

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of State Parks
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

October 27, 2023

Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Island of Hawai'i

REQUEST THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES APPROVE THE FINAL MASTER PLAN FOR KEALAKEKUA BAY STATE HISTORICAL PARK, KEALAKEKUA, SOUTH KONA, ISLAND OF HAWAII'I. TAX MAP KEYS: (3) 8-1-007:050; 8-1-010:001; 8-1-011:001, 003, 004-010, 012-014, and 016; 8-2-004:001-002, 008-010, and 015

LOCATION:

Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park is a 536-acre park that encompasses Kealakekua Bay (315 acres) and the seaward (makai) portion of three (3) ahupua'a surrounding the bay (Keōpuka, Ka'awaloa and Kealakekua) in the South Kona District of Hawai'i Island.

Tax Map Keys: (3) 8-1-007:050; 8-1-010:001; 8-1-011:001, 003, 004-010, 012-014, and 016; 8-2-004:001-002, 008-010, and 015

LAND TITLE STATUS:

Section 5(b) of the Hawai'i Admission Act. Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) 30% entitlement lands pursuant to the Hawai'i State Constitution: NO

CURRENT USE STATUS:

In 2012, Executive Order 4424 set aside Kealakekua Bay (315 acres), Nāpō'opo'o Landing (0.77 acre), and the park land around the bay (221 acres) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of State Parks (State Parks) for public park purposes. Previously, the bay and landing had been under the jurisdiction of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR).

State Land Use District: All of the park land is in conservation, except for 1.12 acres in two parcels at Nāpō'opo'o, which are in the Urban District.

ITEM E-1

SUMMARY:

This submittal requests the Board approve the Final Master Plan for Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park, South Kona, Island of Hawai'i. The Board approved submitting and recommending to the Governor acceptance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the project at the meeting held on January 22, 2021. This Board action did not involve approving the master plan. Governor David Ige accepted the Final EIS on April 26, 2021. 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 limited to the Final Master Plan. The Board will be able to review the merits of project improvements as part of the permit applications.

Public meetings were held in 2009, 2010, and 2016 to assist State Parks in drafting the Master Plan for the Park. In conjunction with the Draft EIS (DEIS), a public meeting was held on April 14, 2018 to share information about the EIS and hear community concerns.

Completion of the Master Plan has been delayed by two community-based undertakings. The first were initial discussions with the newly formed Kealakekua Cultural Advisory 'Ohana which came about after testimony was received at the public meeting in conjunction with the Draft EIS as well as being recommended in the Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) prepared as part of the EIS process. The other was State Parks' participation in a Community Action Plan (CAP) process for Kealakekua Bay that provided an opportunity to identify issues and challenges that can be addressed through community partnerships and a coordinated action plan.

An electronic version of the Final Master Plan is available on State Parks' website: [https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dsp/files/2023/10/Kealakekua-Bay-SHP-Final-Master-Plan-2023 .pdf](https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dsp/files/2023/10/Kealakekua-Bay-SHP-Final-Master-Plan-2023.pdf)

Park Setting

The State acquired lands for the park between 1967 and 1982 to preserve the historical, cultural, natural, and scenic resource values of Kealakekua Bay and the surrounding land area. The historical importance of Kealakekua Bay was recognized with the designation of the Kealakekua Bay Historical District (Site No. 50-10-47-7000) and its listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. The historic district encompasses all of the park, including the bay, as well as Nāpō'opo'o Village, Ke'ei and the Moku'ōhai battleground. The bay contains a diversity of marine resources, including a pod of nai'a, spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*). The sheltered bay is also a popular site for ocean recreation, especially snorkeling at Ka'awaloa Cove, kayaking and paddleboarding across the bay, and commercial and noncommercial boating into the bay from the small boat harbors in Kona for snorkeling and diving activities. Due to its high-quality marine environment, Kealakekua Bay was designated a Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD) in 1969 subject to HAR §13-29-1. The MLCD includes portions of the submerged lands and overlying waters of Kealakekua Bay beginning at the highwater mark at the shoreline and is co-terminus with the park boundaries.

For planning and management purposes, the park has been divided into 4 sections – Nāpō'opo'o on the south side of the bay, Ka'awaloa on the north side, Pali Kapu o Keōua between the two, and Kealakekua Bay (Exhibit 1).

- **Kealakekua Bay and Ka'awaloa Cove.** Visitor counts in the bay and cove ranged from 250 to 400 persons per day in 2019. This count includes passengers on commercial motorized craft from Honokōhau, Keauhou, and Hōnaunau, as well as kayaks and stand-up paddleboards (SUPs) from the Nāpō'opo'o side of the bay. State Parks began issuing permits for vessel access to the bay in 2013 with permits being required for personal, rental, and commercial vessels. A total of 758 permits (71 commercial and 687 personal vessels) were issued in 2022 which reflects an increase from the 514 permits (86 commercial and 428 personal vessels) issued in 2019 with most of the increase being in the number of non-commercial vessels.
- **Ka'awaloa:** Encompassing about 90 acres, Ka'awaloa Flat is an intact archaeological complex and significant cultural site where high chief Kalani'ōpu'u was residing at the time of Captain Cook's arrival at Kealakekua Bay in 1779. The Captain Cook monument was erected in 1874 when Miriam Likelike donated seafront land to James Wodehouse, British Commissioner in Hawai'i, for the construction of the monument. The parcel encompassing the monument is currently owned by the Wodehouse Trust. The jetty adjacent to the monument was built by the Territory of Hawaii in 1929. Hikers can access Ka'awaloa and the bay by taking the 2-mile hike down the Ka'awaloa Road. Under current park rules, participants on one of the three permitted guided kayak tours can land at 'Āwili near the Cook monument, but other boaters are restricted to the waters of the bay. The current permitted use is twelve kayaks per operator for a total of 36 kayaks per day. Vehicle access to Ka'awaloa Flat is limited to the Old Cart Road that runs along the coast and enters the park from privately owned parcels in the adjacent ahupua'a of Keōpuka.
- **Nāpō'opo'o:** Historically known as Kekua, the park adjacent to the residences of Nāpō'opo'o Village includes Hikiau Heiau, and sites associated with the priestly compound. Park facilities include a pavilion with restrooms, picnic tables, BBQ stand, water fountain, and an outdoor shower. Interpretive signs have been placed overlooking the bay and adjacent to Hikiau Heiau. At present, the Landing is gated, and use is restricted to the permitted kayak and canoe tours.
- **Pali Kapu o Keōua.** This 600-foot cliff between the Ka'awaloa and Nāpō'opo'o sections of the park is the major geological feature of the park. The park property consists of a 300-foot wide strip along the top of the pali with remnants of the historic trail along this coastline. For safety reasons, this portion of the park is closed for public access.

Park Planning Overview

Park planning was initiated by State Parks in 1982 with the creation of an advisory committee of area residents and community organizations. A report with

recommendations for the development, management, and operation of the park was prepared by the committee in 1985. This planning was accompanied by archaeological, botanical, and wildlife surveys by DLNR staff.

