

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

October 25, 2019

Chairperson and Members
Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu Hawai'i

Land Board Members:

SUBJECT: REQUEST LAND BOARD APPROVE SUBMITTING AND
RECOMMENDING TO THE GOVERNOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE KAWAINUI-
HĀMĀKUA MASTER PLAN PROJECT; KAILUA, O'AHU, HAWAI'I

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Kawainui-Hāmākua project area is located in the Kailua ahupua'a on the windward side of O'ahu. The overall project area is comprised of three subareas; Kawainui, Hāmākua, and the Pu'uoeahu hillside. These areas are generally bounded by Mōkapu Saddle Road and Mōkapu Boulevard to the north, the Kawainui flood control levee and Hāmākua Drive to the east, Kailua Road and Kalaniana'ole Highway to the south, and Kapa'a Quarry Road to the west.

TAX MAP KEY: The project area is 986.02 acres and includes 12 State-owned parcels listed below.

4-2-003: 017 and 030
4-2-013: 005, 010, 022 and 038
4-2-016: 002 and 015
4-2-017: 020
4-2-103: 018 and 035
4-4-034: 025

SUMMARY:

This requests the Board approve submitting and recommending to the Governor acceptance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan Project.

This Board action is not approving the master plan project itself. Future land use permits would still be required that would be subject to the Board's review before project improvements can be implemented. The Board's action at this time is just limited to completion of the EIS process. The Board would be able to review the merits of project improvements as part of permit applications.

ITEM C- 2

The Final EIS is available electronically as Exhibit 1. A link to files associated with this document for download due to its size is available on DOFAW's website provided below:

Website link: <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/wildlife/kawainui-hamakua-eis/>

Files Available: 1. Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement.
(Two pdf files Parts 1 and 2)
2. Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
Appendices.
(Three pdf files Parts 1, 2 and 3)

BACKGROUND:

The State of Hawai'i (State), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), in partnership with the Division of State Parks (DSP), is proposing the Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan Project. The Kawainui-Hāmākua project area encompasses 986.02-acres of State-owned property located in the ahupua'a of Kailua on the Island of O'ahu. This project area generally includes; 1) the Kawainui Marsh State Wildlife Sanctuary along with other wetland and surrounding upland areas not within this sanctuary (collectively referred to as Kawainui); 2) Ulupō Heiau State Historical Park (SHP); 3) Kawainui State Park Reserve (SPR); 4) Hāmākua Marsh State Wildlife Sanctuary (referred to as Hāmākua); and 5) Pu'uoeahu hillside. Exhibit 2 includes a Project Vicinity Map that identifies this project area.

The Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan project was initiated to provide the State DLNR, DOFAW and DSP with a master plan to generally guide programming and implementation of future improvements needed within the Kawainui-Hāmākua project area. Proposed improvements are needed to support DOFAW and DSP's efforts to achieve agency missions, to sustain, protect, and enhance the natural and cultural resources associated with this area, improve public access and outdoor recreational opportunities that align with sustainability objectives, support cultural practices, and increase stewardship opportunities.

Agency Responsibility and Mission

DOFAW has been working with various agencies along with community groups to devise strategies, plans, and funding sources for the protection and management of natural and cultural resources to Kawainui and Hāmākua. DOFAW's responsibilities within their jurisdiction of the project area include:

- Natural Heritage Responsibilities: Manage wildlife sanctuaries, protect endangered species, and protect and develop water resources;
- Flood Control Responsibilities: Protect and enhance the marsh's flood control capabilities by maintaining and monitoring flood control structures and water quality, and removing vegetation;
- Cultural Resources Responsibilities: Manage and protect cultural resources, and increase stewardship opportunities; and
- Education and Recreation Responsibilities: Create outdoor recreation and educational programs to improve understanding of native wildlife and cultural resources.

Over 96 acres of land are managed by the DSP, which works as a partner with DOFAW. DSP's mission is to manage and administer state parks and land that have high natural, cultural, and scenic value. DSP oversees passive outdoor recreation and heritage programs to allow the public to appreciate and understand these statewide resources. Their responsibilities include:

- Resource Management Responsibilities: Manage and maintain natural and cultural resources.
- Education and Recreation Responsibilities: Create and maintain passive outdoor recreational facilities, and implement interpretive programs to improve the understanding and appreciation of Hawai'i's unique natural and cultural resources.

Purpose and Need for Project

The purpose and need for proposed improvements stem from the following primary themes.

1. Natural Resource Restoration and Habitat Enhancement. The vast majority of the project area includes wetlands that need restoration actions to deal with: 1) the overgrowth of invasive vegetation; 2) flood control requirements; 3) enhancement of habitat for endangered waterbird species; 4) enhancement of waterbodies as suitable habitat for aquatic biota. In addition, upland reforestation is needed to address: 1) overgrowth of invasive vegetation; and 2) erosion control for surface runoff into the wetlands from upland areas. Improvements are also needed to support DOFAW's management and maintenance operations in the project area.
2. Cultural Practices and Stewardship. The Kawainui-Hāmākua area is an important repository of cultural tradition and historical resources. The area is culturally significant to native Hawaiians and the public. Providing opportunities to establish long-term use of specific lands to support cultural practices, stewardship, and educational opportunities is needed. Protecting and managing cultural resources is a core agency mission for both DOFAW and DSP.
3. Public Access for Outdoor Recreation and Educational Opportunities. Increasing opportunities for passive outdoor recreational use is needed to comply with agency missions and regulatory requirements. Increased and improved public access supports educational and stewardship opportunities that support DOFAW and DSP's management of resources in the area.
4. Resource Management. Effective management of resources with increased public access is critical for the public interest and for the protection of this resource.

