

APPENDIX C – ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

DRAFT-1

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

PORTION OF TMK: (3) 1-5-10:17

LOT A-2-A-1, LAND OF MAKU'U

PUNA DISTRICT, ISLAND OF HAWAI'I

By:

Alan E. Haun, Ph.D.

And

Dave Henry, B. S.

Prepared for:

Mr. Brian Nishimura
101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

November 2009

Haun & Associates

Archaeological, Cultural, and Historical Resource Management Services
73-1168 Kahuna A'o Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740 Phone: 982-7755 Fax: 325-1520

Introduction

At the request of Mr. Brian Nishimura, Haun & Associates has prepared an archaeological assessment for 38-acre portion of TMK: (3) 1-5-10:17 located in the Land of Makuu, Puna District, Island of Hawai'i (Figures 1 and 2). The objective of the survey was to satisfy historic preservation regulatory review requirements of the Department of Land and Natural Resources-Historic Preservation Division (DLNR-SHPD), as contained within Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 13, DLNR, Subtitle 13, State Historic Preservation Rules (2003).

No archaeological sites or features were identified during the survey, therefore the project is documented as an archaeological assessment pursuant to Chapter 13-284-5(5A). As required, this report contains a description of the project area and field methods.

Project Area Description

The project area is comprised of a roughly L-shaped c. 38-acre portion of TMK: (3) 1-5-10:17. The parcel is bordered along the western side by the Keaau-Pahoa Road, by undeveloped land to the east and south, and by a communication tower facility and access road to the north. The project area varies in elevation from c. 470 to 502 ft.

The western portion of the project area is comprised of the existing Maku'u Farmer's Market facility. This area mechanically leveled with separate areas for vendor stalls and parking (Figure 3). The farmer's market area is 10.1 acres in size and comprises 27% of the total project area.

The remaining portion of the project area is undisturbed and consists of slightly sloping terrain that angles to the northeast. The vegetation is comprised of *ohia* trees (*'ohi'a lehua*), *ohelo* (*Vaccinium reticulatum*), *uluhe* (false staghorn fern – *Dicranopteris linearis*), wild orchid (*Cattleya* spp.) and ferns and vines. (Figure 4). The soil throughout the parcel is comprised of pahoehoe lava. According to Sato et al. (1973:34) "pahoehoe lava has no soil covering and is typically bare of vegetation except for mosses and lichens. In the areas of higher rainfall, however, scattered ohia trees, ohelo berry and aalii have gained a foothold in cracks and crevices". According to Wolfe and Morris the lava flow is from Kilauea dating from 750 to 2,000 years ago (2001).

A bulldozed road extends from along the eastern side of the farmer's market to the southeast, terminating at the north end of Kaluahine Place (see Figure 2). A guard rail with a locked gate is located at the end of this road (Figure 5).

Methods

The survey fieldwork was conducted on October 7, 2009 under the direction of Dr. Alan Haun. Approximately 4 labor-days were required to complete the fieldwork portion of the project. The archaeological investigation of the project area consisted of a 100% surface examination with the surveyors walking transects at 8-10 meter intervals. Ground surface visibility throughout the project area was fair.

Background

The project area is located within the *ahupua'a* of Makuu in the Puna District of Hawaii Island. Puna was once comprised of six chiefdoms created by the son of 'Umi-a-Liloa. According to Orr, the district, "lies between Hilo to the north and Ka'u to the south; from Kapoho the most easterly point to the uplands that extend to the great central heights of Mauna Loa to the coastal shores of Keaau" (2004:46).

