



County of Hawai'i



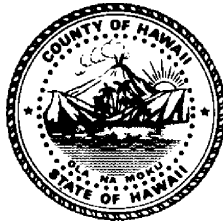
Department of Finance

2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR

**Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources
Preservation Commission**

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor

William V. Brillhante, Jr.
Managing Director



Jodie Rosam, Chair
Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair
Janet Britt
Deborah Chang
Maya Goodoni
Amedeo Markoff
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County of Hawai'i
PUBLIC ACCESS, OPEN SPACE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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December 31, 2025

The Honorable C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor, County of Hawai'i
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Dear Mayor Alameda,

It is my privilege to present the 2025 Annual Report of the Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC). This report reflects the collective efforts of the Commission and the community to protect and preserve Hawai'i Island's invaluable open spaces and natural and cultural resources.

This year, the Commission continued its mission by reviewing and prioritizing properties that embody the values of preservation, public access, and resource protection. The 2025 Prioritized List highlights seven properties, each carefully evaluated for its urgency, public benefit, natural and cultural resource significance, and management potential. These properties, detailed in the report, represent the community's vision for a sustainable future and the ongoing commitment to safeguarding our island's heritage. I would like to emphasize that the Commission works very hard to prioritize these properties, and hope that you will take into account the differences in ranking percentages when you consider what to purchase this upcoming year. The Commission is always willing to speak to you in regards to these properties if you have any questions that need clarification or any concerns, and we encourage you to reach out.

Looking ahead, the Commission will continue its efforts to identify and prioritize properties for preservation, support the stewardship grant program, and enhance processes to ensure transparency and effectiveness. While challenges such as staffing limitations persist, we remain confident that ongoing improvements and collaboration will strengthen the program's ability to achieve its purpose.

On behalf of the Commission, I extend our gratitude to you, the County Council, and the community for your continued support. Together, we ensure that the natural and cultural treasures of Hawai'i Island are protected for the benefit of future generations.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jodie Rosam".

Jodie Rosam
Chair

PREAMBLE

PUBLIC ACCESS, OPEN SPACE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Program (PONP) serves two primary purposes:

1. Facilitating the acquisition of eligible properties through the Preservation Fund (referred to as "The Fund").
2. Managing these acquired properties using the Preservation Maintenance Fund (referred to as the "PM Fund").

The Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC) was established to assist in this process. The Commission's responsibilities include:

- Developing an island-wide prioritized list of qualifying lands for preservation and submitting it to the mayor. This list outlines the significance of each parcel or entitlement, explains the reasons for its priority, and describes its anticipated use after acquisition.
- Updating this list as needed, but at least annually by December 31.
- Exploring funding opportunities for conservation easements or land acquisition and making recommendations to the mayor, with an emphasis on leveraging County contributions to secure State, Federal, and private funding.
- Reviewing Stewardship Grant Applications and recommending eligible non-profit organizations to the Department of Finance for stewarding properties purchased with The Fund.

In 2025, the program focused on maintaining its mission to uphold the values that guide its work. These values ensure that the people of Hawai'i County are the true beneficiaries. By protecting lands from development, safeguarding numerous cultural sites, and preserving endangered species, the program continues to honor its commitment to preserving the natural and cultural heritage of Hawai'i, often referred to as the "Endangered Species Capital of the World."



2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR

The Department of Finance, through its Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC), is submitting this 2025 Annual Report to the Mayor, which includes the 2025 Prioritized List of Properties that was submitted to this Commission on or before the deadline date of January 31, 2025, according to the Hawai'i County Code Section 2-217.

2025 Prioritized List

In developing the 2025 Prioritized List, the Commission considered properties submitted on the 2025 Suggestion Forms, heard public testimony, reviewed communications, conducted interviews, conducted site visits, and scored according to the Assessment Criteria Form. The Commission developed its prioritized ranking order based on reported urgency, anticipated use, significance, the benefit to the public, unique funding opportunities available for acquisition, and a proposed management plan. In 2015, the Commission amended its rules to include only those properties that scored 50% or higher on the prioritized list for consideration. Included in this report are detailed descriptions, maps, and summaries of all properties that scored above the 50% threshold

No.	%	Sugg.	Nomination	Tax Map Key No.
1	92.143	25-06	Kokua Kealakekua	8-1-009:007,008
2	91.000	25-05	Kealoha Family Lo'i	5-2-009:025, 026
3	89.333	25-07	Kumukahi	1-4-002:002, 017, 042, 047, 048, 052, 065, 072, 080, 081, 082, 085, 092, 100
4	83.286	25-02	Kuamo'o Ahupua'a	7-9-005:004, 005, 014, 015, 089
5	73.571	25-08	Waiakahi'ula Village Ocean Access	1-5-088:009, 010, 011, 012, 013
6	73.286	25-01	Waiakahi'ula Burial Site 19014 & Agricultural Complex Site 19013	1-5-063:042, 043
7	52.286	25-03	Kuakini Parking Lot	7-5-006:001

The commission members have written summaries for each of these prioritized properties, which are provided at the end of this report.

Commission Meetings

Regular meetings of the commission for the transaction of its business are held in person on the second Monday of every alternate month. In 2025, the following meetings were held:

January 13 (Hilo)	July 14 (Kona)
March 10 (Kona)	September 9 – Meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum. Meeting not rescheduled.
May 12 (Hilo)	November 10 (Kona)

Commission Members

The commission consists of nine members representing each of the districts on Hawai'i Island. In 2025, the seat for District 3 remained vacant after the previous commissioner's term expired on December 31, 2023. Below is a list of commissioners who served in 2025.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Council District No.</u>
Deborah Chang	12/31/27	1
VACANT	12/31/24	2
VACANT	12/31/23	3
Amedeo Markoff	12/31/27	4
Debbie Ward	12/31/25	5
Jodie Rosam, Chair	12/31/26	6
Janet Britt	12/31/29	7
Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair	12/31/25	8
Maya Goodoni	12/31/25	9

Property Acquisitions

In 2025, the Department of Finance continued to advance the acquisition goals of the Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Program. The County closed on the acquisition of a 27.38 acre conservation easement at 'Anaeho'omalu, securing permanent protection of shoreline open space and associated natural and cultural resources. In addition, the County is in escrow or active negotiations for three properties, totaling approximately 446 acres, located in North Kona (0.35 acres), North Hilo (81.19 acres), and Puna (364.41 acres). These transactions, once completed, will expand the County's inventory of preserved lands, improve public access, and support long-term stewardship of significant cultural and natural resources.

**PRIORITY #1: KŌKUA KEALAKEKUA
(92.143 %)**

TMK No (3) 8-1-009:007 & 008, consisting of approximately 1.26 acres in Ka'awaloa, South Kona (District 6)



Kealakekua, named for the alii (chief) and akua mano (shark god) Kua, is a beloved wahi kupuna (ancestral place) in South Kona.

Located near the well-known Ka'awaloa Trailhead that leads to Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park, the property sits at the intersection to Napo'opo'o road, a critical and heavily trafficked access-point for local residents and non-residents into a culturally rich and ecologically diverse landscape. The two adjacent properties are in the ahupua'a of Ka'awaloa and falls within the wahi pana (storied place) of Kealakekua Bay. The property aims to support meaningful and better-managed access to the 537-acre Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park.

Anticipated Use:

The property itself is a critical component to implementation of the Community Action Plan (CAP) because it will become the gateway and access-management point for the Ka'awaloa trail and Kealakekua Bay, serving as a kipuka for restoration, cultural and educational programs, and connectivity of people to place. This anticipated kipuka will also provide a safe space for a multi-faceted and diverse community to connect to place and learn how to appropriately engage with not only a cultural landscape, but with each other.