Proposed improvements support several project objectives helping DOFAW and DSP fulfill their agency mission, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Section 6(f) requirements, and wildlife sanctuary objectives for current and future generations. Master plan components to sustain and enhance the natural and cultural resources address the following categories:

1. Wetland restoration, upland reforestation and habitat enhancement.
 - Restore and manage wetlands by increasing open water areas, reducing invasive vegetation, and creating mudflats;
 - Improve habitat to support recovery of endangered waterbirds;
 - Improve suitability of Kawainui's streams as habitat for aquatic biota;
 - Restore wetland ecology and its function as flood control; and
 - Restore upland areas by reducing invasive vegetation, reforestation with native species, and implementing erosion control measures.

2. Providing for cultural practices and stewardship opportunities.
 - Recognize Kawainui-Hāmākua’s cultural and historical significance;
 - Enhance and manage existing historic and cultural features (e.g. Ulupō Heiau);
 - Incorporate a native Hawaiian presence at Kawainui; and
 - Integrate cultural practices, educational programming, and resource stewardship opportunities.
3. Increasing public access for passive outdoor recreational and educational opportunities.
 - Create opportunities for public enjoyment of natural and cultural resources;
 - Provide trails to designate public access areas and minimize effects on resources;
 - Provide support facilities for educational programs, service learning projects, and areas open to the public; and
 - Promote a sense of ownership and stewardship through participation in restoration efforts, maintenance activities, and educational programs.
4. Managing the resource and public access.
 - Utilize phased approach in opening up areas available for public access;
 - Provide structures to support management of areas (e.g. fencing);
 - Increase coordination with State DLNR, Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE) for monitoring and enforcement of regulations along with non-profit organizations stewardship partnerships to supplement management activities; and
 - Increase staffing to support management activities.

In 2005, Kawainui-Hāmākua was designated a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention, raising its visibility as a significant natural and cultural resource. The Ramsar philosophy includes the “wise use” concept, which is defined as “the maintenance of their ecological character, achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development.” In keeping with this mission, DOFAW and DSP are working toward providing more opportunities for the public to access Kawainui with trails and wildlife viewing areas. Ramsar also supports sustainable tourism, recreational use, and cultural practices within designated wetlands.

Background on Previous Planning Efforts

Over the years, several planning documents have been prepared for Kawainui, including a master plan prepared in 1994 that was an outgrowth of a 1983 DLNR resource management plan that focused on the long-term sustainment of Kawainui. The current master plan project reflects many of the improvements proposed under those documents. A summary of these prior efforts is provided.

1. The Kawai Nui Heritage Plan (1982). This plan prepared in 1982 reflected input from many organizations belonging to an ad hoc committee for Kawainui. Recommendations from that plan were incorporated into the 1994 master plan later developed for Kawainui. Notable elements from this plan included:
 - a. A visitor information center and observation area (at former Kailua Drive-In).
 - b. Trail access at Nā Pōhaku o Hauwahine and a perimeter canoe trail.
 - c. A gathering place at the model airplane field area for cultural and educational activities, interpretive base for a trail system, ethno-botanical gardens, and shelter and restroom facilities.

- d. Interpretive center with amphitheater at Ulupō Heiau historical park to support cultural programs, shelters and toilets, and serve as a headquarters for program-related events.
- e. Observation and educational programming area for Hāmākua with a shelter.
2. Resource Management Plan for Kawainui Marsh (1983). The plan established a natural heritage area at Kawainui, and offered multi-resource management components (economic, ecological, and cultural).
3. Kawai Nui Marsh Master Plan (1994). This Plan recommended enhancement and management improvements for three areas: 1) preservation actions; 2) master plan improvements; and 3) management actions. Recommendations in the 1994 plan included waterbird enhancement areas, a visitor center, a cultural park at Ulupō Heiau, ethnobotanical gardens, cultural parks, recreational parks at Kalāheo, Mokulana, and Wai‘auia (the former ITT site), and a pedestrian trail with overlooks around the perimeter of Kawainui.
4. Kawainui Educational Center (1998). The Hawai‘i Audubon Society published a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) proposing an education center at Kawainui on a 5-acre area where DOFAW’s existing management research station is now located.
5. Management Plan for Kawainui Marsh (2002). The State DLNR, Land Division completed an EA in 2000 and obtained CDUP approval in 2002 for improvements at Kawainui. The project included habitat restoration, vegetation management, restoration of riparian habitat, fencing, and relocation of existing facilities (e.g. electrical lines), vegetation processing, development of trails and interpretive areas, and construction of sediment basins.
6. Kawainui Gateway Park (2002). The City and County of Honolulu (City) obtained entitlements for the Kawainui Gateway Park project across from Kalāheo High School. Improvements included a comfort station, parking lot with access road, educational pavilion and viewing platform, open space canoe storage area, canoe access to Kawainui Canal, and a pedestrian bridge over the canal.
7. Kawainui Marsh Pathway Plan (2003). The City completed an EA proposing a multi-purpose pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists along Kapa‘a Quarry Road, a pedestrian trail below Kapa‘a Quarry Road extending from a visitor center site along the highway and around the Mokulana Peninsula, and boardwalks and viewing platforms.
8. Kawainui Marsh Environmental Restoration Project (2009). The U.S. Corps of Engineers completed a Supplemental EA proposing to restore habitat by creating 24 acres of mudflats and shallow ponds, installing predator control fencing, and constructing two access roads for maintenance activities. This was completed in 2013.
9. Ulupō Heiau Cultural Resources Management and Landscape Plan (2011). A cultural resources management and landscape plan was prepared for Ulupō Heiau SHP to establish a vision and purpose for improving cultural resources in the area.
10. Kawainui Marsh Wetland Restoration Project (2012). DOFAW obtained approvals for wetland restoration and upland reforestation on 80 acres in the Kahanaiki area.