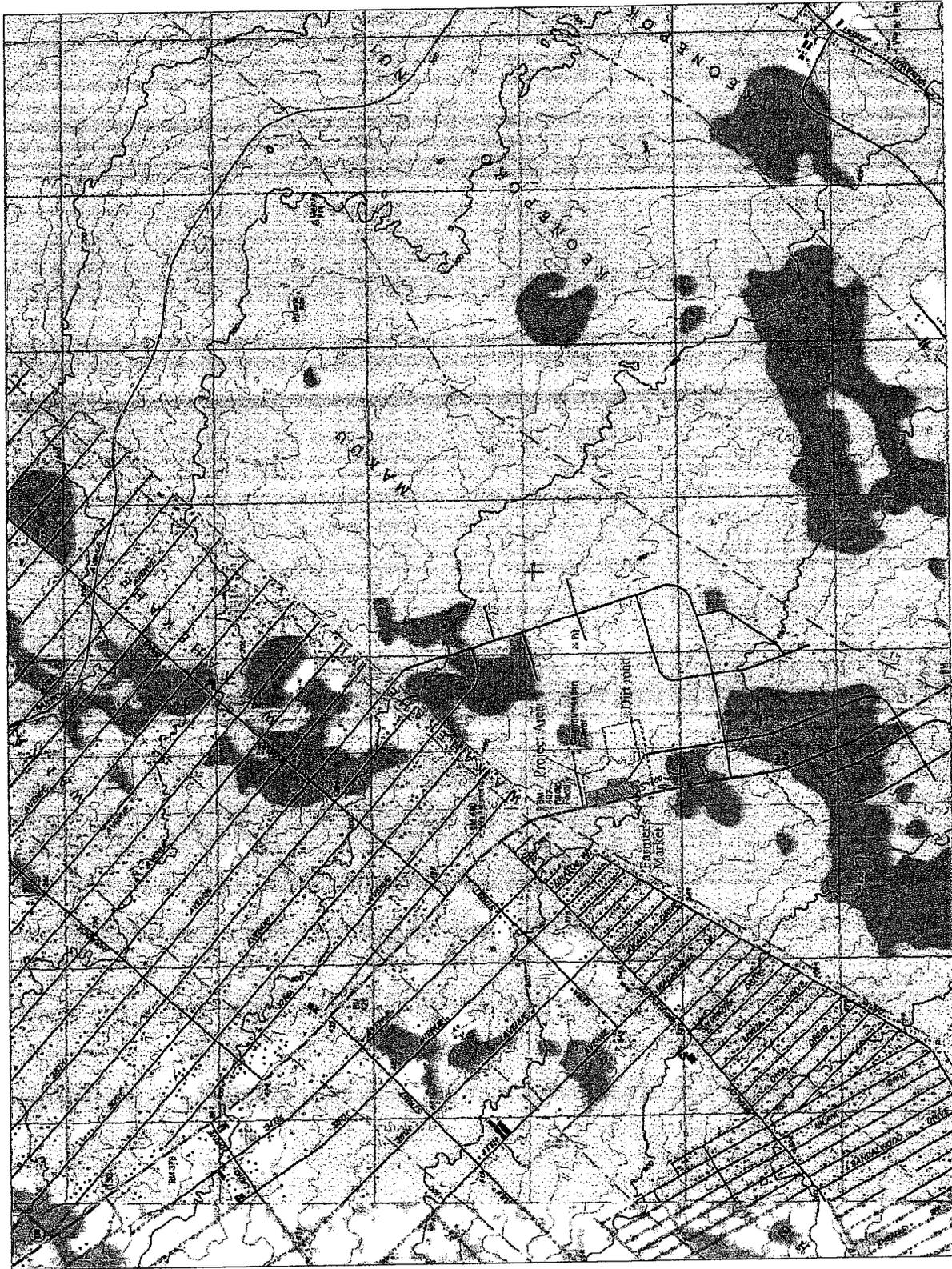


Figure 1 . Portion of USGS North Pahoa Quadrangle showing Project Area

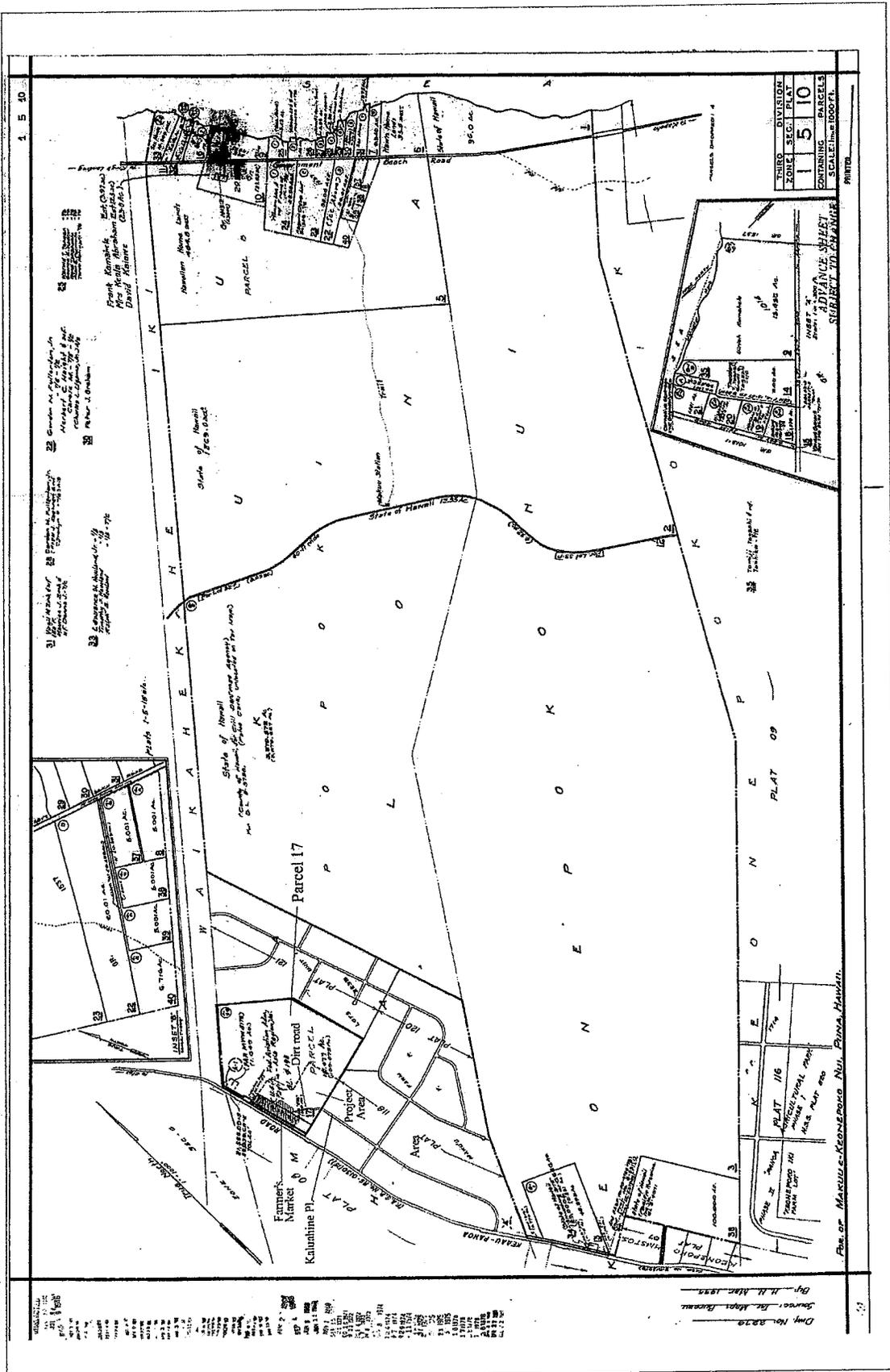


Figure 2. Tax Map Key 1-5-10 showing Project Area