In 1997, a more formal planning effort was conducted with the development of a Conceptual Master Plan. This plan sought to reduce the impacts of park visitation on Nāpō'opo'o Village by proposing a visitor center on the pali. However, this would have involved the acquisition of additional land for the park and concerns were raised about the potential visual impacts from the bay. As a follow-up to the Conceptual Plan, a Phase I Development Plan and Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) were prepared for the Nāpō'opo'o Section of the park in 2001. The Conceptual Master Plan, Phase I Development Plan and EA were withdrawn in 2002 in response to a legal challenge regarding the Chapter 343 process.

By 2010, DLNR had initiated two new planning efforts. A Stewardship Area Management Plan was drafted with participation by all the Divisions of DLNR. It identified projects and management actions for the park, including the bay, but also dealt with upland areas. A major outcome of this plan was the transfer of the bay and Nāpō'opo'o Landing from DOBOR to State Parks.

A new master planning effort for the park was begun in 2009, but work was suspended until the draft Stewardship Area Management Plan was compiled and the Bay and Landing were incorporated in the park, allowing State Parks to manage the entire 536-acre area. The Master Plan effort resumed in 2015 and drew on the community input gathered in earlier initiatives while updating the plan with new studies, community meetings, and statewide surveys. The plan developed several alternatives for park development and management:

- A recreational focus providing ocean and hiking opportunities for visitors and residents with support facilities and a community park.
- A historical-cultural focus promoting preservation, interpretation, and restoration of the cultural landscape, historic sites, and traditional cultural practices.
- The preferred alternative seeks to create a balance of recreation with preservation, historical interpretation, and the incorporation of cultural practices, values, and traditions.

At the public meeting held in April 2018, comments were received about the quality of the Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and the need for State Parks to consider others in the community with knowledge about the cultural traditions and ongoing cultural practices at Kealakekua. This resulted in additional ethnographic interviews being conducted in December 2018 by Nohopapa Hawai'i. These community interviews and recommendations created a better understanding of the cultural traditions and how these traditions could be incorporated into the Draft Master Plan and Final EIS. Another outcome was the formation of the Kealakekua Cultural Advisory 'Ohana, an advisory group of Kealakekua residents and practitioners, to assist State Parks in the design and

content of interpretive programs, preservation of the cultural resources, and development of park management strategies that incorporate cultural values and traditions. DLNR's Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) was instrumental in the establishment of the 'Ohana in mid-2018.

Purpose of Master Plan

The purpose of the Master Plan is to identify a sustainable, actionable strategy to preserve natural, cultural, and historic resources within the park, while improving the visitor experience by providing basic facilities and interpretive resources. State Parks seeks to preserve and share the resources of the park and to support recreational use in a manner that does not have adverse impacts on the natural, cultural, and historic values. Staffing by DLNR and concessionaires, with support from community volunteers, is needed to manage visitation and share the stories of Kealakekua Bay.

The Master Plan proposes actions that can be implemented with modest funding and no additional land acquisition, while improving the park experience for both visitors and residents. Respect for the surrounding community played a key role in the planning. Members of the Kealakekua community were involved throughout the planning process.

The Master Plan addresses basic visitor facilities, especially parking at Nāpō'opo'o and toilets at Ka'awaloa. The proposed parking arrangements and use of Nāpō'opo'o Landing are intended to reduce impacts of visitation on the community. The need for a waterless toilet at Ka'awaloa is a high priority need for public health. The plan includes interpretive trails that can help visitors learn about history and cultural resources. It recognizes the importance of collaborating with cultural experts and practitioners in developing and implementing interpretive programs and management strategies. It limits access to Ka'awaloa where visitors could impact the archaeological and cultural resources. The plan addresses safety issues for swimmers and snorkelers in Ka'awaloa Cove with the installation of buoys to create a safety zone from motorized vessels.

EIS Process and Consultation

Community participation began with the conceptual planning for the park in 1997. Concerns were raised about the impact of park visitation on the neighboring Nāpō'opo'o Village and the need to address issues of parking and traffic. For the Ka'awaloa Section, there was a need to provide basic facilities for visitation, especially toilets, and measures to protect the significant archaeological complex. These issues and concerns remained high priorities in public meetings held between 2009 and 2010 during the development of the draft master plan and again between 2015 and 2018 when the Environmental Impact Statement was being prepared. A survey was conducted in 2016 to learn in some detail about stakeholders' views of the Park and attitudes towards various options for preserving, managing, and making changes to the Park. This survey was accompanied by a talk-story session held at Nāpō'opo'o in August 2016.

The Draft EIS was submitted for publication in February 2018 and published in March 2018. This document discussed details of the proposed project improvements and

activities, showed conceptual site plans with building locations and footprints, and included exhibits and other supporting description to provide a reasonable understanding of proposed improvements so that likely impacts could be identified. A community meeting to learn of community reactions to the Draft EIS was held at Konawaena Elementary School on April 14, 2018. The meeting announcement went to all parties on the stakeholder list, as well as being announced on the DLNR website. The major themes of that meeting were:

Respect for continuing cultural practices and the cultural significance of Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park. Several speakers found the DEIS and the CIA unsatisfactory because they did not recognize ongoing cultural practices, notably fishing practices and cultural practices at Hikiau Heiau. They urged State Parks to consider these cultural practices and establish a cultural advisory group. Since this meeting, the Kealakekua Cultural Advisory 'Ohana has been formed and there will be continuing consultation with the group on management and interpretive strategies for the Park and the future implementation of park interpretive programs.

Measures to regulate human-dolphin interactions. Some speakers objected to the proposed buoys around the dolphin rest zone; others argued that the zone was not correctly delineated. Since that meeting, State Parks has withdrawn the proposal to demarcate a dolphin rest zone.

Alternatives Considered

A total of 4 alternatives were considered in both the Master Plan and Final EIS, including a no action alternative. These alternatives were developed after considering the significant cultural history of Kealakekua, the marine resources of the Bay, and the recreational interests of residents and park users. The alternatives were initially presented at a January 2016 community meeting and reflected a varied emphasis on historical ambiance and preservation vs. recreational use of the Park. The major differences between the alternatives centered around:

- Number and types of vessels allowed in the Bay;
- Access to Ka'awaloa;
- Use and management of Nāpō'opo'o Landing;
- Extent of restoration activities at Nāpō'opo'o Beach; and
- Extent of DLNR management and enforcement activity mandated by each alternative.

The alternatives are summarized below with more detail provided in Exhibit 2.

1. No Action Alternative. This alternative maintains the existing condition of the Park with managed use of the Bay through permits, no new facilities to address parking issues, and no site improvements to protect and restore the cultural sites. This alternative does not address the current issues at the Park, including parking at the Nāpō'opo'o Section and sanitation at the Ka'awaloa Section. There would be no new construction

of facilities, no implementation of interpretive programs to educate visitors, and no resource management actions designed to protect the natural and cultural resources of the Park land area and bay.

