

Finding of No Significant Impact

Cultural Center

Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park

Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

April 2013

INTRODUCTION

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) has prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Environmental Assessment (EA) for constructing and operating a Cultural Center in Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park (Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP or the park). This FONSI states the decision, identifies the other alternatives considered and the environmentally preferable alternative, discusses the basis for the decision, lists measures to minimize environmental harm, and briefly describes public and agency involvement in the decision-making process. The determination of non-impairment of resources in the park for the selected action, pursuant to NPS *Management Policies 2006* (NPS 2006), is attached to this FONSI as Attachment A. References for citations used in the FONSI and non-impairment determination are available in EA.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR FEDERAL ACTION

Congress established Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP in 1978 “to provide a center for the preservation, interpretation, and perpetuation of traditional native Hawaiian activities and culture, and to demonstrate historic land use patterns as well as provide needed resources for the education, enjoyment, and appreciation of such traditional native Hawaiian activities and culture by local residents and visitors.” 16 U.S.C. Section 396d(a) Congress’s creation of the park was based primarily on the Hono-kō-hau Study Advisory Commission (1974) Report entitled Spirit of Kaloko Hono-kō-hau (“Spirit Report”), which was developed by an advisory commission of Native Hawaiians and the NPS. Recognizing the importance of the Spirit Report, in the park’s enabling legislation, Congress stated that “[t]he Secretary shall administer the park . . . generally in accordance with the guidelines provided in the [Spirit Report].” 16 U.S.C. Section 396d(c). The Spirit Report called for the creation of the Cultural Education Complex. In 1994, the NPS adopted a General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP) that set out the general programmatic direction for managing Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP. The GMP established the goals for the Cultural Center, set parameters for the construction and operation of the Center, and identified a specific location for where the Center should be.

SELECTED ACTION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Selected Action

After careful review of scoping comments, public and agency review of the EA, and with due consideration of potential impacts to affected resources and visitor use, the NPS has selected Alternative 2 (preferred alternative) for implementation (as presented in the EA; there are no

modifications due to public and agency comment incorporated herein). The actions selected for implementation include the following elements.

Alternative 2: Cultural Center South of Kaloko Fishpond Area

A Cultural Center would be constructed, managed and operated by the National Park Service and Makani Hou o Kaloko-Honokōhau through partnership agreements at a previously disturbed area approximately 650 feet (ft) south of Kaloko Fishpond and 500 ft from the ocean. The Center would be constructed on less than one acre within the 1.65-acre (ac) disturbed area. The site comprises a basin constructed in the 1970s by the private landowner of Huehue Ranch who bulldozed a portion of ‘a‘ā lava flow to deposit dredge spoils from Kaloko Fishpond. The substrate of this disturbed area is composed of the sand, silt, shell and other contents that were pumped out of Kaloko Fishpond and diverted via a pipeline to the area. The site is dominated by alien invasive vegetation. The Center construction footprint would be confined to the disturbed area and no construction would be permitted beyond this area.

Construction

The Cultural Center would include a maximum of 12 traditional Hawaiian structures (hale) common to housing complexes. Other non-traditional structures designed to camouflage operational requirements would be constructed and could include as many as 10 small structures. Construction of the Center would include conducting classes in traditional building techniques to the extent practicable. Although traditional skills are to be relied upon where possible, modern safety practices will be employed to fully meet safety requirements and initial site preparation requirements. Building materials would include rocks, concrete pier blocks, wood, thatching, concrete, lashing, and other associated materials needed for hale construction.