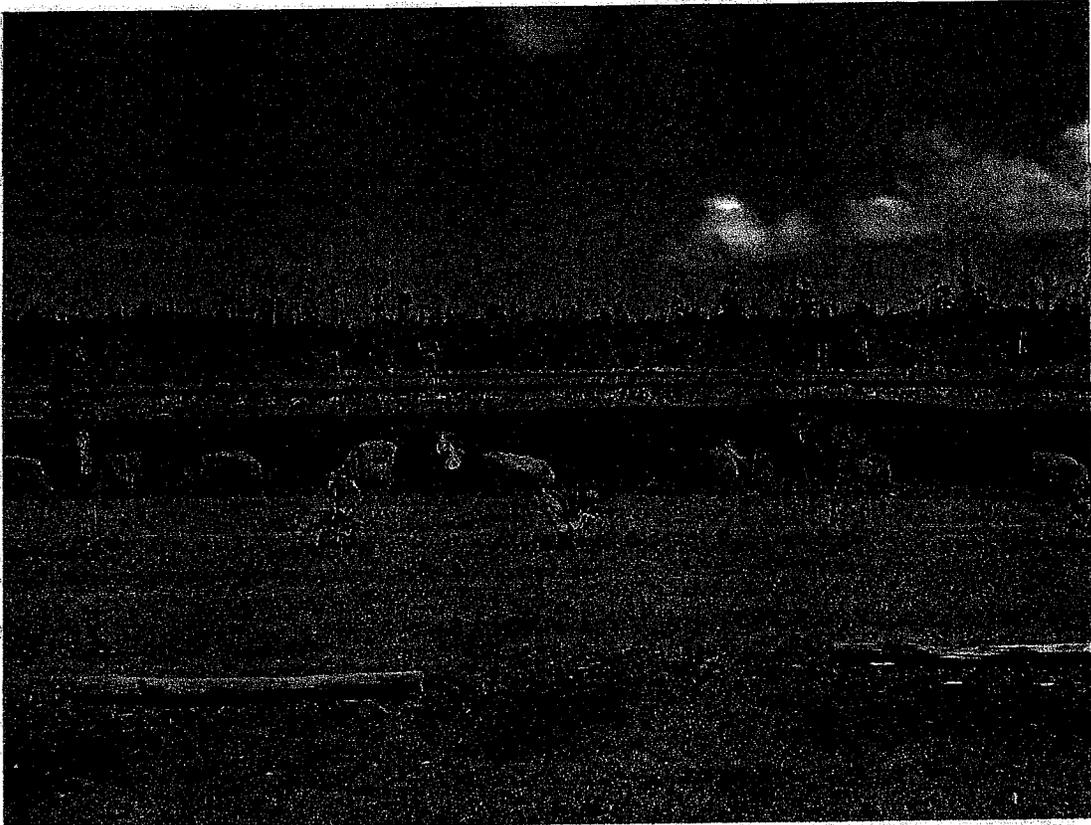


Figure 3. Bulldozed Farmer's Market Area, view to east



Figure 4. Gate at end of Kaluahine Place with Project Area Vegetation in background, view to north

