

**CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
COUNTY OF HAWAII**

**MINUTES
October 8, 2025**

MEETING LOCATION:

Hybrid in-person and interactive video conference through Zoom with live observation through YouTube. The in-person location was held at the Hilo Planning Department Conference Room, 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3, Hilo, HI 96720.

The full YouTube video of this hearing can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfxJzdEOlYg>

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Matthew Clark (Chair), Desmon Haumea (Vice Chair), Darde Gamayo, Roberta “Ku‘ulei” Keakealani, Janet Six, and Aaron Spielman (arrived at 10:08 a.m. and left at 11:00 a.m.).

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Kealohanuiopuna Kinney and Nicole Lui.

ALSO PRESENT: Jean Campbell, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Bethany Morrison, Planning Program Manager; Kim Tanaka, Planner IV; and Ashley DeVera, Board Secretary.

Chair Clark called the Cultural Resources Commission (CRC) meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. A quorum was established with five members in attendance. It was announced that pursuant to Act 220, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2021, which amended the Sunshine Law to allow meetings to be remotely conducted online, effective January 1, 2022, the Cultural Resources Commission meetings will be held online, with an in-person location for the public to provide testimony. The meeting can be viewed live online, and a link to YouTube can be located on the County website, as well as links to reports and surveys reviewed at this hearing. Commissioners were reminded that only one person may speak at a time and were asked to raise their hands to be recognized before speaking.

Vice Chair Haumea provided a pule to open.

Commissioners were asked to introduce themselves and in accordance with the Sunshine Law, identify any member(s) present within the household. All members reported being alone in their location, except Commissioner Keakealani who identified one individual.

Staff introductions were made.

There were no addendums or supplemental agenda items.

STATEMENT(S) FROM THE PUBLIC

At 10:12 a.m., Chair Clark opened the floor to receive public testimony. Procedures for testimony were provided. There is a three-minute time limit on each agenda item; statements must relate to items on the agenda.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 5:03*] No testifiers were present on Zoom or in person.

Public testimony closed at 10:12 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS OF THE COMMISSION

1. Kona Open Space Network (KOSN) Draft Plan

Review of memorandum prepared on behalf of the Commission consisting of comments offered at the September 10, 2025, meeting.

Location: North Kona, Hawai‘i Island

TMK: Various

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 5:26*] This agenda item was called to order at 10:12 a.m. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 5:39*] Ms. Morrison mentioned that the draft memo had been provided for the commissioners to review and approve, which incorporated the comments from the last CRC meeting. A brief discussion occurred.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 7:36*] Vice Chair Haumea motioned to accept the letter as drafted. Chair Clark seconded the motion. No further discussion occurred. The motion was approved with a unanimous aye voice vote.

This matter concluded at 10:15 a.m.

2. Hakalau Stream Bridge Rehabilitation (PL-INT-2022-001654)

Consultation and discussion of pre-production documentary video pursuant to the Hakalau Stream Bridge Rehabilitation Project Memorandum of Agreement (Section I.B. of the MOA).

Location: Hakalau Ahupua'a, Hilo Moku, Hawai‘i

TMK(s): (3) 3-1-001:001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 777, 999; (3) 2-9-002:023, 025, 039, 064, 080, 888, 999; and (3) 2-9-006:021

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 8:17*] This agenda item was called to order at 10:15 a.m. Chair Clark stated that he had served as a consultant for the project and the memorandum of agreement (MOA). He chose to remain for this agenda item, as the project had been completed, and Ms. Campbell indicated that his disclosure was sufficient.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 9:39*] Robert Sun, Project Manager from the Hawai‘i State Department of Transportation; three consultants from WSP — Allen Kam, Pamela Uyeda, and

Ethan Lau; and videographer Naalehu Anthony were present to provide a presentation. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 13:05*] Mr. Allen Kam provided a presentation. He explained that throughout the Section 106 process for the rehabilitation of the Hakalau Stream Bridge, the CRC served as a consulting party. One of the mitigation measures outlined in the MOA was the video documentation of the Hakalau Bridge.

