Nā Ala Hele staff
- ▶ Participate in any working groups applicable to, or in the interest of, any interested constituency group they represent.
- ▶ Participate in an annual review when considering an additional service term of one-year on the advisory council.



All Representatives Will...

- › Act as a liaison & public advocate
- › Maintain list of interested parties
- › Regularly communicate with ones network to understand needs



Position Descriptions:

Hiking Community Representative

As a representative of the hiking community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested hiking parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to hiking and hiker access. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Hunting, Fishing, & Subsistence Community Representative

As a representative of the hunting, fishing, and subsistence community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested hunting, fishing, and other subsistence activities parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to hunting, fishing, and subsistence access. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Equestrian Community Representative

As a representative of the equestrian community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested equestrian parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to equestrian trails and access. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Off-Highway Vehicle Community Representative

As a representative of the OHV community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested OHV parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to OHV parks, trails, and accesses. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Hawaiian Cultural Practitioners Community Representative

As a representative of the Hawaiian cultural practitioner's community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to traditional and customary access rights. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Environmental Community Representative

As a representative of the environmentalist community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to access for scientific and conservation efforts. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Mountain Bikers

As a representative of the mountain biking community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā

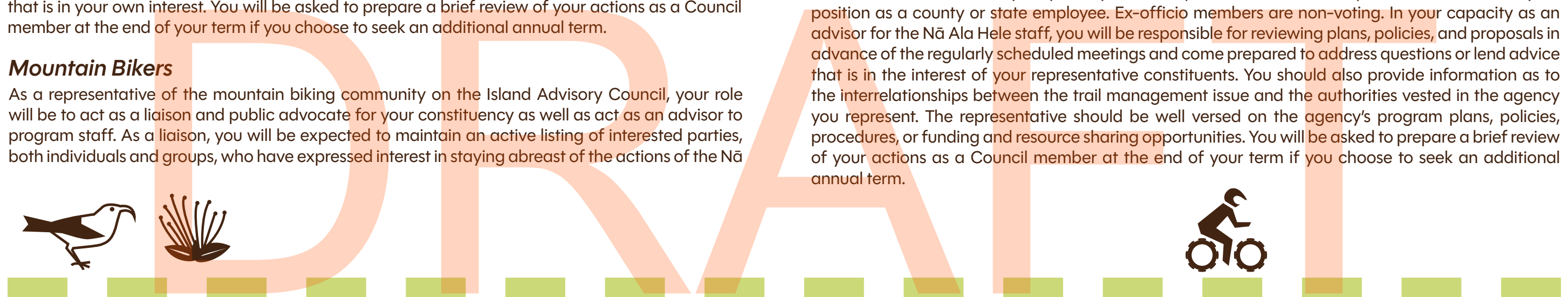
Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to mountain biking trails and accesses. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Private Landowner Community Representative

As a representative of the landowner community on the Island Advisory Council, your role will be to act as a liaison and public advocate for your constituency as well as act as an advisor to program staff. As a liaison, you will be expected to maintain an active listing of interested parties, both individuals and groups, who have expressed interest in staying abreast of the actions of the Nā Ala Hele program. You will be required to provide regular communication with your networks as to the relevant decisions and activities of the program as it relates to landowner rights and responsibilities. As a public advocate, you will regularly communicate with your network to understand the desires, needs, and concerns of your constituency. You will report on any communications from your network to the Advisory Council during the regularly scheduled meetings and bring forth ideas for addressing those concerns to the Council. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You will not prioritize any particular person, group, interest, or area that is in your own interest. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.

Ex-Officio Representatives

As an ex-officio member, your primary role is to provide advice and expertise as it relates to your position as a county or state employee. Ex-officio members are non-voting. In your capacity as an advisor for the Nā Ala Hele staff, you will be responsible for reviewing plans, policies, and proposals in advance of the regularly scheduled meetings and come prepared to address questions or lend advice that is in the interest of your representative constituents. You should also provide information as to the interrelationships between the trail management issue and the authorities vested in the agency you represent. The representative should be well versed on the agency's program plans, policies, procedures, or funding and resource sharing opportunities. You will be asked to prepare a brief review of your actions as a Council member at the end of your term if you choose to seek an additional annual term.



3.2 State of Hawai'i Interagency Involvement

As the Program continues to mature, the working relationships with other divisions, agencies, individuals, nonprofits, and other community organizations has been essential to the successful management of trails and accesses. Although the Program is housed within the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, the effort to steward trails and access is a multi-jurisdictional effort that heavily depends on the cooperation and participation of stakeholders developed through both formal and informal channels.

As the primary trail and access organization in the State, Nā Ala Hele links DLNR's efforts and actions with those of other government agencies and private parties concerned with trails and accesses. There are presently few formal agreements between Nā Ala Hele and agencies with which it must work. Informal networks on cabinet, division, and district levels have carried the program thus far. Nā Ala Hele tries to keep other agencies and divisions informed through newsletters, status reports, correspondence on specific issues, and information on Nā ala Hele's priority trails and accesses. Ex-officio members of the advisory councils are in a position to be most informed about the program.

The Nā Ala Hele Director and Specialists are responsible for reviewing and commenting on Conservation District Use Permits, land use boundary and zoning change requests, and county special management area permits, as they relate to trails and accesses. The review processes are important to monitoring how trails and accesses might be affected by proposed land use activities.



Kauila Tree



Agencies External to DLNR that Nā Ala Hele Works With:

› **Office of Planning & Sustainable Development (OPSD)**

The State of Hawai'i, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development gathers, analyzes, and provides information to the Governor to assist in the overall analysis and formulation of state policies and strategies. OPSD is tasked with: (1) providing central direction and cohesion in the allocation of resources and effectuation of state activities and programs and, (2) effectively addressing current or emerging issues and opportunities. OPSD is guided by two statewide planning documents, the Hawai'i State Planning Act, which is a broad policy document that sets the table for all activities, programs, and decisions made by local and state agencies; and Engineering Hawai'i's Future.

› **Department of Accounting & General Services (DAGS)**

The Department of Accounting and General Services, commonly known as DAGS, is headed by the State Comptroller, who concurrently services as the director of DAGS. The department is responsible for managing and supervising a wide range of State programs and activities and include the following divisions: Accounting Division, Archives Division, Audit Division, Automotive Management Division, Central Services Division, Land Survey Division, Office of Enterprise Technology Services, and Public Works Division.

› **Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)**

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is a semi-autonomous state agency responsible for improving the wellbeing of all Native Hawaiians (regardless of blood quantum). The agency is governed by the Board of Trustees, made up of nine members who are elected statewide to serve four-year terms and set organizational policy.

› **Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)**

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands is governed by the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, enacted by the U.S. Congress to protect and improve the lives of native Hawaiians. The act created a Hawaiian Homes Commission to administer certain public lands, called Hawaiian home lands, for homesteads. Native Hawaiians are defined as individuals having at least 50% Hawaiian blood. The primary responsibilities of the DHHL are to serve its beneficiaries and to manage its extensive land trust. The land trust consists of over 200,000 acres on the islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, O'ahu, and Kaua'i.

› **Department of Transportation – Highways Division (HIDOT)**

The Hawaii Department of Transportation is responsible to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain State facilities in all modes of transportation, including air, water, and land. Coordination with other State, County, and Federal programs is maintained in order to achieve these objectives. As it relates to the Nā Ala Hele Program, staff may have most frequent interaction with the Highways Division. The mission of the Highways Division is to maximize available resources to provide a safe, efficient, accessible and sustainable State Highway System that ensures the mobility of people and goods and supports economic vitality and livability.

› **Department of the Attorney General (AG)**

The Attorney General is the chief legal officer and chief law enforcement officer of the State of Hawaii. The Attorney General is appointed by the Governor. 180 attorneys and over 500 professional and support personnel assist the Attorney General in fulfilling the responsibilities of the office. The Department AG's Office advises on the Board of Land and Natural Resources and provides legal advice and counsel on proposed legislation, rules, deeds, contracts and other legal documents. The office also interprets laws and provides legal advice and counsel to state officials to assist them in performing their functions and tasks.





3.3 Nā Ala Hele & the Counties

Through Nā Ala Hele, DOFAW has an expanded role in shoreline access and urban trails, a role which overlaps with county jurisdictions. Nā Ala Hele staff need to work closely with county staff in reviewing special management area permit applications as well as other county land use permits which may involve trails and accesses. Nā Ala Hele's inventory could facilitate identification and review of land use permits that might affect known trails and accesses. Other county planning efforts, such as development and general plan reviews, can benefit from Nā Ala Hele program input.

County agencies with land use planning functions include the Department of Planning of the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, and the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting. Representatives from these county agencies serve as ex officio, non-voting members on Nā Ala Hele's advisory councils. Conditions, which can include setting aside land for trails and accesses, can be incorporated into recommendations to the counties' planning commissions and county councils. In Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii, both the planning commission and the county council have decision-making power. Decisions on proposed subdivisions, special management area permits, and zoning changes must come before these bodies. In Oahu, the planning commission, while important, is only advisory. The City Council is decision-making. Nā Ala Hele's designated staff should receive planning commission agendas and should also be placed on the county council's mailing list. Nā Ala Hele staff may then review agendas and determine whether or not any item warrants closer examination.

Many land use approvals are administrative, requiring only internal review and approval by the counties. Subdivision applications, grading and grubbing permits, and building permits on lands with proper zoning for such uses or which are outside of the Special Management Area, are all examples of land use applications which are administratively processed by the counties. By fostering collaborative working relationships between county agencies' and Nā Ala Hele's staff, Nā Ala Hele can increase its involvement in reviews which are done at the county level.



3.3.1 Nā Ala Hele & the Visitor Management Industry

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) serves as the tourism operating agency for the State of Hawai'i, and is tasked with responsibly managing the Hawaiian Islands' iconic brand. HTA's role spans marketing the islands, preserving Hawaiian culture, protecting the natural environment, and strengthening local communities. The HTA works with each of the county's visitor bureaus to develop strategic Destination Management Action Plans, which focus on a regenerative tourism model that aims to limit the adverse environmental impacts and stressors associated with tourism.

Many visitors and tour-guided hiking excursions over recent years have sought out locations that are well-known and highly publicized through social media and 3rd party hiking and recreation platforms. The proliferation of information over the internet and social media has fueled the demand for outdoor recreation in the state, which has particularly concentrated around 'hot spot' locations which previously did not see high volumes of visitors. Trails not currently listed as Nā Ala Hele Program Trails, or other unregulated accesses, are also becoming increasingly popular through promotion on social media. It is essential that the HTA and Nā Ala Hele maintain regular communication and active partnerships to effectively manage popular destinations for visitors.

Currently, the county visitor bureaus have piloted trail stewardship projects aimed at educating and directing visitors at popular hiking locations. These pilot programs have been successful in identifying and mobilizing community-based participation in stewardship activities. The Program recommends and brings forward the lessons learned from the HTA and Visitor Bureaus' stewardship efforts to advance alignment between agencies for the shared purpose of adequately managing our valued public resources.

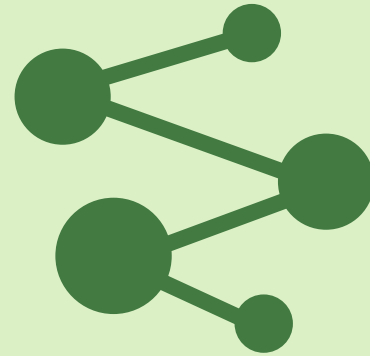
Both Nā Ala Hele and the HTA should allocate staff time to collaborate on educational materials that can be easily distributed to tourists and which provide a cohesive, simplified message. Pamphlets and trail maps that provide tour guides and tourists information about hiking best practices, online resources which communicate whether popular hiking destinations are busy, parking and bus ride information, and other logistics considerations can reduce the number of individuals and groups that arrive unprepared for the conditions at the trailhead or on the trail.

Collaboration between the HTA and Nā Ala Hele may also include the creation of permanent stewardship coordination roles at both agencies, whereby HTA can help identify and coordinate volunteer groups of mostly tourists and short term visitors and Nā Ala Hele staff can provide the event activities, training, equipment, and location. Under this or other collaborative models, communication will be imperative. Setting up recurring meetings on a regular basis and adding these activities to staff member roles and responsibilities will institutionalize this commitment to collaboration across staff turnover.

Manoa Falls Trailhead, O'ahu



3.4 Organizational Recommendations & Objectives



Related Objectives:



3A: Spearhead a Collaborative Network of Agency and Community Partners in a Trail Stewardship Program.



5B: Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.

Goal 1

To Expand Program Resources and Networks that Help to Achieve Nā Ala Hele's Goals and Objectives.

Objective 1A: Build into the program designated roles that foster intra-agency collaboration on shared objectives within the DLNR Divisions.

Objective 1B: Be the primary resource for trail use, management, and access needs.

Actions:

- › Continue to utilize biweekly meetings of the Chairperson of BLNR with top administrators to discuss Nā Ala Hele intra-departmental concerns
- › Use biweekly cabinet meetings with all department heads and the Governor to discuss inter-departmental concerns of Nā Ala Hele
- › Train Nā Ala Hele staff in meeting the requirements of other agencies for trail and access projects
- › Place appropriate staff offices on the mailing lists to receive Land Use Commission notices & agendas, OEQC Bulletins, & county planning commission & county council agendas
- › Provide all departments, divisions, and agencies that have jurisdiction over trails/accesses with information on Nā Ala Hele's priority trails and accesses
- › Provide governmental cooperators in the inventory with copies of the inventory so that it can be used when permits and applications are reviewed

Internal Cooperation within DLNR:

After extensive consultation with representatives from visitor industry groups, Island Advisory Council members, internal staff, and the residents, it is understood that there is a desire to have information on staff roles more widely understood by the public and that there should be procedures for identifying who should be contacted. Desired information contacts:

1. General reporting of trail conditions & complaints
2. Volunteer & educational collaboration & connection
3. Coordination with agency leadership

Advisory Councils & Ex Officio Representation:

Visioning feedback identified the following desired adjustments to the Councils:

- › Revision of IAC purpose statement to clearly define roles & responsibilities
- › Establish term limits
- › Establish performance review criteria tied to the mission, vision, & expectations of the Advisory Councils

Goal 1

Interagency Coordination:

- › Fund additional staff Planner position within the Forestry and Wildlife Program that focuses on the strategic alignment between State agency management plans, particularly within the OPSD
 - › Participate in management plan update processes, serve as advisory, council, and board members on agency led initiatives.
 - › Align strategic actions on visitor management and access controls with tourism bureaus
 - › Provide Nā Ala Hele contact information to visitor management bureau staff for (1) complaints; (2) natural resource management collaboration; (3) leadership advisory on steering committees etc.
 - › Reference: Table 1: Interagency Program Alignment
 - › Reference: Table 2: Destination Management Plan Strategic Alignments
- › Fund additional staff Planner position within the Forestry and Wildlife Program that focuses on grant applications for funding opportunities in alignment with State and Federal standards for active transportation, climate mitigation and reduction strategies, infrastructure improvements, as applicable to the Forestry and Wildlife and Nā Ala Hele Program's goals and objectives
 - › Coordinate and strategize on the efficient and effective use of existing and new sources of financial and technical assistance to support natural resource management, trail development and recreation
 - › Reference Table 3: HDOT Transportation Funding Opportunities to Support Recreational Trails
- › Leverage use agreements to streamline access, maintenance, and construction responsibilities for trails and accesses within multi-jurisdictional authority
- › Fund additional abstractor position on each branch to research and protect threatened ancient and historic trails and accesses.
- › Secure and maintain adequate base funding for personnel, operations, and CIP.

Staffing Roles & Responsibilities

- › The FW Techs who are responsible for the review, consolidation, and summarizing of field data to be the primary person to receive the list of metrics of success for trails and support trail monitoring and reporting for the Program.
- › The FW Worker should be responsible for the collection of field metrics aligned with the successful management of trails.
 - › FW Workers should also be primarily supporting the volunteer training and educational aspects in coordination with the Volunteer Coordinator
- › GIS Research Data Technician will need better coordination with field offices and the databases they maintain. Investments in ArcGIS Online or other database sharing would allow access from multiple individuals into the database for updates, field data input, report generation and analysis.
- › Increase Civil Service staff positions to support essential collaborative functions of the program including:
 - › **Assistant Director/ Planner:** assist the program director and coordinate with other agencies
 - › **Full-time Abstractor:** Locate and determine governmental jurisdiction
 - › Converting temporary paralegal position to a permanent position
 - › **Two full-time staff Planner positions:** working under the Assistant Director/ Planner to focus on strategic alignment of the Program within other agency management plans, funding opportunities, and advisory/ consultation needs

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Table 1: Interagency Program Alignment

Agency	Program	Plan/Entitlement	Resource Management Alignments	Aligned Actions	Data Collaboration
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development	Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM)	Ocean Resources Management Plan	Ormp goal: design management strategies and programs to recognize and incorporate the connection of land and sea, facilitating the broad adoption of green infrastructure practices to reduce polluted runoff from within watersheds.	Increase the shared understanding of green stormwater infrastructure among homeowners, government officials, practitioners, and private industry, through continuing outreach efforts	Number of fenced acres in DLNR priority watersheds
				Identify adaptations needed to implement green stormwater infrastructure successfully in Hawai'i's unique conditions (topography, climate, soils, development patterns).	Miles of fencing inspected and maintained at DLNR priority watersheds
	Environmental Review Program (ERP)	Chapter 343 HRS Environmental Review	The Environmental Notice Exemptions List	Periodic review and update of the DLNR Exempted Actions List	N/A
				Cultural Impact Assessments	Become a routine consulted party for Cultural Impact Assessments
	Statewide GIS Program	ArcGIS Online Maps LiDAR Data Downloads Hawaii Open Data Portal	Geodatabase of historic properties, trails and accesses (not all data publicly available)	Coordination between GIS Data Technician and Program to align publicly available information, future trail sensitivity analysis, etc.	Data needs identified in management and action plans including fencing, soil data, erosion rates, etc.
	Statewide Sustainability Program	Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan (2008)	HSP Goal 3: Sustainable Environment and Natural Resources	Provide greater protection for air, and land-, fresh water -, and ocean-based habitats.	Percentage of lands and water protected for native plants and animals.
				Conserve agricultural, open space, and conservation lands and resources.	Number and types of invasive species introduced to Hawaii annually, including intra-island migration
			Develop a comprehensive environmental mapping and measurement system to evaluate the overall health and status of Hawaii's natural ecosystems	Trail vulnerability assessment analysis	



Table 2: Advisory Council Annual Review Criteria

Member Responsibilities	Metrics of Success	Required Threshold	Acceptable Performance Ratings
Attendance in regularly scheduled meetings	Number of meetings attended. Meeting Quorum	Must attend 90% of meetings (or three excused absences)	Meets Expectations / Does Not Meet Expectations
Fair and Objective Representation of Constituency	Number of regular communications with contact list	At least biannual communications to contact list (2 emails, newsletters, etc)	Meets Expectations / Does Not Meet Expectations
Active Participation in Agendized Items	Voting on agendized items, preparation to discuss agendized items, completion of evaluation forms for program trails, etc.	10 hours a month dedicated to council activities	Subjective performance rating based on Island Specialist and Member review. High – Med- Low ranking scale
Participation in Working Groups	Maintain a list of Permitted Interaction Groups (PIGs) convened or joined	N/A	Subjective performance rating based on Island Specialist and Member review. High – Med- Low ranking scale

Table 3: HDOT Transportation Funding Opportunities to Support Recreational Trails

Agency	Program	Funding Source	Funding Goals	Funding Requirements	Online Resource
Hawai'i State Department of Transportation Highways Division	HDOT Transportation Alternatives Funding	Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	Maintenance and restoration of existing trails. Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages.	Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment.W Construction of new trails. Acquisition of easements or property for trails. Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance. Publications of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection	https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/overview/program_summary/index.cfm
	Provided by Federal Highway Administration Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty	Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)	To construct projects to provide safe and connected active transportation facilities in an active transportation network or active transportation spine.	Active transportation "networks" are active transportation facilities that connect between destinations within a community or metropolitan region, including recreation areas and other community areas.	https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/atiip/
		Transportation Alternatives (TA) Surface Transportation Block Grant	Funding for a variety of generally smaller-scale transportation projects including recreational trails	Trail Bridges Trail/ highway crossings and intersections	https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/
		Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (BUILD)	Provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact.	Trail Construction and Maintenance Equipment Trailside and trailhead facilities	https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants



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PLANNING FOR TRAILS & ACCESSES

NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN



Section 198D-2, HRS, directs Nā Ala Hele to plan, develop, and otherwise implement a system which includes all of Hawai'i's trails and accesses. Utilizing an inventory of all trails and accesses in the State, Nā Ala Hele can identify and select those trails and accesses that should become part of the Nā Ala Hele system.

Major Planning Components

IDENTIFICATION

of all existing trails & accesses with ongoing updates & corrections.

CLASSIFICATION

of existing & candidate trails/ accesses according to descriptive characteristics deemed of value to users & managers & use of a key tool of classification: trail types

EVALUATION, SELECTION, & PRIORITIZATION

of trails & accesses which should be included in the Nā Ala Hele program.

4.1 Identification of Existing Trails & Accesses

Section 198-D, HRS, directs the Department of Land and Natural Resources to “establish, maintain, and amend, as required, an inventory of all trails and accesses in the State, whether wholly or partly on public or private lands and whether or not under the jurisdiction of the department, and a separate inventory of all trails and accesses to public hunting areas in the State.” The law specifies the kinds of information that must be included in the inventories. The department is further instructed to “publish and periodically update documents, which shall be available to the general public. The documents shall contain that portion of the inventories which include trails and accesses available for the use of the general public.”

4.1.1 The Inventory

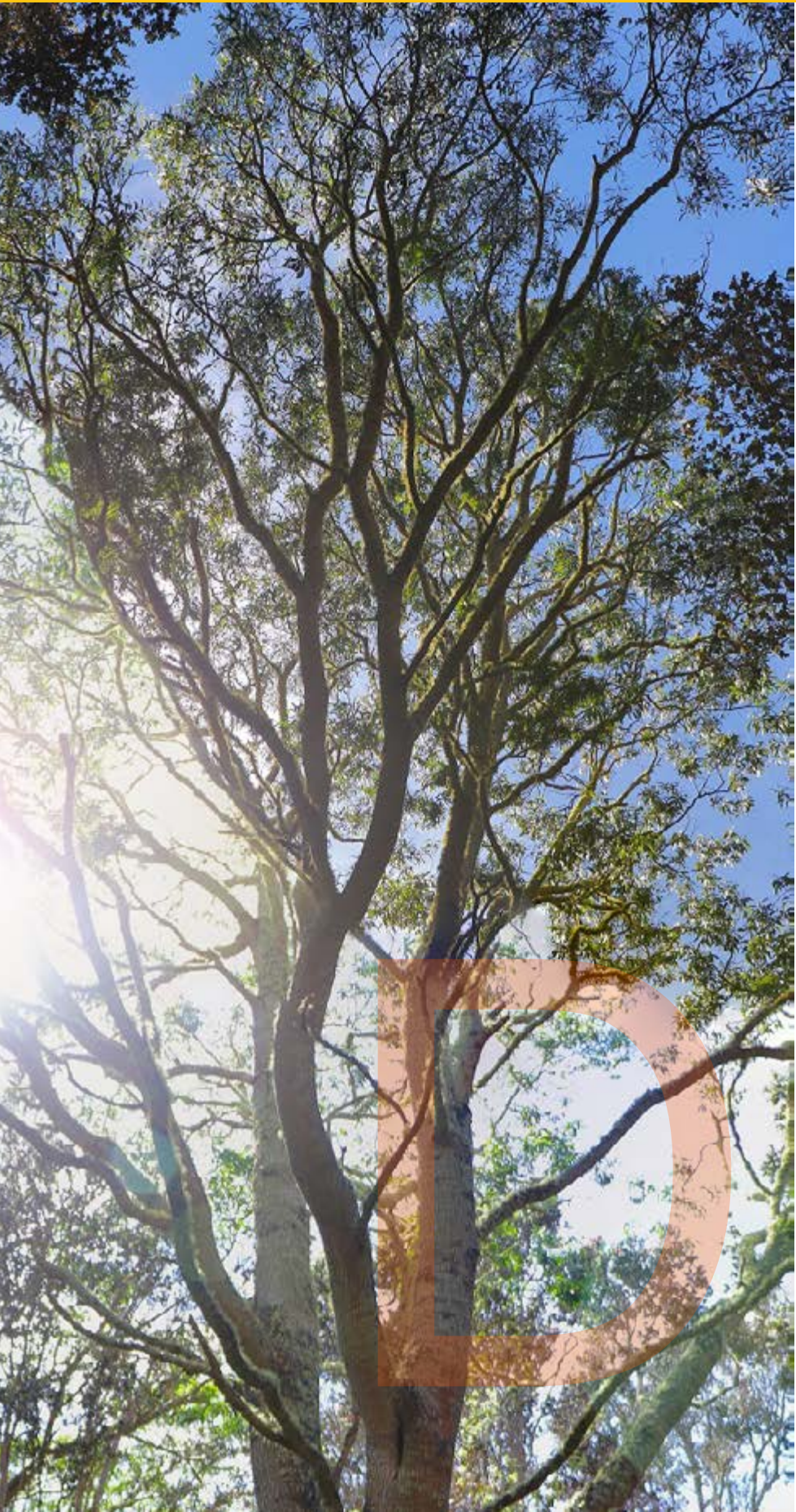
A comprehensive inventory which records the existence of all trails and accesses is fundamental to the planning of a statewide trail and access program. The inventory provides Nā Ala Hele with an overall perspective of the types of trails/ accesses which exist and their many characteristics. Additionally, when land use applications and other development proposals are reviewed by government agencies, the presence of trails/ accesses on or adjacent to the subject properties can be more easily determined using the inventory. Another potential use of the inventory is in search and rescue of missing persons.

The inventory is in a digital mapping database which contains within the metadata the following information:

- > Location according to USGS quadrangle map, island district, and Tax Map Key identifications
- > Traditional and popular name of the trail / access
- > Whether it is known to be ancient (created in or prior to 1892)
- > Land ownership of property over which trail/ access passes
- > Primary manager of trail/ access
- > Whether it is part of a larger network
- > Length, elevation range, climate in which it is located
- > Physical condition – frequency of maintenance, hazards, degree of difficulty for foot travel, recommended method(s) of transportation along trail/ access
- > Special activities that can be enjoyed along the trail/ access and any amenities/ facilities present
- > Any restrictions on use of the trail/ access and whether or not it is available for general public use
- > Other brief comments considered necessary for the record

The process of updating and amending the inventory is ongoing. Because the number of trails and accesses in the state is vast and constantly changing, many trails and accesses remain to be placed on the inventory or lack accurate data needed to inform the inventory. Currently, one staff position in Forestry and Wildlife maintains the official inventory database. However, island staff may also maintain a separate list for ease of access and use. The implementation of the following update procedures are therefore recommended.