2. Recreational Focus. This alternative proposes actions to manage recreational opportunities for visitors and residents, including ocean recreation in the bay (boating, snorkeling, diving, and swimming) and hiking to Ka'awaloa Flat. The number of boats and non-motorized watercraft would be limited by an open permit process. Support facilities for recreation would be retained and expanded at Nāpō'opo'o, including the existing community park. This alternative was eliminated because the historical and cultural values are recognized but interpretation is too limited.
3. Historical Focus. This alternative seeks to recognize the cultural and historical importance of Kealakekua Bay and the surrounding land area by promoting preservation and interpretation of the historic sites and restoration of the cultural landscape. Recreation and traditional practices are respectfully woven into the cultural landscape and park programs. Traditional Hawaiian outrigger canoes would replace kayaks for transport across the bay and the number of other vessels in the Bay would be limited to promote a sense of the historical and cultural setting. Visitor access at Ka'awaloa would be limited to hiking or by guided tour/canoe shuttle. This alternative was not adopted because the community felt it restricted the recreational activities in the bay.
4. Recreational-Historical Focus. This preferred alternative seeks to bring in elements of the other two alternatives and balance the managed recreational activities with historical and cultural values and traditional practices. Interpretive programs at both the Nāpō'opo'o and Ka'awaloa Sections include guided and self-guided tours, interpretive trails, and an interpretive shelter with displays. The establishment of a cultural advisory committee will promote the incorporation of traditional knowledge and practices into these programs. Cultural resource management includes stabilization and rehabilitation of cultural and historical sites and removal of invasive vegetation. There will be a continuation of existing recreational activities, including hiking to Ka'awaloa, ocean recreation in the bay and at Nāpō'opo'o Beach, and boating from Nāpō'opo'o Landing. This recreation will be managed through permits.

Alternatives suggested in earlier plans and discussed with the community but not considered further include the following:

Off-site Improvements: The plan proposed in 1997 included land acquisition for an off-site visitor center. Concern over hikers' access and parking along Nāpō'opo'o Road near the highway junction has stimulated proposals to develop a parking lot for hikers either at the highway junction or on private land closer to the Park. The Master Plan notes that changes in parking on Beach Road and striping on Nāpō'opo'o Road, between the entry to the Park's new parking lot and the T-intersection would help to improve pedestrian safety and minimize traffic congestion.

Actions involving off-site lands and their owners involve decisions and negotiations that cannot be made by State Parks and are consequently less actionable than the Proposed Action. While State Parks will participate in discussions with the County of Hawai'i and its neighbors, the Master Plan does not depend on them.

Reductions in Visitation: Concerns about protection of resources, sanitation, and carrying capacity have spurred proposals to limit access by hikers and motorized vessels. These are not considered further as alternatives for three reasons:

1. State Parks retains the power to limit access for resource protection and visitor safety.
2. Apart from the Master Plan and EIS process, State Parks can make small improvements such as maintenance activities and placement of a waterless toilet, which can manage some impacts of visitation.
3. Studies fail to show that current levels of visitation have a significant impact on the Park's resources, other than on the spinner dolphin population.

If new information shows that visitation adversely affects resources of the Park or the surrounding community, State Parks can institute limits or management strategies, such as a reservation system and limited access to Nāpō'opo'o Landing. After tsunami events, State Parks has closed the bay to vessels for reasons of safety; similar closures could occur in the future. These operational decisions fall within the scope of action described by the Master Plan alternatives.

Kealakekua Bay Community Action Plan

A Community Action Plan (CAP) was initiated in 2021 as a community-based planning effort for the Kealakekua Bay area, including the park. This plan sought to bring together the community, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to identify issues and challenges facing the people and resources of Kealakekua Bay and to propose actions for balanced and sustainable management. Implementation of the action plan involves building collaborative partnerships and improving community capacity for co-management. The vision developed for the CAP is:

Kealakekua Bay is a living, spiritual place. It is a vibrant ecosystem interwoven with traditional knowledge and practices, honored and cultivated through understanding and reverence of this wahi pana (sacred place).

DSP participated in the CAP and finalizing the Master Plan was deferred until the CAP was completed in May 2022 to better understand the community's concerns, the condition of the resources, and potential partnerships for implementing various aspects of the plan. Those participating in the CAP and its implementation have adopted the name the Kapukapu 'Ohana which recognizes the traditional name for Kealakekua Bay. The CAP document can be viewed at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rw-iIXKhumDr0kgrkshRTOCoU4Hbrznd/view?usp=sharing>

While the Master Plan already addresses many of the community concerns, the CAP emphasized the need to incorporate traditional cultural practices and values into park programs and management strategies. Incorporating local knowledge (‘ike kūpuna) into the management and stewardship of the cultural and natural resources is now recognized as one of the goals in the Master Plan. The community’s traditional fishing and gathering practices and the resources they depend on are affected by increases in recreational use. Park visitation is viewed by many residents as disrespectful which indicates the need for better management and the education of visitors to encourage more appropriate behavior. Establishing a regular and ongoing dialogue with the Kealakekua Cultural Advisory ‘Ohana and promoting community-based programs are identified as key elements in the priority short-term actions.

Proposed Action of the Master Plan and EIS

The proposed action consists of park improvements and management strategies to accommodate visitors on land and in the bay, while better protecting marine life and the historic and cultural resources in the park. The Master Plan was developed through discussions with a wide range of stakeholders and agencies. It relies in part on community and private-sector contributions to sustaining the park as both safe and enjoyable. The planning process included consideration of earlier planning efforts for the park and the surrounding area. It incorporates information from new studies, and integrates plans for park facilities, interpretive programs, and management. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) assesses the impacts of the Proposed Action so State Parks can seek support for new facilities and operations. The Proposed Action would be realized as State financing and staff resources allow, and as collaboration proceeds with the County of Hawai‘i, neighboring landowners, and NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association).

The proposed actions of the Master Plan and EIS by each of the park sections are outlined in a table of proposed actions (Exhibit 3) and shown on maps of each park section (Exhibit 4). The major elements are summarized below:

Nāpō‘opo‘o:

1. Develop the Parcel 1 area along Lower Nāpō‘opo‘o Road with a 40-stall paved parking lot, new restroom, and interpretive shelter with exhibits. These facilities will support boating activities from Nāpō‘opo‘o Landing as well as the land-based park.
2. Install an interpretive trail from the parking lot to Hikiau Heiau and the Nāpō‘opo‘o Beach area for guided and self-guided tours.
3. Retain the existing picnic pavilion with restrooms, outdoor shower, and grassed court.

Nāpō'opo'o Landing:

1. Drop-off for personal and commercial vessels with a permit. Restricted parking.
2. Portable toilet and picnic tables.
3. Watercraft rental by a concessionaire with storage and limited parking for the concessionaire.

Ka'awaloa:

1. Install a waterless toilet outside the archaeological complex. To maintain this unit, a helicopter landing zone is recommended because of limited vehicle access to the area.
2. Install an interpretive shelter with a trail through a portion of the archaeological complex for both guided and self-guided tours.
3. Allow permitted vessel landings at 'Āwili, including cultural access.
4. Hiker access along the Ka'awaloa Road with options for other access routes from neighboring Keōpuka on other historic trails/roads.