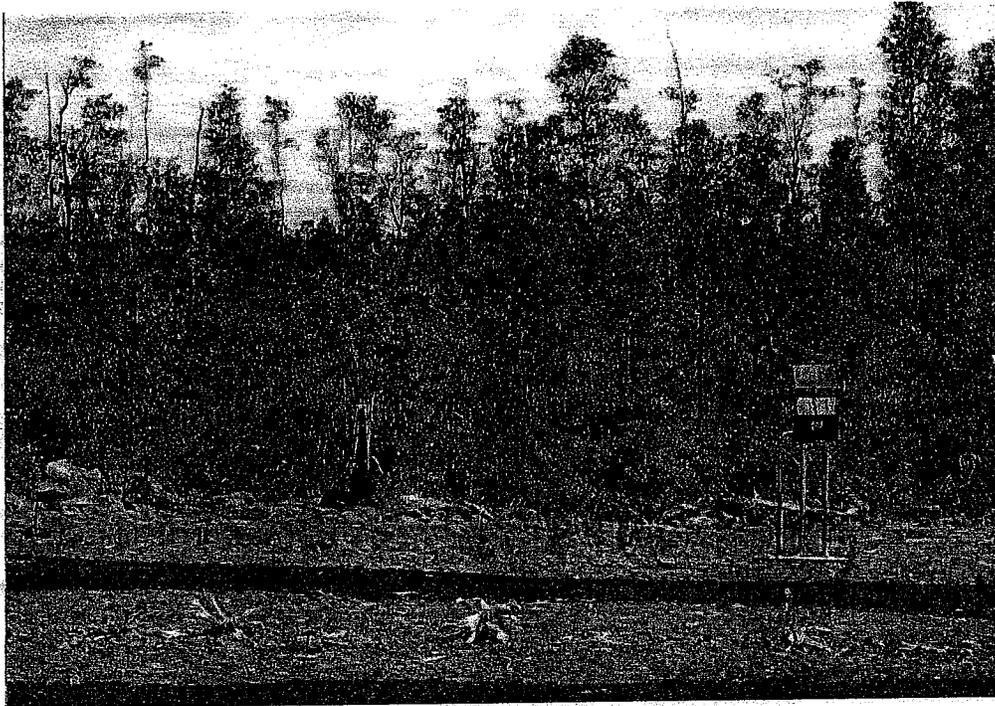


Figure 5. Project Area Vegetation, view to east

There is little mention of Makuu in Hawaiian traditional and legendary accounts. Crozier and Barriere (1971) note that in Puna, few pre-missionary traditions and legends survived because of intensive mission work by Reverend Titus Coan between 1835 and the 1870s. Emory et al. (1959) suggest that Puna's traditional history is difficult to follow because of the dominating influence of the ruling families in the neighboring districts of Hilo and Ka'u. Handy and Handy (1972:542) state that Hawaiian traditions suggest that Puna "was once Hawaii's richest agricultural region and that it is only in relatively recent time that volcanic eruption has destroyed much of its best land".

Hua'a was the chief of Puna when it was seized by 'Umi-a-Liloa, unifying his control over the Island of Hawaii (Kamakau 1961). Hua'a was killed during a battle with one of 'Umi's warrior sons, Pi'i-mai-wa'a, at Kuolo in Kea'au. Kalani'opu'u unified his control over Hawaii Island when he gained control of Ka'u and Puna following Alapa'i's defeat in a battle at Mahinaakaka. During Kalani'opu'u's rule, the Puna chief, I-maka-koloa, attempted a rebellion and seized the valuable products of the district including 'o'o and *mamo* bird features, hogs, fine mats made from pandanus blossoms and from young pandanus leaves, gray tapa cloth, and tapa cloth made from *mamaki* bark (Kamakau 1961).

Following the death of Kalani'opu'u, in 1782, a dispute over ascendancy ensued culminating in the battle of Moku'ohai (Kamakau 1961, Kuykendall 1938). Following the battle, control over the island was divided between Keoua Ku'ahulu'ula, who held Ka'u and a portion of Puna; Keawema'uhili, who controlled the remainder of Puna, Hilo, and southern Hamakua; and Kamehameha, who controlled northern Hamakua, Kohala, and Kona. A feud between Keoua and Keawema'uhili in 1785, resulted in Keawema'uhili's death and the expansion of Keoua's territory, including the unification of Puna. The island was finally re-unified in 1791 when Kamehameha killed Keoua at Kawaihae. In 1790, a lava flow extended diagonally across Kaueleau from the northeast above Opihikao to the coast at Kamaili (Wolfe and Morris 2001).

Early historic accounts document that Puna was well populated and intensively cultivated. In 1823, Ellis (1963) traveled along the coast from Kaimu to Kapoho, probably passing through, or very close to, the project area. At Kaimu, there was a sandy beach and village with an estimated 725 occupants. Also described, are plantations and groves of coconuts and *kou*. Ellis estimated that the population of Kaimu and nearby villages was approximately 2,000. Ellis described a village surrounded by plantations at Kamaili, which is immediately south of Kaueleau, where they were given taro and potatoes. Other crops noted by Ellis in Puna included bananas and sugar cane. In 1841, the Wilkes Expedition passed through an inland portion of Kaueleau (Burtchard 1994).