Updates of the inventory records will be made at regular intervals by DOFAW and the Counties. The process of updating will be done by (1) reconciling changes in the database at the district level based on input from each county and DOFAW office; (2) submittal of each island's updated inventory for reconciliation by the main Honolulu DOFAW office, which will manage the statewide inventory; and (3) distribution of the statewide updated information by the Honolulu office to each of the DOFAW district offices, the counties, and other cooperators in the inventory system.



4.1.2 Protection of Threatened Trails

Many ancient, historic, and contemporary trails and access routes are threatened by development, land subdivision, encroachment, obstruction, physical destruction, and prolonged disuse. These threats are most pronounced where ancient or historic trails traverse private lands, particularly in areas experiencing development pressure or changes in land use. Over time, trails may be graded over, fenced, incorporated into agricultural or landscaping practices, informally rerouted, or allowed to deteriorate to the point that their physical presence and legal status are no longer evident on the ground.

A recurring challenge for the Nā Ala Hele Program is that many State-owned trails—particularly those established under the Highways Act of 1892—were never surveyed, monumented, or clearly recorded in modern land records. As parcels were subdivided and conveyed over time, trail corridors were often omitted from deeds, maps, and title documents, resulting in uncertainty regarding their location, alignment, and ownership. In some cases, adjacent landowners are unaware of the existence of a public trail; in others, landowners may dispute or refuse to acknowledge State ownership or public access rights. When trails are not formally identified and documented, they are especially vulnerable to being lost, obscured, or eliminated through routine land use activities.

From an inventory and planning perspective, the protection of threatened trails depends on timely identification, documentation, and integration of trail information into land management and land use decision-making processes. This includes systematic archival research, field verification, and professional surveying to establish accurate trail alignments; mapping trails within the Nā Ala Hele inventory and geographic information systems; and providing notice to adjacent landowners and agencies regarding the State's interest in those trails. Where appropriate, trail corridors should be formally recognized in land tenure records, subdivision maps, and other property documentation to ensure that public access interests are carried forward as lands change ownership or use.

In some circumstances, clarification of trail ownership, course, or legal status may require formal action, including Board recognition of State-owned trails or participation in legal proceedings such as quiet title actions. However, from a planning standpoint, early coordination with counties and other governmental partners is a critical and preferred tool. Integrating trail information into county planning documents, development review processes, and land use permits can help ensure that public trails and access routes are identified and protected before impacts occur. Conditions requiring avoidance, buffering, or accommodation of public trails during development can significantly reduce conflicts and prevent permanent loss of access.

Protecting threatened trails through inventory-based planning actions allows the Department to maintain a complete, accurate, and defensible record of State-owned trails and public access routes. A robust inventory supports informed decision-making, facilitates interagency coordination, and provides the foundation for long-term trail system planning. By documenting and protecting threatened trails early, the Nā Ala Hele Program preserves future options for trail restoration, improvement, or designation as program trails, while safeguarding historic access routes and public trust resources for future generations.

4.2 Classification of Trails & Accesses

Section 198D-4, HRS requires the department to classify each trail and access in the inventory according to “function, type, theme, actual and desired use intensity, and any other classification deemed necessary or desirable by the department.”

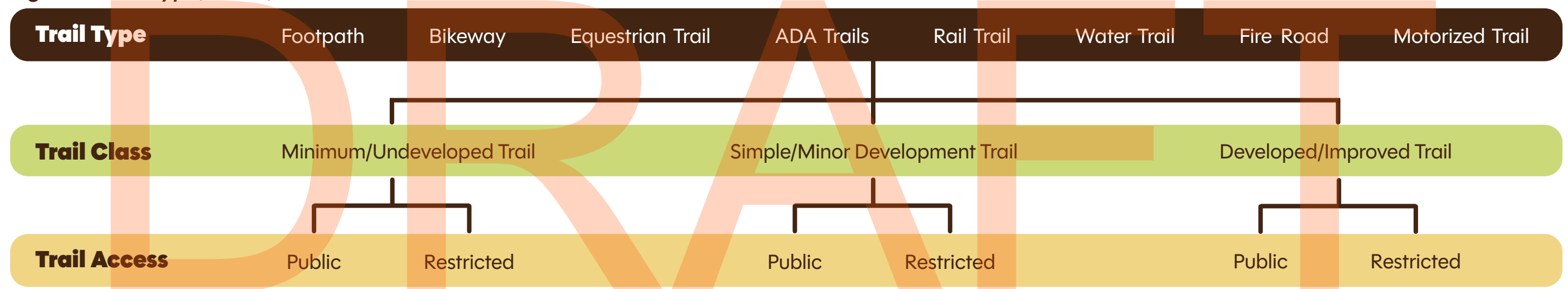
One of the applications of Nā Ala Hele’s inventory is to facilitate classification of trails and accesses. Nā Ala Hele’s classification system is designed to provide efficient retrieval of information that would be of interest to the trail / access user, planner, and manager. Classification can tell users what to expect in a particular trail / access. Planners look to classification systems for help in planning a system that includes sufficient variety of trail / access types and satisfies community needs. Managers look to a classification system for guidance in determining desired trail/ access standards of development, monitoring requirements, level of use, and maintenance requirements.

As the Program continues to expand and evolve over time, the importance of the trail classification system has also become a critical component of overall trail management success. Stakeholder engagement has identified gaps in the previous “Trail Types” system, which formed the basis for the program’s classification system. As a result, the trail types have been revised to reflect national standards and address stakeholder concerns regarding the functionality of the designations and how the program can better anticipate trail needs, manage visitor volumes and physical conditions, and target investments in trail improvements into the future.

Past “Trail Type” designations were separated into four categories – urban, rural, wildland, and sensitive. Each designation was organized around the physical setting of the trails as well as the anticipated experiences one would have while on the trail. As the State’s population has grown, certain trails have experienced exponential growth in the number of visitors who use the trail for recreational, cultural, and research activities every day. There is also an ever increasing demand for outdoor recreation in general, and the demand for an increased variety of trail uses including off-highway vehicle, equestrian, and mountain biking facilities. The revised trail classifications address these needs by further expanding the function, type, theme, actual and desired use intensity, and other factors that will help to evaluate and manage each program trail and access.

Figure 1: Trail Type, Class, and Access Criteria shows the overall trail classification system. All Program trails will be evaluated based on three tiered criteria: type, class, and access. There are 8 different designations under Trail Type which is determined by the primary use of the trail including – footpath, bikeway, equestrian trail, ADA trails, rail trails, water trails, fire roads, and motorized trails. In addition to Trail Type, trails and accesses should be further identified by Trail Class and Trail Access criteria. Trail Class outlines the existing physical aspects and desired development standards for each Program Trail, including the level of physical improvements made to the trail itself as well as any constructed facilities, signage, and amenities. Trail Access outlines the current and desired level of use intensities, or the current level and appropriate amount of recreationalists to a site. A full description of each classification and evaluation criteria follows.

Figure 1: Trail Type, Class, & Access Criteria

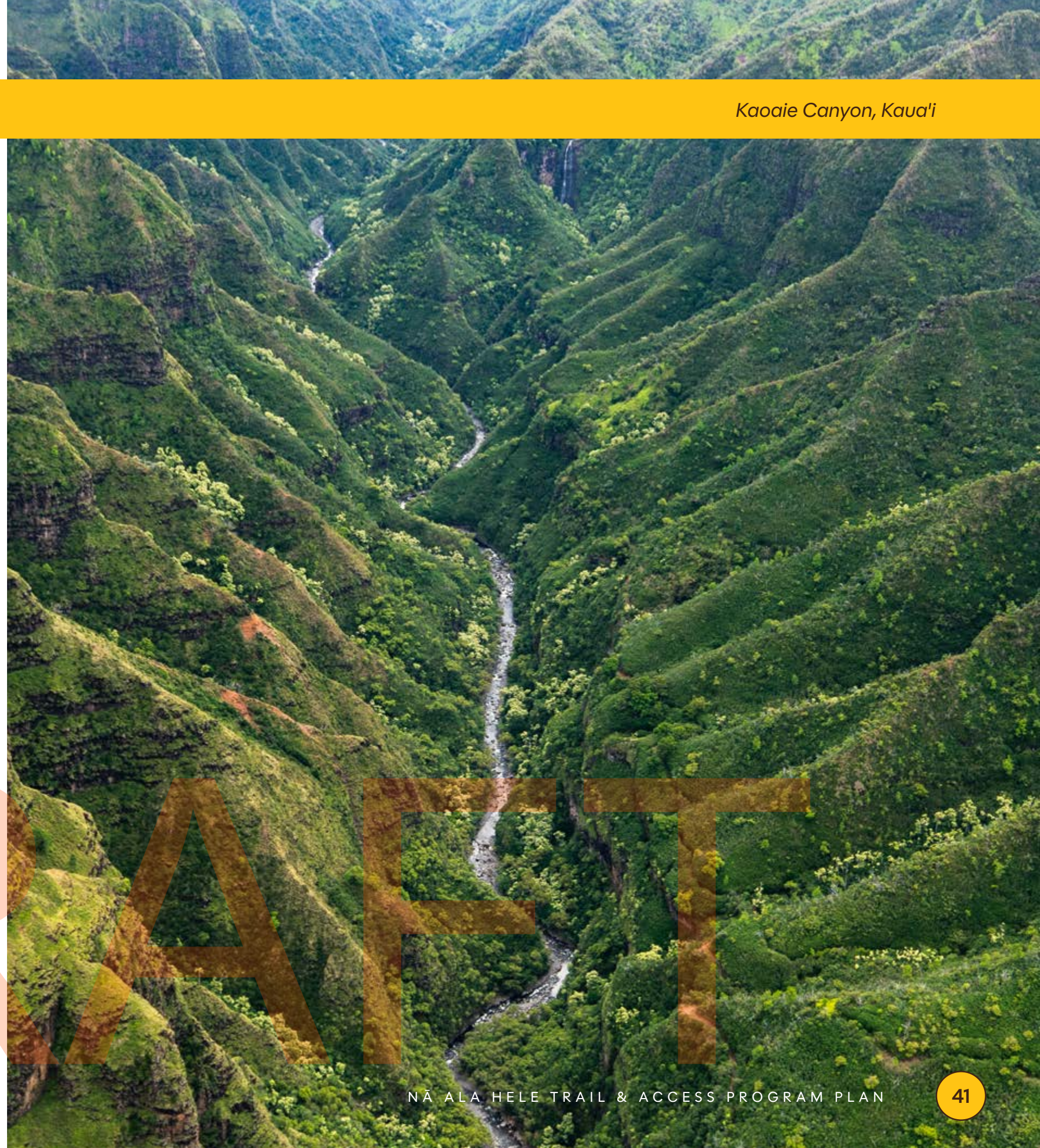


4.2.1 Overview of Trail Types

Trail Types have been expanded to eight new categories based on national standards and best practices as prescribed by the U.S. Forest Service (USDA Forest Service, 2025) and the Safe Trails Coalition (Safe Trails Coalition, 2025): Footpath, Bikeway, Equestrian Trail, ADA Trails, Rail Trail, Water Trails, Fire Roads, and Motorized Trails. Each Trail Type has specific forms, functions, themes, use intensities, and development standards associated with the designation. The Trail Type classification is used to robustly assess a trail for the appropriate recreational uses and provide standard criteria for evaluating new trails for incorporation into the list of actively managed program trails.

4.2.2 Overview of Trail Class

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife manages over a million acres across Hawai'i, roughly 25% of the land area in the state. The Division has a broad mandate to enhance, protect, conserve and manage natural and cultural resources, and to promote forest products development, recreational hunting, hiking, and other activities. The lands under the management of the Division are varied in their resources and potential uses: some lands may be best suited for native species management or habitat restoration, while other lands may be better suited for forest products management or for recreational use. Forestry and Wildlife staff have developed a set of management classifications to guide discussions about the most appropriate management goals for a given area. As a Forestry and Wildlife program, Nā Ala Hele builds upon this categorization to effectively manage the different types of trails and accesses within the various land classes for the various types of recreational, cultural, and scientific uses. Evaluation criteria for Program Trails may be found under Table 5: Forestry and Wildlife Recreation Management Classifications.



4.2.3 Overview of Trail Access

In the decades since the inception of the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access program, the number of Hawai'i residents and visitors who travel to the islands has risen considerably. Residents across the major islands enjoy the free access to mauka and makai lands while also expressing a deep frustration with the mounting number of additional recreationalists. With the proliferation of social media and instant access to data and information about trails and accesses, more people have the opportunity to learn about and experience previously lesser-known locations. More residents are also seeking recreational experiences in nature to promote physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. These factors, compounded by the limited number of program trails and even smaller number of trails actively managed by the State, have resulted in the degradation of many popular trails and accesses along with the surrounding environment.

Hawai'i's residents and visitors alike recognize the need for stronger and more proactive user management strategies that balance access to mauka and makai lands, while preserving the delicate natural environment that all users seek to experience and enjoy. The adoption of a visitor use management framework, to be instituted statewide, is in compliance with HRS Chapter 198D-6, whereby Nā Ala Hele staff are directed to regulate the use of trails and accesses under DLNR jurisdiction for the purposes of preserving the integrity, condition, naturalness, or beauty of the trails or accesses, to protect the public safety, or to restrict or regulate public access to protected or endangered wildlife habitats, except for scientific or educational purposes. HAR Chapter 13-130 Subchapter 4 further expounds upon the regulation of trails and accesses by providing administrative guidance as to the ability of the public to gain access to, and recreate on, Program trails .



Trail Access Level 1: Open to the Public

In areas where outdoor recreation is a primary activity, where higher user volumes are expected, where outdoor recreation is integrated into other activities or uses, where natural environments are not deemed too sensitive to allow for open access, and in any other cases where managed access is not identified as a necessary constraint to preserve public safety or the natural environment, then open public access should be permitted. Chapter 13-130-18 states that no person is permitted to interfere with the rights of another to use a program trail, access, or trail facilities excepted as authorized by law, permit, or an authorized representative.

Statutory Requirements:

No person shall interfere with the rights of any other person to use a program feature, except as authorized by law, or permit, board or an authorized representative. Interference includes, but is not limited to, physically blocking trails and accesses, making physical changes to a trail that impede use of the trail, threatening physical harm to persons using a trail, threatening civil or criminal trespass actions against trail users, posting signs such as "no trespassing" or "kapu", or otherwise intimidating persons from using the trail.

Trail Access Level 2: Restricted (unless permitted)

When Nā Ala Hele staff or other authorized representative(s) identify concerns related to open public access, temporary closures and permitted access management strategies may be implemented. Restrictions may be instituted (1) In the event of an emergency on public safety reasons; (2) In order to address an imminent threat of harm to a trail, natural resource, or person; (3) to comply with the requirements of agreements made with private landowners or lessees who permit access to program trails through their land; (4) to mitigate user impacts upon the trail surface, historic and culturally sensitive areas, or environmentally sensitive areas; (5) to minimize incompatible uses in the same area, e.g. horseback riding and motorcycle riding, or hiking and bicycle riding; and (6) to manage and control periods of use of a program trail.

Statutory Requirements:

'13-130-19 Trail and access activity restrictions. (a) The board or its An authorized representative may temporarily close a program feature, and may restrict the days and hours of public usage of, or numbers of persons allowed entry to, or the types of uses or activities allowed on any program feature and any such restrictions shall be posted on the program feature thereof...



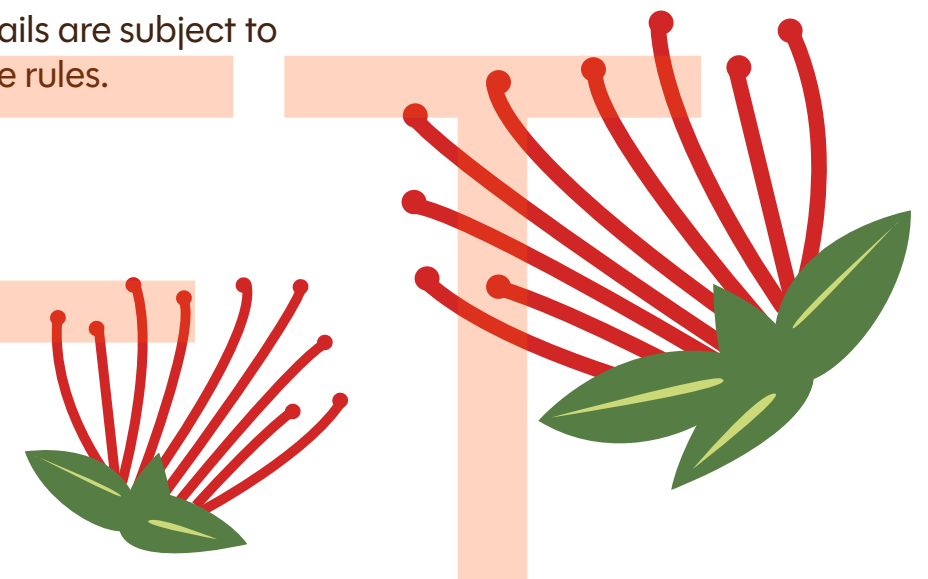
4.3 Evaluation of Trails & Accesses


In accordance with HRS Chapter 198D-5, Nā Ala Hele staff are directed to identify and maintain a listing of proposed trails and accesses which may be opened to the public, potential expansions of trails and accesses, potential or desirable connectors between existing trail systems, public beach, shore, park, trail, and other recreational areas to which access is unavailable or inadequate, and trails and accesses to public hunting areas. To further the purposes of section 198D-5, pursuant to section 198D-6, the department adopted HAR Chapter 13-130 to provide for the selection, designation, classification and regulation of a system of Program trails to be improved and maintained for public use. Through a consultation process with the public, the Island Advisory Councils, and with approval by the BLNR, a select list of trails and accesses may be deemed Program trails for the purpose of regulating and actively maintaining the trail or access. Those trails or accesses approved as a Program trail are subject to the statutory requirements of Chapter 13-130. Recommendations for trail types, classes, and use standards are informed by best practices outlined by the U.S. Forest Service and are compliant with the statutory requirements of the Chapter 198D and Chapter 13-130. 13-130-12 HAR: The Nā Ala Hele program shall be responsible for maintaining an inventory of trails and accesses in the State of Hawai'i. Program Trails shall be selected from among the inventoried trails. Program trails are subject to the trail use rules set forth in the administrative rules.

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Kaluakauka Trail, Hawai'i





While the designation and management of Program Trails represent the primary focus of Nā Ala Hele’s implementation efforts and the majority of program funding, staffing, and operational resources, the broader statewide trail system extends well beyond those trails formally designated under the Program. Hundreds—and likely thousands—of additional historic and contemporary trails remain outside the Program Trail system. These non-Program Trails continue to provide important public benefits, including access for recreation, cultural practice, hunting, subsistence, community connectivity, and appreciation of Hawai’i’s landscapes and history. These trails fall under the management and regulations of their respective landowners. Non program trails on DLNR lands, for example, unless otherwise unencumbered, are regulated under Chapter 13-221, HAR.

The absence of Program Trail designation does not imply that a trail lacks value, legitimacy, or public importance. Rather, it reflects the practical reality that the Nā Ala Hele Program does not have sufficient funding, staffing, or capacity to improve, manage, or maintain every trail statewide. Many non-Program Trails remain functional and in active use despite limited or no formal improvements, relying on their historic alignment, traditional use, or informal maintenance by users and communities. In many cases, these trails continue to meet public needs without the level of investment or infrastructure associated with Program Trails. This plan recognizes that both Program Trails and non-Program Trails are integral components of Hawai’i’s trail network. Program Trail designation is a planning and management tool used to prioritize limited resources toward trails where active development, maintenance, and long-term management are feasible and appropriate. Non-Program Trails, while not prioritized for improvement under this framework, remain important public assets and may continue to be inventoried, documented, protected, and considered in broader land use and access planning.

As conditions, needs, and resources change over time, non-Program Trails may be evaluated for potential future designation, while others may remain appropriately unimproved. Together, Program Trails and non-Program Trails form a comprehensive and diverse trail system that supports public access, cultural continuity, and outdoor recreation across the state, even where active management is not possible or necessary.

*Hawai’iloa Trail
O’ahu*



4.3.1 Trail Type Evaluation Guidelines

Trails and accesses designated as a Program trail must be classified in accordance with Chapter 13-130-15, HAR which shall reflect the following:

1. The function of the trail
2. The type of trail
3. The actual or desired use intensity
4. The desired condition of the environmental or historical setting
5. The recreational setting
6. The quality and nature of the expected experience, including the expected sights, sounds, and levels of interaction with other individuals
7. The degree of physical modification to the environment
8. The accessibility of the trail
9. The mode of transportation for which the trail is intended
10. The type of ancillary and complimentary facilities
11. Other similar factors as the board may consider from time to time

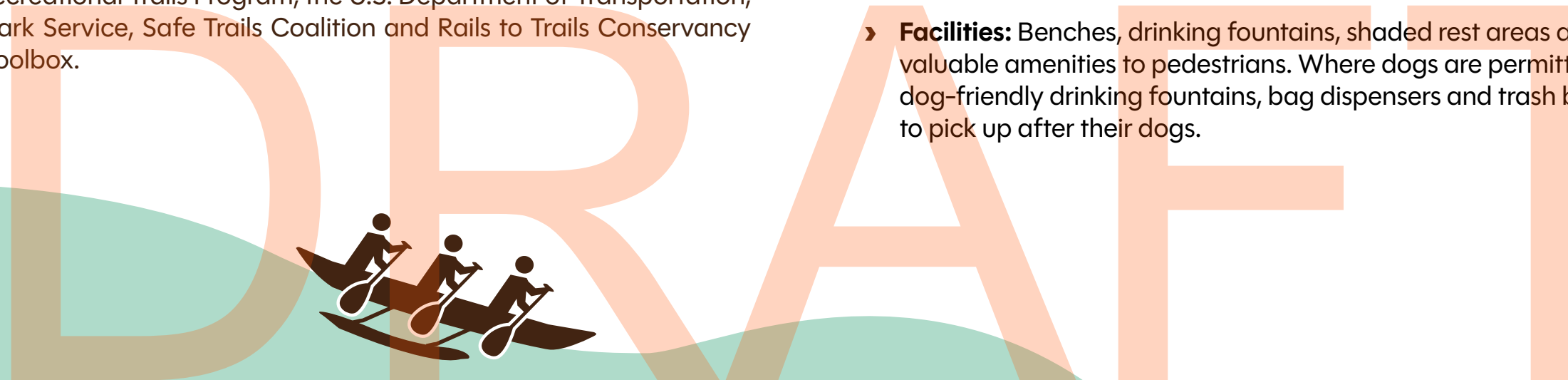
Trail type guidelines are based on best practices as prescribed by U.S. Code 23, Title 206 for Recreational Trails Program, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the National Park Service, Safe Trails Coalition and Rails to Trails Conservancy Trail Building Toolbox.

Footpath

A type of trail for individuals on foot (hikers, runners, backpackers, walkers, etc.)



- › **Intent:** Footpaths are the most flexible and diversified trail type categorization. Trails under this type are primarily designed and managed for pedestrian users, which may include walkers, hikers, joggers, runners, bird watchers and dog walkers. Footpaths may be used for wildland hiker experiences, access to cultural and native Hawaiian traditional practices, in urban settings to connect transit corridors or trail networks, or within sensitive natural protected areas with restricted access.
- › **Use Intensity:** Dependent upon access protocols but may be considered for open, unfettered public access to highly restrictive permitted access. In urban areas, footpaths should be designed to support high volume public access and connect to either existing trail networks or commuter routes. In rural areas, footpaths ideally connect trail networks or support access to natural features in the rural-wildland interface. In wildland settings, permitted access may be required to maintain natural settings and prevent environmental degradation.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Ideal in urban, rural, and wildland settings. In urban settings, parking at trail heads or access to trail routes using public transportation should be readily accessible. In rural areas, parking and other amenities may not be supported but should be accessible by public transport. In wildland settings, parking or other public transit access may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- › **Facilities:** Benches, drinking fountains, shaded rest areas and restrooms are valuable amenities to pedestrians. Where dogs are permitted, consider providing dog-friendly drinking fountains, bag dispensers and trash bins to encourage people to pick up after their dogs.





Bikeway

A specific type of trail for use by cyclists. Cyclists include those who bike for recreation, commuting, touring, or as a function of a job or commercial related activity.



- › **Intent:** Bikeways are required to meet very specific design standards based on the intended use and proximity to other vehicles. These standards are established by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Thus, classification standards for trails under this trail type category are evaluated under a separate set of class designations.
 - › **Class I Bikeway (Bike Path):** These paths are for exclusive use of bicyclists and pedestrians with limited vehicular interaction
 - › **Class II Bikeway (Bike Lanes):** These lanes are adjacent to streets or highways and have a solid striped land designating the one-way bike travel.
 - › **Class III Bikeway (Bike Route):** These routes share the travel space with both pedestrians and motor vehicles.
- › **Use Intensity:** Bikeways are highly developed in design and construction, which allows for greater user volumes. Bikeways should be planned to accommodate open public access, with limitation considerations for public safety and environmental concerns.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Bikeways connecting to residential neighborhoods, community centers, commercial areas, or transit hubs are ideal. Parking areas for bikeways may be considered in Class I designations.
- › **Facilities:** In addition to the amenities suggested for pedestrians, bicycle racks and bicycle lockers located at transit nodes or places of employment are recommended.

Mountain Bike Trails

A trail that allows mountain biking and is separate from a designated bikeway. Mountain bikers are considered a separate user group to Off-Highway Vehicle or bikeway users, as the bikes, trail composition, construction and maintenance standards are distinct.



- › **Intent:** Mountain biking trails may consist of highly developed courses with treads that are well defined, have consistent grades, and are free of obstacles or have planned obstacles. Other types of trails can include cross country trail networks, backcountry trails or climb trails that are less developed, often in more remote areas, and can be functional for other types of uses such as fire roads.
- › **Use Intensity:** Mountain biking trails should be constructed for managed use, to the extent possible, but can be open for other recreational uses if planned accordingly. Trails in this category should be planned to accommodate open public access, with limitation considerations for public safety and environmental concerns.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Mountain biking trails are most likely to be located in rural and wildland settings. In rural areas, parking and other amenities may not be supported but should be accessible by public transport. In wildland settings, parking or other public transit access may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Building trail networks with connections to existing trails with parking should be considered.
- › **Facilities:** Trails with managed access should have a clear point of entry and exit where permits, counts, or other management strategies can be easily deployed. For highly developed trails, consider restrooms, water fountains, and shaded benched rest areas. For wildland experiences, no trail amenities are to be expected.

DRAFT

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Motorized Trails

Off-road recreation using any motor-powered vehicle, except for a motorized wheelchair.



