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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



WILLIAM W. PATY, CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DEPUTIES

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OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY CONTROL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Brian J. J. Choy, Director
Office of Environmental Quality Control

FROM: William W. Paty, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources

SUBJECT: Negative Declaration for Renovation and Construction
of Facilities at the Nike Missile Control Site
(TMK: 6-8-001-4)

Enclosed are four copies of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife agency action Determination of Negative Declaration. The project is for renovation of the Nike Missile barracks and administrative buildings above Mokuleia and conversion of those buildings for use as an environmental education center.

We have consulted with the Divisions of Historic Preservation, Water and Land Development, State Parks, Land Management, and Conservation and Resources Enforcement in the preparation of this Environmental Assessment and have incorporated their comments in the attached document.

We are submitting this declaration for action as required in Environmental Quality Commission-Environmental Impact Statement Regulations. Please contact Mr. Herbert Kikukawa at 587-0166 if you have any questions. Thank you.

WILLIAM W. PATY

Enclosures (4)

cc: M. Buck, DOFAW
H. Kikukawa, DOFAW-Oahu Dist.

1992-05-08-0A-FFA - Nike Missile Site MAY 8 1992

NOTICE OF
DETERMINATION OF NEGATIVE DECLARATION
NIKE MISSILE SITE (MOKULEIA), ISLAND OF OAHU

I. Proposing agency: Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

II. Approving Agency: Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

III. Summary of Proposed Action

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Oahu District, proposes to restore and convert the old Nike Missile Site Administrative building and barracks to a camp for nature education purposes. The site is on State owned land in the Mokuleia Forest Reserve. This project will enhance the nature education program supported by the Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

IV. Determination

With this Notice, the Division hereby files a Notice of Negative Declaration. Evidence presented in the attached Environmental Assessment indicates that no endangered or rare flora or fauna are present in the project area. The proposed project is consistent with the land use designations and consists of restoration and conversion of an existing facility.

V. Further Information

Herbert H. Kikukawa, Oahu District Manager
1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 587-0166

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE RESTORATION AND
CONVERSION OF THE MOKULEIA NIKE MISSILE FACILITY (MAUKA)

SECTION I

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

I. IDENTIFICATION

- A. Proposing Agency: Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR),
Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), Oahu District.
- B. Approving Agency: DLNR, DOFAW.
- C. Agencies Consulted: Historic Preservation Division
 Water-Land Development Division
 State Parks Division
 Land Management Division
 Conservation and Resources Enforcement

II. INTRODUCTION

The Division proposes to restore and convert the Administration and Barracks buildings at the Mauka NIKE Missile Facility (Site 8) (see attached map) to a camp facility able to house children and adults on overnight stays for participation in a nature education program.

III. PROJECT GOAL

The goal of this project is to restore and convert abandoned, yet fundamentally sound, buildings to a productive use, and to develop a facility for use as an education site and an area to store materials and supplies related to the management of the Pahole Natural Area Reserve, the Mokuleia and Kuaokala Forest Reserves and Kuaokala Game Management Area.

IV. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project is to further develop the nature education program for the people of Hawaii, specifically, for children on Oahu. The Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Oahu District, considers this a significant step in development of a comprehensive nature education program. Another objective is efficient management of the surrounding State Forest Reserve lands including the Pahole Natural Area Reserve, Mokuleia Forest Reserve and the Kuaokala Game Management Area.

SECTION II

DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

I. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. Climate/Topography

This area has an excellent climate for upland recreational activities. Located at 2000' elevation, it's temperatures are cooler than those found near sea level, and an annual rainfall of 30"-40" inches per year provide ample moisture for lush vegetation growth yet still provides for predominantly sunny weather. The topography on the site is moderate due to grading done by the military during original construction, and adjacent roads and trails provide safe hiking and spectacular vistas. Steep slopes near the site necessitate keeping to marked and maintained routes.

B. Noise

The sounds of weapons firing can frequently be heard from the adjacent Makua Firing Range. Although there is a substantial buffer zone between the live fire areas and the forest reserve and the noise level is not high, the sound of small arms and automatic weapons can clearly be heard.