Reductions to Master Plan Improvements

Improvements included in the Final EIS have evolved during the planning and environmental review process to address community input and concerns raised. Overall, the level of improvements has been reduced significantly since an initial draft master plan was presented to

the public to address community concerns with providing public access and accommodating visitors. A summary of the reduction in the project is provided.

1. Reductions Since Draft Master Plan. An EIS Preparation Notice (EISPN) identified project revisions from the draft master plan. Some improvements were eliminated, others modified, and others were postponed so that priority improvements can first be implemented. A summary of main revisions by subareas is provided.
 - a. Kahanaiki to Nā Pōhaku-Kapa'a.
 - Eliminated a DOFAW maintenance access road across the wetland and a boat launch ramp at a vegetation processing area intended to support restoration and management activities.
 - Added a kauhale concept into the Educational Center complex with the addition of six traditional Hawaiian structures, games area, and gardens of native and Polynesian-introduced plants.
 - b. Kapa'a to Kalāheo Subarea
 - Eliminated a section of the pedestrian path from the City's Model Airplane Park northeast up to the Kalāheo park site.
 - Eliminated the pedestrian bridge across Kawainui Canal from Kalāheo park site to levee.
 - c. Wai'auia to Mokulana Subarea
 - Eliminated a rest room, parking lot and access road improvements serving the Ulupō Heiau SHP site.
 - Eliminated observational decks along a section of the pedestrian path.
 - d. Hāmākua and Pu'uoeahu Subarea
 - Eliminated a trailhead along Pu'uoeahu hillside that was connecting to Kailua Road.
 - Eliminated public use of trails at Pu'uoeahu. Limited strictly for DOFAW-authorized management and program activities.
2. Reductions Since Draft EIS. Since publication of the Draft EIS, further reductions to project improvements have been implemented to address concerns with providing public access and accommodating visitors. Reducing public access and passive outdoor recreation would subsequently reduce the projected number of visitors. A summary of main revisions by subareas is provided.
 - a. Kahanaiki Area
 - Removed a pedestrian trail leading to Mokulana peninsula and bridge over Kahanaiki Stream.
 - b. Pōhakea to Nā Pōhaku o Hauwahine Area
 - Eliminated segments of the pedestrian trail within the upland area. Only foot trails would be supported.
 - Reduced total building floor area at the kauhale complex at Pōhakea from about 8,250 sf to 5,300 sf by reducing the number of proposed structures.
 - DSP plans to first provide an off-street parking lot, restroom facility (350 sf), and open pavilion (350 sf) to support programs either as an interim or permanent basis before proceeding with an education center.
 - c. Kapa'a Area
 - Eliminated the pedestrian trail section along Kapa'a Quarry Road from Nā Pōhaku to the City's Model Airplane Park.
 - Reduced total building floor area for the cultural center at Kapa'a from

- about 9,600 sf to 7,200 sf by reducing the number of structures.
- Reduced the number of vehicle driveway access locations serving the cultural center at Kapa‘a to two instead of three.
- d. Kapa‘a to Kalāheo Area
 - Eliminated hale wa‘a structure and canoe storage at the Kalāheo park site.
 - Restricting canoe launch into Kawainui Canal to only schools by permit.
- e. Wai‘auia to Ulupō Heiau Area
 - Eliminated pedestrian trail from the levee to Ulupō Heiau.
- f. DOFAW Management Station to Mokulana Area
 - Eliminated two observation decks and interpretive pavilion.
 - Eliminated pedestrian trail and two viewing pavilions at Mokulana. Mokulana peninsula to only be used for DOFAW management activities.
 - Eliminated pedestrian trail from Mokulana to Kahanaiki upland area.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Improvements proposed in the Final EIS consist of initiatives supporting: 1) natural resource management; 2) cultural resource management; and 3) educational and recreational programs. Exhibit 3 includes a conceptual plan identifying improvements included in the Final EIS.

Natural Resource Management Activities

- A. Wetland Restoration. Wetland restoration at Kawainui would involve the gradual removal of invasive vegetation and restoring the area with native wetland vegetation. Exhibit 4 includes a conceptual plan to open surface water flows, establish seasonal mud flats, and allow streams to resume their natural course through the area. Restoration work at Hāmākua includes creating additional wetland areas (up to about 3 to 4 acres) along the mauka end of the wetland by lowering the elevation (cutting) of adjacent upland areas. Other work planned would consist of maintenance activities and improving waterbird habitat.
- B. Upland Reforestation. Upland reforestation would consist of gradual replacement of invasive trees and vegetation with native vegetation. A hybrid ecosystem model for forest restoration is planned to allow native and existing non-native species to mix in a transitional period that benefits native biodiversity and aids re-establishing a robust native forest.
- C. Storm Water Runoff Improvements. Existing drainage culverts and low lying flood prone areas along Kapa‘a Quarry Road would be repaired or improved to mitigate stormwater runoff. Culvert repair could involve replacement or reconstruction with connection to new piping with headwall along with a grouted rip rap apron to mitigate discharge and erosion of upland areas.
- D. Improvements Supporting DOFAW Operations. Several improvements are proposed to support DOFAW management and maintenance operations.
 1. Improvements to predominantly unimproved existing access roads are proposed and would utilize compacted gravel, soil, or other previous surface material. Only DOFAW vehicles or other authorized users would be allowed to use the roads. A bridge would be needed to cross Maunawili Stream to connect access roads serving DOFAW’s management station and the Mokulana peninsula.
 2. An existing predator control program primarily for mongoose and feral cats would continue and be expanded as areas are restored.