- › **Intent:** OHV parks and trails support motorized vehicle recreation for dirtbikes, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and utility task vehicles. OHV motorized trails can be permitted along well managed and maintained recreational trails, motocross tracks, or within designated obstacle course parks.
- › **Use Intensity:** OHV trails are highly developed recreational experiences that require investments in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of the trails and parks. An OHV trail or park is rated by the course difficulty and skill level of the rider. A Trail Difficulty Level rating system provides guidance to the rider as to the difficulty of the course. A Trail Exposure Rating indicates the degree of risk the rider will encounter on a particular trail segment. OHV parks and trails should be well monitored and structured to meet the recreational demands of the public while managing access to ensure that parks are not overused.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Appropriate facilities for access to an OHV park should be provided and would include parking access. Off-Highway Vehicle trails connecting residential, commercial, or other recreational sites to the OHV park could also support connectivity, recreational experiences, and reduce facilities costs. Other activities may include the use of an OHV for access to hunting and fishing sites or camping areas.
- › **Facilities:** While not required, suggested facilities to accompany OHV parks include connecting trail systems where OHV riding is permitted, rest areas including picnic shelters, restrooms, and water fountains, and camping facilities. Educational and safety signage should be prioritized to encourage safe riding and environmental protection practices.

Water Trails

A designated route along a lake, river, canal or bay for individuals using non-motorized equipment like kayaks, canoes, and rafts. Known as an aquatic equivalent to a 'greenway' where there is a clear launch point(s) and are near significant historical, environmental, or cultural points of interests.



- › **Intent:** There are currently no designated water trails in the State of Hawai'i. Future considerations for the development of a water trails system for the state would allow for the designation and management of waterway corridors for the purpose of public recreation under the Nā Ala Hele trails system. National standards, including the federal guidelines of the National Water Trails system, identify the functions of a water trail to include the connection between historic, natural, or cultural points of interest. Staff may also consider the inclusion of historic routes routinely traversed by native Hawaiians.
- › **Use Intensity:** Dependent upon access protocols but may be considered for open unfettered public access to highly restrictive permitted access. In instances where a designated water trail traverses hazardous areas, private property, or is in proximity to sensitive cultural, historic, or natural resources, permitted and controlled access may be considered.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Trail managers may consider docks, designated public access points, or public beaches and parks for appropriate access points along a water trail. Considerations of parking facilities in areas where designated public access points are created will be essential. In areas where existing parking facilities are located, such as beach parks, managers should consider increasing capacity in the lots or extending public transport services to the area.
- › **Facilities:** Loading areas, showers, waste disposal facilities may be considered but are not required.

ADA Trails

A type of trail that meets the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act for use by people of varying ability levels.



- › **Intent:** A class of footpath that meets ADA design and construction standards. This set of pedestrian trails should be usable by all people, including those with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible within the constraints presented by the terrain. This may include an Outdoor Recreation Access Route which is a continuous, unobstructed path that connects elements, spaces, or facilities within a site such as picnic areas, campgrounds, trailheads, and viewing areas.
- › **Use Intensity:** ADA Trails will be highly developed facilities that meet federal and state regulatory standards for the accommodations of persons with disabilities. Highly developed trails are most likely able to accommodate unrestricted users of all abilities and should be open to the public with little to no permitting or volume limitations.
- › **Mode of Transport:** ADA Trails should be connected to federal and state compliant parking lot facilities.
- › **Facilities:** Accessible trails may include highly developed trail features along the trail corridor such as boardwalks and bridges, retaining walls, and ramps. Wayfinding and informational signage that provides specific information on the trail grade, width, surface and elevation gains will allow individuals to more accurately assess whether the trail meets the visitor's desired experiences and abilities. Trail amenities such as parking lots, benches and picnic areas, restrooms, and water fountains should all be constructed to federal and state disability standards.

Equestrian Trail

A type of trail specific to equestrians. Equestrians can range in age, experience, and rider type and use. Riders also prefer a range of experiences from a highly developed urban trail to a wildland experience. Trail development standards will range based on the rider's needs and the horse's physical characteristics, natural instincts, and trained/ learned behaviors.



- › **Intent:** Equestrian trails must be designed for mount comfort and ease of use. This tends to include appropriate distances from other trail uses, walls and fences, and any other object that may prove disturbing to the mount. In addition to wide treads, mounts tend to like tracks that are well-established with densely packed soil. Accommodating equestrians on footpath trails for multiuse paths is also common. For multiuse trail designs, where hikers, runners, and bicyclists may share trail corridors, user conflicts can be expected. In instances where conflicts are common, trail managers may consider separating users on different trails or on different treads separated by buffers.
- › **Use Intensity:** Equestrian trails may be found in urban, rural and wildland settings and may be appropriately designed for various use intensities. In wildland settings, equestrian trails may be considered in areas where vehicles cannot traverse but where access to trail maintenance activities is necessary such as along fire trails or within restricted sensitive ecological areas. Urban and rural trails may feature more constructed and maintained treads to accommodate multiuse or equestrian-only paths. Use intensity can range from unfettered access along highly developed multiuse paths to permitted and restricted access in remote areas.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Equestrian trails should have convenient driving access to the trailhead or riding site. The standard is for the site to be located within 5 miles of a paved road.
- › **Facilities:** Basic amenities for equestrian trails include potable water sources, restroom facilities, mounting blocks, manure disposal mechanisms, highlines or corrals, hitch rails, and a clear trailhead point of entry/exit.

Rail Trails

Trails converted from old or abandoned railroad easements to trails. The trails are often aimed at accommodating hikers and cyclists. Repurposing rail lines often means that the trail corridor is already defined, the access easement established, and the land use history is highly developed.



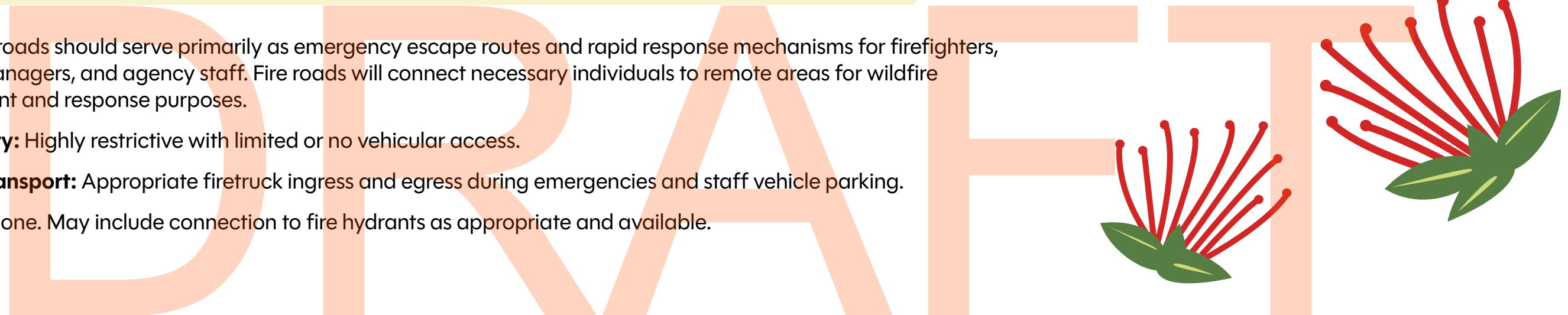
- › **Intent:** Rail trails are typically highly developed, multipurpose footpaths in urban and rural settings. When redeveloping an old rail line, trail design strategies focused on sustainable trail practices within the old rail line can lead to strengthening local and regional economies, creating smart active transportation options, improving environmental outcomes, supporting local recreation health and wellness, and promoting social equity.
- › **Use Intensity:** Open public access that can accommodate a variety of recreational activities, user groups, and abilities, to the greatest extent possible.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Appropriate facilities for access to rail trail should consider trail network connections as well as easy access from residential, commercial, or other recreational sites. Trail planning should prioritize connectivity, recreational experiences, and reduce facilities costs.
- › **Facilities:** Varied, may include parking facilities, connections to public transit options, or remote access.

Fire Roads

Roads that provide access for land managers and easement holders into natural areas. The public generally does not have access to these roads by vehicle. These roads provide a significant gap in the vegetation, allowing fire crews to gain better access to the land and more appropriately fight wildland fires.



- › **Intent:** Fire roads should serve primarily as emergency escape routes and rapid response mechanisms for firefighters, resource managers, and agency staff. Fire roads will connect necessary individuals to remote areas for wildfire management and response purposes.
- › **Use Intensity:** Highly restrictive with limited or no vehicular access.
- › **Mode of Transport:** Appropriate firetruck ingress and egress during emergencies and staff vehicle parking.
- › **Facilities:** None. May include connection to fire hydrants as appropriate and available.



4.3.2 Trail Class Evaluation Guidelines

For the purposes of evaluating trail and development scale as it relates to recreational activities, Program staff and Advisory Council members are encouraged to use the Forestry and Wildlife's Recreation Management Classification system (Refer to Figure 2: Forestry and Wildlife Recreation Management Classifications, on the next pages).

Trail class guidelines should be used to reference and reflect on the development scale of Program Trails. There are no hard boundaries separating the classes. Rather, the development standards should be understood to exist within a continuum, or sliding scale, where future investments for trail development can be evaluated and anticipated.

Figure 2: Forestry and Wildlife Recreation Management Classifications

R-1



High Recreation Management Standards

The most developed trails should be considered Class R-1, whereby the trail tread is wide, firm, stable, and uniform. The tread will oftentimes be hardened or paved and will have no physical obstructions or barriers. Vegetation is cleared from the path and constructed features are frequent and often come with trailside amenities. Signage will include wayfinding, informational, and interpretive, throughout the corridor. Trail grades will be gradual, less than 8%, and constructed features will be either frequent or consistently present throughout. Trail amenities will likely accompany the trail and will also have accessible features such as bridges, boardwalks, or handrails. Recreationalists can expect a more controlled outdoor experience.

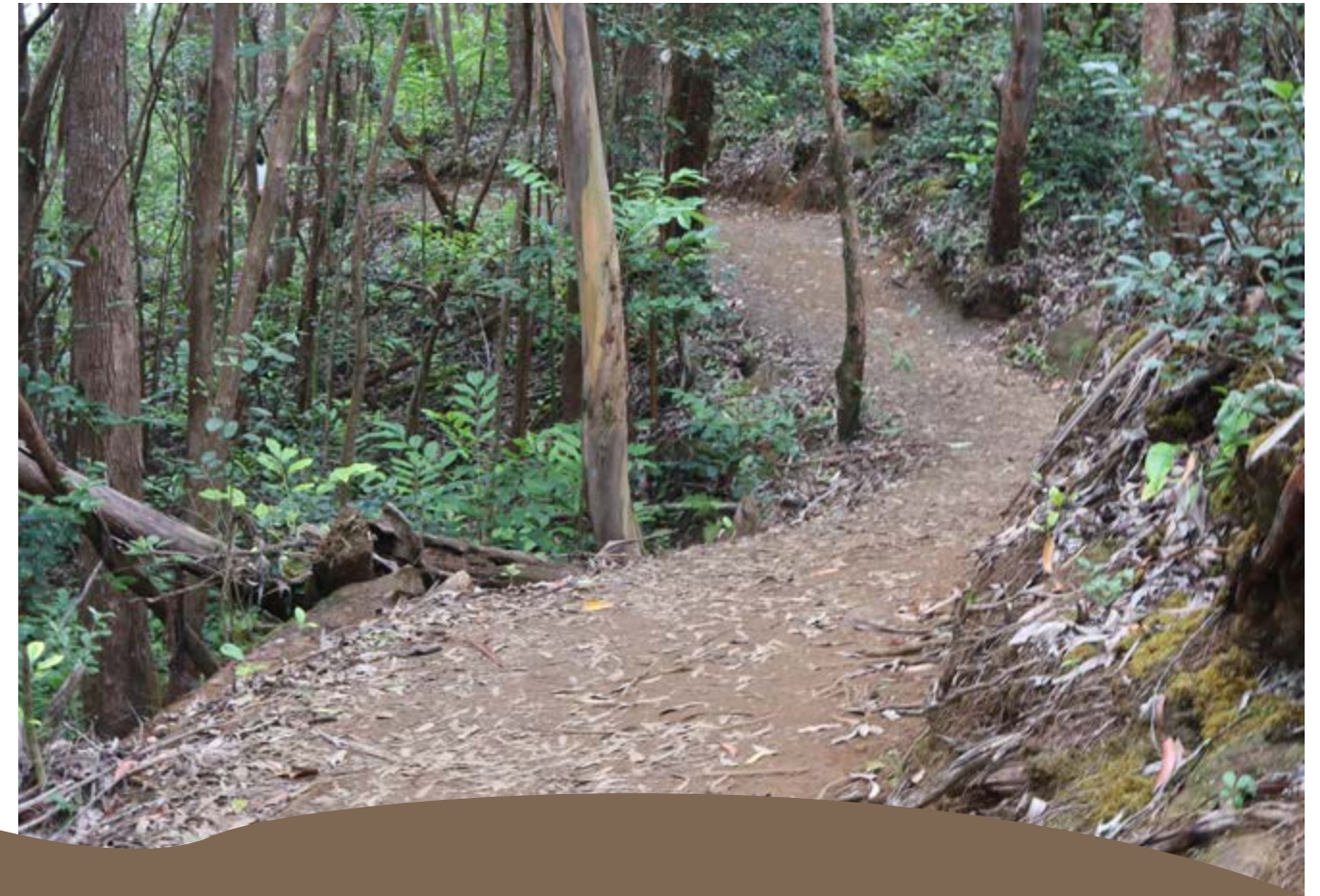
Definition:

- > Areas where outdoor recreation is a primary objective;
- > High level of visitor use is received and accommodated;
- > May include recreation, transit and/or urban elements;
- > Approximate average daily use: 100 – 1000+ users.

Management Strategy:

- > Area can sustain heavy recreational use; recreation plays a major role in use of the area;
- > Trails maintained to sustain heavy use which may include hiking, mountain bike riding, equestrian and/or off-road vehicle use;
- > Improvements commensurate with use.

R-2



Medium Recreation Management Standards

Development within a R-2 trail would show a tread that is continuous, obvious, and unobstructed. The trail may be moderately constructed with common features such as walls, drainage, raised trail beds and steps. Signage is posted clearly at trailheads, junctions, and periodically along the length of the trail corridor. R-2 trails are typically outside of wilderness areas, and the recreationalist can expect a more curated outdoor experience that is still mostly natural and unmodified outside of the immediate trail.

Definition:

- > Areas where outdoor recreation is of moderate intensity, and may be integrated with other uses;
- > Includes a wide range of trails and roads requiring a moderate level of management and maintenance to meet user needs and balance other land use objectives;
- > Approximate average daily use: 0 – 500 (+/-) users.

Management Strategy:

- > Area can sustain moderate recreational use; recreation integrated with other management programs;
- > Roads and trails maintained to sustain moderate use which may include hiking, mountain bike riding, equestrian, and/or off-road vehicle improvements;
- > Improvements commensurate with use.

R-3



Low Recreation Management Standards

Trails under a R-3 designation would have treads that are continuous and discernable, but narrow and natural. Obstacles along the trail route may be common and vegetation is allowed to encroach into the pathway. There are few constructed features that are limited in size, scale, and quantity. Signage along an R-3 trail should be limited to junctions or when the presence of the trail is not immediately evident. To protect both the trail environment and experience, improvements are typically minimal and designed to fit the setting and need. The expected experience along an R-3 trail should be natural and unmodified wildland.

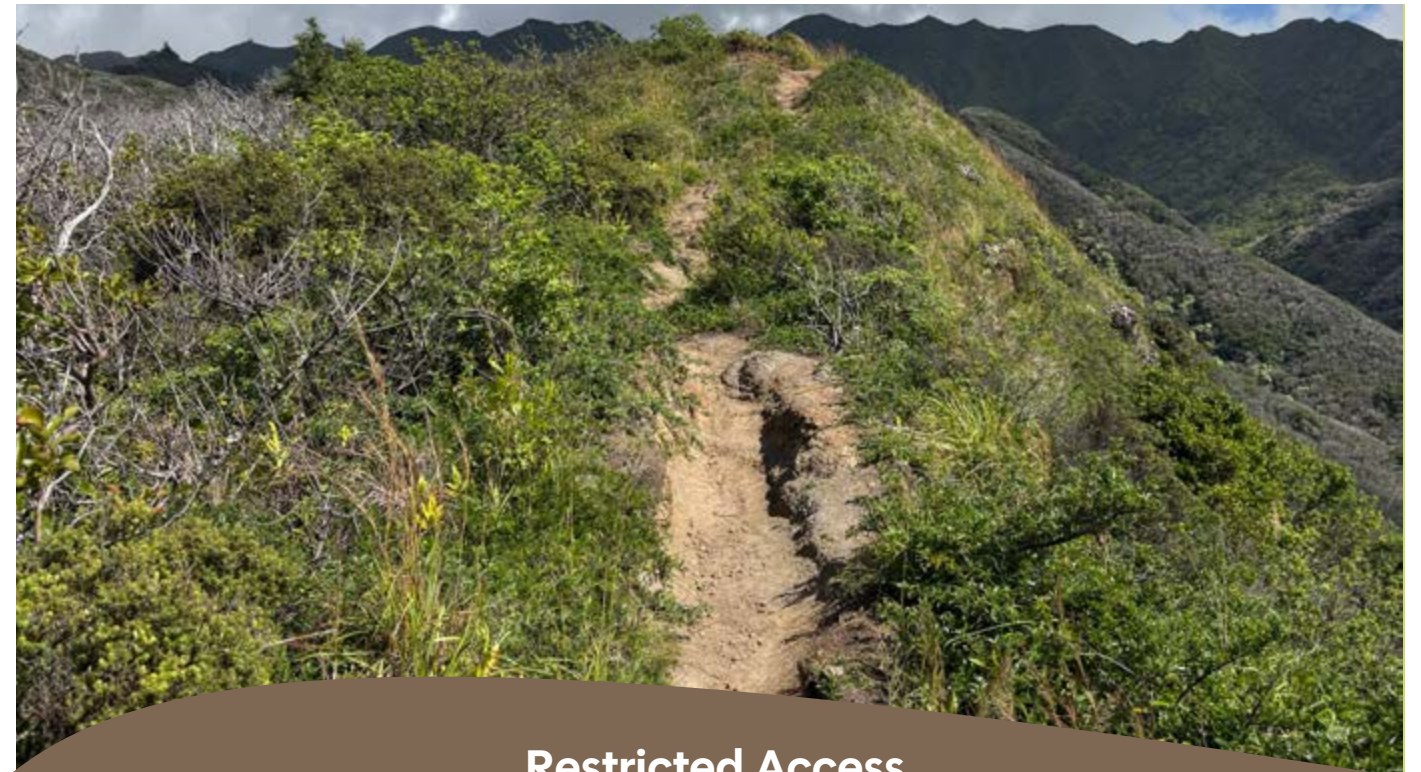
Definition:

- > Areas where outdoor recreation is of low intensity, and is integrated with other uses;
- > Trails and roads that receive limited use, or whose character and terrain require little maintenance relative to the usage;
- > Approximate average daily use: 0 – 100 (+/-)

Management Strategy:

- > Areas may be inaccessible or remote; facilities and improvements are limited, in keeping with the level of use;
- > Areas may be managed for multiple uses including forest protection, conservation, hunting, and hiking, or protected and managed to preserve natural conditions; activities may include hiking, biking, equestrian and/or off-road vehicles;

R-4



Restricted Access Recreation Management Standards

Trails that fit within the R-4 category will have treads that are intermittent and indistinct. Natural obstacles on the trail tread would be expected to be common, naturally occurring, and sometimes substantial. Trails will not feature extensive recreational amenities and will generally incorporate only facilities necessary to protect and manage the resource. Signage along the trail would be limited to specific junctions or critical turns along the path. People recreating on a R-4 trail should expect a natural and unmodified wilderness experience.

Definition:

- > Areas where outdoor recreation is restricted or controlled;
- > Areas sensitive to human disturbance due to natural, cultural or archaeological features;
- > Access primarily for management purposes, and/or limited or programmatic recreational or educational uses.

Management Strategy:

- > Areas may be classified "restricted" due to hazardous conditions, watershed protection, sensitive wildlife, fragile ecosystems, cultural resources, limited accessibility, or management practices incompatible with recreational activities;
- > Managed to limit impacts from human activities;
- > Facilities and improvements are very limited and generally associated resource management;
- > Access may be controlled via permits, group number limitations, or other restrictions as appropriate for the area.

4.3.3 Trail Access Evaluation Guidelines

Overuse of popular natural destinations is a nationwide phenomenon. As such, several national government agencies responsible for the management of natural resources and public lands including the Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service came together to establish national standards for visitor use management strategies. Visitor use, also referred to as recreation management, describes the presence of people in natural spaces for the purposes of recreation, education, interpretation, inspiration, and physical and mental health (Interagency Visitor Use Management Council, 2016).

The framework is not prescriptive but rather allows Nā Ala Hele staff to operate within a set of guidelines that can be flexible and responsive to the unique needs of the communities they serve. Outlined herein are the standardization procedures that trail experts and managers can take to establish management action plans that are place-sensitive, timely, informative, and proactive.

Management Framework:



When an area, trail or resource has been identified as degraded or overpopulated, trail managers should begin by collecting pertinent information as to the current conditions of the resource. Trail counts for visitor volumes, soil sedimentation rates, sensitive biological species indicators, or other indicators can be used. The purpose of this step is to quantify the exact impacts on the degraded resource, the anticipated or known causes of those impacts, and community perceptions, conflicts, and attitudes of the situation. The outcome of this stage is to define the management needs and strategize on a management approach.

After current conditions are evaluated, the next step is to define the desired conditions for the area. In this stage, the Nā Ala Hele staff, in consultation with the surrounding community, local residents, and lineal descendants of the place, should clearly define the desired conditions of the trail/ access or surrounding environment to be achieved or maintained. The evaluation should include a definitive outline of the appropriate visitor activities, facilities, and services. Sensitive resources and the accompanying indicators of health for the resource should be clearly delineated along with a strategy for how conditions will be tracked over time.

In this stage, project managers will identify strategies to manage visitor use to achieve or maintain the desired conditions stated in Step 2. Start by evaluating the differences between existing and desired conditions that are specifically linked to visitor use characteristics. Prepare a list of visitor use management strategies and actions that will be used to achieve desired outcomes and present them to the community and other stakeholders for feedback. Strategies and actions may include establishment of visiting hours, closures, rest periods, and reservation systems to manage user numbers at desired levels. Identify institutional and resource constraints to implementing the management strategies and, where possible, identify volunteer or other options to address needs gaps. Develop a monitoring strategy and implementation team.



Implement, Monitor, Evaluate, & Adjust

Finally, staff will need to implement a suite of management strategies and actions and be prepared and well-trained to deploy the monitoring plan. Staff should be prepared to dedicate the necessary resources, in terms of staff time, equipment, software and training, to effectively evaluate how a trail or access is performing based on a standardized set of metrics. As data collection and monitoring protocols are deployed, management should pull routine reports and conduct analysis to evaluate current conditions and observe improvements or deterioration of conditions. As observations and analysis are routinely conducted, staff may choose to adjust the management actions if conditions are not within the expected range of acceptable conditions. This stage will be the most active part of the management cycle where most resources should be focused.

Implement

Make sure that the resources necessary for implementation are available including funding, training, staffing, and any other needs identified in Step 3. Train relevant staff on the new actions; purchase supplies, equipment, and products; and hire contractors. Ensure staff members know how to care for new facilities and what the desired conditions are for the area.

Monitor

Staff will need to have well defined performance measures and protocol for data collection. Begin by evaluating the existing condition of the trail in relation to the ideal conditions staff would like to achieve, as outlined in Step 2. Identify all measurable indicators and metrics that will be used to evaluate the condition of the trail. An indicator is the broad qualitative or quantitative measure of the state of the trail or access. For example, visitor satisfaction or sense of crowding along a popular trail corridor could be used as an indicator of user volumes. If most trail users indicate that the trail or access is overcrowded, this could be used as an indicator of volumes exceeding expected or ideal conditions. Metrics are the specific and measurable quantities that are used to assess performance. Examples of performance metrics may include user counts, miles of spur trails, or incidents of hiker rescues. Both metrics and indicators are useful measures of performance against the ideal standard and may be used in tandem to assess larger trends and specific performance aspects, depending on the needs and resource limitations of the agency.

Adjust

Finally, staff should use the management strategies and physical improvements identified in Step 3 to address substandard performance of a trail or access. Whether strategies will address user volumes, maintenance needs, or investments in new infrastructure will all depend on the trail type and use standards as well as the natural conditions surrounding the trail. Management strategies should be iterative in nature and active management for troublesome areas must be anticipated. Trails that are well sited and constructed using sustainable practices, as well as actively managed for the appropriate visitor volumes, will be most successful in maintaining ideal conditions over time without intervention.

4.3.4 Commercial Use

Commercial use of Nā Ala Hele Program Trails is addressed through a Board-approved policy framework that balances public access, resource protection, and appropriate economic activity. The framework recognizes that limited, well-managed commercial use—such as guided hiking and ecotourism—may be compatible with certain trails, provided that such use does not result in undue damage to natural or cultural resources, displace public use, or exceed the Department's capacity to monitor and manage impacts.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources approved a formal process for commercial hiking and related activities on select public trails on October 10, 1997, following recommendations of the Department's Commercial Use Task Force. This process establishes clear criteria for determining where commercial use may be allowed, limits on the scale and intensity of that use, and procedures for review, approval, and ongoing oversight. This plan incorporates that framework by reference and provides a planning context for its continued application within the Nā Ala Hele Program.

Under the Board-approved framework, commercial use is not presumed to be appropriate on all trails. Instead, only select Program Trails that meet defined suitability criteria may be considered. These criteria include, but are not limited to: existing public use and management status; accessibility and safety; absence of significant environmental or cultural sensitivity; compatibility with surrounding land uses and nearby communities; and the Department's ability to monitor use and respond to potential impacts. Trails not meeting these criteria are excluded from consideration for commercial activity.

Where commercial use is authorized, it is subject to explicit limits designed to prevent overuse and resource degradation. These limits may include restrictions on the number of groups per day, maximum group size, days of operation, permit duration, and the types of activities allowed. Commercial permits are issued for limited terms and may be modified or terminated if monitoring indicates unacceptable impacts or noncompliance with permit conditions. The framework emphasizes adaptive management and the application of limits based on observed conditions rather than fixed assumptions.

The procedural framework for commercial use includes public notice, advisory council involvement, and a competitive proposal and review process. Proposals are evaluated based on the applicant's ability to conduct activities in an environmentally and culturally responsible manner, educate clients appropriately, contribute to local communities, and comply with insurance, reporting, and fee requirements. Final approval authority rests with the Department and, where required, the Board, consistent with statute and administrative rules.