The following summarizes Burtchard (1994) discussion of Puna's later history. Prior to the 1870s, foreign influence in Puna primarily was limited to missionaries. In the late 1870s, Robert Rycroft moved to Pohoiki and built a home, wharf, sawmill, jail and courthouse. He later began growing coffee in the area and built a coffee mill. In the mid-1880s, the government began selling land in Puna for homesteads. Most of the homestead land was acquired for coffee cultivation in the 1890s.

Puna Sugar Company was established in 1900 in nearby Kapoho. Between 1900 and the 1930s, the population of the region grew dramatically with the expansion of sugar cane cultivation, pineapple production, the timber industry, and other commercial developments. In the early 1900s, the Hilo Railroad Company developed a rail system from Hilo Town to Puna. In 1907, the Hawaiian Mahogany Lumber Co. was established by James B. Castle to provide railroad ties to the mainland United States. A mill was built at Pahoa and lands being cleared for sugar cane cultivation provided a steady supply of timber. The mill lost its contract to provide railroad ties in 1913 because the ties did not last as long as anticipated. The mill was leased for sugar plantation use in 1917.

By the late 1920s, concern over forest depletion and watershed maintenance lead to the creation of the Puna, Nanawale, and Malama-Ki Forest Reserves. Handy and Handy (1972) citing oral historical sources, indicate that in the 1930s there were homesteading areas in 'Opihikao, Kaueleau, Kamaili, Ke'eke'e, Kehena, and Keaouhana. Dry land taro was grown throughout the inland portions of these *ahupua'a*. A particular taro cultivation method, *pa-hala*, is described for the area from Kalapana to Kamaili. The method involved excavating a hole in a'a lava in a pandanus grove. The hole was then filled with weeds, which were allowed to rot for six weeks or more. A taro cutting (*huli*) was wrapped in pandanus leaves and planted in the hole. After the cutting produced three or four leaves, the pandanus branches were cut to provide sunlight and the taro plant was covered with pandanus leaves. After the pandanus leaves were sufficiently dry, the leaves were burned reducing them ash that provided nourishment to the taro plant, which grew tall enough to hide a man beneath the leaves.

Puna Sugar Company continued in operation until the early 1980s. Beginning in the late 1950s, real estate development, along with tourism and diversified agriculture gradually replaced plantation agriculture in Puna. A portion of the present project area is currently in use as a farmer's market.

Findings

No archaeological sites or features were identified within the project area. Two small non-cultural lava blisters were encountered. These were both carefully examined and one was found to contain evidence of recent cultivation. The other blister contained no cultural material or evidence of modification. No further archaeological work is recommended for the property based on the survey results.

References

- Burtchard, G.C.
1994 Archaeological in the Kilauea East Rift Zone. Part 1: Land Use Model and Research Design and Part II. A Preliminary Sample survey. Kapoho, Kamaili and Kilauea Geothermal Subzones.
- Crozier, S. and D. Barrere
1971 Archaeological and Historical Survey of the Ahupua'a of Puulaa, Puna, Hawaii. Bishop Museum Department of Anthropology Report 71-1.
- DLNR (Department of Land and Natural Resources)
2003 Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 13. Dept. of Land and Natural Resources, Subtitle 13, State Historic Preservation Division Rules.
- Ellis, W.
1963 Journal of William Ellis, Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owhyee...Honolulu: Advertiser Publishing Company.
- Emory, K., W. Bonk and Y. Sinoto
1959 Hawaiian Archaeology: Fishhooks. Bernice P. Bishop Museum Special Publication 47, Honolulu.
- Handy, E.S.C., and E.G. Handy
1972 *Native Planters in Old Hawaii: Their Life, Lore, and Environment*. B.P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 233. Bishop Museum Press. Honolulu.
- Kamakau, S.M.
1961 *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*. Kamehameha Schools Press. Honolulu.
- Kuykendall, R.S.
1938 The Hawaiian Kingdom 1778-1854. Foundation and Transformation. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.
- Sato, H.H., W. Ikeda, R. Paeth, R. Smythe, and M. Takehiro, Jr.
1973 *Soil Survey of the Island of Hawaii, State of Hawaii*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and University of Hawaii Agricultural Experiment Station. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Wolfe, E.W., and J. Morris
2001 Geologic Map of the Island of Hawaii. U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey. Miscellaneous Investigations Series.

APPENDIX D – REPRODUCTION OF COMMENTS MADE ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSES TO THE COMMENTS

1. State of Hawaii, Office of Environmental Quality Control, April 8, 2011.
Response: Letter from Brian T. Nishimura to Rebecca Alakai, May 24, 2011.
2. United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, May 6, 2011.
Response: Letter from Brian T. Nishimura to Loyal Mehrhoff, Ph.D., May 24, 2011.
3. County of Hawaii, Planning Department, May 10, 2011.
Response: Letter from Brian T. Nishimura to Ms. BJ Leithead-Todd, May 24, 2011.
4. Mr. Robert Lower, email dated April 11, 2011.
Response: email from Brian T. Nishimura to Robert Lower, May 24, 2011.



