

A landscape photograph showing a wetland area in the foreground with a bird standing in the grass. In the middle ground, there is a body of water with some vegetation. The background features a large, green, conical mountain under a cloudy sky. The text "CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) has prepared the Kawainui Marsh Wetland Restoration and Habitat Enhancement Plan. The Plan identifies improvements planned for a portion of the Kawainui Marsh that would consist of: 1) wetland restoration and erosion control for a portion of Kawainui Marsh; 2) habitat restoration for native Hawaiian waterbirds, migratory shorebirds and waterfowl, and native fish species; 3) improvements to support DOFAW's maintenance operations; and 4) some public access to the marsh. Funding for the plan and implementation of restoration improvements was obtained via a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, and the State of Hawai'i.

### **1.1 Purpose for Restoration Plan**

The purpose for this conceptual restoration plan is to present the types of improvements and management activities that DOFAW plans to implement for the project area. Information in the plan will be used in the preparation of an environmental document to comply with the State and Federal environmental review procedures prescribed under Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Necessary land use approvals and permits would also be obtained using the plan. It is intended to guide the design and phased

implementation of restoration improvements for the project area by DOFAW over several years.

Restoration and habitat enhancement recommendation provided in this plan area part of an on-going progression of improvements being made to the Kawainui/Hāmākua Marsh complex beginning with the *Coastal Wetlands Acquisition, Planning, Development and Management of Hāmākua Wetlands* project in 1992. More recently, the U.S. Department of Army, Corps of Engineers will implement the *Kawainui Marsh Environmental Restoration Project* adjacent to the project area. Initial construction of the latter project is planned to begin in the summer of 2011. The success of ecosystem restoration improvements at Hāmākua Marsh has provided a framework for actions proposed in this plan for a portion of Kawainui Marsh.

### **1.2 Background on Kawainui Marsh**

Kawainui Marsh was recognized as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance in 2005 for its historical, biological, and cultural significance. The wetland encompasses about 830 acres of land and is the largest remaining wetland in the State of Hawai'i. Exhibit 1 provides a panoramic photo of the project area within the marsh.





Exhibit 1 – Panoramic Photo of Kawainui Marsh Project Area

The marsh is located in the Kailua district of the island of O‘ahu, and generally bordered by major roadways on each side including Kalaniana‘ole Highway and Kailua Road, Mōkapu Saddle Road, Kapa‘a Quarry Road, and Kīhāpai Street. Figure 1.1 identifies the location of the project area and entire marsh boundary in relation to Kailua.