Establishing a cultural stewardship center at the entrance to both main access-points of the bay will allow community agency in the implementation of carrying-capacity limits, reduction of recreational-use, prevention of inappropriate access and overuse, and establish culturally sensitive codes-of-conduct. This will support stewards in long-term community-based, culturally grounded stewardship and management and ensures safe and self-aware access into Ka'awaloa and Kealakekua. Additionally, it provides a foundation for regenerative tourism, community empowerment, and allows visitors the opportunity to build their own relationships and connections with this space.

Significance and Management:

The Ka'awaloa trail and Kealakekua Bay Historical Park, as well as the many other coastal access points that extend beyond these areas, face a multitude of challenges due to extensive overuse and unmanaged access. In 2024, the Ka'awaloa trail was recorded to have been accessed by over 53,000 individuals with the intent to hike to the bay. This does not account for vehicular access to Kealakekua Bay Historical Park, nor does it account for coastal access by boat or non-motor watercraft (e.g. kayak, stand-up paddleboard, canoe, etc.).

Although the property itself is generally comprised of non-native invasive vegetation and is not currently a significant habitat for native species, the bay which it serves to support access to is a

Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD) and although currently dominated by non-native species, the native species are resilient and ever-present across the land, sea, and sky. With over 100 species of fish living in the bay, and as one of the few-available resting areas for dolphins on the island, the bay is heavily sought out by visitors for aquatic-recreational experiences and beloved by the local community who relies on the bay for cultural practices, fishing, and subsistence lifestyles.



Over 50,000 people access Kealakekua Bay and Kaawaloa per year, either by boat, non-motor boating (kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, etc), hiking, and vehicular access.

The property lies within the 44-acre watershed and aquifer of Kealakekua, which has a sustainable yield of 38 million gallons per day (MGD) and whose health is vital to ensure the health of its reliant communities. Property acquisition will support community-stewardship and more active engagement in watershed management as it pertains to the groundwater plumes which emanate from the coastline surrounding Kealakekua Bay and the near-shore anchialine ponds and springs such as Wailokoali'i. Current efforts by Hō'ala Kealakekua Nui and the extended community include a partnership with The Nature Conservancy to design and test various coral growth methods for Kanu Ko'a. This place-based initiative to restore coastal marine habitat along the west coast of Hawai'i Island is being conducted by means of several preparation steps not-possible without the support of community volunteers. Rooted in traditional ecological knowledge derived from the Kumulipo (a Hawaiian creation chant), implementation of these restoration efforts honors the cultural and ecological significance of coral as a first-born and foundational component of our community, emphasizing that the resilience of the people and the lands is intrinsically tied to the resilience of the marine ecosystems.

A location of great importance to the history of the Hawaiian people, Kealakekua is a storied landscape, revered by the people who have called it home for generations and who will continue to do so for generations to come. It was the first-known extensive contact between the Hawaiian people and Europeans when Captain James Cook arrived in January 1779. Subsequently killed there upon his second arrival for his role in the kidnapping of Kalani'ōpu'u, ruling chief of the island, Cook played a dominant role in the history of Kealakekua for many generations. A controversial monument honoring Cook remains standing at Ka'awaloa, visible from across the bay at Kealakekua. However, the bay was likely populated between 900 and 1300 A.D., long before the arrival of Captain Cook, and was a known epicenter of Kona. An abundant coastal sanctuary, the Kealakekua community was a thriving fishery and was first visited by a different foreigner known as Kua. A chief and shark god from Ka'ū, just like Cook, Kua was not of any



Hikiau Heiau is located within the Kealahou Bay Historical Park and can be accessed through Napoopoo road and is currently stewarded by Hoala Kealahou Nui.

known genealogical ties to this place. In his expeditions he sighted the bay and, when he arrived, he held himself with a humility, care, and respect for the place and community and was met with reciprocity. Kua learned from this place, engaging and participating in the traditional practices and protocols of its people. Stories of his time in Kealahou emphasize his willingness to learn, his genuine care, and his efforts to feed into the people and places which cared for and fed him. Kapukapu bay was named Kealahou, “the path of Kua,” to honor Kua, a foreigner who took the time to aloha ‘āina, showing us that there is value in cultural-exchanges and that if done so appropriately, there is strength and resilience in the new relationships that result.

In support of strengthening the stewardship of Kealahou, the community strives to perpetually engage and strengthen the long-term relationships of place and people and in doing so, develop a foundation of community connectivity, awareness, and understanding that leads to a more adaptive, resilient, and sustaining future for Kealahou overall.

These properties would support and enhance long-existing connections within a part of the ancient and historic agricultural field systems of Kona, fishing villages, Hikiau and Helehelekalani Heiau, an extensive ancient and historic trail system, anchialine pools, ponds, birthing sites, house sites, burial grounds, and numerous other culturally significant features representative of a rich history and deeply influential community space.

Special Opportunities:

- Protection of the property sets a precedent for collaborative landscape planning and land-protection strategies that emphasize land-connections rather than land-divisions, supporting traditional ecological knowledge and practices and decentralizing western narratives and perspectives in land-management.
- Cultivating a community-space for non-resident, resident, local, cultural- and lineal-descendant members of the community to exchange knowledge, develop meaningful relationships, and connect through appropriate avenues to place and people-of-place.
- Support the development and implementation of appropriate management of a historically overused and undervalued cultural landscape which may contribute to a large-scale effort of local communities to protect and perpetuate place-based cultural practices and traditions, ensuring coastal resilience into the future.
- Willing landowners and other funding sources are in place for a smooth acquisition process.

Strengths:

- The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is partnering with nonprofit Hō‘ala Kealahou Nui to fulfill the South Kona community’s vision to foster a space for community stewardship

and adaptive co-management of Kealakekua Bay which will honor traditional place-based knowledge and practices.

- The Kealakekua Bay Community Action Plan (CAP) is a document that has been thoroughly developed and refined by the multi-faceted community of Kealakekua and implies a strong path forward for partners that would serve as stewards of the properties nominated.
- Community support and collaboration is prevalent in the nomination of these properties and their future stewardship. Partnerships have been identified, and needs have been defined for appropriate collaboration and stewardship.

Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses identified.

Concerns and Other Thoughts:

- Current scoring systems for PONC nominations do not necessarily account for the significance of these properties as an extension and access-point of the cultural and natural areas which do not fall within its property boundaries. The significance of the extended landscape and community must be understood and emphasized as part of the property value and the property nomination itself must be seen as an integral part of the extended lands and waters of Ka'awaloa and Kealakekua. Viewing these spaces as undeniably connected and interwoven is critical to considering the extended landscape in scoring processes.

Report by: Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair, PONC Commission

Photos by: Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair, PONC Commission

PRIORITY #2: KEALOHA FAMILY LO'I

(Suggestion 25-05, Scored 91%)

TMK No.(s): (3)5-2-009: 025 and 026, consisting of approximately 2.39 acres in the Makapala and Niuli'i ahupua'a, in the District of North Kohala, Hawai'i.