Kealakekua Bay:

1. Continue the permit system for personal and commercial watercraft to control launchings and landings as well as entry into the bay. This will allow State Parks to monitor and manage an acceptable number of vessels in the bay.
2. Encourage a shift from kayaks to more traditional canoes for access across the bay.
3. Install buoys to demarcate a safety zone (100 feet offshore) for snorkelers, the rock fall zone, and the park boundary within the bay.

Potential Impacts and Mitigation of the Preferred Alternative

Several potential impacts, none of them determined to be significant, have been identified and mitigation to address these potential impacts have been proposed.

The use of best management practices is proposed to address risk of harm to natural and cultural resources. For example, shielded lights will be used outside to avoid impacts to birds and the Hawaiian hoary bat. The selective removal of alien vegetation will reduce the impacts on archaeological and cultural sites while also restoring aspects of the cultural landscape.

As a significant cultural landscape, the scenic resources and view planes are important and could be impacted by visitation and the development of park facilities. A proposed shift from plastic kayaks to more traditional canoes for access across the bay is one means of mitigation that promotes the historic setting of the bay. To maintain the scenic values, park facilities have been located outside the archaeological complexes at both Nāpō'opo'o and Ka'awaloa. The buildings are one-story, setback from the shoreline, and will incorporate historical architectural elements into the design. Visibility of park structures from the bay will be addressed through landscaping.

The potential for increased visitation poses potential impacts to the resources and the neighboring community. As this applies to boating and ocean recreation within Kealakekua Bay, there is a potential for impacts to the nai'a, fish, and coral of the MLCD. Mitigation includes working with NOAA to educate park users about the guidelines for protected marine mammals while DOCARE (Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement) continues to take the lead for DLNR on enforcement. With the assistance of the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR), monitoring is another means of mitigation for the impacts of visitors.

Increased visitation raises concerns for public safety, especially in the bay. The potential conflict of vessel traffic and snorkeling at Ka'awaloa Cove is being addressed by the demarcation of a swim-only area and encouraging boat operators to codify a "drift plan". The proposed concession at Nāpō'opo'o calls for staffing at the Nāpō'opo'o launching and landing sites to manage these activities and assist inexperienced kayakers.

The impact of park visitation on the Nāpō'opo'o community involves increased traffic and access to the Bay. The proposed parking lot is located to mitigate and reduce traffic on the narrow roads in the residential area. The number of parking stalls has been determined to maintain a level of use that is acceptable to the community. State Parks will work with the County on road signs that direct visitor traffic away from the narrow roads, such as Pu'uhonua Road and the Beach Road.

The development of an interpretive program with guided and self-guided trails will enhance the visitor experience. There is a potential for cultural sites to be impacted by trails, interpretive devices, and visitor traffic. Archaeological research will precede the development of these trails to ensure that the cultural sites are protected with buffers and visitors are educated through signage and other interpretive methods. In addition, consultation with the Kealakekua Cultural Advisory 'Ohana will identify culturally sensitive areas so these locations within the park can be set aside with buffers and access to these sensitive locations can be avoided or controlled as appropriate.

Park development and visitation have the potential to impact traditional cultural practices although none have been specifically identified at this time. By partnering with the Kealakekua Cultural Advisory 'Ohana, the potential impacts can be better identified, monitored, and addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This Final Master Plan incorporates agency comments and community concerns that were expressed at the public meeting held in conjunction with the State environmental review process prescribed under Chapter 343 (Environmental Impact Statements), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) as well as challenges and opportunities that were learned through State Parks' participation in the Kealakekua Bay CAP process.

This Board action is now requesting approval of the Master Plan. Future land use permits such as a CDUA (Conservation District Use Application) will 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.

Therefore, it is recommended that the Board approve the Final Master Plan for Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Curt Cottrell

CURT A. COTTRELL
State Parks Administrator

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson, Board of Land and Natural Resources

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit 1 – Park Map
- Exhibit 2 – Table of Alternatives
- Exhibit 3 – Table of Proposed Action
- Exhibit 4 – Maps of Proposed Action