This plan does not restate or modify the Board-approved commercial use policy. Instead, it affirms that commercial use planning within the Nā Ala Hele Program will continue to follow the adopted framework, with trail-specific decisions informed by inventory data, site conditions, management capacity, and advisory council input. Readers seeking detailed criteria, findings, and procedural requirements are directed to the original Board submittals and approvals establishing the commercial use framework.



Hawai'i contains thousands of historic and contemporary trails and access routes, nearly 1,500 of which are currently documented within the Nā Ala Hele inventory. While all inventoried trails represent important cultural, historic, or public access resources, not all trails are suitable or appropriate for improvement, public use, or long-term management by the Department. Physical constraints, environmental sensitivity, cultural considerations, land tenure complexity, safety concerns, and fiscal and staffing limitations all affect whether a trail can be responsibly developed and managed. Given finite funding and operational capacity, a structured and transparent process is required to identify and prioritize those trails that warrant investment and formal inclusion within the Nā Ala Hele Program.

For trails selected for improvement, public use, maintenance, and active management, clear policies and procedures are necessary to ensure consistent, cost-effective, and legally compliant decision-making. Chapter 198D, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, establishes the authority of the Nā Ala Hele Program to plan, develop, acquire, construct, restore, and manage trails and access routes. Chapter 13-130, Hawai'i Administrative Rules, implements that authority by establishing a regulatory framework governing trails selected for improvement and management. This plan complements that regulatory framework by describing the planning, evaluation, and selection process used to identify trails appropriate for designation as Program Trails.

Trails and access routes selected through this process are formally designated as Program Trails (or Program Features) pursuant to Department regulations and policies. Designation indicates that a trail has been prioritized for planning, improvement, and long-term management and that construction or restoration activities are reasonably anticipated, subject to environmental review, funding availability, and required approvals.

4.3.5 Program Trails & Accesses Selection Process

Recommendations for designation may originate from a variety of sources, including community members, user groups, Island Advisory Councils, partner agencies, or Department staff. Island Advisory Councils may review and provide input on proposed designations. To promote consistency and transparency, staff and advisory council members may evaluate proposed trails using standardized criteria that address public benefit, resource protection, feasibility, safety, cultural values, and long-term management considerations. A critical component of this evaluation is the consideration of environmental impacts. Trail construction, improvement, or restoration constitutes an “action” under applicable environmental laws and is subject to compliance with Hawai’i Revised Statutes Chapter 343 and, where federal funding, permits, or approvals are involved, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Environmental review is therefore an essential element of determining whether a proposed trail is suitable for designation as a Program Trail.

Consistent with this plan, environmental considerations must be integrated into the trail selection and designation process at an early stage. Preliminary screening for environmental sensitivity and potential impacts should inform whether a trail is advanced for further consideration. For trails where construction or improvement is reasonably foreseeable, preparation of an environmental assessment (EA), or other appropriate environmental documentation, may be necessary to fully evaluate impacts and identify mitigation measures prior to final designation.

While past practice has, in some cases, involved Board designation of Program Trails prior to completion of formal environmental review, this plan recognizes that the findings of an EA may reveal environmental constraints or impacts that render a trail unsuitable for development or inconsistent with program objectives. Accordingly, completion of environmental review—where required—may inform, and in some cases precede, a recommendation for designation. Trails for which environmental review identifies unacceptable impacts may be removed from consideration without being brought forward for Board designation.

To support consistent decision-making, the Nā Ala Hele Program has developed a standardized evaluation matrix (*Table 6: Evaluation and Selection Criteria for Program Trails*). This matrix is intended to incorporate environmental feasibility alongside other criteria, and it is recommended that staff and Island Advisory Councils further develop a standardized evaluation worksheet that explicitly documents environmental review status, findings, and implications for trail designation.

After evaluation, advisory council input, and consideration of environmental requirements, staff may bring a request to designate a trail or access as a Nā Ala Hele Program Trail or feature to the Board for consideration and approval, consistent with applicable statutes, administrative rules, and environmental laws.

Through this integrated and adaptive selection process, the Nā Ala Hele Program ensures that Program Trails are chosen strategically, are environmentally and culturally appropriate, and reflect an informed balance among public access, resource protection, safety, and long-term management capacity.

Table 5: Evaluation & Selection Criteria for Program Trails

Criteria	Existing Condition	Desired Condition
Trail Type Description		
Description		
Intended Use		
Accessibility		
Mode of Transport		
Facilities		
Trail Class Description		
Tread		
Expected Outdoor Experience		
Constructed Features		
Signage / Wayfinding		
Trail Access Description		
Trail User Volumes		
Facilities		
Parking		
Access		

Additional Trail Considerations:

- Have all potential community partners including landowners, individuals, non-profit organizations, agencies willing and able to support the acquisition, development, maintenance, and stewardship of the proposed trail been identified?
- Have there been any needs assessments, action plans, entitlements, or other planning reviews conducted in support of the trail or access becoming a Program Trail?

4.4 Planning Considerations for Historic Trails & Cultural Access

Guidance for the management of historic recreational trails has been developed over the years since the establishment of the original 1991 Program Plan. In 2005 (and subsequently updated in 2020), the Hawai'i Island Advisory Council established guidelines for the treatment of historic Hawaiian trails (Hawai'i Island Advisory Council, Nā Ala Hele, 2020).

General Guidelines

Recognizing the need to establish protocols for the consistent treatment of historic Hawaiian trails, the aforementioned memorandum identifies the procedures for historic trail best management practices which have been distilled into the Plan update. The intent of these guidelines is to pull forward the work conducted at the regional level and provide continuity in standards and practices across the islands.

Consultation with the Nā Ala Hele Island Advisory Council

Solicit advice and assistance in the implementation of the statewide trail and access system.

Consultation with State Historic Preservation Division

Archaeological surveys and recommendations for site treatments are reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD). SHPD's assessment of the value of a historic trail is based on its physical condition, archaeological integrity, and cultural significance. A trail's archaeological value (and SHPD's preservation recommendation) is influenced by its present-day state of preservation and whether it is an integral part of a larger complex that is to be preserved.

To assess trail values, the Nā Ala Hele staff should consider these factors:

- 1. History** Evidence that the trail historically existed by examining archaeological reports, historic maps, historic accounts, early surveyor's notes, land deeds, boundary testimonies, and/or cultural impact assessments
- 2. Connection** If the trail connects to other trails to form more lengthy routes
- 3. Public Purpose** The public purpose served in preserving the trail

Nā Ala Hele staff may also consider "land banking" of trails deemed to have public value when resources are lacking to open them to public use.

Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail, Hawai'i (NPS)



Specific Guidelines

Trail Relocation and/ or Destruction

Nā Ala Hele staff, in consultation with the respective Island Advisory Councils, should establish a policy pertaining to the relocation and/ or destruction of historic trails. While often discussed on a case-by-case basis, evaluation criteria and protocols should be created by staff, reviewed and approved by Council, and periodically updated as new information becomes available.

Cultural experts, the State's Department of the Attorney General, and NAH's abstractor may need to be consulted. If the development project is receiving federal funds, a Section 106 assessment is required to fully assess and mitigate the development's potential impacts on historic and cultural sites (See Relevant Laws on the last page of this document). Planners, landowners and/ or developers are encouraged to contact the Council early in the planning process. This can prevent misunderstandings, premature expenditures, and potentially costly delays.

4.5 Planning Considerations for Climate Change & Sea Level Rise

The State of Hawai'i continues to build climate change resilience, adaptation, and mitigation strategies at both a policy and regulatory level. The DLNR partners with the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (CCMAC) and the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) along with the four counties to identify priority actions that address the many facets of climate change. Along with national standards developed by the U.S. DOT, this chapter outlines how the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program can create trails and accesses as part of statewide climate mitigation and resiliency

Climate Mitigation & Adaptation Definitions

Climate Mitigation: Interventions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as shifting travel away from single occupant vehicles, or enhancing carbon sinks that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Climate Adaptation: The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to reduce harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Adaptation: The ability of systems, institutions, humans and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to consequences.

Trails & Accesses as a Climate Mitigation Strategy

Trails and accesses can be part of the statewide climate mitigation strategy by contributing to an overall network of active mobility options that will reduce motor vehicle dependency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase the use of active modes of transportation. While Nā Ala Hele specifically focuses on trails and accesses with connections to beach and mountain lands, there are opportunities to better integrate the existing network into county and state roads, bikeways, and other networks. Residents who can walk, bike, or ride the bus to trailheads reduce required investments in parking facilities and other built amenities. Sustainable trail designs can broaden restorative habitat for Hawai'i's endemic and endangered species.

Trails & Accesses as a Climate Adaptation Strategy

Investments in sustainable trail design, construction, and management practices should be prioritized. Sustainable trails have low impact on the surrounding environment, are less expensive to maintain over time, and can be adaptable to disruptions such as natural disasters, increased user volumes, and long term stressors such as increased temperatures or sea level rise. Trails that are connected to state and county transportation networks also provide increased resilience to the community by providing alternative emergency evacuation routes during extreme weather events and other natural disasters. Trails can function as fire breaks between the rural/ wildland interface and provide additional access points to firefighters and agency emergency responders during wildfires. Many adaptation strategies for the state and counties have included some form of evaluation on the vulnerable populations. Known as a Social Vulnerability Index, this evaluation tool helps decisionmakers determine which areas and communities will most likely need support before, during, and after a natural disaster or other hazardous event. It is good practice to develop the agency's own vulnerability index to show community investments in vulnerable areas over time.

*'A'o photographed
by Alex Wang*



4.6 Planning Considerations for Inclusive Mobility

According to the most recent data findings from the Outdoor Industry Association (Outdoor Industry Association, 2024), there has been continued enthusiasm for outdoor recreation nationwide, with participation in 2024 reaching a record high of 181.1 million recreationalists. This continues the trend seen since 2019 when the participant base grew by 27.5 million people. Outdoor participation also spiked in recent years due to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as increasing trends of participation rates by Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities (Outdoor Industry Association, 2023). The most notable demographic gains over the past year came from outside the traditional white, middle-aged, college-educated participant profile.

Demographic Gains:

- › Youth (6–12): +5.6%
- › Seniors (65+): +7.4%, with participation more than doubling over the past decade
- › Black participants: +12.8% (2.3 million more)
- › Hispanic participants: +11.8% (2.8 million more)
- › High-income households (\$100K+): +10.7%
- › High school graduates (no college): +11.2%

Overall, the growing diversity of both new and young participants signals long-term health for outdoor recreation. The key challenge ahead is converting casual participants into more frequently engaged ones — especially among youth and communities of color.

A record 66% of households with children participated in outdoor recreation — about 12 percentage points higher than households without children. Children's high participation rates (above 70%) appear to pull parents outdoors as well. After more than a decade of decline, the number of "core" participants (those who participate most frequently) grew by 5 million in 2024 to 93.4 million — about one-third of all participants. Growth was led by 18–24-year-olds (+6%), adults 65+ (+4.2%), and People of Color. Core participants are particularly valuable to the industry, spending roughly 30% more on gear and apparel than casual participants.

Hiking led all outdoor-specific activities with 63.4 million participants, followed by freshwater fishing (42.6M), road bicycling (42.5M), camping (21.9M), birdwatching (16.5M), and trail running (15.1M). These gateway activities tend to lead participants into broader outdoor engagement — 91% of campers and 85% of hikers also participate in other outdoor activities.

To achieve greater inclusivity in outdoor recreation spaces, planners should consider broader concepts of trail design including universal design, mobility, and user-friendly choices. The strategies outlined herein can be incorporated across trail types, classes, and user volumes, although some strategies are specifically designed for high development, high use trails. Recommendations for inclusive mobility on trails and accesses comes from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Outdoor Industry Association, GRIT, Move United, Waypoint Adventure, RL Mace Universal Design Institute and American Trails.



Opportunities for User-Friendly Choice, Universal Design, & Active Mobility

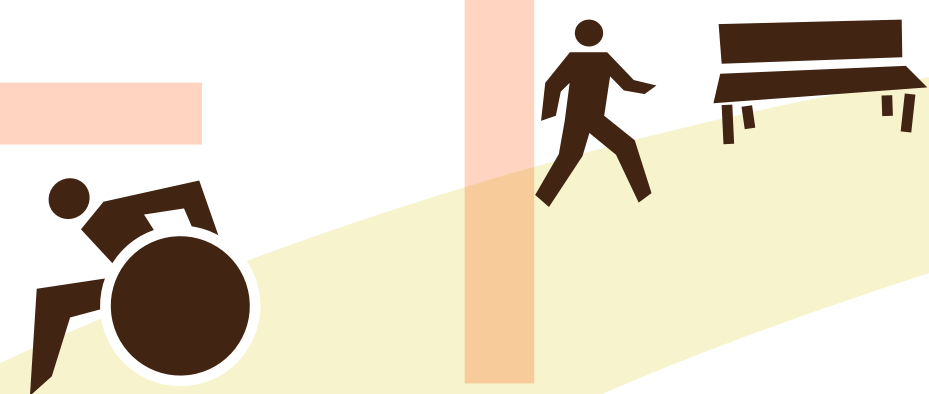
Given recent trends in outdoor recreationalists over the past decade, trail managers should consider a wide range of trail planning, management, and maintenance strategies that continue to encourage participation of broader user groups. One such approach, known as universal design strategies, may be an appropriate place to start. Universal design, as defined by the RL Mace Universal Design Institute is, "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for specialized design." (RL Mace Universal Design Institute, 2024). The Institute is a nonprofit organization which supports universal design and accessibility practices and concepts within the United States. Under the universal design framework, all built aspects of parks and open spaces would be designed for a wider range of user ages, abilities, and other demographics. For example, age friendly spaces would consider things like proximity to neighborhoods, opportunities for different age groups to volunteer, and trailheads designed to inform and direct users to the spaces where they want to visit.

Another example, detailed in Issue 7 of UC Berkeley's Ground Up Journal, Deaf landscape designer Alexa Vaughn states that: "Spatially, people in the Deaf community require enough space between individuals to sign and 360° sensory reach, dependent upon visual and tactile senses. The [DeafSpace Design Guidelines] DSDG attempts to create a better built environment for the Deaf community through five units: "Space and Proximity," "Sensory Reach," "Mobility and Proximity," "Light and Color," and "Acoustics and Electromagnetic Interference"" (Vaughn, 2018). Implementing more user-friendly choices could include initiatives like providing a number of different spaces, volunteer opportunities, or recreational choices for folks of different ages, abilities, and preferences. For example, volunteer days centered around removing invasive species and planting native species could also incorporate considerations for native species that have sensory aspects such as strong scents, hearty varieties of plant species that have unique leaf textures, and other self-guided activities to facilitate interacting with the surrounding environment.

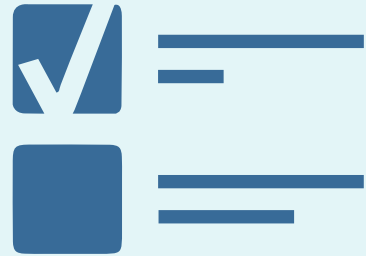
Universal design can also work to make outdoor spaces more inclusive for people with disabilities without heavy investments in on the ground infrastructure. Due to the challenges disabled users have continue to face in outdoor recreational spaces, such as unaffordable outdoor equipment, there have been a number of grassroots initiatives focused on creating more opportunities for disabled people to enjoy outdoor trails. Nonprofits, members of the disability community, and disability advocates have started to move away from 'accessibility' and more towards creating spaces that provide mobility choices whereby an individual can assess the space and determine for themselves if the recreational space is a place they can interact with or not. For example, instead of considering paved trails to achieve accessible standards, the trail could be equipped with the right information, such as elevation, if there are public facilities, etc., and individuals regardless of ability can make the informed decision as to whether they would like to participate in the activity. Members of all abilities are certainly able to determine their own thresholds for participating in outdoor activities, and the agency can support these choices by publishing information that allows all to make informed decisions.

Digital Resources Accommodations

Considerations for accessibility in Nā Ala Hele digital resources is one opportunity to become more inclusive and responsive to the needs of the public. Using accessible technology, such as closed captions, text-to-speech, and adjustable reading levels can help get the agency's message to a wider audience and prepare hikers and other trail users as to what to expect when they engage in physical activity outdoors. There are many resources available to guide planners and staff on how to develop accessible public digital media. The Institute for Disability Research, Policy and Practice at Utah State University created WebAIM to, "expand the potential of the web for people with disabilities by empowering individuals and organizations to create accessible content" (Utah State University, 2024). WebAIM provides resources to guide organizations in the meaningful implementation of accessible digital content, including the publication of accessible web content guidelines. These guidelines include providing text alternative for any non-text content (such as images, buttons, maps, etc.), providing audio-only and video-only content, and other considerations for layout, colors, and images and page designs. Small details, such as including photos with individuals who represent a diverse set of demographics, will help promote comfort and feelings of welcomeness through digital platforms (EMPOWER, 2020).



4.7 Planning Recommendations & Objectives



Goal 2

To Identify and Select Trails and Access for Acquisition, Preservation, Development, and Improvement.

Objective 2A: Prioritize the identification and acquisition of historic trails.

Objective 2B: Collaborate with other public and private landowners and organizations to preserve and protect public trails and accesses.

Objective 2C: Consider how social, economic, and physical barriers impact public use of trails and accesses. Prioritize plans, policies, and actions that are inclusive of all backgrounds.

Related Objectives:



4A: Strategically focus on developing and connecting trail networks for greater connectivity, mobility, and recreational opportunities.



5B: Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.

Planning for Historic Trails & Cultural Access

It is recommended that Nā Ala Hele staff work with state and county agencies as well as the respective Island Advisory Councils to include a robust ka pa'akai analysis, including the following actions:

- ▶ Any agency staff tasked with a ka pa'akai analysis, should make sure to review any consultant or developer recommendations and conduct their own analysis. The best practice would be for agencies to go through their own verification process of any analysis and not solely rely on the consultant's or developer's recommendations
- ▶ Identify the scope of valued cultural resources in the project area
- ▶ Identify how the resources will be impacted
- ▶ Identify how the agency will mitigate or protect the resource
- ▶ Pay attention to who is, and more importantly, who is not, participating in the consultation process. No participation is a form of participation, meaning that individuals may choose to actively not engage in a project due to a disagreement with the project goals, the outreach methods, or other objections. It has been noted that if a project or consultant team does not have the capacity to accept, receive, and act on the mana'o given, they may choose not to participate in the process
- ▶ Protect participant's identity and redact sensitive cultural, historical, or physical information
- ▶ Incorporate a formal Ka Pa'akai analysis as a necessary component of the technical reports that informs the federal National Environmental Policy Act and Hawai'i Environmental Protection Act environmental entitlement processes. Similar to a traffic impact report or public infrastructure (PIM), The Pāku'i Watershed Project Final Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) included a Traditional & Customary Practices Report inclusive of the project area, ahupua'a, and Moku. (Department of Land and Natural Resources, 2017)

Goal 2

Recommendations for Accessibility & Mobility Considerations

- › Previous analysis of the legal landscape regarding accessibility in the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program identified that, pursuant to Chapter 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Nā Ala Hele Program must prepare a "Self-Evaluation Plan."
 - › The plan should evaluate all programs, activities, policies, and practices to determine what actions need to be taken to comply with Chapter 504 and identify any structural changes that need to be made to existing facilities to achieve accessibility.
 - › There is no legal mandate to make trails accessible to persons with disabilities. Only built facilities and amenities, such as parking spaces, restrooms, picnic benches and grill spaces, etc. must comply with ADA requirements.
- › Universal design strategies can be used as a framework for creating more inclusively developed spaces, such as urban trails, to increase mobility and support a wider range of recreational users.
 - › Example: Incorporating sensory components into any built trail amenities such as braille trails, or self-guided activities that engage senses such as touch and smell.
 - › Example: Implement a statewide trail rating system to inform hikers of the elevation, trail tread, and other considerations for users of various ages and abilities.
 - › Consider creating web and digital media content that conveys information through a variety of methods including video-only, audio-only, and closed-caption formats. Consider design layouts, colors, and images that are easier to see or read using a screen reader. Include photos of people with a variety of abilities, ages, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- › Community engagement, volunteer opportunities, and other stakeholder activities should endeavor to include people with disabilities, and disability advocates, in the facilities design process from beginning to end.

Recommendations for Trail & Access User Volume Management

- › Create and deploy a Program-wide user volume decision support tool (Template 4: User Volume Decision Support Tool) to help inform STEP 1: Evaluate Current Conditions of the trail access evaluation guidelines in Chapter 5.3.3 Trail Access Evaluation Guidelines
- › Develop and deploy a Program-wide user capacity evaluation tool based on resource sensitivity, desired user experience, and trail maintenance budget estimates, among other criteria as required.
- › Develop and deploy a Branch-wide user access monitoring program, with opportunities for volunteers and staff members to assist in data collection and tracking activities.

Recommendations for Planning Considerations for Climate Adaptation & Mitigation

- › When considering new trail development, prioritize additions that connect existing trails and create a broader trail network across each island. Trail use types, development class, and user volumes can vary by segment along a network and improve trail use for a variety of user groups.
- › Connect trails to county and state transportation networks to reduce parking and other trail amenity costs and increase active mobility options to trailheads.
- › Consider sustainable trail design guidelines that prioritize adaptability of the trail to small and large disruptions (floods, severe heatwaves, wildfires, and persistent flooding due to coastal inundation).
- › Plan multipurpose trails at the rural/wildland interface.
- › Develop a Social Vulnerability Index to evaluate where to prioritize federal dollars to invest in vulnerable populations and locations.



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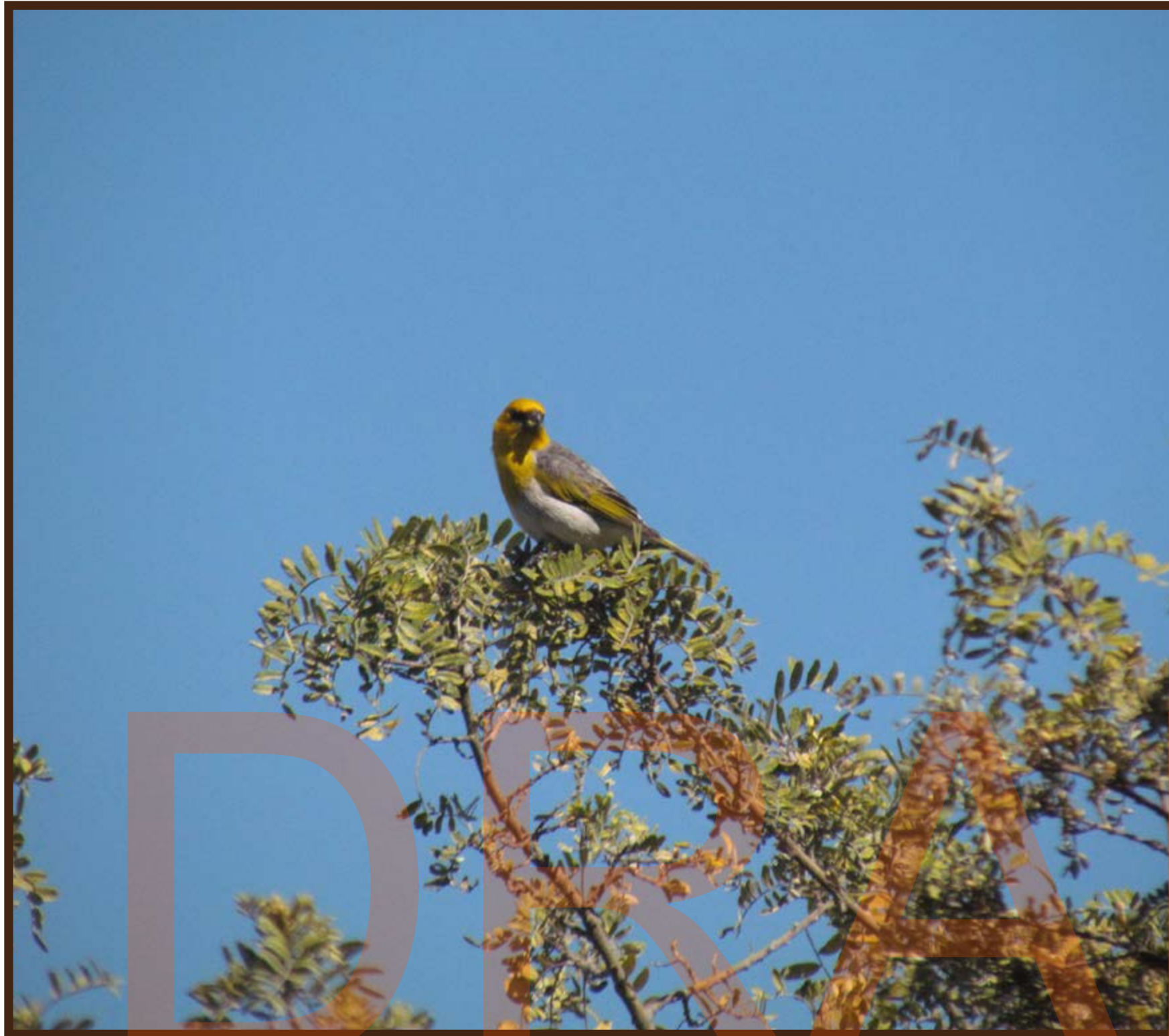
TRAIL & ACCESS MANAGEMENT

NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

DRAFT

5.1 Management Philosophy, Objectives, & Conditions

Palila seen on Palila Discovery Trail, Hawai'i



The Trail and Access Management chapter is heavily informed by, and reflective of, best practices prescribed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service Standards for Trail Design, Construction and Maintenance (Helmandollar-Powell, et al., 2025). All information included herein may be further explored in the cited works.

Trail management encompasses all activities related to the design, construction, and maintenance of the trails and accesses within the Program Trail designation, as only Program Trails are eligible for infrastructure investments and improvements. The Program Plan takes a sustainable trails approach, which focuses on creating and maintaining trails and accesses that are context-sensitive, appropriate in scale and public access uses, and which have little to no impact on the surrounding environment. Trail design concepts should consider the physical aspects of the trail corridor, the current and desired volume of public use, and the types of activities that will be permitted on the tread. Trail construction should focus on physical improvements that are as limited as necessary to prevent environmental degradation, ensure public safety, allow for user enjoyment, and reduce long-term maintenance requirements. Trail maintenance strategies should aim to keep a trail at the condition that matches the design and use specifications that it was designed for. Maintenance investments should focus on addressing root problems that occur within a trail access or corridor, not just the symptoms of a particular issue. Trail managers are encouraged to prioritize trail management projects based on public safety and environmental concerns.