3. Perimeter fencing with signage is proposed around project area boundaries to deter unauthorized entrance, and physically identify areas under DOFAW or DSP jurisdiction. Fencing would typically consist of about 4-foot-tall wire. Vehicle driveway accesses would be gated.
4. Construction of permanent and improved facilities (e.g. storage, office) at DOFAW's Kawainui Management and Research Station would support the operation and management of Kawainui.

Cultural Resource Management Activities

Cultural resource management activities are intended to promote cultural practices, education, and stewardship. Proposed improvements seek to create opportunities for non-profit organizations to establish a broader permanent native Hawaiian presence in the project area. The project would allow activities at Kawainui for native Hawaiian traditional cultural practices consisting of: 1) education; 2) environmental stewardship; 3) performing and language arts; and 4) agriculture.

Nā Pōhaku o Hauwahine and Ulupō Heiau State Historic Park, are already active with some restoration activities and cultural practices. The project supports continued cultural landscape improvements and provides support facilities (green house and hālau) at Ulupō Heiau.

Three new areas are proposed (Kapa'a Cultural Center, and Wai'auia Cultural Center, Kauhale Complex at Pōhakea) to provide opportunities for non-profit organizations to establish cultural centers to support native Hawaiian cultural practices, educational programs, and stewardship opportunities. Each site has a different cultural focus. Areas would be developed and operated by non-profit organizations selected through the State procurement process (e.g. Request for Qualifications / Proposals Solicitation).

Educational and Recreational Improvements

Improvements supporting passive outdoor recreation include pedestrian trails, comfort stations, parking lots, and accessory facilities (e.g. observation deck, pavilion). Exhibit 5 shows areas proposed for trails and parking lots. Trails would consist of: 1) pedestrian trails consisting of unpaved or improved trails; and 2) foot trails consisting of unimproved trails similar to hiking trails. Improved trail sections would have permeable surfaces using materials such as gravel or Grass Crete. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations require that some new trails designed for pedestrian be made accessible. Departure from specific accessibility guidelines is permitted where terrain or the prevailing construction practices make ADA compliance infeasible, or if there is potential harm to cultural, historic, religious, or significant natural features or characteristics.

Observation decks and shelters would provide public opportunity to view Kawainui and its resources and also support educational program activities. Students would use the trails to access areas where hands-on learning could occur, and observation decks and open pavilions would provide locations for instruction along with shelter from the elements. Comfort stations would consist of modular prefabricated structures with either two or four toilets. These small single-story structures would vary in size depending on the number of toilets they contain and would be designed similar to other facilities used in other park sites. Wastewater could be

processed using a leach field or newer green technology (e.g. self-contained restroom with or without utilities).

Parking lots would be designed using pervious surfaces, such as gravel, to encourage compatibility with the surrounding environment. Filter strips and bioswales would also be incorporated in parking lot design, slowing stormwater runoff, reducing sediment transport, and increasing infiltration. Other site improvements would incorporate low impact design (LID) elements that aim to maintain natural, pre-development hydrology.

An educational center for visitors is proposed by DSP at Pōhakea. This facility would function as both an educational and interpretive center and is envisioned to include space for informational and educational materials, interpretive exhibits and displays, restrooms, administrative offices, vehicle parking, and other accessory support facilities. The educational center would serve as a starting point for visitors to Kawainui, and as a base location for accessing pedestrian trails in surrounding areas along Kahanaiki and at Nā Pōhaku. However, DSP plans to first provide an off-street parking lot, restroom facility, and open pavilion at Pōhakea to support programs either as an interim or potentially a permanent basis before proceeding with the education center. These improvements would be sited in generally the same location as the education center.

DOFAW and DSP propose to create opportunities to allow specific venues at the project area to support an integrated program of education, scientific research, service learning and community stewardship. The program would be based on three themes common to managing wildlife sanctuaries, historical parks, and passive recreation areas: 1) natural and cultural resources; 2) community stewardship; and 3) education. The curriculum and activities would target elementary through graduate level students in partnership with non-profit organizations, schools, and universities. School groups can participate in scientific data collection at the project site. Students would learn to analyze data collected and help create long-term data sets that could be used by DOFAW in existing or planned resource management projects.

DOFAW currently sponsors service learning projects to provide students and adults with “hands-on” knowledge about basic wetland functions, native/invasive species, and management techniques for restoring wetland functions. DOFAW would continue to work with established partners to expand educational and service learning programming. DOFAW and DSP will work with current and future potential non-profit organizations to support area maintenance as part of community stewardship opportunities. Some areas proposed for use by a non-profit organization for cultural use and practices (e.g. Wai‘auia and Kapa‘a Cultural Centers) will include stewardship of surrounding areas in partnership with DOFAW and DSP.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Several alternatives to the proposed project were identified and considered, but eventually eliminated from further consideration due to several factors. These included the following:

1. No Action Alternative: This alternative involves not implementing proposed improvements that are not already entitled or already permitted as part of management and operations within the project area. This alternative was eliminated because it would not meet the purpose and need for the project. Additional wetland restoration and upland reforestation improvements are needed beyond that already permitted to

improve the function of Kawainui for flood protection, enhance waterbird habitat, and address non-native invasive vegetation. This alternative does not meet Section 6(f) LWCF requirements for improving public access and outdoor recreational use of areas, or support educational programming. This alternative does not support traditional and customary rights of native Hawaiians for cultural practices under Article XII of the State Constitution.

