

Deborah L. Chang

April 27, 2022

Mr. Steven Ikaika Rodenhurst P.E.
Director
Hawai'i County Department of Public Works
Aupuni Center
101 Pauahi St., Suite 7
Hilo, HI 96720

Aloha Director Rodenhurst,

SUBJECT: TMK: (3) 4-4-003; Kahawai Road and Kalōpā Lower Road

We are requesting County assistance in exercising our rights of public access along the two above-mentioned "Roads in Limbo" for the following purpose:

- To assess the feasibility of establishing a public walkway along the Kahawai Road right-of-way, to the former Tramway (TMK: 4-4-003:003 owned by the State of Hawai'i) adjacent to the historic Kalōpā Camp Site and Camp Road, and continuing on Kalōpā Lower Road where it eventually joins Hawai'i Belt Road. (see enclosed map of a proposed trail network).

It is our understanding that both Kahawai Road and Kalōpā Lower Roads are public rights-of-way, but both roads have been locked up by private interests for decades. Because they have been blocked, it has been impossible to determine whether these "roads" could safely be used by the public as pedestrian trails. This request is a first step in determining whether conditions exist for the provision of safe and responsible public access through areas that were once open during sugar plantation and early homesteading days. As long as these public "roads" remain locked up, no assessment can be made of the public's interests in the roads.

This request is in keeping with several recommendations made in the Hāmākua Community Development Plan. A pertinent excerpt from the CDP is:

"4.8.3 County Action (p. 71)

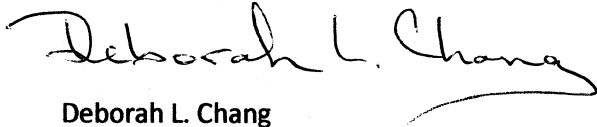
Policy 49

Identify government roads (including roads-in-limbo, 'paper roads' and train infrastructure remnants) with public access value for trails. If these are being obstructed by private parties, work to remove the obstructions.

This policy is specific to publicly owned roads-in-limbo or old road rights-of-way that are best adapted to trail use; however, for CDP policies relating to the adoption of 'roads-in-limbo' into the current County of Hawai'i road inventory, see Policy 68, and Policy 71. It is important to note that not all train infrastructure remnants are government owned – some are now private and therefore would not relate to this policy."

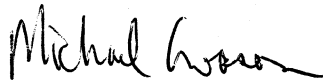
This request is a first step towards organizing a site visit to assess whether a public pedestrian path could be safely established utilizing these public rights-of-way. Ideally, a representative from your agency and the State of Hawai'i's DLNR - Land Division would be among the participants.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing from you,



Deborah L. Chang

[Redacted]



Michael Crosson

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Enclosure: Map of proposed trail network

cc:

Mr. Zendo Kern, Planning Director

Councilwoman Heather Kimball

Hāmākua CDP Action Committee Members

DLNR-Land Division