Operation and Management

- Activities and multi-day programs would be managed using “leave no trace” principles. Participants would be capped at 50 people per workshop (less than 8 hours) and at 25 people per overnight event. Participants would stay for up to seven days at the site. Activities that would occur at the Center include building traditional Hawaiian structures and minor constructed units including *imu* (fire pits) for demonstration cooking, planters, and drying racks.
- No electrical power would be provided to the site. Nighttime lighting would be limited to flashlights, battery operated lanterns, camping candle lanterns, *kukui* oil lamps, and fires contained within fire pans. A small generator may be used for lighting in an emergency.
- Prepared food would be subject to inspection for compliance with all applicable health and sanitation requirements of local and state agencies. Fires for cooking would be contained in the *imu* or on a fire pan above ground.
- Bathing in anchialine pools and fishponds is prohibited within the park. Showering and bathing would not take place at the Cultural Center site; therefore, no water runoff would occur. Participants may bathe in the ocean or rinse onshore without the use of soaps and shampoos. Wastewater from food preparation and dish and utensil cleaning would be collected, contained, removed from the site, and disposed of in appropriate wastewater

systems. Any wastewater that can be recycled to meet state and county code may be used to irrigate plants within the site. Participants would provide their own water for drinking.

- Trash, leftover food, and litter would be held in animal-proof containers and at the conclusion of events would be placed in park trashcans at the Kaloko Parking Area or removed from the park by the participants.
- Sounds would be generated by participants talking during classes, singing, chanting, *hula*, beating *tapa*, and/or playing traditional instruments. Noise would be reflective of traditional Hawaiian village sounds. At night, natural sounds would prevail. Rules for the Center will specify that noise levels be kept at a low-level that is culturally appropriate to traditional Native Hawaiian ambience. Participants would not be allowed to use electronic devices with speakers, and/or other loud devices.
- Fishing activities would continue to be in accordance with Hawai‘i state law and the Superintendent’s Compendium.
- Landscaping and agricultural plantings associated with Center activities would consist of plant species that are native to the park, and are historically and culturally appropriate agricultural species.
- Participants at the Cultural Center would be required to attend an orientation to the Center including proper behaviors regarding cultural resources and archeological sites, and sensitive natural resources (sensitive species, water resources, native plants, marine resources). During the required orientation, all participants will be instructed on safety precautions and procedures for the Center and the planned activities.
- A maximum of four small-footprint compost toilet facilities with two stalls each would be constructed and maintained on the site. The toilet facilities would be designed to blend into the traditional village atmosphere and would be hidden within the disturbed area to the extent possible.

The NPS has selected Alternative 2 for implementation for the following reasons: 1) the location meets the objectives for participant privacy and proximity to ocean, fishponds and planters set forth in the Spirit Report and the GMP (NPS 1994); 2) the location is a previously disturbed area in need of restoration; 3) creating the Center at this location would have no adverse effects on historic or archeological features; 4) the inland location would provide the Center some protection from storm surge and climate change related sea level rise; and 5) the size of the area would allow for the construction of many different hale in a concentrated area.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternative 1 -No Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, current management, operations, and conditions would continue. This Alternative is essentially the management structure that has been in place since the GMP was approved in 1994. Under the No-Action Alternative, ongoing cultural

demonstrations and interpretive programs would continue to be presented at areas throughout the park. Ongoing programs offered to the public include cultural demonstrations at the Visitor Contact Station, the Kaloko Fishpond Picnic Area, the Kaloko Demonstration *Halau* and the ‘Ai’ōpio Fish Trap area. Programs and workshops offered by park rangers and cultural practitioners include, but are not limited to, *hula*, ukulele, *ipu* crafts, lashing, geology tours, trail hikes, and tours of the Kaloko Fishpond wall. Program duration varies from less than an hour to six hours. There would be no multi-day programs.

Alternative 1 was rejected because it does not meet the goal of establishing a cultural education complex as called for in the 1974 Spirit Report and the 1994 GMP.

Alternative 3: Cultural Center at Kaloko Parking Area

Under Alternative 3, a Cultural Center would be constructed and operated at the Kaloko Parking Area. The Kaloko Parking Area was identified as the location for the Cultural Center in the park GMP (Figure 2; NPS 1994). The Center would be managed and operated by the National Park Service and *Makani Hou o Kaloko-Honokōhau* through partnership agreements. The Kaloko Parking Area is located adjacent to Kaloko Fishpond and Kaloko Beach and is approximately 0.2 ac in size. Under Alternative 3, the Kaloko Road and Parking Area would be closed to public vehicles and the road would be used by hikers and for NPS and emergency service purposes including servicing the toilet facilities. The Kaloko picnic area would be removed and the public would access the area by foot from the trails or unimproved road. Access to the Center would be by foot on the coastal trail or Mamalahoa Trail from the Visitor Contact Station (approximately one mile). The closest public parking area would be at the Visitor Contact Station, approximately one mile away. Constitution, operation and management for Alternative 3 would be similar to Alternative 2.