2. Resource Management Activities: This alternative involves implementing only improvements directly associated with resource management activities. No improvements supporting public access, outdoor recreation, or cultural practices would be included. This alternative was eliminated because it would not satisfy key elements of the project purpose and need or adequately comply with regulatory requirements similar to that discussed for the No Action Alternative. This alternative does not meet LWCF 6(f) requirements for public access and outdoor recreation, nor support traditional and customary rights of native Hawaiians for cultural purposes under Article XII of the State Constitution.
3. Variations in Public Access. These alternatives evaluated modifications to public access to address community concerns with visitors and public access at Kawainui, and the reasons for their elimination is summarized.
 - a. Public Access Without Education Center. This alternative evaluated allowing public access without an education center and kauhale complex at Pōhakea and two public parking lots planned along Kapa‘a Quarry Road. Under this alternative, the public would be permitted access within the Kahanaiki to Nā Pōhaku upland section. This was eliminated because it would allow unrestricted and unmanaged public access within the Kahanaiki to Nā Pōhaku upland areas. Reasonable and managed public access is necessary, and this alternative would potentially increase public safety concerns and impacts on the environment.
 - b. Variations in Accessory Support Facilities. This alternative evaluated providing less accessory support facilities (e.g. restrooms, pavilion, trails) for public access and outdoor recreation. This alternative was eliminated because variations would result in minimal changes to environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. Variations would have no significant change to projected visitors to the project site or the type of activities occurring, such as wildlife viewing. Such improvements are also typically exempt from environmental review under DLNR’s exemption list because they are accessory support and minor facilities that do not generate significant impacts. Restrooms and pavilions are important for both visitors and students participating in educational programs and eliminating these would deprive the public of basic and reasonable conveniences.
 - c. Variations in Hawaiian Cultural Presence. This alternative considered reducing the number of new cultural centers proposed but was eliminated because it does not affect visitors (tourist) or cause negative effects related to public access. The centers proposed at Wai‘auia and Kapa‘a would not be open to the general public, and would thus not attract tourists and day visitors because their use would only be for guests participating in programs and activities conducted by the non-profit organizations. Organizations managing these centers would not be allowed to accommodate commercial tours. The two centers are intended to support different areas of cultural practices, support educational programming, increase stewardship of the area, and support cultural practices. The kauhale complex at

Pōhakea would be open to the public because it serves as an interpretive cultural component with the education center. The number of structures proposed for the kauhale complex has been reduced as part of the project. However, this change should have minimal influence on the number of visitors to the area.

4. Other Alternatives Considered. Alternative plans were suggested by certain organizations for consideration. These alternatives were eliminated from further consideration for various reasons, such as not supporting the project's purpose and need, or were not feasible and practicable to implement.

- a. Kawainui Marsh Restoration Plan, Priorities, Protocols, and Participation. This alternative was supported by the Kailua Neighborhood Board. The concepts under programs and operations, and resource management and restoration were generally consistent with the proposed project, which are related to wetland restoration, removal of alien species, preserving historic sites, and habitat enhancement. However, there were significant differences in the areas of proposed public access and cultural practices. In summary, the common theme proposed was eliminating most, if not all reasonable public access, support facilities within the project site, and facilities supporting cultural practices. Only superficial accommodations were proposed for public access and cultural practices and did not provide a reasonable alternative to truly and practicably support public access, outdoor recreation, and a permanent presence for cultural practices.

Without support facilities, allowing and managing public access would be difficult to accomplish in a reasonable and safe manner for the public. This alternative provides no reasonable or practicable support for cultural practices. For example, a proposed hula mound and small hale (15x20 feet) at Wai'auia to accommodate "occasional" activities do not support establishing a long-term and permanent cultural presence to support cultural practices, stewardship, and educational opportunities by non-profit organizations and cultural practitioners. Such a mound and hale only accommodate temporary use for activities, and do not provide a fair, sensible or logical alternative.

- b. Ho'olaulima Recommendations. The collective group of organizations known as "Ho'olaulima iā Kawainui" prepared a document after a series of community meetings, titled *Interpreting Kawainui-Hāmākua Recommendations for the Kawainui Master Plan Update* to provide suggestions as part of the master plan's development. Alternative education center sites involved either displacing existing commercial businesses along Hāmākua Drive, a commercial building, or a boating business. These alternative sites were not feasible or practicable because they are privately-owned properties, and the displacement of businesses is not justifiable as a prudent and practicable alternative for DSP. These sites are also separated away from Kawainui and would not support the education center's purpose to provide visitor orientation, guidance of restrictions, etc.
- c. Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle (LKOC) Alternative. The LKOC proposed an Alternative Plan to the project. Some of the themes proposed were consistent with major project components, such as wetland restoration, upland reforestation, and enhancing habitat for endangered waterbirds. However, other suggestions did not practicably support the project purpose and need or agency missions, Ramsar

objectives, and the need to provide reasonable public access for all. Consequently, these other components of the Alternative Plan were eliminated from further consideration.

The plan instead proposed restricted, limited, and superficial access for the public as justification for avoiding negative impacts on the Kawainui and Hāmākua wetlands, watershed, waterbird habitat, and archaeological sites. However, the DEIS results showed project improvements would not have an adverse effect on these areas. The project does not provide privately-owned, for-profit commercial operations (e.g. tour buses), or activities for visitors as suggested by the Alternative Plan. It should be noted that Ramsar supports sustainable tourism, recreational use, and cultural practices within designated international wetlands of importance. The suggested form of public access does not support LWCF requirements for public access and outdoor recreational opportunities for all. Although the Alternative Plan supports preservation of historic and cultural resources, it does not provide many suggestions supporting reasonable and practicable opportunities for establishing a permanent presence for cultural practices, educational programs, and stewardship of the area.