DESCRIPTION

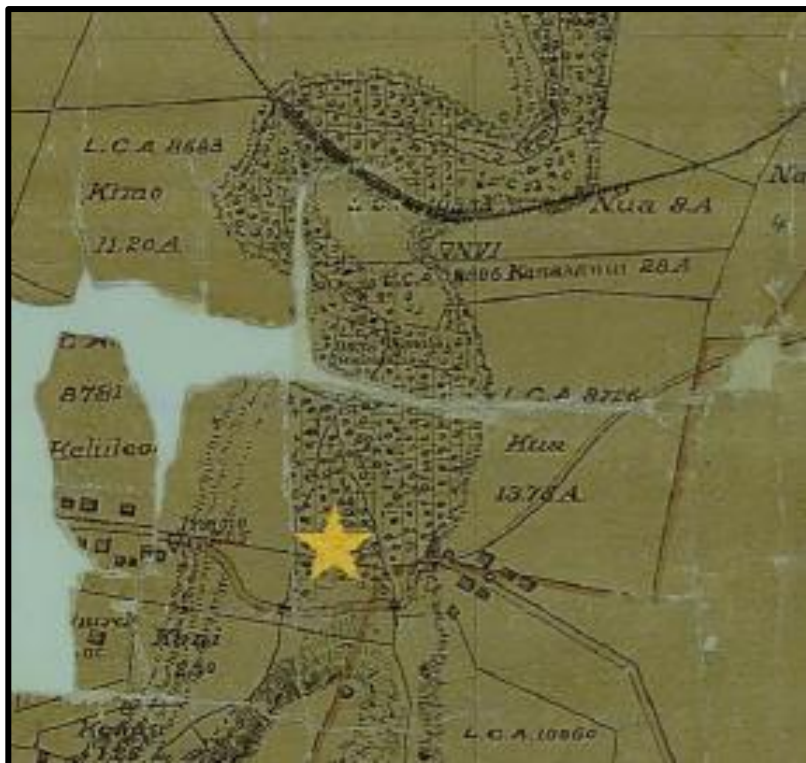
The Kealoha Family Lo'i sits on 2.39 verdant acres of well-established tropical plants that were popular to cultivate in the sugar plantation days of Kohala. Tall and mature 'ulu, coconut, mango, banana, ti leaf, kukui, sweet potato and taro, are among the rich assortment of plants. The property, which has been owned and occupied by the Kealoha Family for over 100 years, is bordered by two streams, the Waikāne and Niuli'i streams.



This is the home of the late Margaret Tablit, grandmother of Beldon Kealoha, and highly respected kumu hula. It is located at the entrance to the subject property, next to the main hwy. P.C.: Deborah Chang

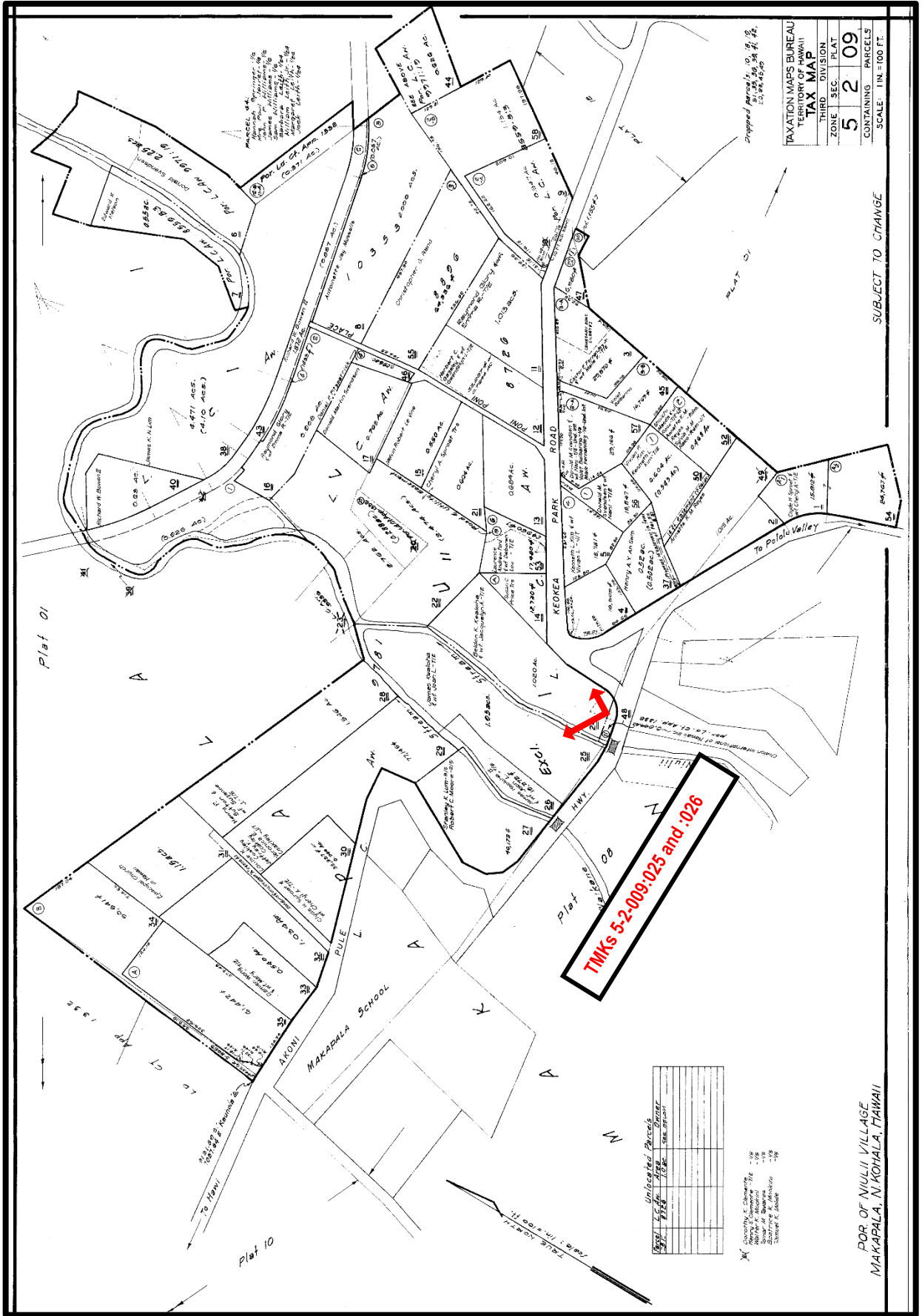


Aerial view of historic lo'i kalo (taro terraces) that have been cleared and restored by the Kealohas with the help of Kohala youth. P.C.: HILT



The property is covered by lo'i kalo that have likely been in existence since at least the 1880s.

The "Lydgate Map" shown on the left depicts the presence of numerous lo'i in the area where the Kealoha Family property is located (marked by yellow star). The map, which was drawn by J.M Lydgate, is dated circa 1880s. J.M. Lydgate was a surveyor under the Hawaiian Kingdom and Territory. P.C.: HILT



Proposed parcels 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

TAXATION MAPS BUREAU			
TERRITORY OF HAWAII			
TAX MAP			
ZONE	SEC.	DIVISION	PLAT
5	2	09	
CONTAINING PARCELS			SCALE: 1 IN. = 100 FT.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

TMKS 5-2-009-025 and :026

Lot No.	Area	Owner
1	0.0000	
2	0.0000	
3	0.0000	
4	0.0000	
5	0.0000	
6	0.0000	
7	0.0000	
8	0.0000	
9	0.0000	
10	0.0000	

Unlocated Parcels
 1/8 AC. - 1/8 AC.
 1/8 AC. - 1/8 AC.
 1/8 AC. - 1/8 AC.
 1/8 AC. - 1/8 AC.
 1/8 AC. - 1/8 AC.

POR OF NIULII VILLAGE
 MAKAPALA, N. KOHALA, HAWAII



View of a few of the lo'i kalo and their proximity to Waikāne and Niuli'i Streams. P.C.: Deborah Ward

ANTICIPATED USE

- The Kealoha family is seeking a Conservation Easement (CE) between themselves and the County of Hawai'i, which would help to ensure that the property remains in the Kealoha family and in its long-standing traditional use of growing kalo. This would fulfill the desires of the matriarch of the family who did not want the family's property sold.
- It is a concern that a number of newer landowners have destroyed the historic lo'i on their properties in the process of converting their properties to other uses. Keeping the Kealoha's land in lo'i kalo and productive agriculture is a major goal of the CE. Educating and employing the youth of Kohala in agricultural pursuits are among the planned activities for the property. It is the landowner's intention to provide limited rights for housing of a site stewardship worker to support the ongoing maintenance and to conduct educational programs on the property.

SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- The Kealoha Family Lo'i are unusual in that the property has remained in the family's ownership and management for more than a century, during a time when sugar plantations were successfully acquiring land in North Kohala for sugar cultivation.
- The Kealoha lo'i are in an ideal location for kalo cultivation, bordered by two streams.
- Water that is diverted from the streams to flood the lo'i kalo, is returned to the streams. The kalo must not be kept in stagnant water. This means that wetland kalo cultivation maintains the stream flow. By returning the water to the stream, the stream's ecosystem continues to provide habitat for aquatic life both in the streams and at the stream outlet, thus sustaining life in the near-shore coastal zone at Kēōkea Bay. The lo'i also provide surface to groundwater recharge to the Kohala aquifer.
- Protection of this property provides a unique opportunity to reestablish connectivity of the traditional agricultural practices of Kohala, revitalize the health of the watershed, and uplift the long-held relationships of people-of-place to the cultural landscapes that they have lived in for generations.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACQUISITION AND/OR MANAGEMENT

- With the CE, the Kealoha family intends to perpetuate centuries-old Hawaiian practices of food production and 'āina stewardship, ceremony, mele, and hula. The legacy of cultural education can continue, and the family intends to demonstrate, restore, and encourage expanded kalo production within Kohala.
- The opportunity to restore and steward this extensive, traditional lo'i system, in conjunction with

other families in the area, provides potential benefits to native species, habitat, flood control and mitigation, community resilience to climate change, and culturally significant food for the community.

- The Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT) is willing to co-hold with the County of Hawai'i an agricultural conservation easement (CE) to assist the permanent protection of the Kealoha Lo'i. That assistance includes annual monitoring of the CE in accordance with best standards and practices in CE drafting, monitoring, and violation correction. HILT currently holds 54 permanent CEs of private lands throughout Hawai'i.
- A fully executed Agricultural Conservation Easement contract with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for \$150,000 towards the purchase of an agricultural/conservation easement has been committed. This is one-half of the estimated cost of the CE, but the NRCS funds must be dispersed by March 31, 2027. Timely acquisition of the CE is urgently needed.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Years ago, the Kealoha family had to prove to the State that they had rights to use the water from the streams. Fortunately, they succeeded and their ability to draw water from the stream to raise kalo is secure.
- There are no known encumbrances, covenants, restrictions, or hazards on the property. All property taxes are paid and up to date.
- Without successful completion of the CE, the property may be at risk for sale to a new landowner with no interest in protecting the ancient lo'i.



Ditch that brings water from the stream to the lo'i. P.C.: Deborah Chang

Report by: Deborah Chang and Maya Goodoni, PONC Commission
Photos by: Deborah Chang and Deborah Ward, PONC Commission

PRIORITY #3 : KUMUKAHI
(89.333%)

TMK No (3)-1-4-002:002, 017, 042, 047, 048, 052, 065, 072, 080, 081, 082, 085, 092, and 100, consisting of approximately 1,967.96 acres at Kumukahi in the ahupua'a of Kula, Puna (District 4)



The coastline at Kumukahi holds great natural and cultural significance to the community.

The easternmost point of our islands, Kapoho, sits within Kumukahi, just makai (toward the ocean) of what is referred to as, "Four Corners," the space utilized as the main entry point to Kumukahi. Visitors currently access Kumukahi east of the new road construction at Highway 137, traversing through private property to make their way down to the bay. The Kīlauea eruption of 2018 reshaped the landscape and covered the Kapoho and "Vacationland" communities as well as a large section of Highway 132, cutting off vehicular access to Kumukahi. Much of Highway 132 was reopened in 2019; however, the section leading to "Four Corners," that leads from the junction of

Highway 132 and Highway 137 to the unaffected portion of Highway 132 near the nominated property(s) has not been reopened. Currently no public vehicular access to the property exists, though a rough 4-wheel drive access route across the new lava flow through private property is being used.

The reconstruction of this 0.15-mile section leading from "Four Corners," is scheduled to reopen by December of 2026, increasing the need and urgency for established stewardship and management of this cherished cultural landscape.

Anticipated Use:

The proposed vision would involve consolidation of properties under a single community management and stewardship plan which supports the long-term protection of cultural traditions and practices of this wahi kupuna (ancestral place). Securing the land would enable robust discussion regarding the development and implementation of descendant-led and community-based stewardship and ensure protection and management approaches that are grounded in place-based knowledge systems and practices.

Development of a Comprehensive Area Management and Stewardship Plan is intended



The off-road access into Kumukahi traverses through multiple pa ilina (burial grounds) and other culturally sensitive areas.

to identify and guide long-term protection of natural and cultural resources and will include strategies for managed access. Discussion regarding visitor-use and engagement, native species habitat establishment and protection, stewardship objectives and goals, outreach initiatives, and overuse preventative measures will require significant community planning and ensure that descendants, residents, local organizations, and other sectors of the community understand their unique roles and responsibilities. Sharing responsibility for the care, maintenance, and management of Kumukahi will build community capacity and instill a sense of kuleana in its future. Clearly defining these different roles and responsibilities will be paramount to ensure a mindful and culturally sensitive approach to decision-making, project planning, and the implementation of adaptive management techniques.

The long-term goals associated with the acquisition and community-based stewardship of Kumukahi is to reinforce a multigenerational place-based stewardship model which perpetuates place-based modes of learning, lifestyles, and legacies. Implementation of this model could be accomplished through education outreach and cultural programming for youth, residents, visitors, and descendants that reinforce and revitalize traditional fishing, astronomy, cosmology, wayfinding, storytelling, record-keeping and otherwise significant and impactful cultural lifestyle modes. Efforts to document and share the stories and knowledge of Kumukahi may include oral history programs and mapping initiatives. These efforts would seek to instill a sense of pride, love, and understanding of place to all those who enter Kumukahi and deter inappropriate behaviors that risk disturbance of culturally sensitive areas. This emphasizes access as a privilege and a responsibility, rather than an entitled right and deemphasizes cultural landscapes as purely recreational, allowing an individual with the opportunity to experience Kumukahi in a safe and meaningful way.



Kumukahi is a storied place that represents beginnings and transitions.

Significance and Management:

Kumukahi is known as the place which the sun first rises in Hawai'i, a place holding deep cultural significance to its people. It is traditionally referenced in mele, oli, and mo'olelo as the hikina or, "eastern point," of Ko Hawai'i Pae'aina, the Hawaiian archipelago, symbolic of beginnings, birth, and new life. It is also a leina (transitional place) where spirits depart from this world and into an afterlife. From this we can infer that Kumukahi holds space for the beginnings and endings of life and thus holds great significance regarding the lifetime which falls

between the two. Traditional practices that continue in this space include navigation, ceremonial practice, environmental stewardship, lawai'a pono, and mālama pā ilina. Opportunities to reinvigorate and support the utilization of Kumukahi for lifestyle practices and traditions would require protective measures that prevent further encroachment on these lands by development.

Kumukahi is located within the larger extent of Kula Ahupua'a, within which a range of native species exist. The integrity of the natural environment that exists within Kumukahi is threatened

by inappropriate use and access as well as the introduction and increased presence of non-native invasive species to its coastlines.

Without protective measures in place and established stewards, Kumukahi is subject to severe misuse and overuse and this unmanaged access will lead to further degradation of a highly revered and beloved place. The acquisition will support meaningful and appropriate access to Kumukahi and in doing so, protect the ability of community to gather from and honor the space in perpetuity.

Special Opportunities:

- All current landowners have been engaged in discussions regarding consolidated ownership of Kumukahi for protection in perpetuity and a considerable number of these landowners have expressed a willingness to sell or donate their properties.
- The current County Council Member for this district is actively involved in the process of nominating this property and is committed to pursuing its acquisition and protection.