The MOA, which was signed on December 30, 2024, included a goal to contract with a video production company—Palikū Films—to produce a documentary. The documentary would record and interpret the historic and cultural significance not only of the Hakalau Bridge, but also of the Hilo Railroad Company, the majority of the historic bridges along the Hāmākua Coast, the impact of the 1946 tsunami on those bridges, and the history of the Hāmākua coastline communities.

The project will include interviews with recognized engineering experts, historians, and kūpuna with knowledge of the area. Mr. Kam noted that one consulting meeting was to be held during the video’s pre-production phase, which was the purpose of this meeting.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 15:44*] Mr. Kam continued the presentation, explaining that the next mitigation requirement was the installation of interpretive signage at Hakalau. A separate contracted infographic would be hired for this component and would participate in a separate community meeting.

A draft version of the video will be shared with consulting parties, including the CRC, prior to its finalization. Consultation on the video is scheduled to begin within 24 months of the MOA’s execution, a timeline which the project is currently well within. The final draft of the video is expected to be completed within 12 months.

Regarding distribution, preliminary conversations had taken place with the Laupāhoehoe Train Museum, the Pacific Tsunami Museum, the Lyman Museum, and potentially the Hakalau Home website as possible platforms for viewing the completed documentary.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 17:41*] Mr. Anthony discussed that throughout the process of research, photography, and inquiry into the topic, the team has contacted various facilities and individuals along the Hāmākua Coast. As part of their research, they also explored additional venues where the video could be shared.

He noted that the final video would be approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. The team also expressed interest in sharing the documentary with educational institutions. Initial discussions were held about screening the video at two venues: the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo and the Jodo Mission in Hakalau.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 19:26*] Mr. Anthony stated that the storytelling within the project was compelling and emphasized that the value extended beyond producing a finished

film. He explained that the team aimed to curate and preserve content—stored both on hard drives and in the cloud—that could support ongoing storytelling connected to the Hilo–Hāmākua Coast.

He shared that the content had been organized into four parts. Part One focused on interviews with individuals who grew up in Hakalau or along the Hāmākua Coast, including Duane Kurisu, who worked on the sugar plantations in Hakalau, and former Governor John Waihe‘e, a former resident. These interviews aim to convey how the sugar industry shaped both Hawai‘i Island and its coastal communities.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 20:51*] Part Two explored the engineering feats of the early 1910’s, particularly the construction of bridges to support the rail system that served the sugar industry. Archival photographs illustrated the challenges involved in building major infrastructure such as the Hakalau Bridge and provided insight into the work required to rehabilitate it.

Mr. Anthony also discussed the impact of the 1946 tsunami, which forced the sugar industry to reconsider how it transported goods along the coast. Following the tsunami, rail transport ceased, marking the end of sugar being moved by train. Once the damaged bridges were repaired, transportation shifted to vehicles.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 21:58*] Part Three focused on how the land along the coastline had been transformed in the post-sugar era. With the decline of sugar cultivation, the area had seen a shift toward residential development, with land now being marketed as an opportunity to “build your own paradise.” This transformation reflected changing land use patterns and cultural dynamics along the Hāmākua Coast.

Part Four addressed the future of the Hakalau Bridge. It explored plans for the bridge’s rehabilitation, with the goal of extending its lifespan for approximately 100 years. This would involve the use of modern technology, updated engineering techniques, and advanced materials. Mr. Anthony emphasized that the purpose of the project was to document the bridges as they currently stand—prior to any modification or reconstruction.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 23:55*] Commissioner Six recommended place names that could be incorporated as part of the documentary, noting that there was a significant focus on the sugar industry and its mixed effects on the island. Mr. Anthony responded that the comment had come up before and mentioned that Ross Stephenson — who they had not yet interviewed — would help fill in that part of the story. Governor Waihe‘e touched on that topic briefly, discussing the settlements that existed in the valleys before the arrival of the sugar plantations. He emphasized that life on the island did not begin with the sugar industry.