EIS PROCESS AND CONSULTATIONS:

An extensive project scoping and community outreach process was implemented for this project since its initiation in 2011 to solicit public input that helped refine the project purpose and need, development of project improvements, and refinements to improvement that are addressed in the Final EIS. Input from the community helped identify the type of activities desired, improvements needed to support activities, and issues and areas of concerns from the community. The consultation process included five public informational meetings, numerous meetings with various community organizations, and participation in other public events to distribute project information (e.g. World Wetlands Day) that are summarized below.

1. DOFAW and DSP held four public informational meetings at Le Jardin Academy's Wang Auditorium in Kailua. Three meetings involved in the project's scoping process, and the fourth public informational meeting after publication of the Draft EIS. DOFAW and DSP also participated in a fifth public informational meeting (Envisioning Kawainui) sponsored by others to further facilitate community input and discussions.
2. Many meetings with the Ho'olaulima group were held throughout the process to obtain their input, brief them on the project and discuss project concepts. This network includes representatives from several community organizations, including 'Ahahui Mālama i ka Lōkahi, Hawai'i Audubon Society, Hawai'i's Thousand Friends, Kailua Hawaiian Civic Club, Kailua Historical Society, Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle, Pacific American Foundation, and Windward Ahupua'a Alliance.
3. Several presentations were given to the Kailua Neighborhood Board (KNB), the KNB's Planning, Zoning, and Environment Committee, and other KNB members have attended several of the Ho'olaulima meetings.
4. Many meetings were held with various native Hawaiian organizations from Kailua due to their strong interest in Kawainui as an important cultural place, and their desire for re-establishing a permanent Hawaiian cultural presence at Kawainui.

5. A presentation on the project was given to the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) at their annual meeting held in 2014. The AHCC unanimously adopted a Resolution supporting the project's master plan.
6. A presentation was given to the State's Environmental Council that was scheduled at the request of Hawai'i's Thousand Friends. The former President of the KNB also served as Vice President of the Environmental Council. Other members from the KNB, and representatives from Hawai'i's Thousand Friends and Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle were also present.
7. Other consultations included a presentation to the Hawai'i Audubon Society at a 2014 meeting, providing a booth at Ramsar World Wetland Day events, and DLNR meetings and site visits with representatives from Hawai'i's Thousand Friends, and the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR ISSUES:

The main issues associated with this project stem from general opposition to visitors to Kailua by some organizations and members of the community, and any project improvements that support public access (visitors) to Kawainui. Opposition to visitors and public access can be attributed to the increase in the level of visitors to Kailua has experienced over the years, and general opposition to visitors to Kailua as a whole by some. Therefore, improving public access within designated upland areas and providing support facilities (e.g. education center, trails, restrooms, pavilions) generate concerns and opposition. Even a managed approach proposed to improve public access may not satisfy some organizations and community members.

Many members of the community and other organizations do support managed public access along with necessary support facilities. People see the value in improving public access because it supports educational programs, cultural practices, passive outdoor recreation, and stewardship opportunities. Input received from community meetings and comment letters also reflect this strong perspective supporting managed public access and the associated benefits.

There are no long-term adverse effects resulting from the project that cannot be avoided, minimized or mitigated. Facilities and public access improvements are located within upland areas and would not adversely impact historic sites or environmental resources. Best management practices, proposed management practices, and other minimization and mitigative measures discussed in the Final EIS would avoid long-term adverse effects on the environment. Overall, the scale and type of improvements proposed are minor and would not have a significant impact. Several improvements (e.g. restrooms, pavilion) would be exempt under DLNR's exemption list under Chapter 343, HRS. The projected level of visitors is reasonable and manageable consisting of about 105 persons a day participating in educational (e.g. students) and cultural programs, and about 200 visitors a day (e.g. wildlife viewing). Only about 48,000 square feet of floor area is proposed (e.g. cultural centers, education center, restrooms, DOFAW offices and storage, etc.) for structures within about 70 acres of upland areas, reflecting a very low building area ratio of about 1.6%. DOFAW operations account for 31% of this floor area, and cultural centers 56%.

Unfortunately, misinformation on the cultural centers and other proposed improvements have been spread throughout the community through social media that have contributed to the public's misunderstanding of this project. People have developed their own opinions based upon this

misinformation or from what they have heard from others, while not understanding the real purpose and activities being proposed. Many of the comment letters received reflect this misperception of the project. One of the primary purposes for the last public informational meeting held during the Draft EIS comment period was to clarify the project for the community due to misconceptions from misinformation.

The Kawainui-Hāmākua project site is a Ramsar wetland of international importance. Ramsar supports sustainable tourism, recreational use, and cultural practices, and views sustainable tourism as maintaining a high level of visitor satisfaction, ensuring a meaningful experience, and raising awareness about sustainability issues. The project includes improvements supporting these aspects of sustainable tourism recognized under Ramsar and has eliminated many improvements through this environmental review process to address community concerns.

One of the purposes for the project is to improve public access and outdoor recreation to meet regulatory requirements along with agency missions. The interests of the entire State of Hawai'i need to be considered because Kawainui is a state resource of international importance for the entire public to enjoy. The project supports the Public Trust Doctrine of the Hawai'i State Constitution, by conserving and protecting this natural resource for the benefit of present and future generations. Project initiatives also promote the utilization of this resource in a sustainable and managed manner by providing public access, educational programs, and stewardship consistent with the conservation and development of resources under the Constitution. It also supports traditional and customary rights of native Hawaiian's for cultural purposes under Article XII of the State Constitution.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FINAL EIS ACCEPTANCE:

This Final EIS was prepared in compliance with the State environmental review process prescribed under Chapter 343, (Environmental Impact Statements), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), as amended (State of Hawai'i, 2007), and Title 11, Chapter 200 (Environmental Impact Statement Rules), Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR) (State of Hawai'i, 2008).