Strengths and Weaknesses:

- Strong community support and active descendant-led efforts to properly steward lands.
- Supporting descendant-led and community-based collaborative land management planning within a heavily utilized coastal landscape which considers the protection and perpetuation of the environmental and cultural resources present.
- Unification of the properties will lead to reestablishment of the connections between people-of-place and the place-based practices and traditions which shape them. Bringing together community through stewardship planning and implementation through these connections of people, place, and practices will then lead to a more resilient future for Kumukahi and the community-at-large.
- Kapoho Land & Development, Kumukahi Properties LLC, and Roseanne Oda-Ching Trust have expressed a willingness to sell.
- Lorraine Lorretta Tobin Trust and Frank Cole & Thomas Tobin (i.e. Tobin property interests) have expressed an openness to sell or establish a conservation easement.
- No weaknesses which would undermine property(s) significance are notable.

Concerns and Other Thoughts:

- TMK No. (3)-1-4-002-047 & 048 are owned by the State of Hawai'i and if transferred from the State of Hawai'i to the County of Hawai'i it would likely have to be through an Executive Order (EO) for a specific purpose (e.g. parks and recreation, community center and allied purposes, historic and cultural preservation purposes, etc.) and it would not be a fee simple purchase or as a conservation easement. PONC has not acquired land through this method and it is unclear whether this is a possible avenue for acquisition. An EO could be structured to mirror the PONC purposes, ensuring that these properties would still be protected in alignment with PONC standards, and a non-profit could potentially take over stewardship of these lands, but the property may not be eligible for PONC stewardship funds for management and maintenance. These are important areas for further discussion but do not hinder the significance of Kumukahi as a PONC nomination. The University of Hawai'i property, TMK No. (3)-1-4-002-092 is also suggested to be transferred to the County and similar concerns should be considered.

Report and Photos by: Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair, PONC Commission

PRIORITY #4: KUAMO'O AHUPUA'A
(Suggestion 25-02, Scored 83%)

TMK No.(s): (3)7-9-005: 004, 005, 014, 015, and 089, consisting of approximately 77 acres in the Mā'ihī and Kuamo'o ahupua'a, in North Kona District, Hawai'i.

DESCRIPTION



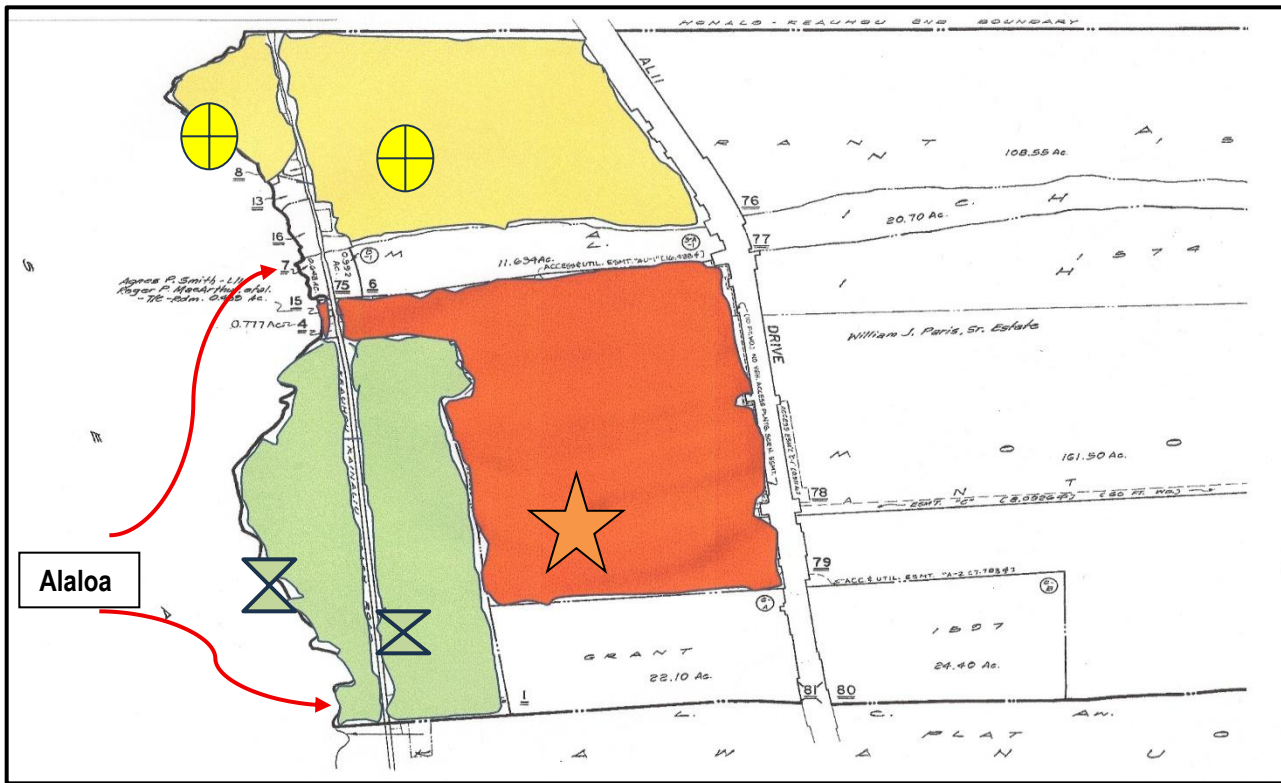
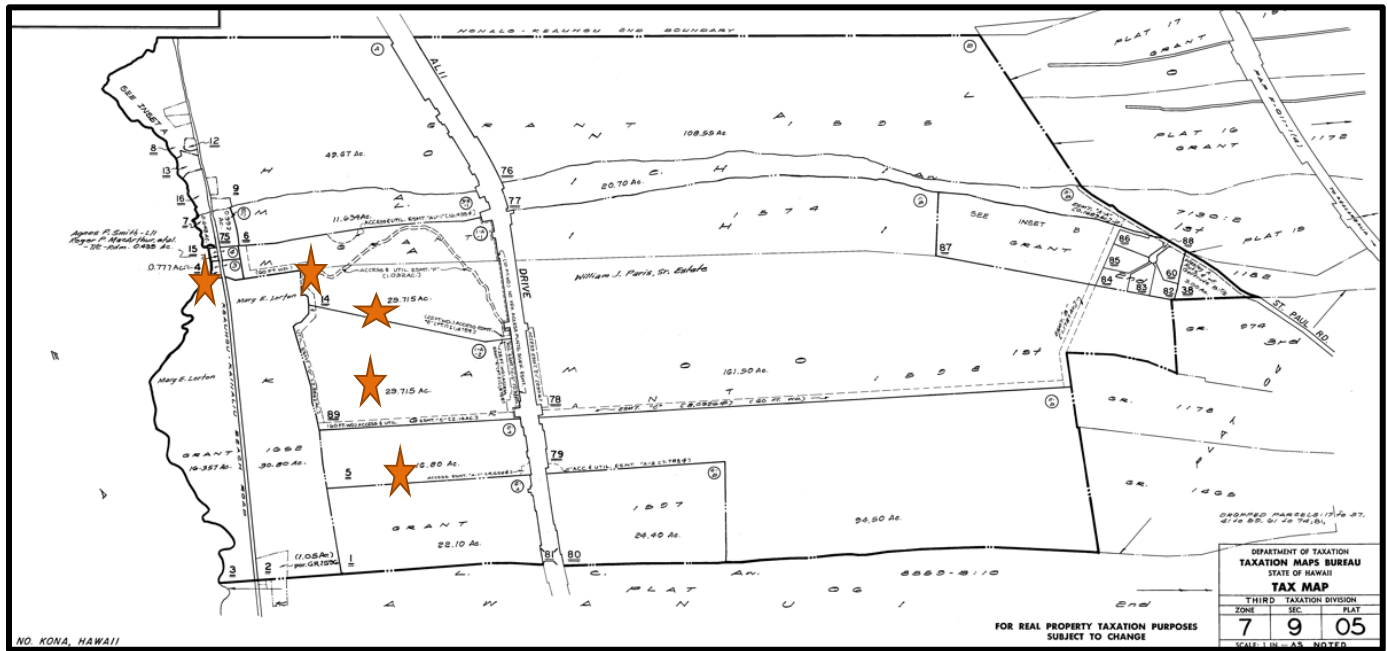
P.C.: Amedeo Markoff




The four-wheel drive road leading down to the coast passes through rough, uneven terrain with numerous ancient and historic rock walls, amidst dryland scrub vegetation of kiawe (*Neltuma pallida*), opiuma (*Pithecellobium dulce*), widespread koa haole (*Leucaena leucocephala*), lantana (*Lantana camara*), 'ilima (*Sida fallax*), and other introduced shrubs and grasses.