EXHIBIT 1

Park Map with Sections Created for Park Planning and Management

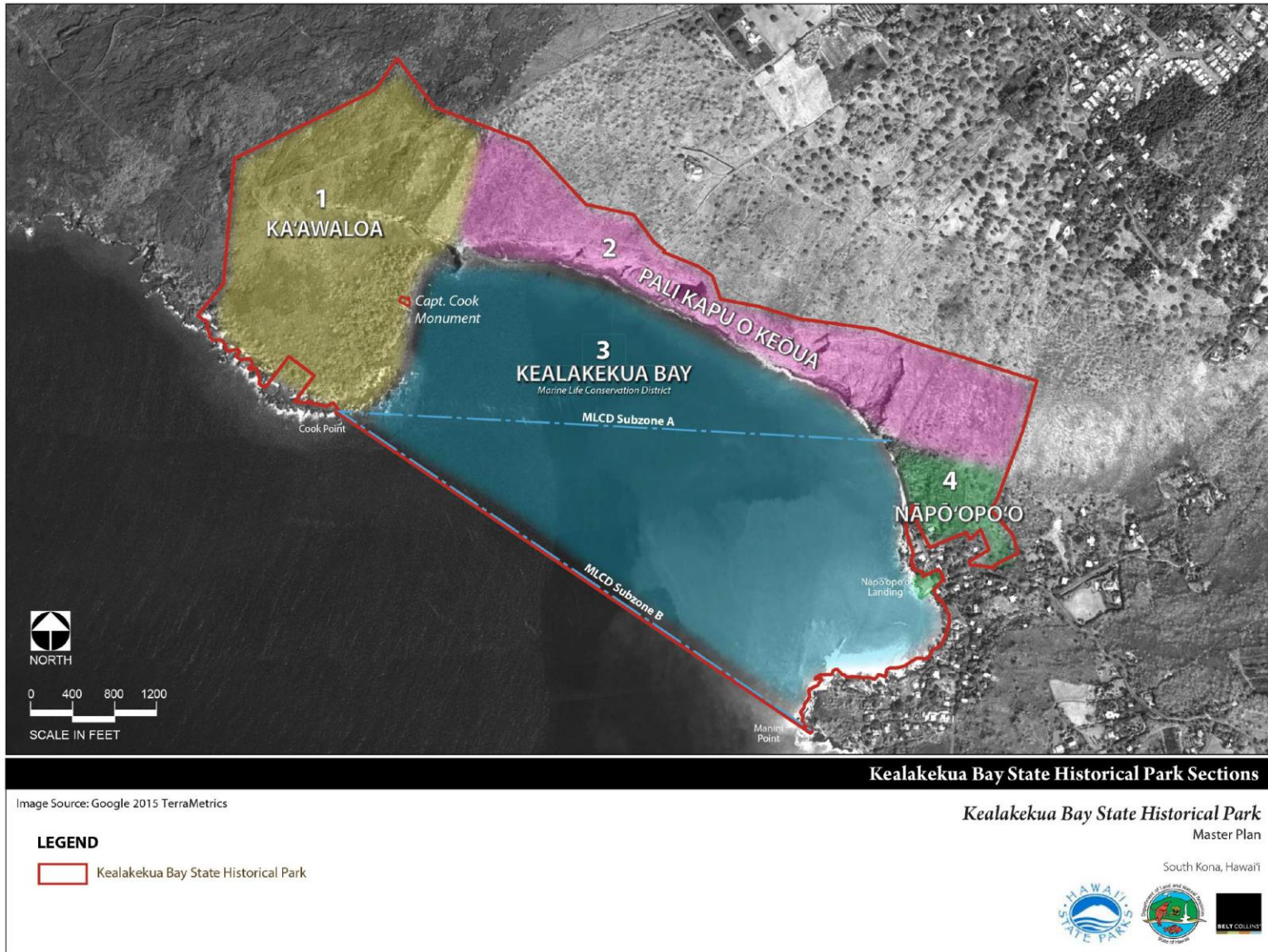


EXHIBIT 2
Elements of the 3 Action Alternatives

	Alternative A Recreational Focus	Alternative B Recreation & Historical Balance	Alternative C Historical Focus
Kealakekua Bay	<i>ACCESS AND OCEAN RECREATION</i>		
	Non-commercial and commercial vessels (personal kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards (SUPs)) allowed in bay by permit.		
	Commercial tour boat mooring (Ka'awaloa Cove) and drift-in tour boats continue.		
	Guided kayak tours (up to 90 guests/day) by permit.	Guided kayak tours (up to 72 guests per day- same as existing) plus canoe shuttle tours (up to 30 passengers at a time) by permit.	Canoe shuttle tours by permit from Nāpō'opo'o Landing to Ka'awaloa. No kayak tours. Focus on transition to traditional vessels in the bay.
	Safety zones delineated (buoys/markers): rockfall zone, ocean edge of MLCD/Park; swim/snorkel/no powerboat zone near Ka'awaloa shoreline		
	NOAA takes lead on dolphin regulations in the bay.		
Ka'awaloa	<i>ACCESS & FACILITIES</i>		
	No vessel landing except for permitted guided kayak tours or traditional cultural access, concessionaire landings and storage at 'Āwili.	Permitted guided tour landings and non-commercial personal watercraft landings and storage at 'Āwili (when landing is staffed).	No vessel landing except for permitted canoe shuttle at jetty (for traditional cultural access by permit). Improve jetty for canoe landing.
	Hiking access via Ka'awaloa Road		
	Limited interpretive trails; Hikers directed to shoreline trail from 'Āwili to Monument. Create open space gathering area by the Monument.	Interpretive trails for guided and self-guided tours in restored cultural landscape areas that have been surveyed.	
Waterless toilet			

	Alternative A Recreational Focus	Alternative B Recreation & Historical Balance	Alternative C Historical Focus
			Interpretive shelter with exhibits and staff at Ka'awaloa Flat and Interpretive wayside exhibit (sign) at Puhina o Lono Heiau.
Pali	No trail access		
Nāpō'o-po'o Landing	<i>ACCESS & PARKING</i>		
	Public vehicle access for personal watercraft drop-off only (parking at Parcel 1).		No public vehicle access.
	Restricted parking (~10 stalls max + 1 accessible stall) for State and Landing concession.		
	Kayak and equipment rentals and launching of guided kayak tours by permitted concessionaire.	Kayak and equipment rentals and canoe shuttle tours by permitted concessionaire.	Canoe shuttle launching by concessionaire. Launching of non-commercial kayaks, canoes and paddleboards.
	Launching of non-commercial vessels with permit from landing; concessionaire available to assist with vessel drop-off/launching.		Launching of non-commercial vessels with permit from Landing; concessionaire available to assist with launching.
	<i>FACILITIES & INTERPRETIVE AREAS</i>		
	Improved pier for water entry.		
	Portable toilet(s).		
	Mobile food concession.		Thatched shelter for canoe shuttle staging area and visitor services.
	DOCARE storage, equipment and deployment area.		
Interpretive signs on wharf and shoreline.		Interpretive exhibits and signs on wharf and shoreline.	
Nāpō'o-po'o Park	<i>ACCESS, ROADS & PARKING</i>		
	Park public parking lot on Parcel 1 (~60 stalls).		Public parking lot on Parcel 1 (~40 stalls).

	Alternative A Recreational Focus	Alternative B Recreation & Historical Balance	Alternative C Historical Focus
	Beach Road – limit parking to 5 stalls on Park land + drop-off area.		Remove Beach Rd. parking; ask County to close road (local/service traffic only).
	<i>FACILITIES, RECREATION & INTERPRETATION & LANDSCAPING</i>		
	Retain existing community pavilions and restrooms.		Convert community pavilion to interpretive shelter. Relocate new community pavilion and grass recreation area to Parcel 1 near new Park Entry/parking.
			Interpretive Center on Parcel 1 with exhibits, gift shop, food sales and staff; architectural style of the Gaspar Mill.
			Restroom at Parcel 1.
	Interpretive low signs, maps and media.	Interpretive signs, guided interpretive walks, work to restore cultural landscape & historic features.	Interpretive signs and guided interpretive walks; restore cultural landscape (remove invasive vegetation and restore historic features). Construct traditional hale in area of Hikiau Heiau for cultural & educational programs.
	Selectively remove boulders to restore sand beach access path for swimmers/canoes.	Restore low rock wall behind beach to separate recreational use from archaeological complex and selectively remove boulders to restore sand beach access.	Restore low rock wall behind beach, restore the cultural landscape and remove boulders to restore sand beach access.
Management Presence	State Parks: limited staff + Regional Park Coordinator.	State Parks: Interpretive staff + Regional Park Coordinator.	State Parks: Interpretive staff, Regional Park Coordinator and Kealakekua Park Coordinator to assist/oversee Park operations.
	DOCARE: Increased yet periodic enforcement.	DOCARE: At least weekly enforcement.	DOCARE: Consistent and daily enforcement.

	Alternative A Recreational Focus	Alternative B Recreation & Historical Balance	Alternative C Historical Focus
	Concessionaire: Staff at Ka'awaloa to support guided kayak tour landings and at Nāpō'opo'o Landing to support ocean recreation and food concession.	Concessionaire: Staff at Ka'awaloa to support guided kayak tour landings and canoe shuttle and at Nāpō'opo'o Landing to support ocean recreation and food concession, and staff interpretive shelter and gift shop on Parcel 1.	Concessionaire: Staff at Ka'awaloa and Nāpō'opo'o Landing to support canoe shuttle operations.
	Adopt-A-Park & Volunteer Agreements: encourage community volunteer participation to care for park resources.		