5.2 Trail & Access Design, Construction, & Maintenance Guidelines

Specific guidelines for trail design, construction, and maintenance activities are described below; however, these guidelines are not prescriptive. Each trail or access will have unique environmental, public use volumes, permitted activities, and other conditions that require unique solutions. The guidelines establish the methods managers should employ when addressing trails and accesses within their jurisdiction.

5.2.1 Design Guidelines

Trail best management practices strive for sustainability—the minimization of impacts to natural and cultural resources. Trail sustainability practices focus on tread and infrastructure investments that are made of natural materials, long-lasting, and can withstand human and natural forces. Sustainable trail designs work with the existing landscape and are planned to naturally hold up under even extreme stressors. The best designed trails are those which avoid major structural interventions such as water bars, steps, retaining walls, or tread armoring. Trail planners and managers are encouraged to keep abreast of the most current sustainable trail design, planning, and construction practices through employee training and attendance at conferences and seminars.

Location



Appropriately siting a new trail or access can be the single best way to develop a sustainable trail. A sustainable trail will function cohesively with the surrounding environment, meaning that the soil profile will be well draining and erosion-resistant, the slope will be within an ideal range, and the overall corridor will not require extensive constructed features or improvements. Ideal locations for trails are in areas with moderate slopes, stable soils, and little to no stream crossings. However, many of the trails and accesses within the purview of Nā Ala Hele are legacy trails, existing trails that may have been sited without these sustainable principles in mind. Trail corridors may also be restricted by legal documents (such as being confined to a particular width through easements) or natural features (such as being close to the shoreline or along lava fields). In cases where the location of a trail and access cannot be negotiated, managers will be required to invest in constructed improvements or reduce user volumes to correct any issues resulting from trail use.

Trail Grade, Slope Ratio, Fall Line



"Grade," "slope," and "fall line" are terms used to refer to the steepness of trails. The angle of the natural terrain is referred to as "slope" or "hillside slope." The angle of a constructed trail is referred to as "grade" or "trail grade." Both measurements are expressed as a percentage and derived using the "rise over run" equation. The trail grade relative to the prevailing hillside slope is referred to as the trail's slope ratio. The fall line is the path that follows the most direct route downhill. Together, these measurements give trail designers and managers a complete picture of the existing and desired localized context of a trail or access.

Sustainable trail design guidelines recommend a trail grade within a 5 to 8% range. However, much of the recommended grade for any particular trail will come down to the soil type, weather, and drainage patterns of the surrounding area.

A slope ratio ranges from 0 to 1, whereby a trail with a slope ratio of 0 is horizontal across a hillside and perpendicular to the fall line or is placed on flat ground. Conversely, a slope ratio of 1 would indicate a trail that runs straight up the natural incline of a hill or mountain, parallel to the fall line. Trail managers should aim for slope ratios closer to zero, as any ratio at 0.5 and above will require extensive physical improvements to mitigate water runoff and soil erosion.

Calculation of Hillside Slope / Percent of Grade is as follows:

$$\text{Slope (\%)} = \frac{\text{Amount of Rise (vertical distance)}}{\text{Amount of Run (horizontal distance)}}$$
$$\text{Slope Ratio} = \frac{\text{Trail Grade}}{\text{Hillside Slope}}$$



Water Flow



Sustainable trail design standards emphasize strategies that direct water away from the trail corridor, limiting the overall that time water is in contact with the trail tread. Adequate water control prevents soil erosion, water channeling, and ponding. Sustainable trail design for water management and control includes creating appropriate tread grades and locating trails in areas with appropriate soil characteristics. In situations where natural features, such as trail inclines and inappropriate soil profiles, cannot be avoided, sustainable design techniques that incorporate drainage and erosion control features will be necessary. Solutions include raising the trail tread surface above surrounding grades, carving switchbacks along steeper slopes to reduce tread grade, and installing drainage infrastructure, all of which are dependent on resource availability.

Siting new trails can be an easier endeavor for trail designers and managers, as they can choose the route, anticipate potential pitfalls, and implement management measures accordingly. Modifying existing trails with water retention or channeling issues pose much more of a challenge. Signs of existing trails with drainage and water control issues may include trail tread areas that are channelized, incised, rutted or gullied. At its core, erosion is a process exacerbated by inadequate drainage. Designs for trails and accesses in erosion-prone areas, or where erosion is an existing challenge, may include the following:

- › Remove any berms that have formed
- › Outslope the tread or restore the outslope to 5–8 percent
- › Regularly maintain drainage features
- › Install new drainage features where they are lacking
- › Reroute the saturated segment of the trail uphill or downhill
- › Armor tread where soils are susceptible to rutting

As trail managers plan for trail improvements or design new accesses, long-term monitoring and maintenance strategies should be considered. Technicians, volunteers, and other trail stewards should be trained identify indicators of drainage issues and ensure that any existing drainage features are well-located and functioning appropriately. Optimally, drainage features should be designed to be self-cleaning or only require light maintenance on occasion.

Soil

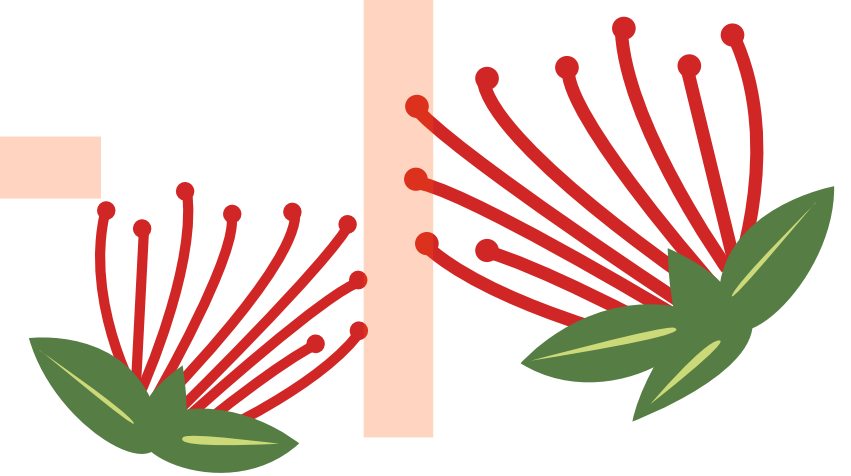
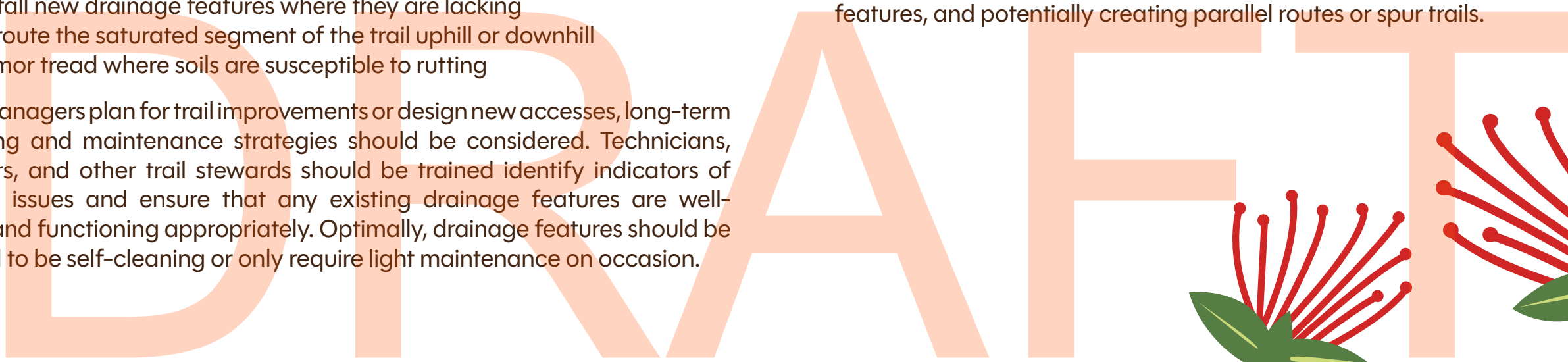


One of the most critical components of sustainable trail design is preventing soil erosion within trail corridors. This requires a thorough understanding of the natural soil profiles of the area in which a new or existing trail is located and the suite of tools available to trail designers and managers to anticipate and prevent soil erosion issues. A timely and useful reference for soil profiles at a particular site may be found on the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey website.

Soil compaction and adequate water drainage are necessary components in mitigating erosion issues. The USDA defines soil compaction as the increase in bulk density and decrease in soil porosity caused by heavy loads when soil becomes too wet. (National Resources Conservation Service, 2019) Soil porosity and water infiltration rates decrease as soil becomes more compact, which in turn increases water runoff and stunting of vegetative growth. Common indicators of inappropriate soil compaction include:

- › Standing surface water (frog ponds)
- › Mud accumulation and wet soils that are unable to fully dry
- › Excessive soil erosion, water runoff or gullies
- › Stunted vegetative growth in the surrounding areas immediate to the trail tread

The most common reason for overly compacted soil on trails and accesses is that the user volume (number of people using the trail or access at any given time) exceeds the appropriate level for the existing soil profile (shoes, hooves, wheel tread, and heavy load construction equipment). Similarly, high user volumes can increase soil displacement rates, deepening trail treads over time, trapping water, eroding trail features, and potentially creating parallel routes or spur trails.





5.2.2 Construction Guidelines by Trail Type, Class, & Level of Access

After the planning and design phases, trail managers should have a very good understanding of the natural context, physical limitations, desired and intended uses, an estimate on appropriate user volumes, and budgetary considerations for construction of necessary improvements and long term maintenance plans. At this stage, construction of trail improvements should be guided by a Trail Management Objective (TMO). The TMO should be crafted so that technicians and support staff are informed on the basic characteristics of the planned or legacy trail. The TMO will identify pertinent information on construction and maintenance, such as tread width and clearing heights and widths, based on the trail type, class, and level of access. Trails in different development classes have different specified maximum grades. For example, grades on minimally developed (class 1) trails open to nonmotorized users can vary widely from 5 to 25 percent, where grades on fully developed trails designed to meet accessibility guidelines shouldn't exceed 5 percent. Suggestions for design and construction parameters for trails and accesses based on type, class and level of access may be found in Table 7.

Upper Waiākea
ATV Park, Hawai'i

Table 6: Construction Guidelines by Trail Type, Class, & Level of Access

Criteria	Existing Condition	Desired Condition	Management Actions Needed	Estimated Improvement Costs
<i>Trail Type Description</i>				
Description				
Intended Use				
Accessibility				
Mode of Transport				
Facilities				
<i>Trail Class Description</i>				
Tread				
Expected Outdoor Experience				
Constructed Features				
Signage / Wayfinding				
<i>Trail Access Description</i>				
Trail User Volumes				
Facilities				
Parking				
Access				

5.2.3 Maintenance Guidelines

The goal of all trail maintenance activities should be to keep a trail at or restore it to the condition that matches its design specifications based on trail use, development scale, safety, and environmental conditions. Data collection, monitoring, and analysis activities will inform decision-makers as to the existing condition of a trail. As part of the planning process, it is imperative that managers identify the key indicators and metrics for evaluating whether a trail is 'operating' as intended. Setting 'trail health' indicators such as water runoff rates, incidents of ponding along trail treads, evidence of erosion patterns, sedimentation rates, or nearshore water turbidity, will help technicians focus data collection efforts. Once the data is collected, managers can monitor the status of the trail to determine if there are any issues. Managers can then quickly and accurately identify the source of any issues, rather than relying on anecdotal information that may only highlight the symptoms of problems. Once a problem is identified, maintenance strategies can be employed. The following steps should be followed to create an effective maintenance program. See Template 1: Program Trail Assessment Worksheet for a Program trail assessment worksheet. The following recommendations for maintenance guideline procedures follow the USDA, Forest Service Standards for Trail Design, Construction and Maintenance .

Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- › Hardhat or helmet that meets the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) safety standards
- › Eye protection with side protection that meets ANSI safety standards for sawing or rock work
- › Footwear with nonskid outsoles and ankle support
- › Cut resistant or leather laced boots when using any saw
- › Hearing protection (when working near power equipment louder than 85 dB)
- › Long-sleeved shirts and pants
- › Gloves
- › Dust masks

Steps for an Effective Maintenance Program:

Conduct a Trail Assessment

Start by first assessing the existing conditions of the trail or access that will be actively managed in the program. The assessment should follow the prescribed planning procedures for the type, class, and access profile of the trail; meaning that for each trail or access evaluated, the trail manager must have the ideal conditions already outlined as the standard by which the trail existing condition will be measured. The assessment can be conducted by the Trail Specialist or Technician and should include detailed logs that document the observations of the individual or crew members. The evaluation should follow a standardized evaluation criteria and methodology to ensure consistency throughout the trail system and program. The evaluation criteria may be developed by island given the varied nature of the different trail typologies; however, it is recommended that the methodology is standardized across the program. The methodology should include documentation of all trail features, existing conditions, an estimate of needed maintenance activities, and rough costs. Complete the evaluation in a database that can be accessed by all staff and consider granting access to relevant database entries to property-trained partners and volunteers so that information can be added in real time and without expending unnecessary resources for data entry.

Components of a good assessment include:

- › Good notes that describe the conditions
- › Ideas about the material, crew, and timing needed to address problems
- › Georeferenced pictures (or pictures with embedded location information) of maintenance needs that correspond to your notes

Prepare a Maintenance Plan

Identify the objectives of the maintenance activities, the sources of funding, the design specifications, materials required to complete the activities, and staff man hours required. At the federal level, a maintenance planning strategy is known as a TMO plan. A TMO plan, or similar document, should focus on the strategic planning and effective maintenance of trails with the use of trail condition surveys. When preparing the maintenance plan, staff should identify specific tasks or materials that can be obtained through public donations or volunteer participation so as to encourage public stewardship and reduce the resources required by the agency. Staff should prioritize maintenance projects that target unsafe conditions for public use or threats to property.

Common maintenance plan components:

- › Baseline inventory of all trails that includes development scale, major use types, typical percent grade, features, centerline locations, status as a national scenic, historic, or recreation trail, and other basic information.
- › Results of trail logs, trail assessment and condition surveys, or problem area reports that identify work areas and help establish priorities.
- › Identified priority maintenance projects to address safety issues, stabilize trail tread, and prevent resource damage.
- › Determination of which project or project components need professional crews are appropriate for trail partners and volunteers.
- › Specialized tools, equipment, and materials needed for priority trail projects.
- › Timing limitations for work.
- › Documentation of project approval.
- › Project status and accomplishments (for reporting).

Prepare a Staff & Volunteer Safety Plan

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be required at all times while working on maintenance activities. Standardized practices for site and environmental safety precautions and emergency protocols should be routinely given to employees and volunteers through safety briefings before work begins and enforced at all times.

- › The maintenance itinerary including the planned route, schedule, and meeting/ departing locations
- › Names and contact information of all participants onsite, emergency contact information, and office/base contacts
- › Forecasted weather conditions with appropriate personal attire and gear for the conditions
- › Clearly stated worksite hazards and safety protocols including specialized equipment, environmental hazards, and lighting conditions
- › An emergency evacuation plan
- › First-aid kits
- › Mission-essential gear such as trail tools, maps, compasses, GPS units, flagging, tape measure, etc.
- › PPE (see section on page 64)

Prepare Signage & Trail Marker Plan

While out in the field, document the type, location and condition of all signs along the trail corridor. Include a written description as well as a photograph and geolocate signs as necessary. This data should be stored in a digital geodatabase to allow for accurate and efficient referencing. The documentation of existing signage will help to identify when to replace or maintain certain signs due to weathering or vandalism but also to begin strategizing on the future investments in types of signage in the future. Considerations for location, placement, and type (educational versus wayfinding, for example) will be better informed based on the existing sign inventory that is created as a result of the maintenance plan.

5.3 Historic Trail Restoration & Public Use Management Guidelines

Guidance for the management of historic recreational trails has been developed over the years since the establishment of the original 1991 Program Plan. In 2005 (and subsequently updated in 2020), the Hawai'i Island Advisory Council established guidelines for the treatment of historic Hawaiian trails (Hawai'i Island Advisory Council, Nā Ala Hele, 2020). Recognizing the need to establish protocols for the consistent treatment of historic Hawaiian trails, the aforementioned memorandum identifies the procedures for historic trail best management practices which have been distilled into the Plan update. The intent of these guidelines is to pull forward the work conducted at the regional level and provide continuity in standards and practices across the islands.

5.3.1 Specific Guidelines

Trail Erosion

When the trail is located in an area vulnerable to potential erosion, provisions for trail relocation in the event of trail erosion should be included in all trail-related agreements and approvals. This is to ensure that the negotiated trail will be usable forever.

Trail Widths

When trying to establish historic trail widths, it is important to note that there are no set standards or minimum / maximum extents. Certain trail widths may be ascertained through direct trail observation and archaeological studies; however, some could change over time if their use transitioned from walking purposes to other modes of transportation. Legal documents, such as land deeds, historic maps, or County permit documents, may also be used to define the legal corridor extents.

Buffer Widths

As with trail extent, buffers have no set standards. Each Island Advisory Council may establish recommended buffer widths and other design standards as appropriate. Buffer widths are determined on a case-by-case basis and consideration is given to the archaeological integrity of the subject trail, view planes, surrounding environment, land uses, land ownership, and nearby natural and cultural features.

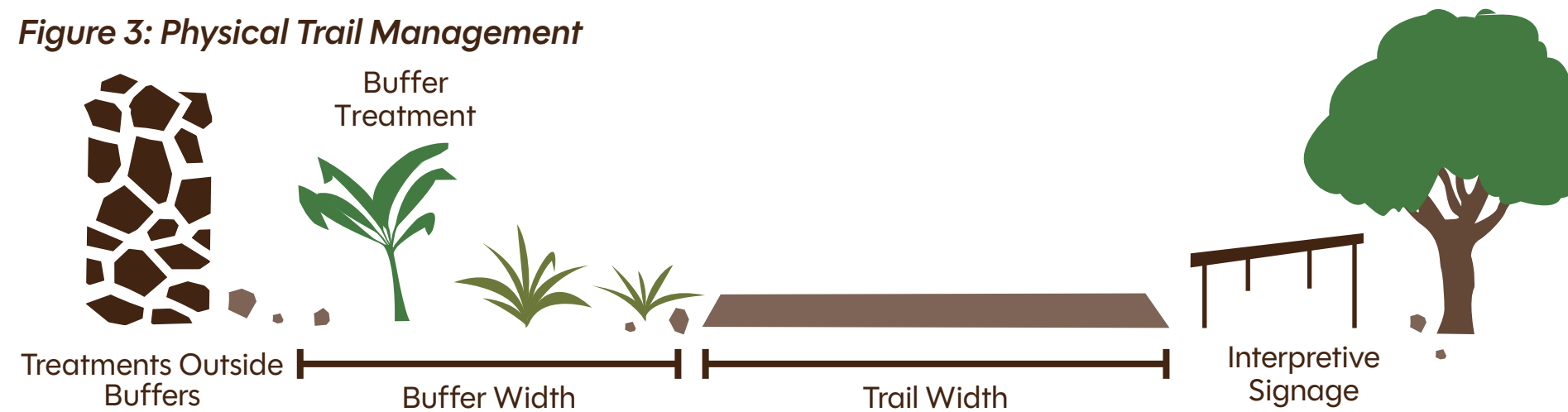
When buffer widths are too narrow, the experience of "walking in the footsteps" of those who created the trails is lost. Many present-day Hawaiians can trace their ancestors to villagers who relied upon these trails for their daily survival. Excessively narrow buffers take away from the authenticity of the experience and damage the feeling of open space and broad landscape in which the trails began. Adequate buffers and appropriate buffer treatments are essential to the historic trail experience.

Buffer Treatments

Whether in its original historic condition or a realigned/ restored historic trail, no construction should be allowed within the buffers (including utilities, foundations, rock walls of any height, and swimming pools), and the natural, existing terrain and grade should be maintained throughout the buffers. Roads should not be located within trail buffers, unless a breach is approved by trail managers.

It is recommended that no landscaping is done within trail buffers. Choosing native plants naturally growing in the area, or known to have historically grown there, is the most practical approach, requiring minimal watering and special care. Be careful not to plant noxious weeds that are naturally occurring, such as fountain grass. Thorny and poisonous plants (i.e. bougainvillea and oleander) should also be avoided. Avoid plants that could become invasive, i.e. extensive root systems, exotic ground covers, or prolific seed plants that drop large leaves and/ or fruits. Avoid plants that are likely to lean or encroach into the trail's buffer. Only hand-clearing within the buffers should be permitted at any time. Responsibility for the maintenance of the breaches and buffers should be clearly detailed in formal agreements.

Figure 3: Physical Trail Management



Breaches

The number and width of breaches should be minimized. The original location of the trail should be restored within the breach, using materials that mimic the historic trail surface. In this manner the breached section will be connected to the original trail on either side. Review of planned breaches by the Council is recommended. Planners and developers are encouraged to request time on Council agendas for that purpose. Additionally, since many historic and ancient trails are still owned by the State of Hawai'i, easements for the purpose of breaching trails may need to be purchased through the BLNR.

Treatments Outside of Buffers

Surroundings immediately adjacent to trail buffers greatly influence the trail experience. When trails are near the shoreline, structures (including walls and fences) makai (seaward) of the trails are discouraged to protect view planes and the historic ambiance. In some locations the natural lava "skin" may be the best choice if earth moving equipment has not already damaged the natural lava surface. Plants surveys done prior to the area's development can help to identify naturally occurring plants, including plants that were historically in the area. Council members may be able to suggest resource people and sources for native plant materials.

Adjacent Historic, Cultural, & Natural Sites & Interpretive Signs

Opening a trail to public use can potentially impact sensitive historic, cultural and natural sites adjacent to the trail. SHPD will often require preservation plans showing how potential impacts of public use will be mitigated.

Property pins (especially if set in concrete) that denote parcel boundaries, impact the aesthetic appearance, diminish the integrity of historic sites, and are a potential safety hazard. It is recommended to place an offset "witness post" at a nominal distance away from the actual boundary corner and indicate on the official survey map record, the distance and angle that the actual corner is located, away from the offset "witness post". This practice meets the legal requirements of identifying the property corner, as well as protecting the integrity of the historic site.

Public Access Management

Historic Hawaiian trails are a special case because traditionally those trails were in use 24 hours a day. The Nā Ala Hele Program supports continuing that practice for historic trails and routes that

1. Are connected to a public road or other historic trail or
2. Lead to or follow the shoreline

5.4 Trail & Access Safety Protocols

Section 198D-6, HRS requires that Nā Ala Hele regulate the use of trails and accesses in order to protect public safety. Nā Ala Hele's primary safety related goal is to prevent and minimize injuries sustained by users of Nā Ala Hele trails and accesses. Oftentimes, safety issues can be directly related to landowner liability concerns which affect the trail and access system's ability to expand. Nā Ala Hele's trails and accesses need to be designed, constructed, and maintained with public safety in mind. Regulations governing trail and access use are an important means to control public exposure to hazards and are especially effective when combined with public education and involvement programs.

5.4.1 Approaches to Injury Prevention

Trail Managers have three common injury prevention approaches including eliminating or controlling exposure to hazards, changing the nature of the exposure, and supporting activities that minimize or prevent injuries.

Eliminating or controlling public exposure to hazards is the safest of the possible approaches but is often not practical due to cost or degree of intrusiveness. The intrusiveness factor is especially important in wildland and sensitive environments where minimal evidence of human presence is sought. Eliminating natural hazards is often not feasible, but exposure to the hazard can be reduced or eliminated in a variety of ways. For example, signs can be posted to warn users of dangerous surf conditions; a bridge can be built over a stream which floods during heavy rains; railings and signs can be posted at cliff lookouts. Barring public access provides the ultimate in safety but is clearly an option to be used only when danger to the public is extreme. What is appropriate and effective will vary widely and must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Changing the nature of the exposure to a hazard so that it does not result in injury requires public education and notification. It is important that the public be informed that the hazard exists. This can be communicated via warning signs. Signs can inform the public when hunting is in progress, but people should also be advised via trail guides and other informational materials to wear bright clothing and stay on trails in areas where hunting is occurring.

Activities that seek to minimize or prevent injuries should be incorporated in the program. First-aid training for users, volunteer leaders, and staff should be conducted, and effective search and rescue capabilities should be developed in cooperation with other responsible agencies. Trail/ access users should be instructed to include first-aid supplies in their standard gear. Trail head stations with sign in/out sheets can be very helpful should search and rescue become necessary. Users should be made aware of the purposes and benefits of using the sign in/out system.

Trails and accesses should be inspected on a routine basis for any safety issues that could affect trail and access users. Safety inspections should be conducted by properly certified/trained staff and be logged in a standardized form.

5.4.2 Duty to Warn

The Nā Ala Hele program should warn the public about dangers that are known to exist, particularly those that may not be apparent to the public, such as streams that are prone to flooding or known ocean rip currents. If a personal injury litigation case comes to trial, the plaintiff must prove

1. That a duty to warn existed,
2. That no warning was given or that the warning was inadequate, and
3. That the injury sustained was caused by the lack of or inadequacy of the warning

Key Words

DANGER:

Immediate hazard which can cause severe personal injury or death

WARNING:

Potential hazard which may cause severe personal injury or death

CAUTION:

Potential hazard which may cause personal injury

Warnings Should...

- > Be in a form and location which would reasonably be expected to catch the attention of a reasonably prudent person;
- > Be comprehensible to a reasonable person and convey the nature and extent of the danger, and;
- > Warn with a degree of intensity that matches the potential danger.

Exciter Colors

Red**Yellow****Orange****Black**

Consideration should be given to compatibility and readability.

5.5 Nā Ala Hele's Sign Design Standards

Signs are essential to a trail/ access system & serve to...

Provide the public with information which helps them to use and enjoy trails and accesses,

Inform the public about regulations or guidelines which govern the use of trails and accesses, and

Present warning of significant, existing, and possibly unseen hazards.

Types of Sign Messages

Identification: Trail and access names should be consistent. Where trails/ access have more than one frequently used name (for example, Hawaiian and English), it may be desirable to list both names at the trail head. When trails branch or intersect, the path of each trail should be clearly marked.

Directions: How much directional and distance information should be provided depends in part on the trail type and extent of the trail network involved. There should be sufficient signage to prevent people from getting lost. The signage should not be too disruptive of the natural surroundings. Maps and guides should be available for more detailed information.

Interpretation & Information: Information is usually provided through a combination of maps, graphics, illustrations, or text. Interpretation can focus on many subjects, including past or present events, the trail/ access environment, and visible landmarks. Interpretation can benefit the public, the trail, and its surrounding environment. For example, a brief explanation of the history of an ancient Hawaiian trail and Nā Ala Hele's goals with respect to sensitive trails and environments can serve to explain the need for regulations restricting motor vehicles from the trail.