View of Kuamo'o Bay from the subject properties. The ocean is accessible, and the coastline is popular for fishing and hiking.
P.C.: Amedeo Markoff

Prime recreational and scenic coastline is an important property asset. Pedestrian public access along the coast is secure through the alaloa, which is an ancient Hawaiian trail that is publicly claimed per the Highways Act of 1892. It started as an ancient foot trail and was modified into a rough road in a few locations. It is labeled on the TMK plat map 7-9-005 as "Keauhou-Kainaliu Beach Road."



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 Properties that make up Suggestion 25-02: 7-9-005:004 (Schattauer/Paris 0.78 acres); :005 (Kainaliu Properties LLC 16.8 acres); :014 (Schattauer 29.7 acres); :015 (Kainaliu Properties LLC 0.44 acres); and :089 (Paris 29.8 acres) -Total acreage in Suggestion 25-02 is approximately 77 acres.
- 
 Properties that were highly ranked for acquisition by PONC in 2024 (Suggestion 24-01, approx. 58 acres).
- 
 Two parcels already acquired for preservation purposes and thought to contain Lonohelemao and Pū'ō'a heiau. Approx.47 acres owned by the Aloha Kuamo'o 'Āina, nonprofit organization.

ANTICIPATED USE

- The landowners are aware of the significance of their properties to Hawai'i's history and heritage and want to work with PONC to protect the properties in perpetuity for public benefit. They say that it is becoming increasingly difficult to collectively own, agree upon, and manage these lands as the number of inheritors increase; relatives move away; and newer generations are less connected to the lands that have been in their families for generations. The potential of listing some of these properties for sale is there, especially without PONC intervention.
- Aloha Kuamo'o 'Āina (AKA) is a nonprofit organization, founded by the Beamer 'ohana, which in 2015 acquired ownership of two parcels (approx. 47 acres) adjacent to the suggested properties. AKA is dedicated to stewardship of the lands and waters of Kuamo'o and is in support of this Suggestion. AKA is interested in entering into an agreement to assist in the culturally relevant stewardship and management of the suggested properties should they be acquired by PONC. AKA conducts educational programs on their properties, which are believed to contain the burials of Chief Kekuaokalani and his wife Chiefess Manono who fought to uphold the customs and religion that comprised the traditional kapu system and were killed in the Battle of Kuamo'o in 1819.
- Several archaeological reconnaissance and inventory surveys have been conducted on the subject properties. In describing the archaeological findings, one of the archaeologists found, "extensive distribution of habitation and possible burial features" and a "dense concentration of formal agricultural features." Another archaeologist reports, "almost continuous light scatter of cultural material," the presence of "particularly large and well-constructed agricultural soil terraces," and "substantial sites and site complexes." In light of the known history of the areas involved, more comprehensive archaeological surveys and cultural study would be advisable.
- Additionally, TMK: 7-9-005:004 contains sites from Kona's historic cattle ranching period, including a shack and other sites that were used by ranch hands in the early to mid-1900s. The Paris and Schattauer families have ranched in Kona for many generations.



These sites are testament to an ever-disappearing land use and unique lifestyle in Kona. P.C.: Amedeo Markoff

SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- The Battle of Kuamo‘o (also known as Kaua ‘Ai Noa, literally “Battle of Free Eating”) ranks among the most significant historical events in Hawai‘i’s history, the outcome of which was to forever change the course of Hawaiian history, religion and culture throughout all the Hawaiian Islands. The Battle of Kuamo‘o in 1819 resulted in the end of the traditional kapu system, which governed daily lives and was an integral part of ancient Hawaiian religion. According to many historians, the Native Hawaiians were left in a spiritual vacuum with the ending of the kapu system. As fate would have it, the first arrival of Christian missionaries in 1820 occurred a few months after the Battle of Kuamo‘o.
- In the mo‘olelo of the Battle of Kuamo‘o, Chiefess Manono is said to have uttered with her dying breath, “Mālama kō aloha” (“Keep your love”). It is thought to have been a plea to both sides of the conflict that no matter what obstacles are faced in Hawai‘i, we are to keep our love for one another. In the words of AKA, “Kuamo‘o is a site of war but a place of peace.” This is a noble vision for partnership and stewardship of Kuamo‘o.
- Should PONC acquire the land in Suggestions 25-02 and 24-01, approx. 135 acres of the area where the Battle took place would be preserved. When combined with the 47 acres already owned by AKA, a total of 182 acres of the battlefield could be protected, restored, and managed for statewide benefit.
- AKA would be a key collaborator and steward. AKA describes itself as “a Hawai‘i center for cultural and ecological peace, with a mission to promote aloha ‘āina as consistent with the mo‘olelo and values of Kuamo‘o to achieve justice and peace for Hawai‘i’s people, environment, and the world.” Their on-line and in-person educational programs reach over 1,500 people a year.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACQUISITION OR MANAGEMENT

- The collective offering by multiple owners in Suggestion 25-02 presents a rare opportunity to preserve a contiguous property where one of the State of Hawai‘i’s most significant battles took place. This is an exceptional opportunity that may be possible only at this time.
- Strong community interest and support exists for this suggestion. AKA is the adjacent landowner and a potential partner with experience and expertise in culturally appropriate land management. They have already begun the process of identifying what needs to be done to properly steward such unique and vulnerable properties.
- The special opportunities to acquire and preserve a largely contiguous area where the Battle of Kuamo‘o took place will not exist indefinitely. Time is always of the essence knowing that the properties could be made available for sale, and the burial and other archaeological sites are vulnerable to damage and desecration without stewardship and management.

Report by: Deborah Chang, Commissioner

Photos by: Amedeo Markoff, Commissioner

PRIORITY #5: WAIAKAHI'ULA VILLAGE OCEAN ACCESS

(Suggestion 25-08, Score 73.571%)

TMK No.(s) (3) 1-5-088:009 - 013, consisting of approximately 1.07 acres of the Waiakahi'ula Ahupua'a, in the District of Puna, Hawai'i.



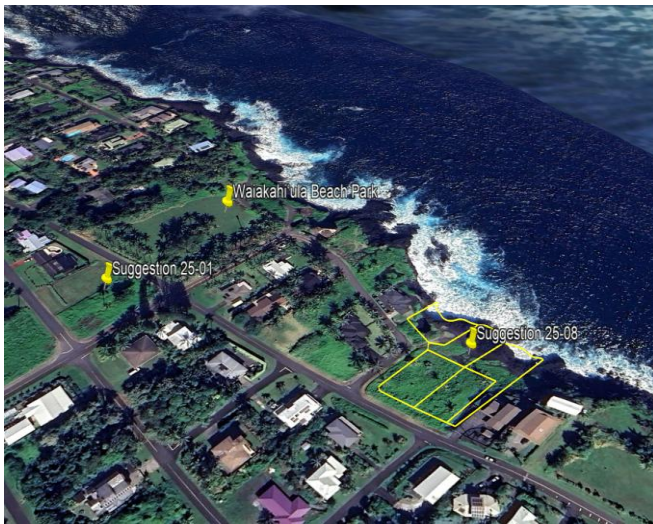
Aerial image of the suggested parcels, taken from the Zillow.com listing. Note the blowhole and the well-defined trail to access the coast.