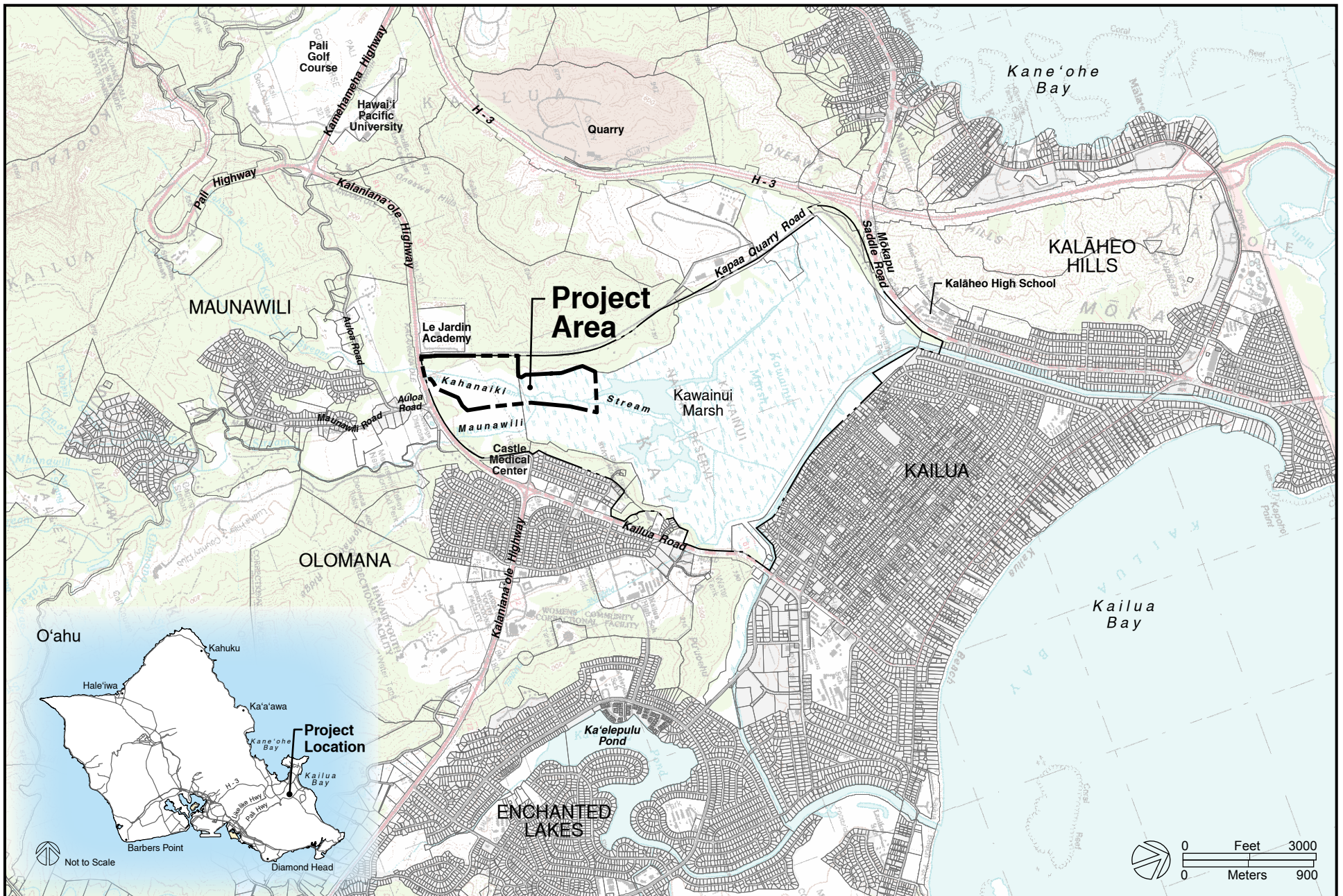
Kawainui Marsh has been identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as a waterbird recovery area because it provides habitat for four endemic and endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. It also plays a unique role in the Ko‘olau Poko region watershed as an important source of flood control and sediment filtration protecting urbanized areas of Kailua and the

Kailua Bay ecosystem through ground water recharge and improved water quality.

### **1.3 Scope of Work**

This plan serves as DOFAW’s guide for implementing restoration improvements within this project area. Plan components were developed based upon information from the DOFAW grant application used in obtaining funds. Future funding outside of this grant would also be pursued by DOFAW to implement restoration efforts, drainage infrastructure, and accessory improvements under this plan. The scope of work for preparation of this plan includes work tasks summarized below.





## Project Location Map

KAWAINUI MARSH WETLAND RESTORATION  
AND HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PLAN  
KAILUA, O'AHU

Figure 1.1

Prepared for:  
State of Hawai'i  
Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Division on Forestry and Wildlife



1. Research and collect information, maps, and other data associated with the Kawainui Marsh project area. Conduct field surveys of the project area to confirm information.
2. Consult with government agencies and identify permit and regulatory requirements, and issues to be addressed in the plan. Consult with the community through presentations and public informational meetings to solicit input and concerns.
3. Develop restoration plans for the wetland and upland areas based upon the information gathered and input received from agencies and the community.
4. Refine restoration plans based upon further agency and community input received as part of the environmental review process.