Regulation of Trail Uses & Activities: In general, this information should be presented in a positive way to minimize negative messages. Symbols should be used whenever possible to eliminate confusion for non-English speakers. When it becomes necessary to show that an activity is prohibited (particularly important when the activity was previously allowed or is prohibited seasonally), symbols can be used in conjunction with a red slash. Whenever possible, the rationale for prohibiting a use or activity should be given.

Warning: Warning signs are most effective when accompanied by educational efforts informing the public of how to avoid injury. A sign primarily indicates that a hazard exists in a specific place. Information regarding how to avoid injury should be provided prior to the actual trip or at the trail head. Signs along trails and accesses should be simple and direct, consisting essentially of graphics which alert the public to the presence of a particular hazard.

Effective Communication: The message being communicated should be clear and concise, with a minimal potential for confusion. Consistency in design, construction, and placement of various signs helps the public to know what to look for when seeking information on trails and accesses. It also reinforces the fact that Nā Ala Hele's trails and accesses are part of a comprehensive, statewide system. Ways to achieve this include careful use of the logo and consistent use of shapes and colors of signs, according to sign type.

Cost: It is important to minimize the costs of signage. Nā Ala Hele's statewide signage program consists of hundreds of signs. Direct costs of this program include the costs of design, manufacture, maintenance, and replacement. The durability and life span of the sign is influenced by its location in the field. Indirect costs include staff time for sign placement, maintenance, and replacement.

Attractiveness: Signs are highly visible aspects of the Nā Ala Hele program, and it is important that signs be well-designed, attractive, and blend into the natural environment as much as possible. While custom designs and materials are available, the costs may be prohibitive. It seems the more attractive the sign, the more susceptible it is to becoming someone's souvenir.

Standardization: Some sign elements that should be standardized include

- > Symbols used to indicate permitted or prohibited activities, hazards, and facilities.
- > The Nā Ala Hele logo and how it is used on a particular sign.
- > Colors for symbols, lettering, warning signs, and logo.

Sign Design:

Font Type & Size

Use Bebas Neue for trail names and major headers, Frutiger LT Pro for section headers and body text, and Arvo for captions. Minimum body text is 30 pt, legible from 5 feet. Section headers run 48 pt and trail/unit names 70 pt. Use no more than three font sizes on any single sign, and keep those sizes consistent across all similarly sized signs.

Color Contrast

The primary palette is NAH Brown (#402313) for backgrounds and NAH Yellow (#ffc818) for trail names, symbols, and accents. Text must be white over dark/brown backgrounds, or dark over light — no other color combinations. High contrast is the governing rule. The brown/yellow scheme should be reconsidered over time in favor of higher-contrast options.

Size & Layout

Trailhead uprights are large panels (20–36"+ wide) on two posts at eye level. Waysides are horizontal or angled panels, approximately 36×24". Panel lower edges must sit 36–48 inches above the ground for wheelchair accessibility. Limit yourself to three panels per trail path (trailhead, mid-trail reminder, and terminal feature), excluding safety and boundary markers. Repeating the same panel is ineffective — reword or change the image if repetition is necessary.

Symbols & icons

Each trail has a unique culturally or ecologically significant symbol rendered in NAH Yellow on NAH Brown. Internationally recognized symbols should accompany all instructional text, especially for non-English speakers. Prohibited activities use the symbol plus a red circle-slash. Permitted and prohibited activity symbols, hazard icons, and facility icons must be standardized across the statewide system.

Language / Message

Write at an upper-elementary to middle-school reading level. Lead with what visitors can do, not what they can't — avoid opening with "Stop," "No," or bare statute references. Place any HRS statute at the end if legally required. Use the 3-30-3 rule: a 3-second headline, a 30-second explanation with supporting visuals, and up to 3 minutes of full context for engaged readers. Always use correct 'okina and kahakō in 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Hawaiian place and trail names come first, with English in parentheses. Do not italicize Hawaiian words or add "s" to pluralize them.

Mounting Height & Location

Panel lower edges must be 36–48 inches above ground so wheelchair users don't need to strain their necks. Maps on signs should be oriented to match the viewer's physical position at the sign, not defaulting to north-up. Place signs where people naturally pause — trailheads, intersections, and destination features. Observe where people go and what they stop to look at before deciding placement. In high-vandalism areas, start with smaller boundary markers to ease the community into signage before installing larger panels

For more specific design standards see *Template 5: Nā Ala Hele Sign Design Standards*

Types of Sign Messages:

Interpretive Signage



Trail Information



Warning



Trail Marker



Directional Sign



Regulation of Trail Use & Activities



5.6 Volunteer Programs

Nā Ala Hele staff Volunteer Coordinators expressed a desire to create a cohesive volunteer program that is based on reciprocity, education, communication, and stewardship. A successful volunteer program is one where staff members can receive much needed, on-the-ground support which enables them to educate others about the trails, history, culture, and the environment. This approach is a net benefit to all parties as it gets volunteers invested in the work and in stewardship in general, while building strong relationships within communities and empowering the public.

For the purposes of this Program Plan, a "volunteer" is defined as any individual or group member who freely contributes their time, skills, or labor to support Nā Ala Hele trail maintenance, stewardship, or educational activities without monetary compensation, and who operates under the supervision and direction of authorized Program staff in accordance with applicable State statutes, including Chapter 90 and Chapter 662D, HRS. While individual island branches and communities may use the term "volunteer" in a broader or informal sense, this document uses the term exclusively in the context defined above to ensure consistency across the Program. Any questions regarding whether a particular type of service qualifies under this definition should be directed to the Volunteer Coordinator or Island Specialist for clarification.

It is recommended that volunteer coordination guidelines are established to provide consistency and structure across the Program. It is understood that each Island Branch contends with its own set of unique circumstances that require nuanced approaches. However, effective volunteer coordination strategies have already been created across branches that can serve as models for more efficient and effective communication with the public. Currently, Volunteer Coordinator staff positions are contracted based on funding availability with the responsibility of establishing operating protocols falling to the individual staff person. Thus, based on current practices created by island branch staff as well as best practices outlined by the National Park Service (NPS), the following operational guidelines are recommended.

Operational Guidelines:

Volunteer Contact & Outreach Protocol by Island Branch

Upon initial contact with the Program, all prospective volunteers should complete a Volunteer Intake Form that collects the following information:

- › Full name and contact information
- › Island branch of interest
- › Availability (frequency, days of week, seasonal constraints)
- › Prior volunteer or work experience relevant to trail maintenance, natural resource management, or related fields
- › Completed trainings, certifications, or licenses
- › Physical capabilities and any known limitations
- › Age (and parental or guardian consent if under 18)
- › Areas of interest or preferred activities
- › Whether the individual is representing an organization or group

Based on the information provided in the intake form and any follow-up conversation with Program staff, prospective volunteers can be assigned to one of the following categories:

- › **"Solo" Volunteer:** An individual who has expressed interest in volunteering on a one-time or infrequent basis, has little to no prior experience with trail maintenance or natural resource stewardship, and has not yet completed any Program-specific training. Solo volunteers require direct supervision at all times and are assigned to tasks appropriate for general audiences.
- › **"Specialized" Volunteer:** An individual who participates on a regular and recurring basis, has completed one or more Program-approved training modules, and has demonstrated proficiency in specific skills identified by Forestry Technicians or other staff. Specialized volunteers may be assigned to tasks that require a higher level of technical knowledge or independent judgment under general staff supervision.
- › **"Core" Volunteer:** An individual who has accumulated significant volunteer hours, completed a comprehensive set of Program-approved trainings, and has demonstrated consistent reliability, safety awareness, and stewardship values over time. Core volunteers may assist Volunteer Coordinators in planning and managing Solo and Group volunteers during events and may be considered for conditional independent work permits.
- › **"Group" Volunteer:** Any organized group of two or more individuals participating together under the coordination of a designated group leader. Groups should be further classified by type and assigned tasks appropriate to the collective skill level, age range, and physical capabilities of the group's members.

The Volunteer Coordinator, in coordination with the Island Specialist, should be jointly responsible for reviewing intake forms and assigning volunteers to the appropriate category. In island branches where a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator position is not currently filled, the Island Specialist should assume this responsibility until the position is filled. Category assignments should be reviewed and confirmed prior to each volunteer event and updated in the volunteer database as new information becomes available. Staff should use their professional judgment in making assignments and are encouraged to consult with colleagues in other island branches when guidance is needed.

Progression between categories is encouraged as a means of building a skilled and committed volunteer base and recognizing the growth and dedication of individual volunteers. The following framework outlines how volunteers may move between categories over time:

- › **Solo → Specialized:** A Solo volunteer may be considered for reclassification as a Specialized volunteer upon meeting the following criteria:
 - › Completion of a minimum of three (3) volunteer events with the Program
 - › Completion of at least one (1) Program-approved training module relevant to trail maintenance or natural resource stewardship
 - › A positive staff evaluation demonstrating reliability, safety awareness, and a willingness to learn
 - › Submission of an updated Volunteer Intake Form indicating interest in increased involvement
- › **Specialized → Core:** A Specialized volunteer may be considered for reclassification as a Core volunteer upon meeting the following criteria:
 - › Accumulation of a minimum of 50 volunteer hours with the Program
 - › Completion of a minimum of three (3) Program-approved training modules, including at least one safety-focused module
 - › Demonstrated ability to assist with the supervision and guidance of less experienced volunteers during events
 - › A formal staff evaluation documenting proficiency in at least two specialized skill areas
 - › A recommendation from the Volunteer Coordinator or Island Specialist

Category progressions should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Volunteer Coordinator and Island Specialist. Volunteers who meet the criteria for progression should be notified in writing and recognized for their achievement. Volunteers who have been inactive for 12 months or more may be reclassified to the Solo category pending a new intake assessment.



Volunteer Database

A database of interested volunteers should be maintained along with the known competencies of the individual or group. It is recommended that staff maintain a list with contact information, known skills, areas of interest, and any limitations (age, physical limitations, etc.). The database should serve as the applicant pool for individuals who are available to assist when a specific need arises and should be organized in such a way as to easily identify appropriate individuals and groups based on their capabilities, staff needs, and the capacity of the volunteer(s). A well-structured database might include the following fields, organized to accommodate both individual and organizational volunteers:

Individual Volunteer Records

Contact and Identification:

- › Full name
- › Preferred name or nickname
- › Phone number
- › Email address
- › Mailing address (optional)
- › Emergency contact name and phone number
- › Island branch affiliation

Categorization and Status:

- › Current volunteer category (Solo, Specialized, Core)
- › Date of initial intake
- › Date of most recent participation
- › Active or inactive status
- › Notes on any category changes and dates of change

Experience and Skills:

- › Prior relevant experience (trail work, natural resource management, construction, education, etc.)
- › Known skills and competencies
- › Completed Program-approved training modules and dates of completion
- › Any certifications or licenses held (first aid, chainsaw, etc.)
- › Languages spoken

Participation History:

- › Total volunteer hours logged
- › Dates and locations of events attended
- › Tasks completed during each event
- › Staff evaluation notes from each event

Physical and Safety Information:

- › Age or date of birth
- › Any known physical limitations or accommodations needed
- › Parental or guardian consent on file (if under 18)
- › Any safety incidents or concerns documented by staff

Permits and Agreements:

- › Conditional work permit status (if applicable)
- › Date of permit issuance and expiration
- › Any permit conditions or restrictions
- › Notes on compliance

Organization and Group Volunteer Records

Organization Contact & Identification:

- › Organization name
- › Type of organization (school, civic club, scouting group, equestrian club, nonprofit, tourist group, etc.)
- › Primary contact name, phone number, and email
- › Secondary contact name, phone number, and email
- › Mailing address
- › Island branch affiliation

Skills & Interests:

- › Any specialized equipment the group can provide
- › Preferred trail areas, project types, or activities
- › Any specialized equipment the group can provide

Group Characteristics

- › Typical group size range
- › Age range of members
- › Any known physical limitations or special needs within the group
- › Languages spoken by group members
- › Any existing MOU or formal agreement with the Program and date of execution

Participation History

- › Total group volunteer hours logged
- › Dates, locations, and projects participated in
- › Tasks completed during each event
- › Staff evaluation notes
- › Any safety incidents or concerns documented by staff

Volunteer coordinators are encouraged to invest in training and experiential learning opportunities for recurring volunteers. Some maintenance activities will require specialized knowledge and will not be appropriate for most one-off volunteers. Before the need arises, Volunteer Coordinators should work with other Forestry staff to identify useful skills that can be developed through online training modules or other low-cost programs to build up a foundational group of skilled volunteers that can handle a wider range of maintenance activities. Individuals and organizations with an interest in becoming a 'specialized' volunteer may go through a set of procedures to vet, train, and certify themselves for specialized work:

1. Begin by setting expectations with volunteers concerning the workload, commitment time for training and volunteer hours, physical requirements, and any liability or safety risks. This may be done through the use of a volunteer intake form.
2. For groups, consider negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding between the organization and the agency for well-established projects that require ongoing maintenance with established protocols in place.
3. Invest in training modules for volunteers based on the skills identified by the Forestry Technicians and other staff. Training modules would ideally be easily accessible through an online platform, comprehensive and focused on safety, and with an evaluation component that ensure that volunteers are capable of demonstrating proficiency in the skills required.
4. Consider implementing a certification or permitting protocol for trained and experienced volunteers. The permitting protocols would be necessary in cases where volunteers can be asked to work independently but should not be working outside of the scope outlined by staff members. Permits would be conditional upon compliance with the rules and guidelines established by staff and can be revoked for volunteers who are noncompliant.
5. Establish and maintain data collection protocols. Provide training and tracker forms for volunteers to fill out after each job is complete. The collection and tracking of data can be useful when applying for funding opportunities and to demonstrate progress on a particular goal or objective. Staff time should be dedicated to ensuring that data is collected and tracked accurately.



Volunteer Coordination, Routine Opportunities & Special Events

Create a monthly electronic communication, such as a newsletter or email blast, with a standard formatting template that conforms to DLNR's branding and communications standards. The communication should highlight projects that have been completed and are ongoing, as well as a schedule of upcoming events, contact information of the volunteer coordinator, and other pertinent information. The aim of the monthly outreach should function as a way to keep the Program's interested volunteers engaged, informed, and motivated to participate in the future.

Currently, an online calendar of events and volunteer opportunities exists for interested members of the public on the Forestry and Wildlife website. Staff have acknowledged that the centralized location of events has helped to identify and coordinate efforts with the public and internally. To capitalize on existing efforts, it is recommended that each island branch's Volunteer Coordinator should work with the Forestry Technicians and Trail Specialist to identify ongoing maintenance needs, priority areas, and the level of training a volunteer would need in order to participate in any particular activity. A shared spreadsheet of actively managed trails can be a good way to share information and coordinate efforts. Weekly, monthly, or bi-monthly coordination meetings may also help facilitate problem solving and resource issues if trail maintenance volunteer demands become urgent or frequent. If available, use already established trail management plans or other strategic documents created by the branch to identify projects recognized for implementation. Where Volunteer Coordinator staff time is stretched, the use of "Core" volunteers to assist with the planning and management of "Individual" and "Group" volunteers may be considered.

Table 8 (on the following page) provides a general guide for task assignments appropriate to each volunteer category. Staff should use this as a starting point and exercise judgment based on individual volunteer capabilities and site conditions.

Community Workdays & Special Events

When planning for a community workday or special event where a larger group of volunteers with little or no prior experience or specialized skills is anticipated, the following procedures are recommended.

Preparation:

- ▶ Where possible, meet with the group leader beforehand to visit the work site and go over the plan including the meeting location and time. Exchange phone numbers.
- ▶ Work with operations crew to get tools and equipment ready the day before the project. Group leaders may be asked to help with preparations.

Tips and Tricks for Event Day:

- ▶ Arrive at the office early in case last minute logistics or troubleshooting is necessary i.e. lost or missing keys, vehicle not starting, forgot lunch and need to go store etc.
- ▶ Get to the meeting site early with a good attitude and clear head.
- ▶ Greet the group with enthusiasm and respect.
- ▶ Respectfully, size up the group and try to think of jobs for all the different volunteers. Try not to make assumptions and assign tasks to people. It is better to let them decide on what they want to do.
 - › Arrange your volunteers based on type and skillsets. Solo and core volunteers may have different expectations, activities, or guidance needs than larger groups.
- ▶ Introduce yourself and the purpose of the day's activities.
 - › Coordinators should brief volunteers on the job and tasks to be completed during introduction. It is encouraged that staff bring educational materials explain the rationale behind the activities or resources being protected.
- ▶ Go over the objective – The group leader may take on some of this role if they are really into the project. Be clear of what is expected and what needs to be accomplished. Try to make that accomplishment happen, so everybody feels like they did what you planned to do and feel good about it.
- ▶ Go over safety procedures that apply to the task.

Table 7: Routine Tasks by Volunteer Category

Task Type	Solo	Specialized	Core	Group
Trail clearing (hand tools)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Invasive species removal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trail signage installation		✓	✓	
Erosion control structures		✓	✓	
Power tool operation		✓ *	✓	
Independent trail assessment			✓	
Volunteer supervision support			✓	
Data Collection and reporting		✓	✓	
Cultural resource stewardship	Staff-led	Staff-led	✓ *	Staff-led

* Requires completion of specific training module and staff authorization

Volunteer Benefits

Volunteers are often dedicating a significant amount of uncompensated time and effort contributing to a resource or trail in support of the Nā Ala Hele mission. Rewarding such efforts and expressing gratitude for the work accomplished is an excellent way to keep everyone motivated, enthusiastic, and appreciated. In alignment with the objective to create an environment of reciprocity and mutual respect, it is good practice to explore non-monetary perks and other incentives that reward the efforts of volunteers. Examples may include conducting guided hiking tours through restricted access areas, volunteer 'swag' such as caps or T-shirts, or holding special 'volunteer only' events.

The opportunity to learn specialized skills, culturally specific stewardship techniques, and information on resource management that is often only learned on the job or at a college or university is also a perk of becoming an active volunteer. Staff members should communicate these benefits to volunteers before, during, and after events. Youth engagement and skills development may also encourage young adults to seek continued job and skills training in natural resource management or become lifelong naturalists.



5.6.1 Current Regulation Guiding Volunteer Participation, Liability, & Safety

Staff should be aware of current statutes and regulations regarding the use of volunteers, safety measures, and potential liabilities. An outline of current regulations is included below; however, this does not constitute legal advice or a legal analysis of the statutes. Rather, this section should function as a general reference guide, and specific questions or guidance should be sought from legal professionals.

Volunteer Statutes

› HRS Chapter 662D. Volunteer Service Immunity.

This statute pertains to volunteers who work for the State, Counties, hospitals, and nonprofit entities. HRS §662D-2 specifies that a volunteer shall be immune from civil liability when the volunteer acted in good faith, within the scope of his/her official functions, and was not negligent. HRS §662D-2(3)(A) further specifies that a volunteer working under a nonprofit organization is also protected if the nonprofit has a level of general liability insurance coverage. Exceptions from this statute are primarily focused on if the volunteer acted in a way that would be considered gross negligence or unlawfully.

› HRS Chapter 90. State Policy Concerning the Utilization of Volunteer Services.

Under this chapter, the State is permitted to recruit, train and accept the services of volunteers. Conditions of volunteer recruitment cannot be on the basis of sex, age, race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disabilities, or political affiliations. However, the State may decline any voluntary offer of service or release any volunteer who is no longer needed or who is found to be unacceptable. State and county employment laws do not apply to volunteers. The law describes practices that make volunteer relationships rewarding and productive for all involved including volunteer expectations of the agency, volunteer responsibilities, and agency expectations of the volunteers. As such, HRS §90-3 Rights, Responsibilities, and Expectations in Volunteer Relationships has been outlined in Template 2: Volunteer Bill of Rights. With regard to acceptable volunteer benefits, HRS §90-4 states that agency staff may provide meals, lodging, transportation reimbursements, training, and recognition ceremonies, certificates, or awards.



5.7 Visitor Use Management & Overuse Mitigation

Increasing demand for outdoor recreation, population growth, and visitor use have resulted in high use levels on many trails and access points across Hawai'i. In some locations, use levels exceed the capacity of the trail, access infrastructure, or surrounding environment to safely and sustainably accommodate visitors. These conditions can degrade natural and cultural resources, compromise public safety, diminish traditional and customary practices, and significantly reduce the quality of user experience.

Nā Ala Hele recognizes that unmanaged or poorly managed use can result in areas being "loved to death," ultimately undermining the very public access values the program is charged with protecting. Effective visitor use management is therefore an essential component of trail and access stewardship.

5.7.1 Defining Overuse

Overuse does not refer solely to high numbers of visitors. Rather, overuse occurs when the type, timing, or intensity of use exceeds one or more of the following thresholds:

- › The physical durability or design capacity of a trail or access
- › The ability to protect sensitive natural or cultural resources
- › The capacity of parking, restrooms, signage, or emergency response infrastructure
- › The ability to maintain safe and respectful user interactions
- › The reasonable continuation of traditional and customary practices
- › The expectations associated with a trail's designated type, class, and desired user experience

5.7.2 Assessing Visitor Use & Capacity

Nā Ala Hele will assess visitor use conditions using a combination of qualitative and quantitative tools, including:

- › Observed and reported crowding, congestion, or user conflict
- › Resource impact indicators such as erosion, vegetation loss, or cultural site disturbance
- › Safety incidents, rescues, or enforcement actions
- › Parking demand and traffic impacts on surrounding communities
- › Feedback from advisory councils, community members, and cultural practitioners
- › Comparison of actual use intensity versus desired use intensity, as defined in the trail classification system

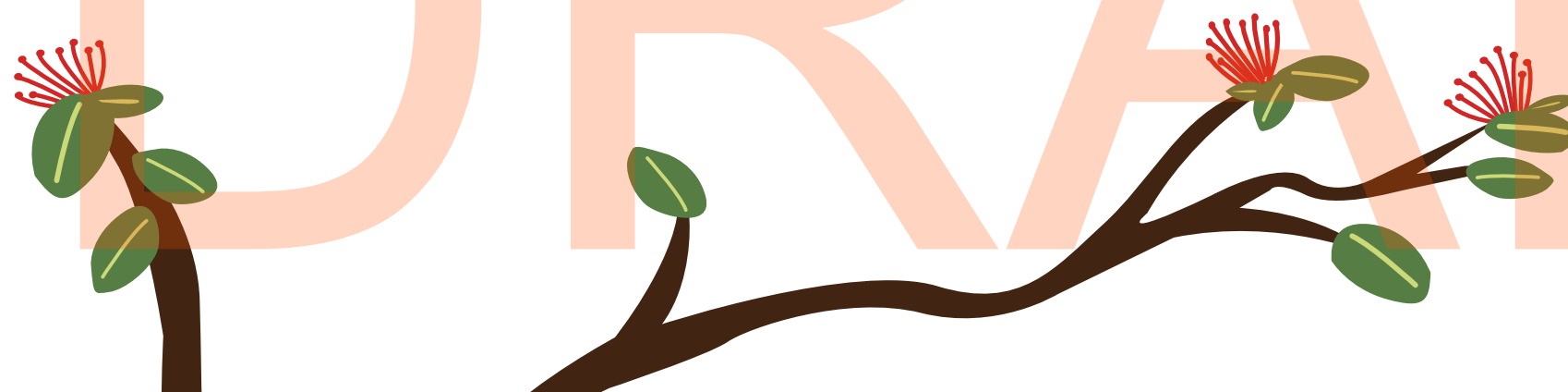
These assessments are intended to be adaptive and site-specific, recognizing that acceptable conditions will vary by trail type, setting, and cultural context.

5.7.3 Visitor Use Management Tools

Where assessment indicates that use levels are adversely affecting resources, safety, or user experience, Nā Ala Hele may employ a range of management tools, alone or in combination, including:

- › Reservation or permit systems to regulate daily or hourly use
- › Timed entry or visiting hours to manage peak congestion
- › Rest days or periodic closures to allow for resource recovery
- › Resident-priority parking or access provisions, where appropriate
- › Parking capacity limits tied to allowable daily use
- › Commercial use controls, including permit caps or scheduling requirements
- › Education and stewardship presence, including volunteer or staff ambassadors
- › Trail hardening, reroutes, or infrastructure improvements where appropriate and feasible

These tools are not intended to restrict access arbitrarily, but to align use with management capacity and statutory obligations.



5.7.4 Equity, Access, & Cultural Considerations

Visitor use management actions must be implemented in a manner consistent with Hawai'i law, including protections for traditional and customary practices. Measures such as reservation systems or time-based access controls should be designed to avoid disproportionate impacts on local residents, subsistence users, and cultural practitioners.

Nā Ala Hele will work collaboratively with advisory councils, cultural practitioners, partner agencies, and affected communities to ensure that visitor use strategies are transparent, equitable, and culturally informed.

5.7.5 Adaptive Management & Successful Models

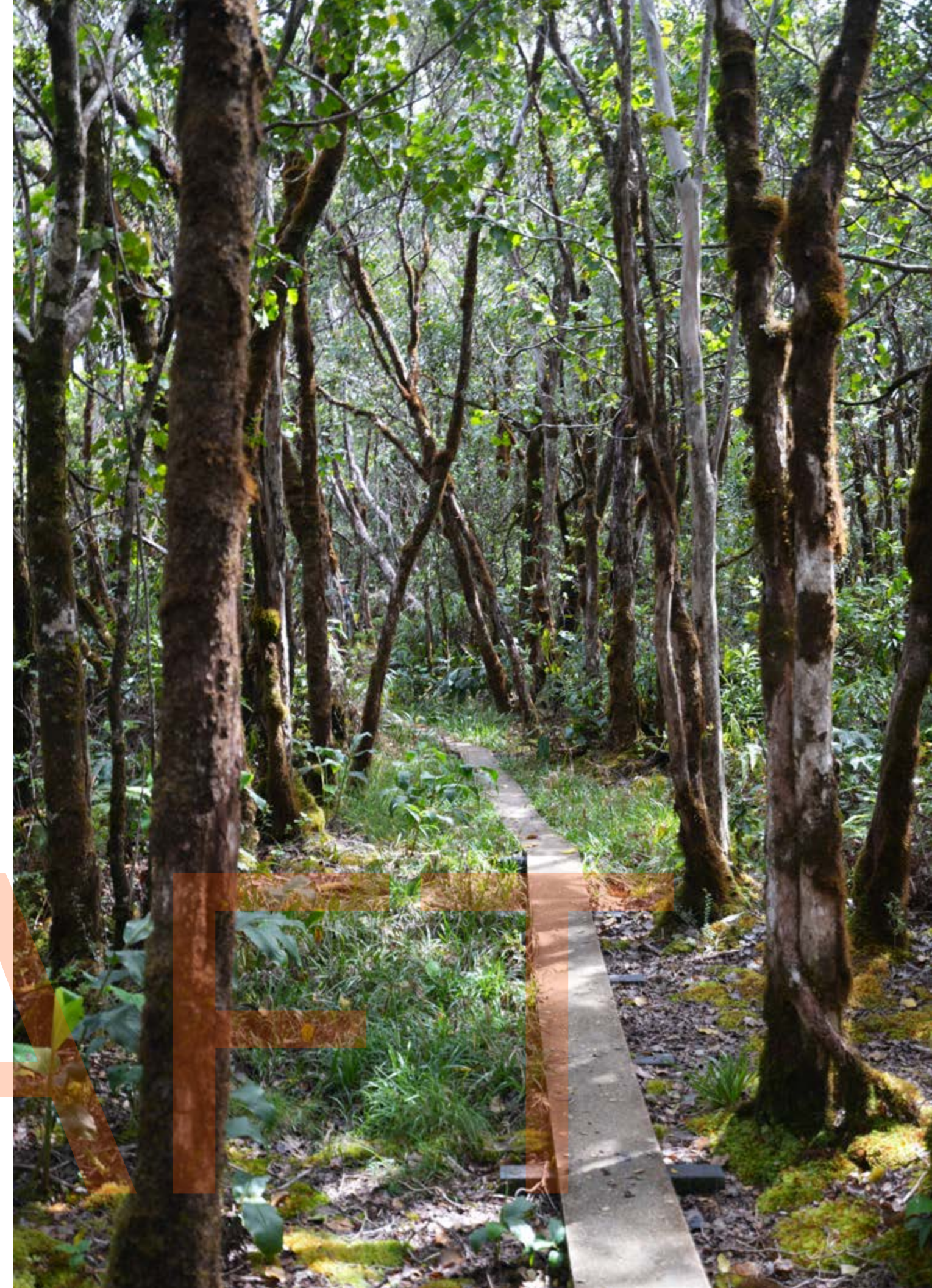
Visitor use management is not static. Nā Ala Hele will monitor outcomes and adjust management actions based on observed conditions and community feedback. Successful examples from Hawai'i and elsewhere demonstrate that proactive management can significantly improve resource protection and visitor experience.