The properties included in this suggestion are approximately 500' east of the Waiakahi'ula County Beach Park and of Suggestion 25-01. This suggestion includes two ocean front lots (TMKs (3) 1-5-088:012, 0.21ac and :013, 0.19ac), one ocean front flag lot (TMK (3) 1-5-088:009, 0.26ac), and two adjoining mauka lots (TMKs (3) 1-5-088:010, 0.19ac and :011, 0.22ac). These properties lie within Lava Zone 2, within the tsunami evacuation zone, and partly within the Special Management Area. All lots are zoned residential.

All five properties have been cleared in the recent past and have sparse vegetation. TMK (3) 1-5-088:013 is quite small and a good portion of the property has a blow hole with consistent wave action. Any attempted development of this lot would be hindered by such a feature, which is very important to note. Currently, the properties are used by community members as an access point to the coast for fishing, sightseeing, whale watching and walking.

Because of the nature of these properties, having been recently cleared for development purposes (as much of the Puna coastline is being inundated with large, part-time homes), they serve as an access point for the Waiakahi'ula community. Local fishermen have had their coastal access restricted by an

unprecedented increase in ocean front development, directly impacting lifestyle and sustainable food supply for local community members. These restrictions cannot be over-emphasized, and protecting bits of what is left is critical for maintaining Hawaiian lifeways and the overall well-being of residents of Waiakahi'ula and greater lower Puna. These properties may not contain native vegetation, visible archaeology, etc. today, but they are part of an extensive historical fishing village that spans the Waiakahi'ula coastline. Additionally, any development on these properties will likely result in sewage leakage / runoff into the marine environment, depleting already sensitive nearshore marine ecosystems.



Suggested parcels (outlined in yellow) sit about 500' from Waiakahi'ula Beach Park and Suggestion 25-01. Note the ocean front development along the coastline in the top-left of the photo.



A trail traverses the ocean front properties, offering coastal access for fishing, recreation, whale watching, etc.



A blowhole dominates a significant portion of TMK (3) 1-5-088:013.

ANTICIPATED USE

- Allow public access for fishing, whale watching, and recreation.
- Maintain open view planes along the coast.
- Mitigate coastal erosion.

SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- These properties are recognizably part of a continuous archaeological landscape which includes Waiakahi'ula Fishing Village.
- Nominators of Suggestion 25-01 support the acquisition of these properties and intend to help with management.
- Malama O Puna has stated that they intend to help with the management of the properties if acquired by the County.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACQUISITION AND/OR MANAGEMENT

- Properties are near Suggestion 25-01 and to County owned and managed Waiakahi'ula Beach Park. They are also near Honolulu Landing, a previously nominated PONC parcel with a current County Council resolution.
- TMK (3) 1-5-088:012 is currently listed on the open market for \$278,888.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

- Acquiring these parcels would ensure that coastal access and open view planes are maintained.
- These properties represent a much larger historic fishing village that spans the Waiakahi'ula coastline (including Honolulu Landing, Waiakahi'ula Beach Park, the properties in Sugg 25-01, etc
- Preserving these properties allows for an opportunity to mitigate coastal erosion and re-introduce native vegetation to the area.
- The blowhole on (3) 1-5-088:013 likely inhibits building on the property.

Weaknesses:

- No willing sellers, though all property owners have been informed of the process.

Summary Report by: Jodie Rosam, Chair, PONC Commission, September 8, 2025

PRIORITY #6: WAIAKAHI'ULA BURIAL SITE 19014 & AGRICULTURAL COMPLEX SITE 19013
(Suggestion 25-01, Score 73.286%)

TMK No.(s) (3) 1-5-063:042 and (3) 1-5-063:043, consisting of approximately 0.435 acres of the Waiakahi'ula Ahupua'a, in the District of Puna, Hawai'i.



Site 19014 as is visible from Papio Street.

The 0.45 acres included in this nomination in Waiakahi'ula Ahupua'a in Puna are currently owned by two different landowners, one of which is actively pursuing the development of a vacation rental. The properties are adjacent to one another, with TMK (3) 1-5-063:042 bordering Kahakai Boulevard. Both properties span the distance between Papio Street and Puna Parkway, and 9,474 and 9,470 square feet, respectively. These properties lie within Lava Zone 2, within the tsunami evacuation zone, partly within the Special Management Area, and are zoned residential.

These properties are just mauka of Waiakahi'ula County Beach Park, separated only by a small community road (Papio Street). Waiakahi'ula Beach Park serves as a place for 'ohana to gather and recreate, lawai'a to access the coastline for fishing, 'āina-based learning opportunities for Pāhoā High School Students, stewardship opportunities for community members, a place to practice cultural protocols, and a reminder of the importance of this sacred land to Hawaiians who were born here, died here, and everything in between for generations – both historically and currently. This park encompasses a small portion of the Waiakahi'ula fishing village and contains many archaeological features.

In 1974, the Bishop Museum conducted an archaeological survey in the area and identified a burial platform (Site 19014) and an adjacent agricultural complex (Site 19013). In 1998, a follow-up site inspection was conducted, confirming the presence of both sites, and another AIS was conducted in 2013 specifically, recommending a burial treatment plan (BTP) for Site 19014. A BTP was prepared later that year, including buffer requirements and fencing requirements during any development of the site.

Site 19014 (a burial) and Site 19013 (an agricultural complex) still exist today and are located on the parcels included in this nomination. However, in 2024, both sites were negatively impacted during machine-driven attempted development, which triggered response from law enforcement, Hawai'i Burial Council, Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement, and the State Historical Preservation Division (SHPD). The active development of TMK (3) 1-5-063:043 has already impacted these sites, without regard to the Burial Treatment Plan (BTP) recommended by SHPD. At the time of the site visit, no BTP requirements have been completed or even attempted, and obvious desecration of the burial platform and associated features had already occurred.

The nominators of this parcel have a great working relationship with the County Department of Public Works and have worked together to install white street markers to prevent parking within the buffer area mandated by the BTP. Additionally, they are very active members of the Puna community and have (since the time of the site visit) worked with the County to install informational signage around the Waiakahi'ula Beach Park. They also have phenomenal community support.



Suggested parcels outlined in yellow. Source: Google Earth imagery and Hawai'i County Property Tax website.

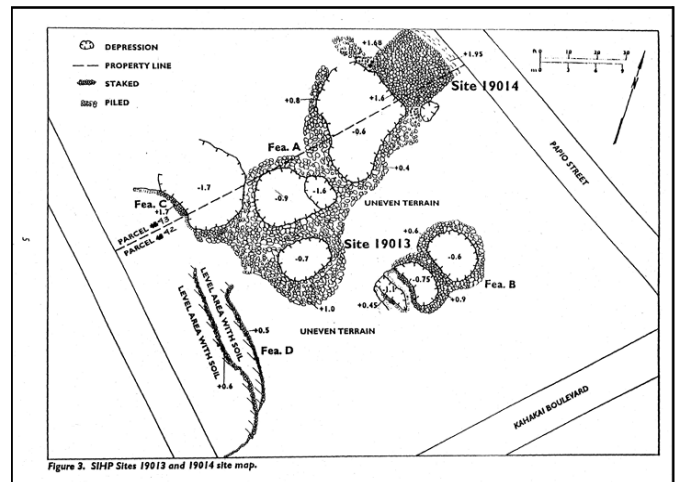


Figure 3. SHPD Sites 19013 and 19014 site map. SHPD Sites 19013 and 19014 site map (image from the submitted application).