The predominant sounds in the area, however, are the sounds of the wind in the trees and birds calling from the forest and hillsides. The isolation of the site provides an excellent opportunity to enjoy the mountain environment.

C. Economics

The only economic impact will be the infusion of capital into the local economy from construction and maintenance activities.

D. Historical/Archaeological

There are no archaeological sites at or adjacent to the facility. This site was graded during the original construction of the building. As this project involves only the refurbishing of existing buildings, there will be no impact on archaeological resources.

II. BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Natural biological systems at the site consist mostly of regrowth following

disturbance caused by grading done during the original construction. Native trees located in the facility will be retained and the area will be extensively landscaped with native plant species.

The area adjacent the site is an area of high quality forest, both native and introduced, and existing trails through areas not considered biologically sensitive will provide an excellent educational resource.

III. SOCIO/ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

A. Population

The site is located far from any populated areas, the nearest town being Waialua. Activities at the site will have no impact on the town or its inhabitants, other than possible employment opportunities for construction and maintenance activities.

B. Land Use

The site is currently unused but the adjacent areas are managed primarily for public recreation including hunting, hiking, camping and picnicking. The nearby Pahole Natural Area Reserve is managed to protect and sustain native natural communities. As entry to the area involves permitting processes, it is unlikely that there will be an uncontrolled surge in public use.

The State Parks Division has had plans since 1962 to incorporate the Peacock Flats area into the Kaena Point State Park. Should such plans reach the implementation stage, adjacent land use as a nature education center would be compatible with a state park.

IV. LAND TENURE

The area is owned by the State of Hawaii and administered by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

SECTION III

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

I. SHORT TERM IMPACTS

A. Noise

There will be a short term negative impact from noise associated with construction/renovation activities at the site, but the noise on site will be buffered by surrounding vegetation and topography. Construction will occur during the week and not on the weekends when the Peacock Flats campground gets most of its use. The campground is along the road which leads to the site. There will be no negative noise impact from the facility once the renovation work is completed, other than occasional vehicle traffic leading to the site.

B. Air Quality
There will be a slight short term negative air quality impact from dust generated by vehicles and personnel working in the area, but this will largely be controlled by keeping dirt areas wet.

C. Water Quality
There will be no impact on water quality from construction/renovation activities at the site.

II. LONG TERM IMPACTS

The long term impacts from the project will be primarily positive. A full time care-taker associated with the nature education facility will provide a measure of security and emergency assistance that is currently lacking in an area that encounters periodic vandalism and has no emergency response network. A storage building at the facility for use by Forestry and Wildlife personnel will improve efficiency of management activities for adjacent forest reserve including improved fire suppression capabilities. The facility grounds, which are currently overrun with weeds and in some areas bare dirt will be landscaped with native species as part of the curriculum of the nature education center.

SECTION IV

ALTERNATIVES

I. NO ACTION

The site remains in its present condition and no effort is made to repair the buildings and convert them to a productive use. The buildings will continue to degrade and eventually to undergo structural damage, rendering them unusable.

II. LIMITED REPAIR

Repair roof and paint buildings. The buildings will be saved from structural damage but will continue to degrade from periodic vandalism and general neglect.

III. RESTORE/CONVERT TO CAMP USE

Restore buildings and convert to a use compatible with the surrounding area. Caretaker presence will provide protection for facility and DOFAW storage.

Alternative III is the Preferred Alternative.

SECTION V

IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Irreversible commitment of resources would consist only of capital expenditures and personnel time to manage the project. No natural resources would be consumed or altered at the site.

SECTION VI

SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Impacts will be three-fold. First will be the increase in traffic on the Mokuleia access road leading to the site. This increase will be minimal, with small buses carrying children traveling the road only every three days on a two way trip (carrying kids down and bringing a new group back up), and occasional single vehicle traffic by facility staff members. Second, an increased load on a trail system adjacent to the facility will require increased maintenance, but the trail route poses no compromise for native species habitat as the trail will traverse heavily modified forest capable of absorbing the increased use. The third, and most significant impact will be the contribution that a high quality nature education program will have for the individual students and the State of Hawaii which far outweigh the investment of time and capital expenditures, and will revitalize a facility which is fundamentally sound but in need of immediate care.