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL
235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 702
HONOLULU, HI 96813

April 8, 2011

Brian Nishimura
Planning Consultant
101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217
Hilo, HI 96720

Dear Mr. Nishimura:

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment, Makuu Farmers Market and Community Center,
Hilo, Hawaii

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA). The Makuu Farmer's Association proposes to construct and operate a cultural/community learning center and other related uses and expand an existing Farmer's Market to service the Hawaiian homestead communities in East Hawaii. The Office of Environmental Quality Control has the following comments.

1. Per the Kepoo v. Watson, 1998 supreme court decision, DHHL is subject to Chapter 343, HRS. The cultural/community learning center and farmer's market appears to be inconsistent with §205-4.5, HRS permissible uses within the agricultural district. Please discuss additional permits that you may need in order to accommodate your needs.
2. The preliminary site plan, depicted in Figure 3, is blank and there doesn't appear to be any Figure 2.
3. Please provide a timeline of performance, estimated costs, and source of funding.
4. It is unclear if parking is sufficient for the farmer's market and community center.

If you have any questions, please call Rebecca Alakai at 586-4185.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Alakai
Senior Planner

BRIAN T. NISHIMURA, PLANNING CONSULTANT

101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217

Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4221

Phone: (808) 935-7692 Fax: (808) 935-6126 E-mail: btnishi@hawaiiantel.net

May 24, 2011

Ms. Rebecca Alakai, Senior Planner
State of Hawaii
Office of Environmental Quality Control
235 South Beretania Street, Suite 702
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment
Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center
TMK: (3) 1-5-10: 41

Dear Ms. Alakai:

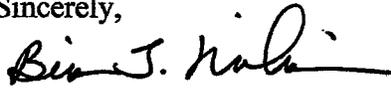
This is in response to your letter dated April 8, 2011, providing comments on the subject Draft Environmental Assessment. The responses to your comments are provided in bold letters following your comments:

1. Per the Kepoo v. Watson, 1998 supreme court decision, DHHL is subject to Chapter 343, HRS. The cultural/community learning center and farmer's market appears to be inconsistent with §205-4.5, HRS permissible uses within the agricultural district. Please discuss additional permits that you may need in order to accommodate your needs. **The DHHL is exempt from the requirements of §205-4.5, HRS and the Planning Department has acknowledged the Village Commercial zoning for the property which allows the proposed uses. The comment letter from the County Planning Department dated May 10, 2011, indicated that a plan approval will be required for the proposed improvements.**
2. The preliminary site plan, depicted in Figure 3, is blank and there doesn't appear to be any Figure 2. **The references to the Figures in the Draft EA are in error and will be corrected. Figure 1 is a Vicinity Map and Figure 2 is the Maku'u Master Plan. Figure 3 will be added showing the Site Plan for the Community Center.**
3. Please provide a timeline of performance, estimated costs, and source of funding. **Construction on the first phase of the community center is expected to begin in 2012 and be completed in phases over a five year period. Grant applications have been submitted in 2011 to the DHHL - \$250,000 and the Administration for Children and Families - \$750,000. Additional funds as needed will be obtained through loans and other grant sources.**
4. It is unclear if parking is sufficient for the farmer's market and community center.

The County Planning Department will require that sufficient parking is provided as part of the Plan Approval process.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the proposed project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian T. Nishimura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Brian T. Nishimura, Planning Consultant



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 3-122, Box 50088
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850

In Reply Refer To:
2011-TA-0227

MAY 06 2011

Mr. Brian T. Nishimura
101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Subject: Technical Assistance on the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Makuu Farmers Market, Hawaii

Dear Mr. Nishimura:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Makuu Farmers Market in the Puna District on the island of Hawaii. We received your letter requesting comments on March 31, 2011. The proposed Farmers Market will be located on nine acres (TMK (3) 1-5-10: 41) adjacent to the Keaau-Pahoa Road. Six acres of the proposed site has been previously cleared and graded. We have reviewed the project information you provided and pertinent information in our files, including data compiled by the Hawaii Biodiversity and Mapping Program and the Hawaii GAP Program. The federally endangered Hawaiian hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus semotus*) and Hawaiian hawk (*Buteo solitarius*) have been observed in the vicinity of the proposed project. We recommend you address potential project impacts to the listed species discussed below, and include measures to minimize impacts to these resources in your Final EA.

On the island of Hawaii, Hawaiian hoary bats (*Lasiurus cinereus semotus*) are known to migrate seasonally. Even though surveys of the proposed site for the project did not reveal any federally-listed animals, Hawaiian hoary bats may utilize the site at various times of the year. Hawaiian hoary bats roost in both exotic and native woody vegetation and leave their young unattended in "nursery" trees and shrubs when they forage. If trees or shrubs suitable for bat roosting are cleared during the bat breeding season (May to August), there is a risk that young bats could inadvertently be harmed or killed. To avoid impacts to the endangered Hawaiian hoary bat, woody plants greater than 15 feet tall should not be removed or trimmed during the bat-birthing and pup-rearing season (May 15 through August 15).