The Ha'ena State Park model on Kauai illustrates how a combination of reservation systems, parking management, community engagement, and on-site stewardship can restore environmental conditions, improve safety, and enhance visitor experience while maintaining public access. Nā Ala Hele will draw from such models, adapting them as appropriate to trail and access contexts across the State.

5.7.6 Management Objectives

Nā Ala Hele's visitor use management objectives are to:

- › Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources
- › Maintain safe and high-quality visitor experiences
- › Reduce conflicts among user groups
- › Ensure continued access for traditional and customary practices
- › Align use levels with staffing, infrastructure, and enforcement capacity
- › Apply adaptive, data-informed management strategies over time



5.7 Trail & Access Management Recommendations & Objectives



Goal 3

To Provide Adequate Management of All Trails and Accesses Within Nā Ala Hele.

Objective 3A: Spearhead a Collaborative Network of Agency & Community Partners in a Trail Stewardship Program.

Objective 3B: Establish & implement a statewide visitor use management framework that balances access & natural resource preservation.

Objective 3C: Strive for the implementation of sustainable trails best practices for the planning, design, construction, & maintenance of all Program trails.

Related Objectives:



5B: Invest in staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.

Agency & Community Partners

- › Provide a copy of a Volunteer Bill of Rights, or similar document, to all active volunteers which outlines the roles, responsibilities, and benefits granted to the volunteer and to the State. See Template 2: Volunteer Bill of Rights
- › Develop and provide a list of resources needed to support volunteer efforts
 - › Volunteer staffing requirements
 - › Volunteer training requirements
 - › Funding needs
- › Standardize a volunteer intake form which includes contact information, pertinent skills, areas of interest, and volunteer locations. Implement across Island Branches.

Sustainable Trail Practices

- › Establish and deploy a Program-wide trail assessment methodology with Branch level database and evaluation protocols. See **Template 1: Program Trail Assessment Worksheet**
- › Establish and deploy a Branch level TMO plan for all Program trails. See **Template 3: Trail Management Objectives (TMO) Worksheet**
- › Establish and deploy a Program-wide trail signage and marker plan.
- › Maintain appropriate PPE for staff and volunteers. Organize PPE by maintenance activity and be prepared to hand out safety information to all field workers during maintenance activities.
- › Invest in employee training and attendance at annual conferences, seminars, and other events to keep up to date with the current best sustainable trail practices.
- › Invest in volunteer training workshops and events for those who are actively volunteering on a regular basis or part of a nonprofit organization with a stake in the Program, trail, or resource being managed.

DRAMA



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6

TRAIL & ACCESS EXPANSION

NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

DRAFT

How New Trail Acquisition Occurs:

REAL PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS which can include sales, purchases, land exchanges, lease & easement agreements, & land trust agreements

GOVERNMENT REGULATORY PROCESSES which can involve provisions for public trails & accesses as conditions to granting State or county land use permits; &

ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC RIGHTS TO USE TRAILS/ACCESSES through the application of certain legal theories & doctrines such as assertion of state ownership, quiet title actions, conditions attached to land use permits, and court proceedings.

Among the impediments to trail/ access expansion are liability concerns of both public and private landowners and resource limitations of the responsible agencies (i.e. funding and staffing limits).

Information presented in this chapter is not meant to be a legal treatise, but rather an overview for lay people of the major expansion opportunities and constraints.



'Alalā photographed by
Bret Mossman

6.1 What the Law Requires

Section 198D-2, HRS, requires the DLNR to "acquire land or rights for public use of land," and Section 198D-7, HRS, requires the DLNR, in consultation with the Attorney General, to examine legal issues relating to trails and accesses.

Legal Issues DLNR Must Examine:

1. Theories, options, and doctrines by which trails and accesses may be placed into or retained in public use
2. The validity and feasibility of dedication requirements to obtain public use of trails and accesses
3. The extent of liability exposure of the State, counties, and private landowners when allowing trails and accesses under their respective jurisdictions to be used by the general public
4. Strategies to reduce or limit the liability exposure of the State, counties and private landowners in order to promote public use of trails and accesses under their respective jurisdictions which are closed to the general public.

Section 198D-8, HRS, allows the DLNR to request legislative appropriations to acquire rights to trails/ accesses that are closed to the public. Also Section 198D-10(b), HRS, points out that nothing in this chapter should be interpreted to be conferring or imposing upon the DLNR any rights, powers, and duties over trails and access to which the public has no rights to use.



6.2 Real Property Transactions

Acquiring trails and accesses for the Nā Ala Hele system through real property transactions does not necessarily involve large public expenditures. Many options and approaches are available, and these should be attempted prior to considering condemnation proceedings, a last resort should other methods fail. Acquisition by eminent domain through condemnation usually involves large expenditures to justly compensate landowners and can be time consuming, antagonistic, and opposed by landowners as well as taxpayers.

6.2.1 Methods Available to the State

Board of Land and Natural Resources approval and cooperation between Nā Ala Hele, Land Division, and the AG's Office are required in processing real property transactions that enable the State to acquire or dispose of trails and accesses.

- › **Lease Agreements** involve the exclusive use of land for a specified time under terms and conditions agreed to by the parties. The State could lease private property containing an existing or potential trail or access. Section 171-26, HRS, requires the BLNR, prior to leasing any State-owned lands, to determine the feasibility of reserving portions of those lands for public hunting.
- › **Cooperative Agreements** made by the State with a private landowner or with other governmental agencies could open a trail or access to the public, subject to whatever conditions are negotiated. Each party's responsibilities would be specified in the agreement.
- › **Easements** grant non-exclusive use of private land. The landowner reserves the right to use the underlying fee title to the land so long as there is no substantial interference with the public's use and enjoyment of the easement. Easements should be in perpetuity.
- › **Sale or Purchase of fee title** to the trail or access can be accomplished through...
 - › **Deed:** Sale of fee simple title to private land by conveyance document. Generally, it implies grantor has good title to the land being conveyed.
 - › **Exchange Deed:** Exchange of public land for private land. Land exchanges require legislative review and must serve public purposes under Section 171-50, HRS.
 - › **Quitclaim:** Sale of any and all interest, whatever that interest may be, in land possessed by grantor. Quitclaim deeds do not warrant that grantor has good or complete title to the land being conveyed. If the State quitclaims its interests in land, legislative review may be required under Section 171-51, HRS. Private landowners and developers have occasionally requested that the State quitclaim its interests in specific segments of ancient Hawaiian trails.



6.2.2 Statutory & Programmatic Support for Land Acquisition

Protection of trails and public access often requires the acquisition of land or interests in land, including fee title, conservation easements, access easements, or other property rights. In addition to advocacy by Nā Ala Hele advisory councils and legislative engagement regarding specific trails and access needs, members of the public and partner organizations play a critical role in advancing trail and access acquisition through nonprofit, tax-exempt corporations, including land trusts and community-based organizations. These entities frequently work in coordination with state and county agencies to secure lands that protect public access, cultural resources, and natural systems.

A cornerstone of Hawai'i's land acquisition framework is the Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP). In 2005, the Hawai'i State Legislature enacted Act 156, establishing permanent funding for the acquisition of lands with conservation value to the State. In adopting Act 156, the Legislature expressly recognized that despite the importance of Hawai'i's natural resources to its economy, culture, and quality of life, an insufficient level of investment had been made to protect the State's natural capital base. Act 156, codified in HRS Chapter 173A, established the Legacy Land Conservation Program and the Land Conservation Fund (LCF), which provide State funding for land acquisition and conservation-related purposes.

Eligible uses of the Land Conservation Fund under HRS §173A include:

- › Acquisition of interests or rights in land having value as a resource to the State;
- › Payment of debt service on State financial instruments related to land acquisition;
- › Administrative costs for the LCF; and
- › Costs associated with the operation, maintenance, and management of lands acquired using LCF funds.

Endangered Kahuli found in the Ko'olau Mountains



The statute defines "land having value as a resource to the State" to include lands with natural, environmental, recreational, scenic, cultural, agricultural, or historic value, explicitly encompassing park and trail systems that provide access to such lands. Competitive land acquisition grants are available to State agencies, counties, and nonprofit land conservation organizations, with an extensive annual public process involving technical review, field inspections, public testimony, and multi-level approval by the Legacy Land Conservation Commission, the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the Department of Budget and Finance, and the Governor.

While the LLCP is a central funding source, it is not the sole mechanism supporting trail and access acquisition. Trail protection and access preservation through land acquisition frequently rely on a diversified funding and partnership approach that combines State, federal, county, and private resources. Federal programs such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Land Acquisition (RLA) Program, Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) mitigation acquisitions, and the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program (NCWCP) have been instrumental in protecting lands that support public access while also advancing endangered species recovery and coastal resilience objectives. Similarly, the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program provides a critical tool for conserving working forest landscapes and access corridors through fee acquisition or conservation easements.

At the State and county levels, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) appropriations, county open space and public access funds, and voter-approved land acquisition programs have played a major role in securing land, trail corridors, trailheads, and associated access infrastructure. These funding sources are often braided together with LLCP or federal funds to complete complex acquisitions that would not be feasible through a single program alone.

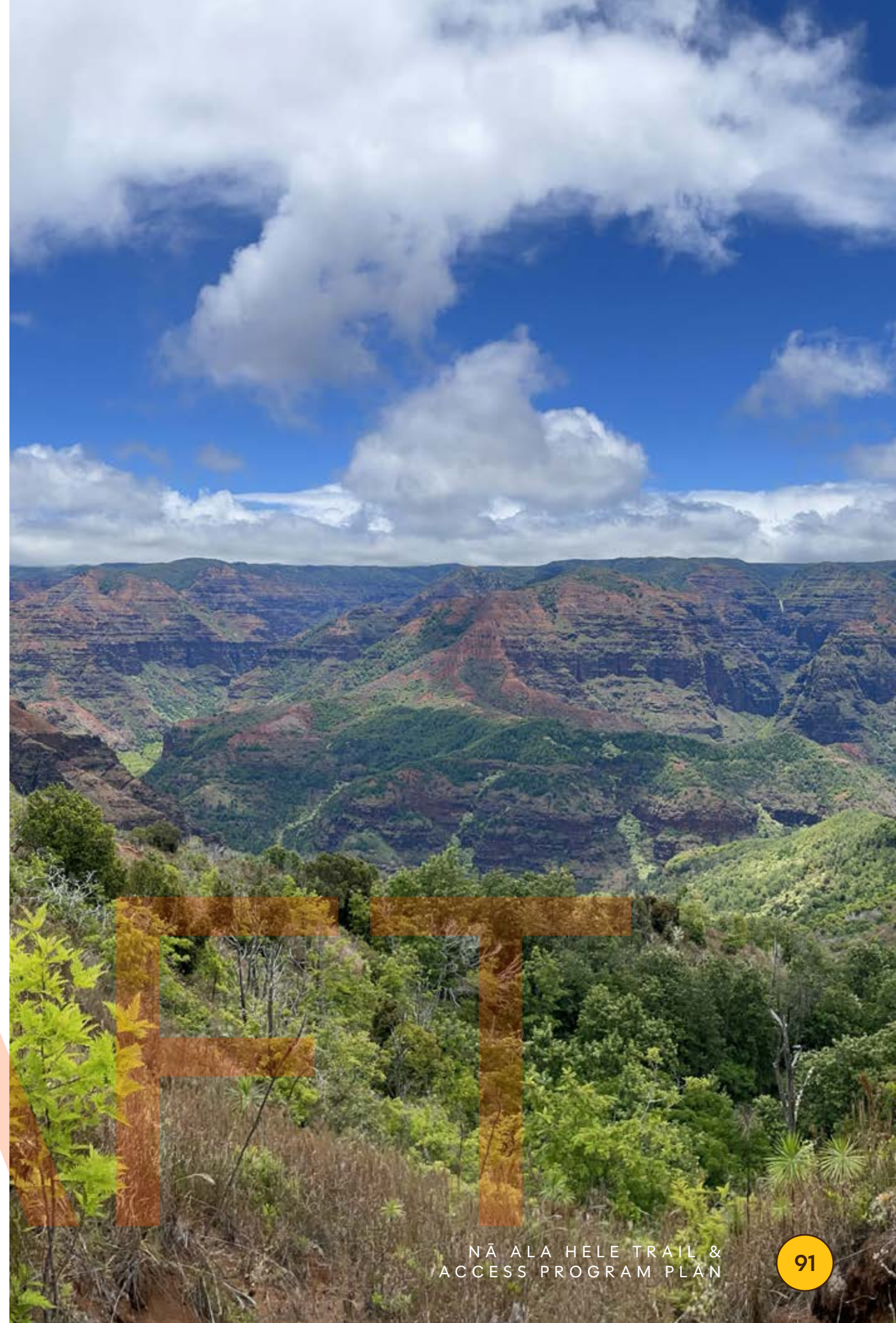
Partnerships with land trusts and nonprofit conservation organizations are a particularly important component of this acquisition landscape. Land trusts offer flexibility, speed, and negotiation capacity that can complement governmental processes. They frequently act as intermediaries, acquiring land or easements from willing landowners who are unable or unwilling to wait for public funding cycles, and later transferring those interests to public agencies once funding becomes available. Land trusts can also work with private landowners who may be reluctant to negotiate directly with government agencies, accept and steward conservation easements in perpetuity, and protect trail and access resources that span multiple jurisdictions.

As of June 30, 2024, the BLNR has approved 80 grant applications under the LLCP since its inaugural funding cycle in 2006, resulting in funding approvals for 74 properties statewide, including completed acquisitions, and active projects. These outcomes reflect both the program's success and the inherent complexity of land acquisition projects. BLNR has also approved numerous land acquisition projects using funds other than those provided by the LLCP.

Several LLCP-supported acquisitions demonstrate the importance of this multi-partner approach for trail and access protection. At 'Anaeho'omalu Kapalaoa in Kona, Hawai'i Island, LLCP funding supported the protection of an extensive cultural and natural landscape that includes mauka-makai and coastal trail networks, cultural sites, native ecosystems, and shoreline access, now stewarded by nonprofit partners. Similarly, the 2024 LLCP award to Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc. supports community-based management of lands at the Ka'awaloa Trailhead, a critical access point to Kealakekua Bay, integrating trail management, cultural resource protection, education, and visitor stewardship. On Maui, LLCP provided matching funds for the purchase of lands at Maalaea that included the historic site of the Lahaina Pali trailhead.

Together, these statutory authorities, funding programs, and partnerships provide a robust and flexible framework for advancing trail and access acquisition statewide. The Nā Ala Hele Program operates within—and actively leverages—this broader opportunity landscape to protect public access, preserve cultural and natural resources, and ensure that trail systems can be sustained for future generations.

*Iliou Nature Loop,
Kaua'i*



6.3 Government Regulatory Processes

Several of Hawai'i's laws have been enacted to promote establishment of public access to recreational areas. Most of these laws apply only when lands are proposed for development. Often taking the form of conditions of approval, private developers are required to provide public accesses and trails which are frequently built and maintained at the developer's expense. Such requirements have become part of the cost of doing business in Hawai'i. It should be noted that when conditions of approval are set, there must be logical or reasonable connection or "nexus" between the requirement and a valid governmental purpose. A discussion of Hawai'i's laws regarding public access requirements follows.

Section 171-26

HRS Rights-of-way to the Sea, Game Management Areas, & Public Hunting Areas

Before the State disposes of public lands through leases, sales, licenses, or permits, this law requires the BLNR to "lay out and establish over and across such lands a reasonable number of rights-of-way from established highways to the public beaches, game management areas, public hunting areas, and public forests and forest reserves in order that the right of the people to utilize the public beaches, game management areas, public hunting areas, and public forests and forest reserves shall be protected."

Chapter 115

HRS Acquisition of Rights-of-Way by Counties

Chapter 115, HRS, provides a mechanism for government to acquire public rights-of-way to the shorelines. This Chapter is distinguished from Section 46-6.5, HRS, in that it applies to public access over privately owned lands that are as yet undeveloped or were developed before the enactment of Section 46-6.5, HRS. It has served to clarify the public's right of transit along the shoreline below the private property line, as long as public safety is maintained. It also provides cost sharing of right-of-way acquisition but requires the counties to be responsible for development and maintenance of these rights-of-way.

Section 46-6.5

HRS Dedication of Rights-of-Way & Easements to Counties by Subdividers

In 1973 the Legislature mandated each county to adopt ordinances that would require developers and subdividers to dedicate rights-of-way or easements for pedestrian public access from public roads to beach and mountain recreation areas. County approval of development projects is contingent upon fulfillment of this requirement. Upon dedication and acceptance of the public access by the counties, the funding of improvements and maintenance of the rights-of-way is a county responsibility. This statute applies to land that is to be divided into six or more units or interests, including non-contiguous land, if six or more lots are offered as part of a common, promotional advertising or sale. Legislation seeking to strengthen the public access requirements of this law was introduced in 2021 under Senate Bill 470 relating to public access. The Bill proposed to strengthen existing subdivision laws by requiring that the county accept the dedication of and maintenance of the required access or identify an entity to own and maintain the access. (Relating to Public Access, 2021)The Bill died in committee and future efforts have not been undertaken as of this writing.

Chapter 205A

Hawai'i State Coastal Zone Management Act

The Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management Program (HICZM) was created through passage of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 and approval of the HICZM in 1977 by the adoption of Chapter 205A, HRS. The HICZM is run by the State of Hawai'i OPSD to provide a common focus for state and county actions dealing with land and water uses and activities. The program builds upon the authorities and responsibilities of the state and county agencies in order to more effectively and efficiently coordinate resource management policies and actions. Enforcement of the CZM policies and objectives are conducted through the review and approval of Special Management Area (SMA) Permits, which are processed at the county level. Trails and accesses within the Special Management Area may be subject to an SMA permit.

Establishment of Public Rights to Use Trails / Accesses

Nā Ala Hele often receives inquiries regarding the public's rights to use specific trails / accesses, based on historic, customary, or prescriptive usage.

Legal theories & doctrines that have been used to assert public rights of access:

› Express Reservation, Exclusion, or Reference to a Trail

Certain trails and roads have been expressly reserved to the "government" or State, or have been clearly excluded from private ownership. A tax map, Land Court map, or maps registered with the State Surveyor may have a trail expressly shown. Examination of the map and accompanying documents of conveyance, Royal Patents, Grants, or Land Commission Awards may reveal a trail or roadway that has been reserved as a public easement and excluded from the described private property. Land title search to determine a trail or road's ownership status often requires the skill of a professional abstractor.

› Ancient Hawaiian Tradition, Custom, Practice, and Usage [see Ka Pa'akai o Ka'āina]

› Public Trails under Chapter 264-1, HRS [see Highways Act of 1892]

› Public Easement by Prescription

To prove the existence of a public easement by prescription, the claimant(s) must show that usage has been "...continuous and uninterrupted, open, notorious and exclusive, with the knowledge and the acquiescence of the owner..." for at least a 20-year period. To be considered "open and notorious," the landowner must have had knowledge of or reasonable opportunity to become aware of the public usage. "Continuous and uninterrupted" use means that the usage was not physically interrupted by acts of the owner or by voluntary disuse by those claiming the easement. Additionally, the use must not have been with the owner's express or implied permission. The burden of proof to satisfy all requirements of a prescriptive easement is on the claimant(s).

› Public Trust Doctrine

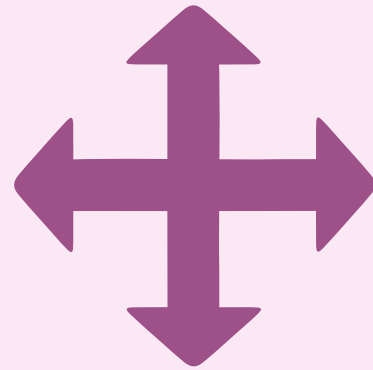
Under the public trust doctrine the State of Hawai'i has a duty to protect and maintain the natural resources on all lands which are held in trust by the State for all people. The public trust doctrine has been used specifically to uphold the rights of the public to fish and navigate in submerged lands. Disposition of lands held in trust by the State should not result in harm to the public.

Prior to the creation of private property rights in Hawai'i, all lands of the Hawaiian kingdom were held by the King in trust for the people in common. When the private property system was adopted in 1848, the King was not given the right to dispose of certain lands which were held in trust "for the common good".


Public trails, accesses, and roads are held in trust by government. If a government-owned route is of cultural or recreational importance to the public, government has a duty to protect and maintain it for that purpose and regulate its use. Conversely, if a government-owned route no longer has public value, government could sell it and use the revenue for public benefit.




6.4 Trail & Access Expansion Recommendations & Objectives



Related Objectives:

 **2A:** Prioritize the identification & acquisition of historic trails.

2B: Collaborate with other public & private landowners & organizations to preserve & protect public trails & accesses.

 **5B:** Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.

Goal 4

To Study and Utilize a Variety of Options and Approaches to Expanding the Trail and Access Network.

Objective 4A: Strategically focus on developing and connecting trail networks for greater connectivity, mobility, and recreational opportunities.

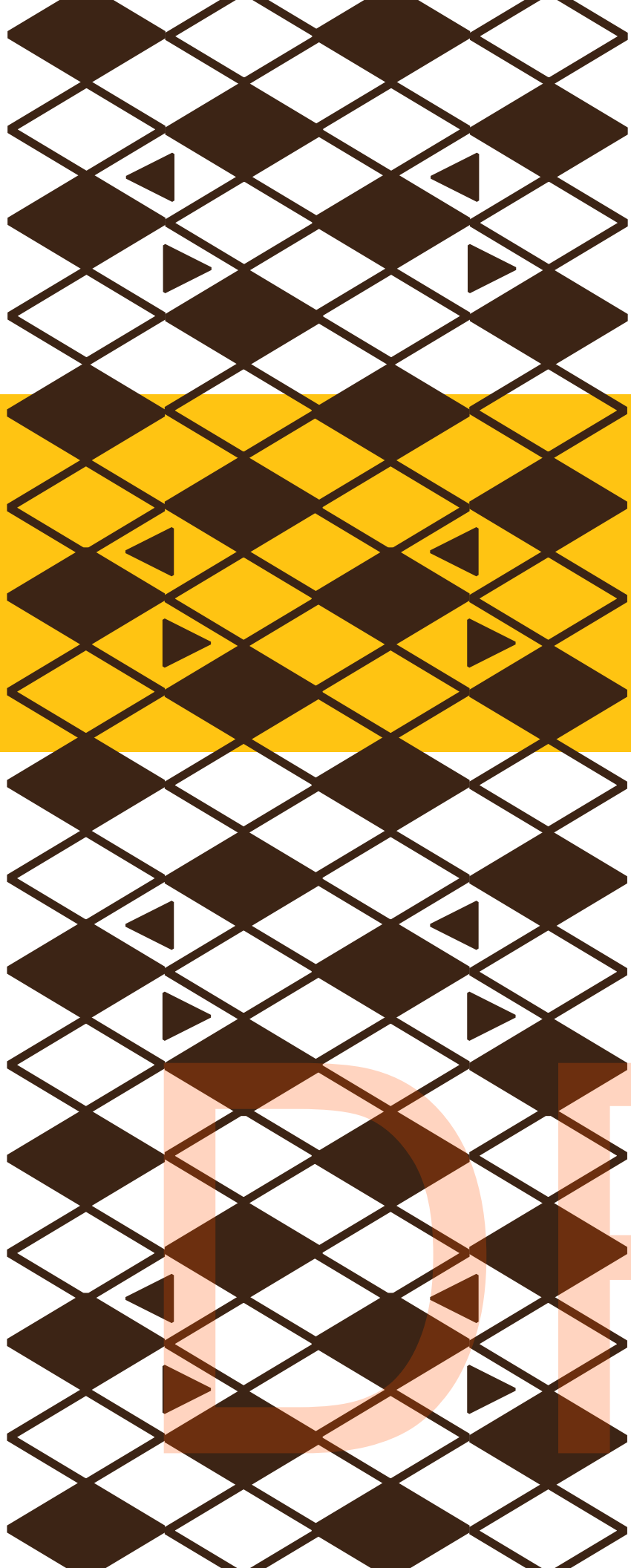
It has been acknowledged by Nā Ala Hele and Forestry and Wildlife staff, as well as stakeholders intimately aware of current operations within the Division that public resources for the operation of the Program is in short supply. Visioning and goal exercises conducted during the Program Plan update process have shown that there is greater public interest in managing existing Program trails and lands over state acquisition of new properties. However, there continues to be public desire to ensure that lands are not overdeveloped and that natural areas are preserved for public benefit for future generations. Thus, it is recommended that the agency focus future trail and access acquisition and preservation efforts on community collaboration, stewardship, and ownership models proven to be successful, through land trusts and the cooperation between LLCP and Nā Ala Hele staff.