Mr. Anthony also located footage from Thomas Edison and included a portion of it in the documentary. This footage showed cars driving along the coast on the Old Māmalahoa Highway.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 26:07*] Vice Chair Haumea questioned whether there would

be an alternate route in the event of an accident or other incident on the bridge, citing traffic concerns. Mr. Kam responded that there was the possibility of closing one lane intermittently during construction, but no permanent closures were planned. He stated that creating an alternate route was not part of the current project. Mr. Sun added that the work was primarily taking place underneath the bridge. In the event of an accident, they would need to consult with the district staff on Hawai'i Island to determine the best emergency response option.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 28:51*] Commissioner Spielman commented that the storytelling aspect of the project was significant. He asked if there would be interpretive signage, and Mr. Kam confirmed that there would be. Commissioner Spielman further noted the value of including this documentary in this project, explaining that while people drive over the bridge, they rarely see its structure or the surrounding views. He expressed support for combining narrative histories from interviewees with both historical and current footage.

Commissioner Spielman also raised a question regarding the Area of Potential Effect (APE), noting the high elevation of the bridge and the presence of the stream and ocean below. He asked whether those areas were also considered part of the APE, and when and where such decisions were made, particularly in cases where debris might fall into the ocean. Mr. Kam responded that the APE is specifically related to the Section 106 process and the identification of cultural resources. He explained that the APE included the ground itself and that this was taken into account. One concern included the potential presence of iwi kūpuna (ancestral remains) or other items buried beneath the bridge, which had been assessed.

Mr. Kam acknowledged that Commissioner Spielman's concerns extended beyond cultural resources to natural resources such as the stream and surrounding vegetation. These, too, had been assessed as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. Mr. Kam noted that consultation under Section 7 was conducted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that the project would not negatively impact the stream, which flows into the ocean and could potentially affect marine life. All of these factors were considered in the EA process.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 32:28*] Commissioner Keakealani expressed concern about the water flow and the potential areas of impact due to the strength of the stream. She asked whether the stream flow would interfere with construction or if work would need to cease during high flow conditions. She was also concerned about vegetation, noting that some clearing would be required, as well as the potential impact on plant life and stream species. She expressed appreciation for the documentation efforts, noting that it would be valuable for future generations.

Mr. Kam responded that, as part of the EA process, the goal was not to stop the stream during construction. Instead, best management practices would be applied, including the use of barriers to prevent runoff from carrying construction materials into the stream. He noted that some of the work would take place in the stream area due to the bridge pillars. For that reason, approval had been obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As part of that approval, the project team committed to implementing environmental protection measures.

Regarding plant life beneath the bridge, Mr. Kam shared that a biological survey had been conducted. No endangered species were identified, although native plants such as hala and pili were present. These, however, were not originally planted but had been planted at a later time.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 38:14*] Commissioner Six mentioned the possibility of using different types of signage, including a QR code that would link to the film. Mr. Anthony confirmed the idea.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 38:35*] Chair Clark asked whether schools would receive the film and requested an explanation of how distribution to schools would work. Mr. Anthony responded that there were several ways schools could be engaged, including through the venues that had been previously discussed. He noted that conversations had taken place with representatives from the Laupāhoehoe Train Museum and Hakalau Home. Engagement with schools, as well as the development of accompanying curriculum, was still under discussion.

He explained that one consideration was to ensure the film had a modular runtime suitable for classroom use. Parts One through Four of the film were approximately 7 to 10 minutes each, and the team was planning to clip sections for more accessible use in school settings.

Chair Clark also highlighted the importance of acknowledging the cultural spaces that the bridges cross and suggested providing background on Hakalau and how transportation through the valley had evolved over time—from railroads to highway bridges. Mr. Anthony added that the production team—including the editor, producer, writer, directors, and photographer—were all from Hawai‘i Island, and they had made a point to utilize local resources throughout the project.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 43:12*] Chair Clark clarified that this meeting was part of the ongoing Section 106 consultation process and that, in the future, the CRC would receive an advance copy of the documentary and would be able to provide comments. Mr. Anthony confirmed this and stated that a working cut of the documentary would be ready shortly for distribution. No further discussion occurred.