Hawaiian hawks also nest in both exotic and native woody vegetation. To avoid impacts to Hawaiian hawks, we recommend not clearing any brush or trees, or using heavy equipment within 300 feet of potential nesting sites during their breeding season (March through September). If you are unable to avoid clearing vegetation or using heavy equipment during these months, we recommend you conduct surveys for nests prior to any clearing activity. Please contact our office for survey methodology and recommendations for avoiding impacts to nests.

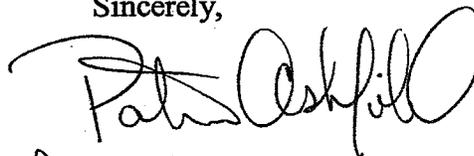
TAKE PRIDE[®]
IN AMERICA 

Mr. Brian T Nishimura

2

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Dr. Jeff Zimpfer, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Consultation and Habitat Conservation Planning Program (phone: 808-792-9431; email: jeff_zimpfer@fws.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat Ashfill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pat" and last name "Ashfill" clearly distinguishable.

for Loyal Mehrhoff
Field Supervisor

BRIAN T. NISHIMURA, PLANNING CONSULTANT

101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217

Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4221

Phone: (808) 935-7692 Fax: (808) 935-6126 E-mail: btnishi@hawaiiantel.net

May 24, 2011

Loyal Mehrhoff, Ph.D., Field Supervisor
U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Rm 3-122, Box 50088
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment
Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center
TMK: (3) 1-5-10: 41

Dear Dr. Mehrhoff:

This is in response to your letter dated May 6, 2011, providing comments on the subject Draft Environmental Assessment. Thank you for providing additional information regarding the Hawaiian hoary bats (*Lasiurus cinereus semotus*) and Hawaiian hawks. This information will be included in the Final EA along with the recommendations provided which will be incorporated as mitigation measures that the developer will comply with.

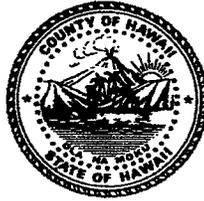
Thank you for taking the time to comment on the proposed project.

Sincerely,



Brian T. Nishimura, Planning Consultant

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



BJ Leithead Todd
Director

Margaret K. Masunaga
Deputy

County of Hawai'i

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Aupuni Center • 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone (808) 961-8288 • Fax (808) 961-8742

May 10, 2011

Mr. Brian T Nishimura
101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217
Hilo, HI 96720-5221

Dear Mr. Nishimura:

SUBJECT: Review of Draft Environmental Assessment
Project: Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center
TMK: (3) 1-5-010:041; Maku'u, Puna, Hawai'i

Thank you for your letter received on April 4, 2011 requesting comments from this office regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center. We also received the attached email correspondence from Robert Lower and subsequent response from M. Kaleo Manuel, Planner for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Please be sure to include this correspondence in the Final Environmental Assessment.

On the subject parcel, the Maku'u Farmers Association plans to further develop the Farmers Market and construct a Community Center that will be utilized for community gatherings, cultural workshops, agricultural related workshops, and business development workshops. The Community Center will also provide community access to office equipment, computers, and a certified kitchen and cooking facility for start-up businesses, training, and fundraising opportunities. The Community Center is planned to be built in phases. Phase I will include approximately 3,000 square feet of floor space that will have two multi-purpose rooms and office space. Phase II construction will include restrooms and storage space. Phase III will include one private and one public certified kitchen, storage space, and an imu. The final phase will involve the construction of an 8,000 square foot great hall. This project is a priority in the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands Maku'u Regional Plan.

The subject property is a 38 acre parcel. However, this project only uses the first 9 acres immediately adjacent to the Kea'au-Pāhoa Road, which include the Farmers Market, Mala (garden area) and Community Center. The subject property is zoned Village

Mr. Brian T Nishimura
May 10, 2011
Page 2

Commercial (CV-38). The property is situated within the State Land Use Agricultural district. In addition, according to the County of Hawai'i General Plan 2005 (amended December 2006), the subject property is designated Extensive Agriculture in the Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide. The subject property is not within the Special Management Area (SMA).

According to Chapter 25 (Zoning) of the Hawai'i County Code Section 25-5-128 (a), *Plan approval shall be required for all new structures and additions to existing structures in the CV district, except for construction of one single-family dwelling and any accessory buildings per lot.* Therefore, plan approval will be required for proposed improvements to the property.

We have no further comments to offer, at this time. However, please provide our department with a copy of the Final Environmental Assessment for our records.

If you have any questions or if you need further assistance, please feel free to contact Bethany Morrison of this office at 961-8138.