The purpose of the State environmental review process is to alert decision-makers to significant environmental effects that may result from implementation of the project. An EIS is an informational document to disclose the environmental effects of a Proposed Action to permit informed decision-making under §343-2, HRS. This Final EIS addresses the environmental effects of the project throughout the document in compliance with State regulations. The document fully addresses content requirements as set forth in Chapter 343, HRS, and sections 11-200-17 and 11-200-18, HAR, as applicable.

This Board action is not approving the master plan project itself. Future land use permits would still be required that would be subject to the Board's review before project improvements can be implemented. The Board would be able to review the merits of project improvements as part of those future permit applications.

Under §11-200-17(e), HAR, a Draft EIS shall contain a project description, but need not supply extensive detail beyond that needed for evaluation and review of the environmental impact. Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS discussed details of project improvements and activities, showed

conceptual site plans with building locations and footprints, and included exhibits and other supporting descriptions to provide a reasonable understanding of proposed improvements so that likely impacts could be identified. Additional project details and information added to this Final EIS allow significant impacts to be reasonably identified and assessed.

A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIS is included in Chapter 8 of the Final EIS. Reproductions of all letters received containing substantive questions, comments, or recommendations on the Draft EIS along with written responses to such comments have been provided and are reproduced in the Final EIS Appendix. The Final EIS includes revisions to the Draft EIS to incorporate and address substantive comments received during the consultation and review process. The Final EIS text was written in a format that allows the reader to easily distinguish changes made to the text of the Draft EIS.

Based upon prior State judicial review, the Final EIS does not need be exhaustive to the point of discussing all possible details bearing on the Proposed Action under the “rule of reason” standard. The utility and validity of this standard was established through prior legal cases evaluating the application of both federal and State of Hawai‘i environmental regulations. An EIS is considered adequate if it has been compiled in good faith and sets forth sufficient information to enable the decision-maker to consider the environmental factors involved, and to make a reasoned decision after balancing the risks of harm to the environment against the benefits to be derived by the proposed action.

This Final EIS sets forth sufficient project information to enable decision-makers to consider environmental factors and to make a reasoned decision after balancing the risks of harm to the environment against the benefits to be derived by the Proposed Action. The Final EIS is adequate in meeting this criteria. The assessment results and documentation included adequately identify and address project effects and are clearly not erroneous.

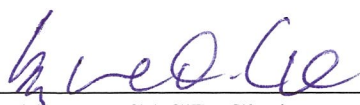
Therefore, it is recommended that the Board approve submitting the Final EIS for the Kawainui-Hāmākua Master Plan Project to the State Office of Environmental Quality Control for publication of its availability in *The Environmental Notice* and transmit this Final EIS to the Governor with recommendation for Acceptance.

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID G. SMITH, Administrator
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



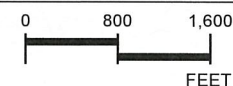
SUZANNE D. CASE, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources

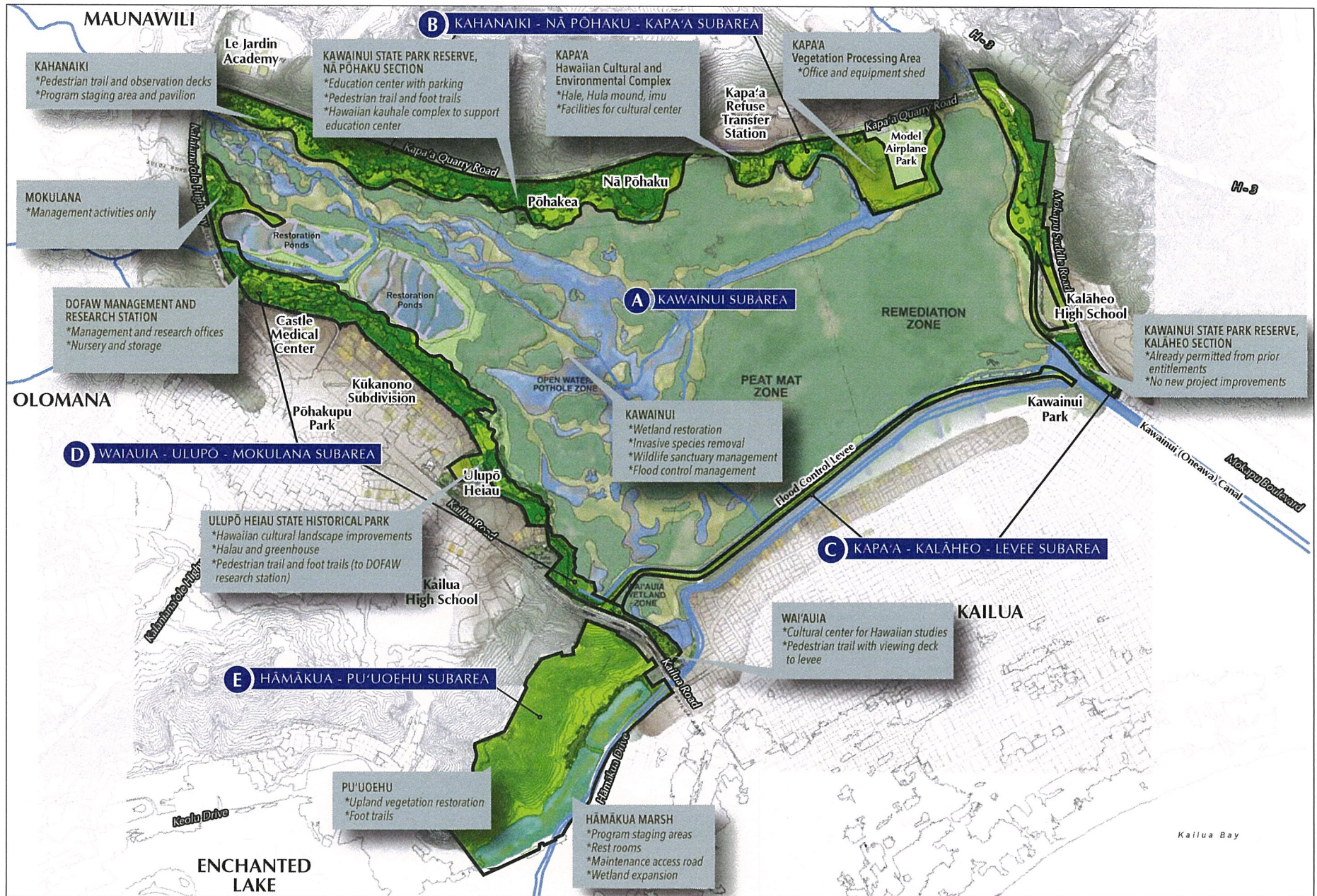


Source: State of Hawai'i GIS

Kawainui - Hāmākua Master Plan Project Exhibit 2 - Project Vicinity Map

Kailua, O'ahu



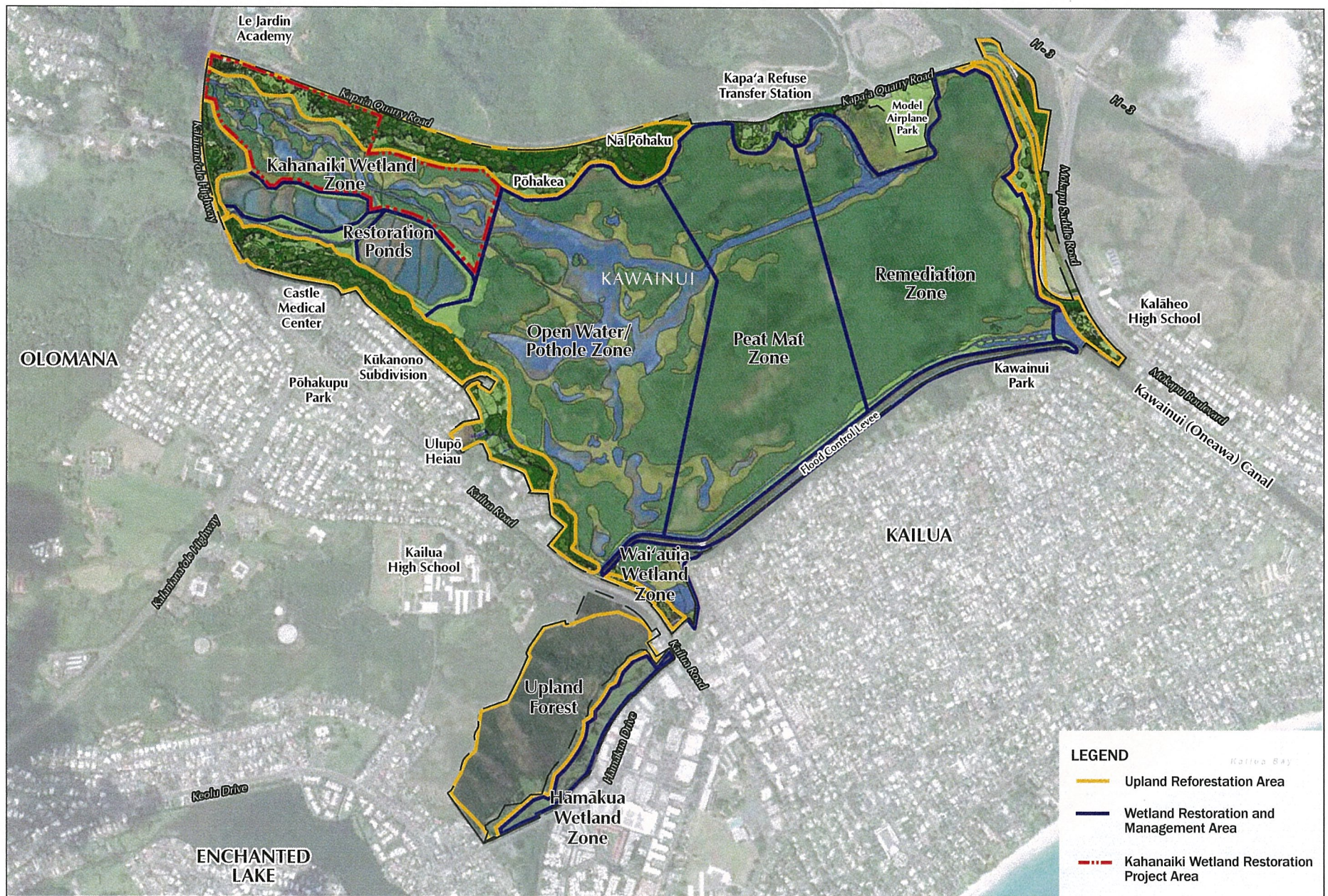


Source: State of Hawai'i GIS

Kawainui - Hāmākua Master Plan Project Exhibit 3 - Master Plan Overview

Kailua, O'ahu

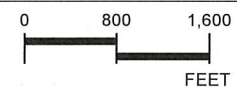




Source: State of Hawai'i GIS

Kawaiinui - Hāmākua Master Plan Project Exhibit 4 - DOFAW Management Areas

Kailua, O'ahu





Source: State of Hawai'i GIS

Kawainui - Hāmākua Master Plan Project Exhibit 5 - Public Access Management Areas

Kailua, O'ahu