EXHIBIT 3
Components and Objectives of Proposed Action

Location, Plan Components		Major Objectives
Kealakekua Bay		
Access Ocean Recreation &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Vessel entry by permit. b. Commercial operators are encouraged to develop and share Drift/Safety Plan. c. One permitted mooring at Ka’awaloa Cove with second mooring off Nāpō’opo’o Landing for commercial tour boat operators. d. Permitted guided kayak /canoe tours (up to approximately 72 passengers per day). e. Reintroduce outrigger canoes via guided tour concession with intent to reduce kayak use. f. Consult with DOBOR and DAR about ways to limit commercial vessels and reduce their impacts in the bay in the future. 	Control number of vessels, behavior of operators to protect resources and scenic ambiance of the area; promote historical setting.
Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Install and maintain buoys or navigational aids marking rock fall zone and park boundary within the bay. b. Swim-snorkel/no powerboat zone (Ka’awaloa shoreline to approx. 100 ft. offshore as demarcated by buoys or navigational aids). c. Support coral restoration project in the bay. 	Safety for visitors; support for enforcement of rules about access.
Ka’awaloa		

Components and Objectives of Proposed Action

Location, Plan Components		Major Objectives
Access-Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Permitted guided tour landings, kayak storage at 'Āwili. b. Permitted non-commercial personal and rented watercraft landings and storage possible at 'Āwili (when landing is staffed and after installation of waterless toilet). c. Permit available for landing a vessel at Ka'awaloa for traditional cultural access. 	Manage visitation, allowing some non-motorized vessels but protecting resources.
Access-Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hiking access via Ka'awaloa Road. b. Seek agreement with adjacent landowner for access to Ka'awaloa by maintenance vehicles. c. Access from the north on other historic trails in partnership with the Na Ala Hele and Ala Kahakai programs. 	Manage visitation, allowing hikers but working to protect resources and provide for continuing maintenance.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Waterless toilet. b. Interpretive shelter with staff. c. Helicopter Landing Zone for emergency rescue/ maintenance operations. d. Improve jetty as needed for safety of swimmers and boaters. 	Assure visitor safety and sanitation; increase interpretive activity.
Interpretation & Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clear vegetation from 'Āwili to the Cook Monument and create open space gathering area by the Monument. b. Restore cultural landscape with selective removal of vegetation around cultural sites. c. Interpretive trails with signage for guided and self-guided tours. Trail locations to be finalized based on archaeological studies. 	Restore cultural landscape and provide visitor access to the historic resources in the Park with interpretation; preserve cultural sites and historical setting.
Pali	(between Ka'awaloa and Nāpō'opo'o)	
	No trail access or development.	Protection of cultural sites; safety of visitors.
Nāpō'opo'o Landing		

Components and Objectives of Proposed Action

Location, Plan Components		Major Objectives
Access & Parking	a. Drop-off for non-commercial vessels. b. Restricted parking (<10 stalls with ~1 accessible stall) for State & Landing concessionaire vehicles.	Orderly use of Landing.
Ocean Recreation	a. Watercraft rentals (kayaks and SUPs) by concessionaire with permitted launching. b. Guided kayak and outrigger canoe tours. c. Launching of non-commercial, personal vessels with permit.	Orderly and safe use of Landing.
Facilities	a. Improve historic wharf for entry/exit to the water. b. Covered shelter and storage for concessionaire. c. Portable toilet(s). d. Equipment, deployment and storage for DLNR, especially DOCARE.	Improve access for residents, visitors and DLNR; increase safety; encourage enforcement activities
Interpretation & Landscaping	a. Interpretive signs on wharf and shoreline. b. Grass/picnic area.	Improve visitor experience.
Nāpō'opo'o Park Area		

Components and Objectives of Proposed Action

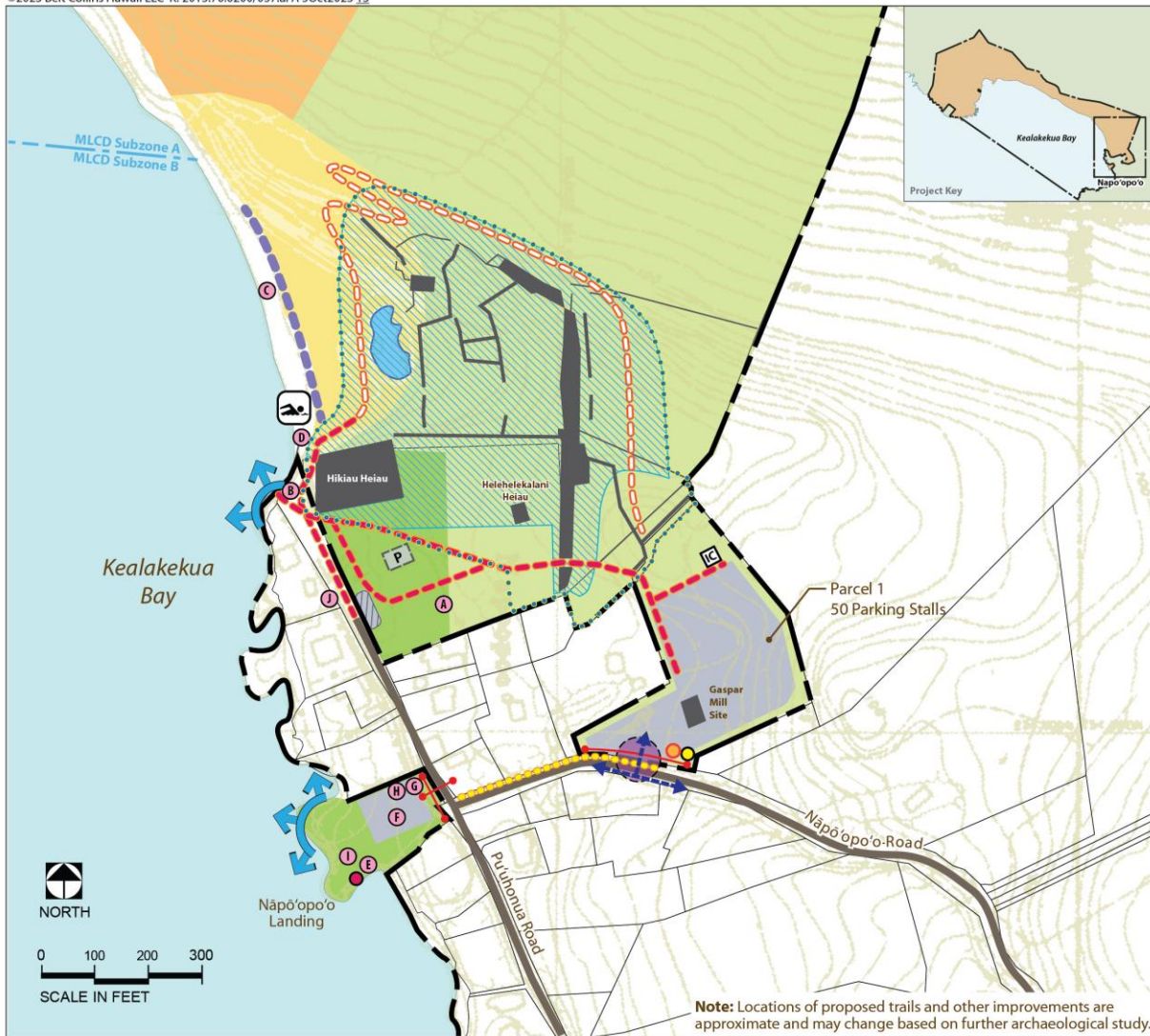
Location, Plan Components		Major Objectives
Access, Roads & Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parking lot on Parcel 1 (Gaspar Mill parcel) with approximately 50 spaces. (No bus parking except school bus by reservation). b. Accessible path from parking lot to Hikiau Heiau. c. Park entry and sign moved to Parcel 1. d. Work with County to reduce vehicle use on Beach Road. to pedestrian zone and emergency/local/service traffic only. e. Install gate or other means to control vehicle entry on Beach Road. e. Reduce/realign parking away from Hikiau Heiau. f. Reduce parking on Beach Road. Provide 2-3 accessible stalls and Special Event (permitted) parking only near grass courts/pavilion (Vehicle parking moved to Parcel 1). 	Manage access to Park and reduce traffic congestion in Nāpō'opo'o Village.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpretive Center with exhibits/concession/ restrooms (Parcel 1). b. Retain community pavilion with restrooms/outdoor showers. 	Improve visitor experience; meet community needs.
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Partially restore access to beach (selectively remove boulders) for swimmers and beach goers. b. Retain grass courts/open space. 	Retain recreational use while respecting cultural resources.
Interpretation & Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish interpretive trails for guided and self-guided walking tours. Trail locations to be finalized based on archaeological studies. b. Restore cultural landscape and historic features (including pond) and remove invasive vegetation. c. Restore low rock wall behind beach to separate recreational beach use from archaeological complex (use existing stones on site). 	Respect cultural sites, restore historic features.