Sincerely,



BJ LEITHEAD TODD
Planning Director

BJM:cs

\\coh31\planning\public\wpwin60\Bethany\EA-EIS Review\draftea Makuu Farmers Market and Community Center.doc

BRIAN T. NISHIMURA, PLANNING CONSULTANT

101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217

Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4221

Phone: (808) 935-7692 Fax: (808) 935-6126 E-mail: btnishi@hawaiiintel.net

May 24, 2011

Ms. BJ Leithead Todd, Director
County of Hawaii
Planning Department
101 Pauahi St., Suite 3
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment
Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center
TMK: (3) 1-5-10: 41

Dear Ms. Leithead Todd:

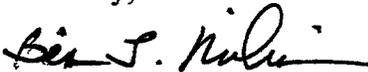
This is in response to your letter dated May 10, 2011, providing comments on the subject Draft Environmental Assessment.

As requested, the email correspondence from Robert Lower and subsequent response from M. Kaleo Manuel, Planner for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands will be included in the Final EA.

In addition, the applicant will comply with the requirement to submit a request for Plan Approval to the Planning Department for proposed improvements to the property.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the proposed project.

Sincerely,



Brian T. Nishimura, Planning Consultant

Bm

Dacayanan, Melissa

From: Kaleo.L.Manuel@hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2011 3:37 PM
To: Robert Lower
Cc: Makuufarmersassociation@yahoo.com; Brian Nishimura
Subject: Re: Maku'u market

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
COUNTY OF HAWAII

2011 APR 12 AM 7: 26

Aloha Robert,

Mahalo for your support and concerns regarding the Maku'u Farmers Market. I will work with our consultant to address your concerns as part of finalizing the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Mahalo nui,

M. Kaleo Manuel
Planner
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands
P.O. Box 1879, Honolulu, Hawaii 96805
fax: (808) 620-9559
direct: (808) 620-9485

Robert Lower <mukuboy@yahoo.com>

To Makuufarmersassociation@yahoo.com
cc kaleo.l.manuel@hawaii.gov, Brian Nishimura <planning@co.hawaii.hi.us>
Subject Maku'u market

04/11/2011 03:33 PM

I saw in the news where the association is wanting to expand. I'm all for it. The market has been great for lower Puna in a lot of ways and is becoming a tourist destination. It has been put together and operated very professionally with a genuine Kanaka Maole presence. I've been a vendor, buyer and advocate for the market. But ... you know there's a "but" coming. My concern is for the traffic situation. It's already been a bit dicey with the early morning queue of vendors and all day highway traffic mixed in with the ingress/egress of market traffic. The relocation of the entry/ exit was a good move, along with the queuing of vendors within the area. But with expansion of activity and extra days I see traffic becoming a significant safety issue. I hope some serious consideration be given to this. Probably DOT should be consulted. There's a number of options. Worst case would be a full-on traffic light. Maybe easier and less costly would be widening that stretch of highway to accommodate turn lanes. I've seen many "DUI's" and other inattentive drivers going through there and it's scary. Please at least think it over. Email is the closest I'm going to get involved, but I'll be looking for a reply or something in the newspaper. Thanks much,

Robert

SCANNED
APR 12 2011
By: 070722

Brian Nishimura

From: Brian Nishimura [btnishi@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2011 10:36 AM
To: 'mukuboy@yahoo.com'
Subject: Response to comments regarding Draft Environmental Assessment for the Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center

Mr. Robert Lower:

Thank you for providing your comments regarding the Maku'u Farmers Market and Community Center Project. Please be advised that the Department of Transportation has been consulted during the Environmental Review process and a traffic consultant was retained to prepare a traffic impact analysis report for the project. The traffic consultant determined that, "The development of Maku'u Master Plan is expected to begin with the community center. The existing unsignalized access can be expected to support the existing Farmer's Market and the proposed community center. Subsequent development of any other major trip generation components of the Master Plan, such as the health center, retail space, office space, and child care center, will require further analysis on Keaau-Pahoa Road at the Project Access Driveway."

A recent study prepared for the State Department of Transportation the Kea'au-Pāhoa Road Improvement Technical Report by SSFM International, Inc. in May 2010 had this to say about the intersection at the Maku'u Farmers Market: "The Maku'u Farmers Market access had just one crash and a very low rate of crashes from 2004-2007. In the time since these accident statistics were calculated, the market driveway has been relocated more towards the Pāhoa end of the property, and a new left-turn lane was constructed for Pāhoa-bound traffic to access the new improved driveway. There has also been a revised internal circulation pattern. These improvements would be expected to result in even lower rates of accidents than previously." The report does not recommend any additional improvements to the intersection based on the crash data.

We believe that the new channelized intersection is adequate for the Farmer's Market and Community Center project. The Farmer's Market will continue to be open only on Sundays when peak hour traffic volumes on the Kea'au-Pāhoa Highway are 82% lower than during weekday peak hours. In addition, the Community Center project will be built incrementally in phases and will not have a significant impact on weekday peak hour traffic as well.

Thanks again for taking the time to comment on the proposed project.

Brian Nishimura