- › Utilize the inventory, in consultation with other State and county agencies, to identify trails and accesses which are desirable for future acquisition. Coordinate with the LLCP in identifying community partners including landowners and nonprofit organizations with a mutually beneficial interest in preserving trails/ accesses.
- › Identify public lands which have public recreational value but presently lack public access. Work with other land management and planning agencies to recommend lands which should be opened, and identify appropriate levels of public use, and methods for acquisition.
- › Explore the feasibility of Cooperative Agreements with private landowners as a means of opening trails/ accesses to public use.
- › Encourage the formation of land trusts by providing information and technical assistance to individuals and groups interested in submitting a competitive application to the LLCP.
- › Train Nā Ala Hele staff in trail/ access acquisition methods & procedures as new staff are hired
- › Train Nā Ala Hele staff in the legal aspects of claiming government jurisdiction over historic roads and trails as new staff are hired
- › Encourage the establishment of consistent public access requirements among the counties by suggesting policies that would ensure adequate public access to coastal and mountain recreation areas in keeping with sound conservation principles.
- › Work with the Land Management Division and the AG's Office in acquiring trails/ accesses which are given priority status
- › On an ongoing basis, identify and research public access claims to trails and accesses which are at risk of being "lost".

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PROGRAM EVALUATION

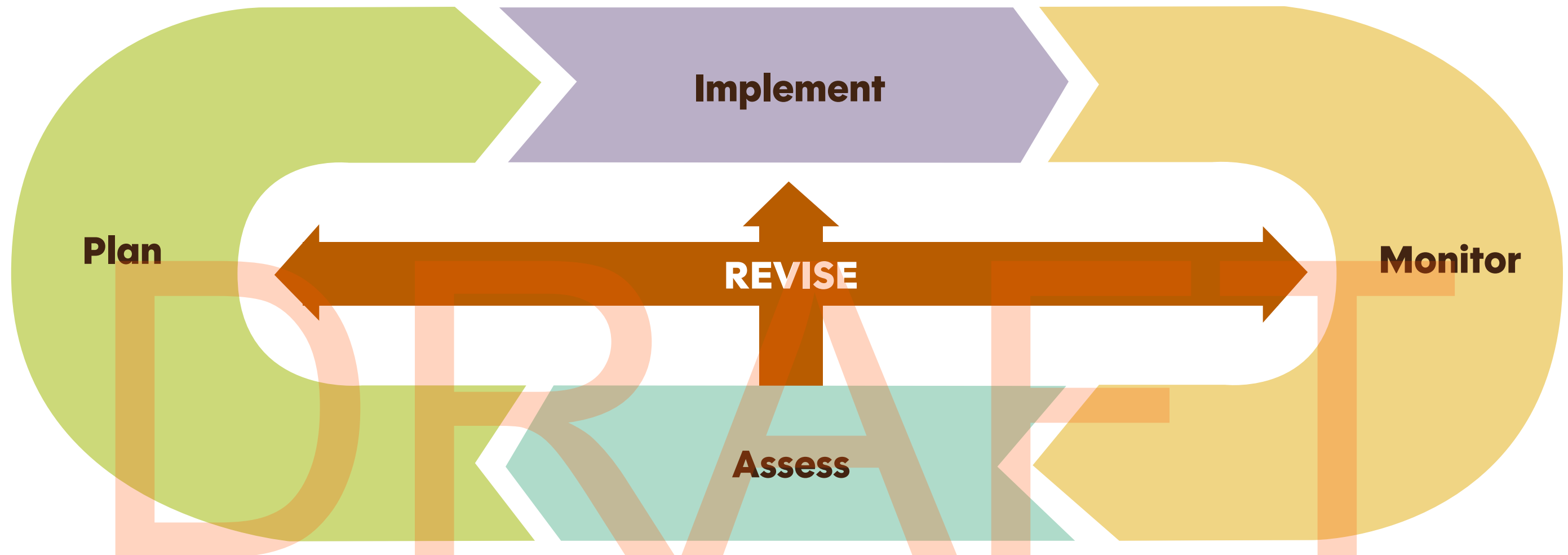
NĀ ALA HELE TRAIL & ACCESS PROGRAM PLAN

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7.1 Methodology

An adaptive management framework is a structured approach to evaluating a program or plan based on a cyclical process of feedback and response. Currently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service has established an adaptive management, monitoring, and analysis framework for resource managers and decision-makers to critically evaluate programs and make data-centered decisions (U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, 2025). Under an adaptive management framework, trail managers are encouraged to work through a four stage planning process which includes developing a strategic plan for the program, trail, or resource, implementing the plan, monitoring resource conditions, and evaluating the efficacy of the plan based on outcomes. The implementation and evaluation components are cyclical, whereby data monitoring informs the overall assessment of efficacy and then revisions to the plan are made as necessary. Assessments should engage strategic partners such as landowners, native Hawaiian and other cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders. Revisions to the plan may include adjustments to annual work plans or amendments to the original plan document. Monitoring protocols should ensure that important factors are accurately captured and evaluated. For example, if the purpose of a trail plan is to reduce visitor impacts to surrounding natural resources, then metrics should focus on the natural impacts of increased visitor volumes such as sedimentation rates, volume of trash, or noise pollution. Figure 2: Adaptive Management Evaluation Framework below illustrates the adaptive management framework guide developed by the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) (Williams & Brown, 2012), respectively.

Figure 4: Adaptive Management Process



7.2 Evaluation Recommendations & Objectives



Related Objectives:



4A: Strategically focus on developing and connecting trail networks for greater connectivity, mobility, and recreational opportunities.

Goal 5

To Evaluate All Aspects of the Program in Order to Identify Where Improvements Need to be Made.

Objective 5A: Create and maintain an adaptive management strategy and protocols aligned with the Vision, Goals, and Objectives established in the Plan.

Objective 5B: Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.

Metrics:

- › Miles of trails/ accesses built and maintained, and the entities performing the work
- › Numbers and types of trail / access facilities and amenities built and maintained, and the entities performing the work
- › Miles of newly acquired trails/ accesses for future development, and the entities performing the work
- › Estimated numbers of trail/ access users, user activities, and time spent on trails and accesses
- › Revenues to the State's general fund generated from the sale of trail, access and road remnants
- › Number of volunteers and volunteer hours required to accomplish specified projects

Objectives:

- › Identify the categories of information that need to be recorded and measured for evaluation purposes
- › Identify the methods to be used in order to obtain needed information
- › Fully integrate the recording of Nā Ala Hele's "overhead" time, activities, expenditures, and accomplishments into reporting formats used by DOFAW
- › Create a survey to be completed by advisory council members and ex officio representatives
- › Develop questionnaires and methods of obtaining public input that will be meaningful to program assessment
- › Produce annual reports on program accomplishments and their cost-effectiveness
- › Produce annual reports on the results of surveys and questionnaires

Advancing the program evaluation framework set forth in the 1991 Plan, herein describes the current best practices and recommendations for an adaptive management program. The purpose of program evaluation is to measure how well the program has met the goals and objectives set forth in the plan, to assess overall program efficacy, staff and volunteer performance, benefits to trail users, and identify areas where improvements can be made. Adaptive management, as a framework, is based on the recognition that decision-making is a cyclical process whereby managers must proactively monitor, assess, and adjust plans as new information and situations occur. Adaptive management creates a structured approach to problem solving that involves learning and adjustment. Most of the dedication of resources should be focused around understanding the feedback between learning new information and adjusting management practices to achieve the best outcomes most effectively and efficiently. The framework developed in the Nā Ala Hele Program Plan relies heavily on the best management practices established by the federal agencies including the NPS and the USDA Forest Service.



Planning Phase

The purpose of the Planning Phase is to start the planning that will guide the future of the program, trail, or resource. In this phase, managers may choose to create a formalized trail or program plan or take a less formalized approach by establishing protocols without a formalized plan. In either case, the resource managers, decision makers, and stakeholders will be instrumental in the successful development of the plan. The Set-Up Phase, once established, can be used as the guidepost for all future management decisions, investments, and guiding protocols for the resource. The key pieces of this phase include:



Identification & Engagement of Key Stakeholders

Trail managers are encouraged to work early and often with stakeholders when creating a new trail management plan. Stakeholders can encompass a wide range of different individuals, groups, and constituencies that may not all need to participate in any given planning process. Managers are encouraged to be strategic about who they engage and when so that input can be productive and effective. Identify those individuals or groups who will help to advance the trail management process long term. Building on the network of trail volunteers, user groups, native Hawaiian communities, landowners and residents near the trail or access will be essential to the long-term viability of any management strategy that is implemented. Managers should also consult the Island Advisory Councils, as appropriate, when considering management strategies at this stage.



Establishing Management Objectives

Trail management objectives are the intended outcomes or performance goals of the subject trail, access, or surrounding natural environment. Objectives are used as the benchmarks against which the various management actions are measured for efficacy, so it is imperative that the stated objectives in any trail plan are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound. For the Nā Ala Hele Program Plan, the Program's objectives are categorized under each of the stated Program Goals. Each objective has a subsequent list of required actions, metrics, and monitoring protocols. That way, each program objective can be measurable, time-bound, and specific. Periodic review and revision of the objectives will ensure that they continue to be achievable and relevant.



Identifying Management Alternatives

Trail managers are encouraged to establish a set of management alternatives, or set of potential future actions, that may be implemented if the first choice is unsuccessful or inadequate at addressing a particular concern. Identifying alternative actions are particularly useful if the actions require permitting or environmental review. For example, under HRS Chapter 343 HEPA, the Environmental Assessment process requires that managers identify and evaluate at least two alternatives in addition to the preferred action. This both helps inform the decision-making process, allows for a robust evaluation into the appropriate course of action, and also allows for future actions to be taken without triggering additional reviews.



Creating Models

When available, the use of predictive or natural process models can aid in determining which course of action may be best to pursue. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Trail Vulnerability and Assessment model has been developed specifically to identify and evaluate the various man-made and natural components that impact trail vulnerability to decay, disuse, and disrepair. Predictive modeling of trail user volumes on any given day or time can also help managers determine if and when permitting systems or other visitor control measures should be taken. These models, and others, are currently being developed and have data availability limitations. So while models may assist management professionals, it is only one tool that should be used in conjunction with robust stakeholder engagement and other inputs.



Establishing Monitoring Protocols

Before any management plan is put into action, monitoring protocols should be well-established. These protocols should identify who will be responsible for collecting data, analyzing the data, and generating reports. The protocols should also outline the frequency, extent, intensity, and methodology for collecting the data. Oftentimes, these protocols are created with the limited staff time and equipment available to the department. Citizen science initiatives can assist with data collection, but still require significant staff time to set up, collect, clean, and analyze community gathered data. Being intentional about the 'who, what, where, and when' of data collection at the start of a management plan will be the key to launching a successful long-term action plan.

Iterative Phase

The iterative phase is the active management, cyclical component of the adaptive management framework. Once the goals and objectives are identified and the monitoring plan and decision-making protocols are set, then trail managers work with other staff and stakeholders to implement the plan. Management actions are put into place, infrastructure and other improvements are funded, and personnel are allocated to the resource. Staff then monitor the specific conditions that are key to the ideal performance of the resource. Periodically, either annual or biannually as needed, decision-makers should review and analyze the monitoring data and evaluate whether the goals and objectives are being achieved. Adjustments to the management actions or resource allocations can be made at that time based on the results of the analysis. Thus, the following elements for the

Decision Making

Decision makers have a difficult job of understanding and framing complex issues while trying to implement solutions that are effective and efficient with staff time and public funds. Forestry and Wildlife leaders are encouraged to revisit and reconsider the management objectives, resource status, and data findings before enacting decisions. The suite of potential management actions available to their staff members can also be reinforced or supported by the formal and informal structures of public participation, additional institutional help, and from elected representatives.

Monitoring & Assessment

Monitoring and assessment are two of the most valuable activities the program can maintain over the course of any particular management strategy. Monitoring involves the collection of information to estimate the status of the resource, can help facilitate learning and add to research, and informs the decision-making process. All valuable insights into the efficacy of any particular management strategy. Therefore, dedicating the appropriate amount of resources, both monetary and personnel, will enable the program to implement a robust and reliable monitoring protocol. At this stage, if the management actions have been created using Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) goals, then the data collection should be straightforward. Trail managers should consider the timing, frequency, cost and workload. Managers also should consider data quality needs when setting up collection protocols. Do the metrics used require an expert to collect a highly refined dataset? Or can a more loosely structured group contribute to the collection of the data? Other logistical questions such as the time and effort required to get to field sites, workload per person in the field, and the amount of training and preparation required should also be fleshed out in a monitoring plan.

Monitoring Procedural Guidelines

- › Forestry and Wildlife staff to establish monitoring protocols including:
 - › Appropriate metrics for evaluating program success
 - › Data collection frequency, extent, intensity and methodology
 - › Data collection resource needs – staff, funding, equipment, training
 - › Responsible staff members to collect and analyze data
- › Deploy staff and volunteer resources to track indicators.
 - › Forestry and Wildlife Administrator to receive data findings on a biannual basis as part of the regularly scheduled staff meetings.
 - › Forestry and Wildlife Worker and Technicians to be given the specific metrics, guidelines, and materials to implement the monitoring plan on the ground.

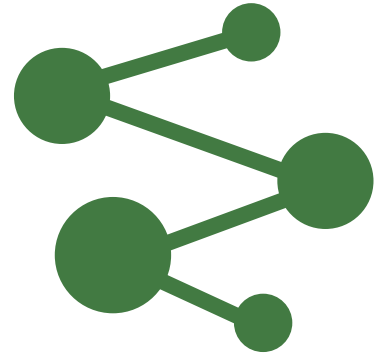
Assessment Procedural Guidelines

- › Periodically (every 5 years) review Program Vision, Goals, Objectives formally by convening a taskforce of agency partners, island councilmembers, and Division leadership.
- › Island Specialists to review data findings/ reports from monitoring efforts on an annual basis. Score / rank performance based on metrics established for the Program objectives. Ensure reporting goals for any grants or program funds associated with federal reporting standards done at this time.

Revise

Adjust (annual, biannual) work plans as needed, develop plan amendments as needed. Revise objectives, indicators, or metrics as needed.

7.3 Program Evaluation Matrices



GOAL 1

Organization

To expand program resources and networks that help to achieve Nā Ala Hele's goals and objectives.

	Objectives	Mandatory Actions
A	Build into the program designated roles that foster intra-agency collaboration on shared objectives within the DLNR Divisions.	Act as a centralized information agency, as an advisor and assistant to other agencies, as an advocate, and as a coordinator for matters relating to the statewide trail and access system.
B	Be the primary resource for trail use, management, and access needs	Establish, maintain and amend, as necessary, an inventory of all trails and accesses. The inventory is to include maps of each trail and access, a description of the trail or access including the agency with management jurisdiction over it, and its availability to the general public. The department must also publish and update periodically the portion of the inventory which identifies trails and accesses that are open to the public.

Table 8: Goal 1 Mandatory Actions, Recommendations, & Metrics

GOAL 1

	Recommended Program Activities	Metric	Accountability & Responsible Parties
A	Form and convene a taskforce of Division leaders and closely related State and County agency staff	Meeting agenda and minutes reported to BLNR as a status update	Staff time allocated to the convening and reporting of the task force
	Place appropriate staff offices on the mailing lists to receive Land Use Commission notices and agendas, OEQC Bulletins, and county planning commission and county council agendas	N/A	Continue to utilize biweekly meetings of the Chairperson of BLNR with top administrators to discuss Nā Ala Hele intra-departmental concerns.
	Provide all departments, divisions, and agencies that have jurisdiction over trails/ accesses with information on Nā Ala Hele's priority trails and accesses. Provide governmental cooperators with copies of the inventory so that it can be used when permits and applications are reviewed	N/A	Use biweekly cabinet meetings with all department heads and the Governor to discuss inter-departmental concerns of Nā Ala Hele
	Revision of IAC purpose statement to clearly define roles and responsibilities. Establish IAC term limits.	Outline exactly what is expected of volunteers, the number of hours, and the scope of their involvement in the council.	Create a structure for monitoring contributions and holding IAC members accountable.
B	Increase investments in online presence. Develop strategic relationships with popular hiking and recreational sites.	Forestry and Wildlife Technicians to be responsible for the review, consolidation, and summarizing of field data to receive NAH Program success metrics for input in inventory database	GIS Research Data Technician will need better coordination with field offices and the databases they maintain. Investments in ArcGIS Online or other database sharing would allow access from multiple individuals into the database for updates, field data input, report generation and analysis.
	Develop partnerships with Visitor Management Bureaus, hotels, and community organizations to direct the public to NAH staff or websites.	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	Volunteer & Education Coordinator
	Create a standardized procedure for interagency communication (who to reach out to and when) guidance memo	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	Volunteer & Education Coordinator



GOAL 2

Planning

To identify and select Trails and access for acquisition, preservation, development, and improvement.



A

B

C

Objectives	Mandatory Actions	
<p>Prioritize the identification and acquisition of historic trails.</p>	<p>Plan, develop, acquire land or rights for public use of land, construct, and engage in coordination activities to implement the statewide trail and access system</p>	
<p>Collaborate with other public and private landowners and organizations to preserve and protect public trails and accesses.</p>	<p><i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i></p>	
<p>Consider how social, economic, and physical barriers impact public use of trails and accesses. Prioritize plans, policies, and actions that are inclusive of all backgrounds.</p>	<p><i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i></p>	

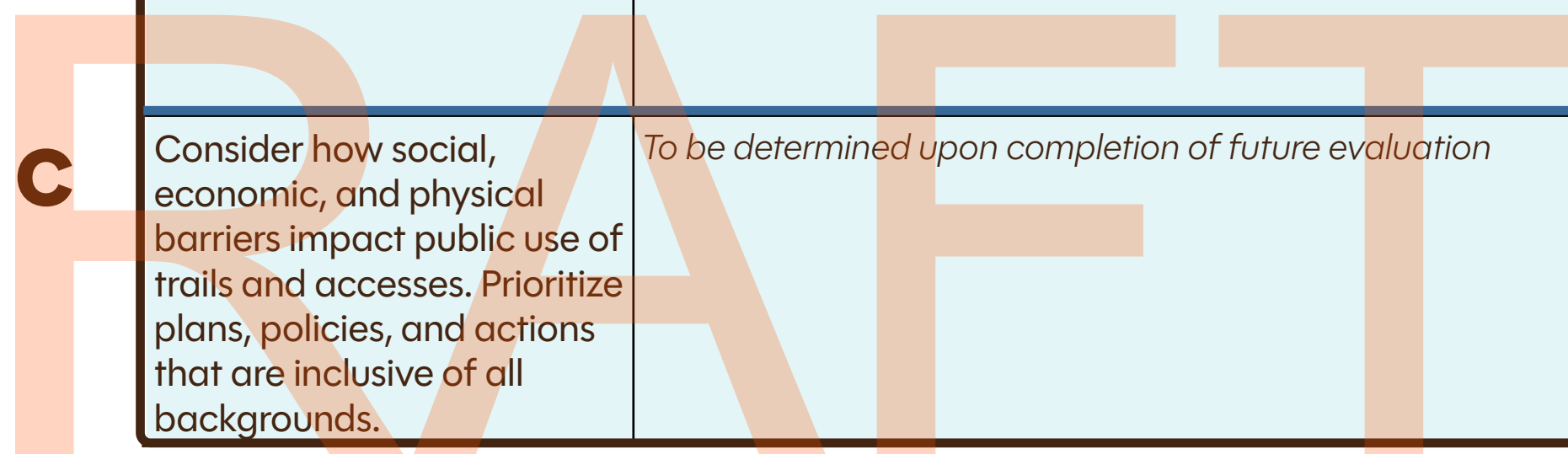


Table 9: Goal 2 Mandatory Actions, Recommendations, & Metrics

	Recommended Program Activities	Metric	Accountability & Responsible Parties
A	Create a staff position that addresses cultural, historic trail concerns include ka pa'akai analysis, historic trails, and cultural consultations with community organizations.	Maintain a list of high-priority trail issues related to these specific issues.	Maintain a protocol that: (1) the identity and scope of 'valued cultural, historical, or natural resources' in the petition area, including the extent to which traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights are exercised in the petition area; (2) the extent to which those resources – including traditional and customary native Hawaiian rights – will be affected or impaired by the proposed action; and (3) the feasible action, if any, to be taken to reasonably protect native Hawaiian rights if they are found to exist.
B	Execute cooperative agreements with private landowners along high use trails/ highly degraded areas	Miles of trails/ accesses built and maintained, and the entities performing the work	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>
	Form and maintain a volunteer action network. Continue to keep community groups informed of program progress and activities through newsletters, publications, and reports Keep property owners whose lands may include trails or accesses informed of Nā Ala Hele's work and intentions Encourage staff attendance of meetings with nonprofit organizations and interested individuals Explore private sources of financial and in-kind support	Number of volunteers and volunteer hours required to accomplish specified projects	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>
	Include more considerations for more inclusive access to developed trails	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	Prepare an ADA Compliant Self-Evaluation Plan and Transition Plan
C	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>

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GOAL 3

Management

To provide adequate management of all trails and accesses within Nā Ala Hele.

D

A

B

C

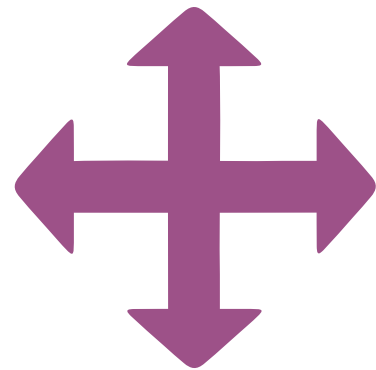
Objectives	Mandatory Actions	
Spearhead a Collaborative Network of Agency and Community Partners in a Trail Stewardship Program.	Classify each trail and access according to its function, type, theme, actual, and desired use.	
	Identify proposed, potential, and needed trails and accesses. This compilation is to include a listing of all recreational areas to which public access is unavailable or inadequate.	
	Establish volunteer advisory councils from whom advice and assistance should be solicited.	
Establish and implement a statewide visitor use management framework that balances access and natural resource preservation.	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	
Strive for the implementation of sustainable trails best practices for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of all Program trails.	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	

Table 10: Goal 3 Mandatory Actions, Recommendations, & Metrics

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	Recommended Program Activities	Metric	Accountability & Responsible Parties
A	Provide all departments, divisions, and agencies that have jurisdiction over trails/ accesses with information on Nā Ala Hele's priority trails and accesses	Numbers and types of trail / access facilities and amenities built and maintained, and the entities performing the work	Develop questionnaires and methods of obtaining public input that will be meaningful to program assessment
	Provide governmental cooperators in the inventory with copies of the inventory so that it can be used when permits and applications are reviewed	Estimated numbers of trail/ access users, user activities, and time spent on trails and accesses	Forestry and Wildlife Workers to provide primary support for volunteer training and educational aspects in coordination with the Volunteer Coordinator
	Use agreements to define the responsibilities of each cooperator in a trail/ access project	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>
B	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>
C	Staff attend annual trainings, conferences, seminars, and other opportunities to learn and practice sustainable and trail best practices.	Trail requires only light seasonal maintenance.	Monitoring strategies focused on ensuring water is not running down the trail (is "hydrologically invisible")
		Trail has a grade of less than 7%, is routed across sloping terrain, and may have short steeper segments with up to a 15% grade (as soil and rainfall patterns allow)	
		Trail is located on stable soils, not easily erodible, and designed to anticipate severe weather events and natural disasters	Monitoring strategies focused on evaluating trail tread for moisture retention, ponding, and sedimentation that would suggest poor water drainage and soil management.
		Trail is designed to follow the contour of the hillside and does not disrupt existing natural water flow patterns.	Monitor water on trails - volume, velocity, and dispersion rates

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GOAL 4

Expansion

To study and utilize a variety of options and approaches to expanding the trail and access network.

A

Objectives	Mandatory Actions	
Strategically focus on developing and connecting trail networks for greater connectivity, mobility, and recreational opportunities.	Examine in consultation with the Attorney General, legal issues as theories, options and doctrines by which trails and accesses may be placed into or retained in public use, and the extent of liability exposure.	
	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	

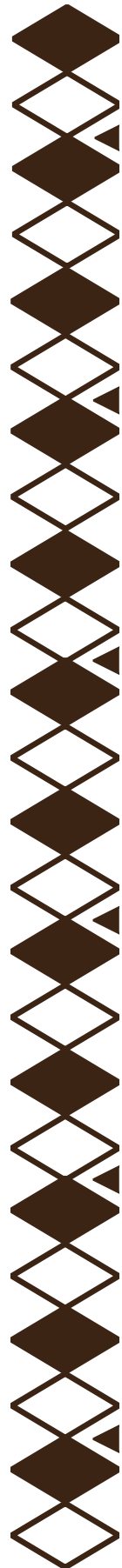
Table 11: Goal 4 Mandatory Actions, Recommendations, & Metrics

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GOAL 4

	Recommended Program Activities	Metric	Accountability & Responsible Parties
A	<i>To be determined upon completion of future evaluation</i>	Miles of newly acquired trails/ accesses for future development, and the entities performing the work	Create a survey to be completed by advisory council members and ex officio representatives.
	Collaborate with trail user groups to identify, construct, and maintain areas for more recreational trail uses (mountain bikes, equestrian, OHVs)	Revenues to the State's general fund generated from the sale of trail, access and road remnants	Produce annual reports on program accomplishments and their cost-effectiveness

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GOAL 5

Evaluation

To evaluate all aspects of the program in Order to identify where improvements need to be made.

	Objectives	Mandatory Actions	
A	Create and maintain an adaptive management strategy and protocols aligned with the Vision, Goals, and Objectives established in the Plan.	Submit an annual report to the Governor.	
B	Invest in the staff training and implementation of the highest standards and best practices for trail planning and management strategies.	Submit an annual report to the Governor.	

Table 12: Goal 5 Mandatory Actions, Recommendations, & Metrics

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GOAL 5

	Recommended Program Activities	Metric	Accountability & Responsible Parties
A	Identify the categories of information that need to be recorded and measured for evaluation purposes	Frequency of data collection	Forestry and Wildlife staff manage monitoring protocols including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Appropriate metrics for evaluating program success › Data collection methodology to be reviewed and administered by trail managers › Data collection resource needs – staff, funding, equipment, training › Responsible staff members to collect and analyze data
	Identify the methods to be used in order to obtain needed information	Extent of data collection	
	Fully integrate the recording of Nā Ala Hele's "overhead" time, activities, expenditures, and accomplishments into reporting formats used by DOFAW	Intensity of data collection (the level of training and sophistication required to collect clean data)	
B	Formalize Ka Paakai o Ka Aiana and ADA DCAB compliance into the Plan. Train staff on tasks and responsibilities as it relates to their roles.	Certificates completed by staff on disability and historic resources trainings	Prepare compliance documents as necessary by ADA DCAB standards.
	Provide relevant training opportunities to advisory council members. Train Nā Ala Hele staff in meeting the requirements of other agencies for trail and access projects.		Establish an assessment protocol that allows for review and consideration from the Island Advisory Councils

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