Components and Objectives of Proposed Action

Location, Plan Components		Major Objectives
Mālama: Management Presence		
DSP	a. Staff responsibilities include: Interpretation and trails, trash removal, cleaning restrooms and facilities and grounds maintenance. b. A Park Manager. c. Interpretive staff assigned to KBSHP. d. Park caretaker(s).	Integrated long-term support for both resources and recreation by State, private sector and community.
DOCARE	Consistent and preferred daily enforcement by DOCARE.	
Concessionaire	Staff at Ka‘awaloa and Nāpō‘opo‘o Landing to support concession operations, including guided kayak and canoe tours, assist in launching, landing, and stowing watercraft, ocean recreation equipment rentals and activities required by the concession permit.	
Adopt-A-Park & Volunteer Agreements	Community volunteers to assist with care of park resources.	
Cultural Advisory ‘Ohana	Collaborate with DSP on management strategies and interpretive programs.	
Makai Watch	Community led work force plan for an ocean watch program in communication with DOCARE.	

EXHIBIT 4 Master Plan Maps

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Master Plan - Nāpō'opo'o

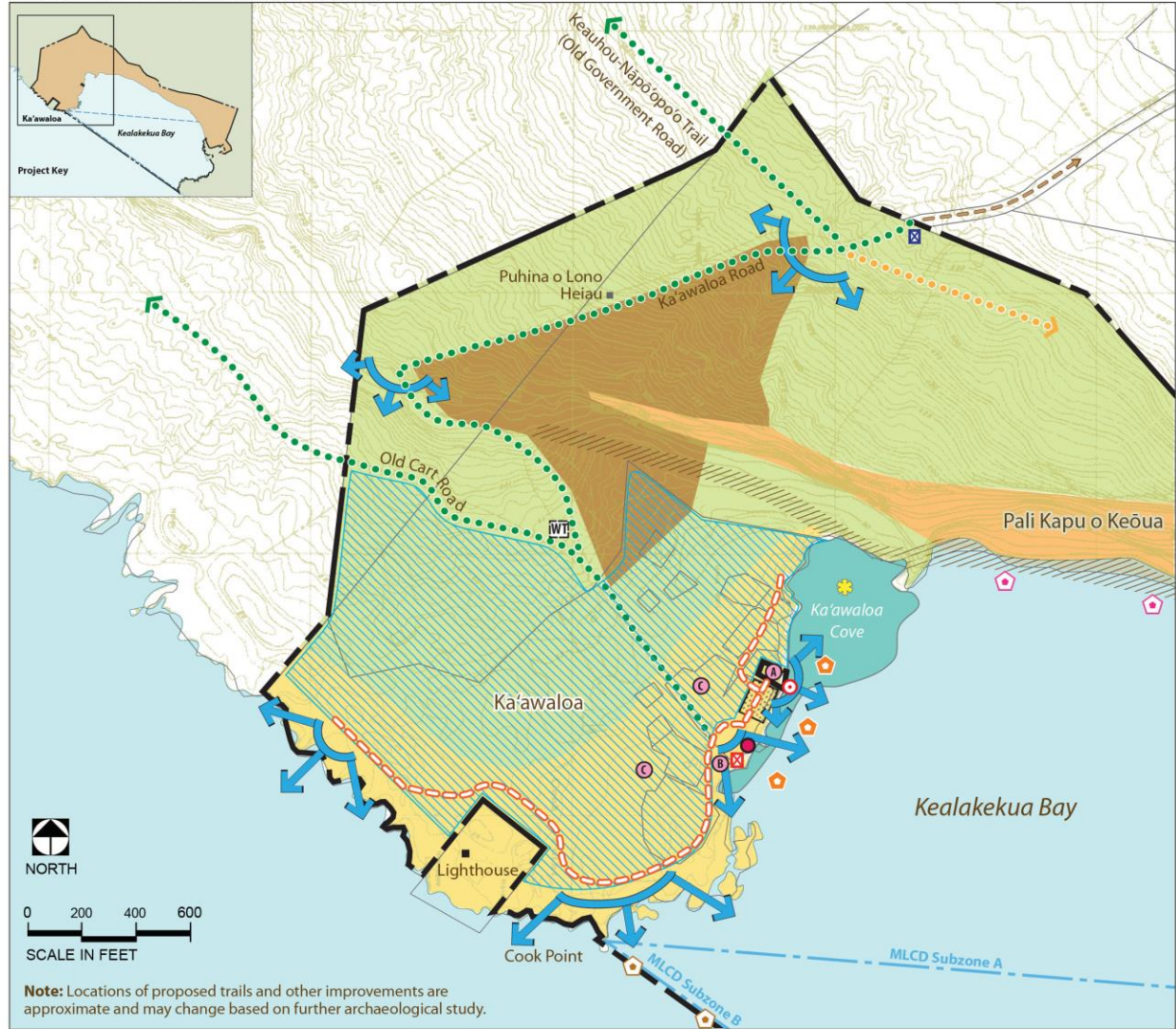
Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park
 Master Plan
 South Kona, Hawai'i