This matter concluded at 10:52 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS OF THE COMMISSION

3. Section 106 Review: Waikaumalo Stream Bridge Rehabilitation (PL-CRC-2025-000034)

Location: Pua‘akuloa, Kapena, and Piha, Kahuku Ahupua‘a, Hilo Moku, Hawai‘i Island

TMK: (3) 3-2-002: 999, and portions of 3-2-002:029 and 032

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 44:51*] This agenda item was called to order at 10:52 a.m. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided. Andrew Hirano, Project Manager from the Hawai‘i State Department of Transportation, and three consultants from WSP — Scott King, Isabella McRae, and Maile McClellan — were present to provide a presentation.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 47:57] Mr. King provided a presentation that covered general information about the bridge, the project scope, the APE, historic, archaeological, and cultural resources within the project area, project outreach as part of the Section 106 process, key highlights and milestones, the estimated design and construction schedule, and project contacts.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 49:29] Mr. King noted that the Waikamalo Stream Bridge was constructed in 1952 and was considered a typical post-war bridge. Program comments indicated that it was a typical or ordinary bridge. The bridge was not listed on the National Register or the State Register of Historic Places.

As part of the project scope, the team planned to repair and replace deteriorated steel members, repair spalling and delamination in the abutments, piers, concrete deck, sidewalks, and bridge railing, repair cracks, repair and replace bridge bearings, replace deck joints and joint seals, and repair the concrete rubble masonry wingwall and spalling on the piers. Footing upgrades would also be completed if scouring—the erosion of sediment material by water around the footings—was discovered. Lead soil sampling was planned below the embankment areas of the bridge. If lead was found, remediation would be conducted in accordance with State Department of Health requirements.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 51:38] Mr. King showed a picture of the APE, which was located mostly within the previously disturbed highway right-of-way (ROW). Two small sections extended into adjacent parcels on the mauka side, identified as TMK (3) 3-2-002:029 and (3) 3-2-002:032. These areas would be used for equipment staging and access to the bridge foundations.

Commissioner Spielman left the meeting. Quorum was confirmed with five commissioners.

Within the APE, WSP conducted research to identify any archaeological, historic, or cultural resources. Sources reviewed included the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) library, Hawai‘i Cultural Resource Information System (HICRIS), and the National and State Registers of Historic Places. No records were found indicating specific historic properties or cultural resources within the APE. In addition, there were no archaeological inventory surveys, cultural impact assessments, or archaeological literature reviews or field inspections previously conducted.

However, WSP identified one document from the SHPD library that discussed the potential for archaeological remains related to irrigated taro cultivation within TMK (3) 3-2-002:029. The document did not identify any specific site but noted the potential for resources to be present. Planned ground disturbance in that area would be limited to vegetation clearing, with no digging or excavation proposed.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 55:26] As part of the Section 106 consultation process, WSP reached out to Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs), including the CRC. Mr. King provided a list of the consulting parties. NHO consultation letters were sent out on August 28 and September 2. Public notices were published in two newspapers—the *Hawai‘i Tribune-Herald*

and *West Hawai‘i Today*—on September 4.

There were only two responses received: one from the CRC and another from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) on September 5, which commented on the parcel described earlier in the presentation.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 56:53*] The environmental permitting phase had begun and was expected to continue through Spring 2026. Design completion was anticipated around Fall 2026, with the project scheduled to be advertised for construction in Winter 2026. Bridge construction was planned to occur from Summer 2027 through Summer 2028. The two main contacts of the project were Mr. Hirano and Mr. King. This concluded Mr. King’s presentation.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 58:08*] Chair Clark questioned why four ahupua‘a were listed, noting that typically a bridge spanning a stream would be located between two ahupua‘a. He also asked about the extent of ground disturbance involved in the project and whether a ground survey for cultural resources would be conducted.

Mr. King responded that, based on the TMK map, the description of the ahupua‘a appeared to have a double name. Ms. McRae clarified that Pua‘akuloa Kapena Ahupua‘a is one and Piha Kahuku Ahupua‘a is the other. She noted that their source of information was found on HICRIS, and that the boundary runs directly through the stream.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:00:41*] Commissioner Six commented that the bridge was built in 1952, and since there were no archaeological regulations until the 1970s, no Archaeological Inventory Survey (AIS) had been conducted. She noted that the absence of data does not indicate the absence of resources, but rather that no formal inventory survey had been completed to record potential findings.