Signage within the Waiakahi'ula County Beach Park informs visitors of the historical significance of the area and the mandated protections therein.



White street markers were installed by Department of Public Works to prevent parking within the BTP buffer.

ANTICIPATED USE

- Implement preservation measures outlined in the BTP, thereby preserving 'iwi kupuna that are on site.
- Continue 'āina-based educational opportunities for the Waiakahi'ula and greater Puna communities.

SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- These properties are recognizably part of a continuous archaeological landscape which includes Waiakahi'ula Fishing Village.
- Both TMKs contain 'iwi kupuna which need *immediate* protection.
- Failure to adhere to BTP recommendations has resulted in the desecration of a portion of the burial site and adjacent features. It is likely that development of these properties will directly negatively impact these sites in the very near future.
- A 501(c)(3) with the mission of stewarding the cultural and historical sites of Waiakahi'ula Ahupua'a will manage the sites.
- Nā Hoa 'Āina o Waiakahi'ula has a Friends of the Park agreement to steward the cultural sites within the Waiakahi'ula Beach Park.
- Māla Lā'au will provide native plant species for out planting on site as prescribed by the BTP and in the adjacent Waiakahi'ula Beach Park.
- Kawai'ula is dedicated to community engagement and the development of Hawaiian cultural protocols and the training for the Waiakahi'ula Ahupua'a and greater Puna community.
- 'Aha Lamakū 'Oia'i'o will continue to partner with community organizations and leaders to provide 'āina-based service learning and culturally relevant leadership training.
- If purchased, the intent is to work with the County of Hawai'i and Department of Public Works (DPW) to adhere to BTP prescriptions and maintain road access to the community. Some of the burial sites are located within the County Easement.
- DPW has already installed white markers to prevent parking within the buffer site. Because of the BTP buffers, this may include blocking off the one-block portion of Papio Street and have access to nearby homes through Puna Parkway, which would not block any access to homes.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACQUISITION AND/OR MANAGEMENT

- These properties are adjacent to Waiakahi'ula Beach Park, a County Park that provides recreation opportunities and coastal access.
- Conversations with the County of Hawai'i Department of Public Works are underway with the intent to come up with a plan that will adhere to BTP prescriptions and still provide access to adjacent homeowners.
- Acquisition of these properties is urgent and should be done as soon as possible to prevent further desecration to archaeological sites. The owner intends to develop property into a vacation rental immediately.
- Parking commonly occurs on the burial site buffer – implementation of the BTP buffers will prohibit vehicles within the buffer.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

- Both TMKs have willing sellers.
- Ample community support (over 60 letters of support included and over 250 signatures from an online petition).
- Several organizations are willing to steward and manage the area (see above in Significance and Management).
- The urgency to preserve these properties and the cultural sites within them is high – time is of the essence before further desecration occurs.
- *If acquired, BTP prescriptions will be adhered to, and 'iwi kupuna will be protected in perpetuity.*

Weaknesses:

- None identified.

Concerns or Other Thoughts

This nomination serves as an opportunity to directly protect SHPD-recognized historic sites that still remain in Waiakahi'ula, and expand on the community engagement and stewardship of the area. This nomination should be considered high urgency, as at least one property owner is ready to begin construction of a vacation rental if the property is not sold quickly.

Summary Report by Jodie Rosam, Chair, PONC Commission, September 8, 2025

**PRIORITY #7 : KUAKINI LOT
(Suggestion 25-03, Score 58.286%)**

TMK No. (3)7-5-006-001, consisting of approximately 1.23 acres in the ahupua'a of Keopu, North Kona (District 7)



The upper portion of the property falls just below the Kuakini Highway, just below the Henry Street intersection.

The property overlooks Hulihee Palace on Alii Drive.

This small but significant property located in the heart of Kailua Bay, within view Hulihe'e Palace and in walking proximity to the Big Island Grill. It has been cleared, and slopes downward 8-10% from legal access on Kuakini Highway with a walkable path to Ali'i Drive. The PONC Commission (and the seller) learned at the March 2025 Commission meeting that at least three springs on the property (known as Puhi Springs) were culturally significant to lineal descendants through testimony by 'ohana with genealogical ties and an ancient and historic knowledge of place. Testimony by these individuals recalled fond memories of visits to the springs during their childhood. The springs were identified on the property by the seller; however, ground-disturbances and modifications to the property in the last decade resulted in the degradation and covering of these springs by gravel and other materials. County Department of Public Works currently has a sewer line running through the property which is in disrepair and efforts to relocate the sewer line have not yet been implemented, although intent to do so has been expressed.



The property is nestled amidst the shops and sights at the beginning of Alii Drive near Kailua Bay, serving as an ideal location for a cultural interpretive center and community gathering space.

Anticipated Use:

The initial proposal included the suggestion of a parking lot on the site, however further discussion with community members have led to a new vision for the property, including the potential of a cultural education center and/or gathering place for visitors who currently traverse past this property with no knowledge of its significance or of the overall importance of the extended area. Community members have expressed a desire for the property to serve as a space for non-resident, resident, local, and descendant members of the community to be

more actively engaged in the cultural traditions and practices associated with this space and

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support well-informed and appropriate access to this coastal area which is a focal point of recreation for both visitors and residents alike. Long-term use of space envisions restoration of the springs to any level possible and a reemphasis of the watershed and its significance to the underground aquifers which lead down to the bay just beyond the property. According to the seller, a small parcel adjacent to the northern boundary is currently owned by the State of Hawaii, but has been offered to the County of Hawaii, and could be used to accommodate access or parking, but impacts to Puhi Springs may still need to be assessed prior to any further planning.

Significance and Management:

The proposal for this site included plans for a parking lot to relieve the dearth of parking in the area, but because the property consists of and connects to culturally and naturally significant sites along Ali'i Drive, the seller is open to the strong sentiment expressed by community members that this site be utilized, not for parking, but for education and outreach. The presence of Puhi Springs and its evident neglect was addressed as a critical component of the nomination and the urgency associated with protection of this property. Development of the property threatens the existence of the springs and is further amplified by the



Puhi Springs, a cherished and highly valued representation of a thriving watershed, was covered with gravel and other materials.

existence of a sewage pipe beneath the property which has been deemed in critical condition and liable to break under the weight of heavy machinery or other construction equipment and vehicular traverse. The seller has not suggested a formal group to manage the acquisition, but several community members indicated their interest in doing so.

Special Opportunities:

- Property listed for sale with multiple inquiries and interest in building a 6-story hotel.
- This acquisition is urgent to protect the natural and cultural resources of Puhi Springs and provide open space and ocean view planes in the highly developed area of Kona Village.
- The community members who attended the site visit spoke eloquently about their memories of the times they visited the springs in their childhood. An opportunity to perpetuate the rich storied landscape of Kailua and share its significance with future generations exists through this property.

Strengths:

- The property is available, has a willing seller, and has active listing, so there is urgency to acquire before sale to a developer.

Weaknesses:

- The proposal for a parking lot is the only option discussed in the suggestion and alternative approaches to the nomination submittal must be defined and implemented prior to scoring that will allow consideration for an amended proposal.

Concerns or Other Thoughts:

- The Permitted Interaction Group (PIInG) commissioners were impressed by the opportunity to acquire a rare property with open ocean view, cultural and historic connections, and proximity to those walking along Ali`i Drive: both the seller and the community members felt that the initial suggested use should be amended.
- Currently, the processes in place for PONC suggests that the nomination submittal limits the property maintenance, management, and overall stewardship to the nature of the original proposal (i.e. Parking lot, etc). It is important for the commission and County staff to clearly identify a path forward that allows protection of the property and stewardship which account for adaptive management strategies and the amended changes discussed and agreed upon by the community.

Report and Photos by: Cayla Crivello, Vice Chair, PONC Commission