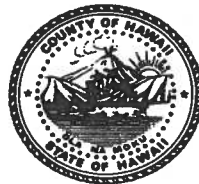


C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Brad Kurokawa
Tisha Mahealani Maikui, Chair
Ben Dalauideo
Maile Lavea-Malloe, Vice Chair
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Robert Nishimoto
Tawn Keeney

County of Hawai'i

HĀMĀKUA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE

Aupuni Center • 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
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February 12, 2026

Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission
County of Hawai'i
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 101
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

**SUBJECT: Letter of Support for Nomination of the Ka'awali'i Gulch
Property**

Aloha Members of the Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC):

The Hāmākua Community Development (CDP) Action Committee has become aware of community efforts to preserve public open space and beach access at Ka'awali'i Gulch through the potential acquisition of the parcel located at 36-2850 Hawai'i Belt Road (Tax Map Key (3) 3-6-005:015 and CPR with (3) 3-6-005:014). This approximately 13.67-acre valley includes beach and stream resources that provide significant natural, cultural, and community value. These resources would particularly benefit from stewardship by active community organizations such as Hui Kāko'o O Laupāhoehoe (the nonprofit arm of Laupāhoehoe School), the Laupāhoehoe Train Museum, and local fishing and educational groups.

The property holds important historical and cultural significance, reflecting both pre-contact Native Hawaiian traditions and the legacy of the sugar plantation era, with architectural remnants still present on site. In addition, the property provides meaningful opportunities for public use. Given the limited number of ocean access points along the Hāmākua Coast, preservation of this area would serve the broader community – including fishing and spearfishing practitioners – while also supporting recreation, place-based learning, and youth education opportunities. Stewardship involvement by the Laupāhoehoe Charter School-affiliated nonprofit organization would further strengthen these benefits.

Members of PONC
County of Hawai'i
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In conclusion, the Hāmākua CDP Action Committee supports community efforts to pursue nomination and funding through the PONC process for the acquisition and management of the Ka'awali'i Gulch property. Preservation of this parcel would advance long-term stewardship and ensure its continued benefit for the community.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tisha', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tisha Mahealani Maikui, Chair,
Hāmākua Community Development Plan Action Committee

JL

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