<p>LEGEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Boundary TMK Parcels Archaeological Zone with Interpretation Parking ADA/Restricted Parking Park Entry <p>Vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-native Forest Ornamental Landscaping Cliff and Scree Coastal Strand Restoration of Cultural Landscape <p>Circulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Road Controlled Access (locked gate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary ADA Accessible Path Secondary Pedestrian Path on County Road Interpretive Trail <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Site Pond Existing Pavilion (Restroom, shower) Views Watercraft and Canoe Launch Sign "All Visitor Parking" Park Sign Low Rock Wall Partially Restored Beach path; boulders removed above high water mark Interpretive Center with exhibits, concession, staff, and restroom 	<p>Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Open Space/Grass Courts (B) Bay overlook, marine life interpretation, and park rules signage (C) Nāpō'opo'o Beach (D) Clear path to Bay; beach boulders above high water mark moved to restore wall between beach area and sites (E) Improved water entry point (F) Restricted parking, non-commercial vessel drop-off (G) Portable restrooms (H) DLNR staging and storage (I) Covered shelter/storage for concessionaire (J) Beach Road: work with county to close or obtain road. Pedestrian Zone; local/service/emergency vehicles only
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Master Plan for Kealakekua Bay SHP

October 27, 2023

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Note: Locations of proposed trails and other improvements are approximate and may change based on further archaeological study.

Master Plan - Ka'awaloa

LEGEND

- Park Boundary
- TMK Parcels
- Ka'awaloa Cove (snorkeling area)
- Pali Rockfall Hazard
- Ka'awaloa Flat Archaeological Zone
- Vegetation**
- Non-native Forest
- A'a Lava
- Cliff and Scree
- Coastal Strand
- Circulation**
- Unimproved Road

- Historic Trail
- Historic Trail - Closed
- Interpretive Trail
- Features**
- Views
- Kayak Launch/Landing
- Commercial Mooring
- Sign: "No Commercial Activity without a permit, No Launching, Operation, or Landing Vessels without a Permit"
- Welcome Sign at Park Entry
- Canoe Shuttle Launch/Landing
- Waterless Toilet

- Seating Area (cleared vegetation)
- Rockfall Hazard Buoys
- State Park Boundary Buoys
- Swim-Snorkel/No Powerboat Zone

Elements

- Captain Cook Monument and Wharf; repairs to Wharf for canoe shuttle landings
- 'Awili; storm beach landing and kayak storage for permitted guided tours and limited assisted landings
- Selective removal of vegetation around cultural sites

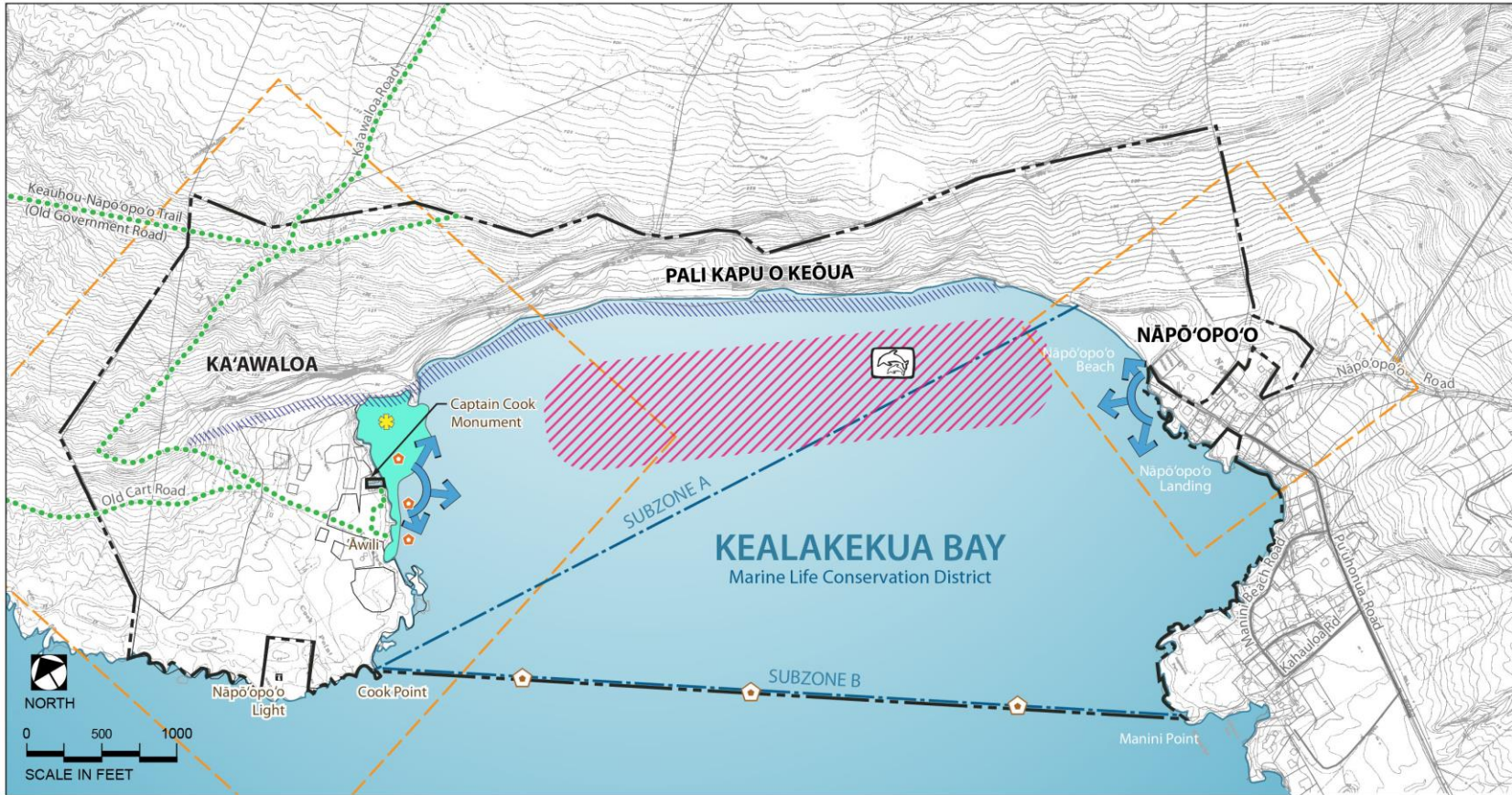
South Kona, Hawaii

Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park

Master Plan



Master Plan for Kealakekua Bay SHP
 October 27, 2023



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Master Plan—Kealakekua Bay

Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park
 Master Plan

South Kona, Hawai'i

LEGEND

- Park Boundary
- - - Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD) Subzones

Circulation

- ... Unimproved Roads and Trails
- Paved Roads

Features/Elements

- Views
- Ka'awaloa Cove (snorkeling area)
- Commercial Mooring
- State Park boundary buoys or navigational aids
- Swim-Snorkel/No Powerboat Zone

- Pali rockfall hazard (100' restricted zone)
- Area where dolphins commonly seen
- Dolphin Rest Area (Note that dolphins may not stay in one part of the bay throughout the day)
- Maps for Ka'awaloa and Nāpō'opo'o