Commissioner Six referenced a 1990 document indicating that lo‘i (taro patches) were likely present within the gulch and recommended that a field survey be conducted within the stream area to verify this. She also questioned what work would occur within the stream itself and suggested that a field inspection above ground be completed to assess potential impacts.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:01:47*] Mr. King responded to Chair Clark’s second question regarding the extent of ground disturbance and whether work under the bridge would involve driving machinery, creating access roads, or if the work would be conducted from the highway above the bridge.

Mr. Randall Urasaki, consultant from WSP, explained that if repairs were required on one of the piers, equipment would need to be brought down to the area, depending on the extent of the repairs. He noted that equipment could be lowered using a crane or by cutting a temporary access trail. He also mentioned that if lead paint was found in the soil below the bridge, the State Department of Health would require mitigation measures, which could involve accessing the stream below with equipment to remove or encapsulate contaminated soil.

Mr. King then responded to Chair Clark's final question regarding a surface survey for cultural resources. He stated that an additional field survey was not initially planned, but he believed it was a reasonable request.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:04:51*] Commissioner Six noted that even if the work involves no ground-altering activities, such as removing vegetation, grubbing, or grading, care should be taken because it is unknown what may exist beneath the surface.

Vice Chair Haumea expressed surprise that no surface or subsurface cultural research had been conducted, particularly in light of potential lead paint contamination and its effect on surrounding areas. He asked whether the project had considered the Ahupua'a Kaohe and noted that there may be iwi (human remains) present. While some remains could have been washed away, he suggested there should still be remnants or indicators, since kupuna historically lived adjacent to the stream, with lo'i (taro patches) and coconut trees nearby.

Commissioner Six referred to these as ecological indicators, explaining that the presence of canoe plants, such as hala and coconut, usually signifies that a village once existed in the area. Vice Chair Haumea noted that there were a few roads further upstream historically used by kupuna to access the area and walk along the shores of the stream.

Mr. King responded that the project team was still in the early planning stages and would follow up on all points raised during the discussion. Commissioner Six recommended consulting with local residents and reviewing place names and oral histories to inform the project.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:09:49*] Commissioner Keakealani commented that relevant data sets may not be found in written records, as much historical knowledge was transmitted orally from one generation to the next. She noted that place names serve as important indicators of historical and cultural significance. Being a source of fresh water, the area was historically used for sustenance. She also mentioned that numerous sources, such as Hawaiian language newspapers, can provide additional context. She referenced lelehuna as an example, describing it as water, and the habitat of birds, like the Awa, associated with the valley and stream. Commissioner Keakealani emphasized the importance of reaching out to local residents, who hold the narratives, stories, and cultural significance of place names.

Vice Chair Haumea added that among the people who were interviewed, there were also Filipinos who had lived in the area, worked on the plantation, and later relocated to Kea'au or Honoka'a.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:13:31*] Commissioner Gamayo commented that the area could serve as a prime habitat for the 'ōpe'ape'a (Hawaiian hoary bat) due to the availability of water. She noted that these bats are commonly seen in gulches and along the Hāmākua coastline. She also mentioned the presence of other coastal and seabird species in the area.

Vice Chair Haumea added that the area's steep valley contributes to its ecological significance. Mr. King responded that identifying the types of species in the area is included as part of the

scope of the environmental work.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:17:20*] Ms. Morrison recommended that staff prepare a letter for the commission and review the draft letter at the next meeting. All commissioners agreed, and no further discussion occurred.

This matter concluded at 11:25 a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Approval of minutes for the meeting held on September 10, 2025.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:18:44*] Vice Chair Haumea motioned to approve the minutes as circulated; seconded by Commissioner Six. No discussion occurred. The minutes were approved without opposition with a unanimous aye voice vote.

2. Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chair Haumea and seconded by Commissioner Keakealani. The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m. with a unanimous aye vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley DeVera, Board Secretary

A T T E S T :

Matthew Clark, Chairman
Cultural Resources Commission