Alternative 3 was rejected because it would significantly limit public use of the Kaloko area and due to its close proximity to Kaloko Fishpond, has the potential to affect endangered waterbirds and their habitat.

OTHER OPTIONS DISMISSED FROM ANALYSIS

Since the establishment of the park, the NPS in collaboration with the park’s advisory commission, Na Hoapili o Kaloko-Honokōhau, considered the following locations and operation concepts in addition to the alternatives fully analyzed in the EA document. For the reasons stated, these preliminary alternatives were dismissed from detailed consideration in the EA:

- Establish a Cultural Center at the area at the junction of Huchue Ranch Road and the Coastal Trail. This alternative was dismissed due to its location in a heavily used public area. Since the approval of the GMP, this area has increased visitation by park visitors, fisherpeople, and surfers, which would not meet the objective to provide a site where cultural activities will be away from major public use. This location also sits directly on the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail, established in 2000. Closing off public access to the area is not possible given the Congressional designation as a National Historic Trail.
- Establish a Cultural Center on a parcel of land owned by DLNR near the Honokōhau Harbor (approximately 7 ac). This land is within the park’s boundary and is managed by the NPS

through a DLNR permit. However, because the land is not owned by the NPS, this location is not feasible as a permanent location for the Cultural Center.

- Partner with the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL), to locate a Cultural Center on DHHL land. Because DHHL land is not owned by the federal government and is not within the park, this location is unfeasible as a permanent location for the Cultural Center.
- Establish a Cultural Center at ‘Ai-ōpio. The ‘Ai-ōpio area is heavily used by the public, and therefore does not meet the objective of providing participants’ privacy.
- Establish the Cultural Center at an area behind the Kaloko Fishpond. A 2005 survey of the area (Tomonari-Tuggle and Tuggle 2006b) discovered many archeological sites in the area, which would be disturbed by construction and operation of the Cultural Center. In addition, the luxury residential development on the north boundary of the park would compromise the privacy of the Center participants. Therefore, this location does not meet the parameter of providing participants privacy away from public use.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The “environmentally preferred” alternative is determined by applying the criteria suggested in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), which is guided by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The CEQ provides direction that “the environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in NEPA Section 101. The environmentally preferred alternative would:

1. fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
2. ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
3. attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
4. preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
5. achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities; and
6. enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.”

In essence, the environmentally preferred alternative would be that course of action that “causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources” (CEQ, 1978).

Alternative 2, the NPS Preferred Action, is the environmentally preferred alternative for Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP because it best meets goals 1, 2, 3, and 4 described above and provides a beneficial use of a previously disturbed area. Alternative 2 also meets goal 5 by achieving a balance between population and resource use in that it provides a private setting for cultural practitioners away from public use. Alternative 1 (No Action) is not the environmentally preferred alternative because it does the least to support goal 4. Alternative 3 meets goals 1 and 4. However, due to its close proximity to Kaloko Fishpond, Alternative 3 has the potential to affect endangered waterbird habitat and significantly limits public use of the Kaloko area.

WHY THE SELECTED ALTERNATIVE WILL HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE QUALITY OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

As defined in 40 CFR 1508.27, significance is determined by examining the following criteria:

Degree to Which the Action may Affect Public Health or Safety

During the required orientation, all participants will be instructed on safety precautions and procedures for the Center and the planned activities. There were no negative effects on public safety identified during preparation of the Environmental Assessment or agency consultation.

Unique Characteristics of the Geographic Area such as Proximity to Historic or Cultural Resources, Park Lands, Prime Farmlands, Wetlands, Wild and Scenic Rivers, or Ecologically Critical Areas

Unique characteristics of the areas potentially affected by Alternative 2 include special status species, visitor experience and safety, and cultural resources. Mitigating measures that would reduce impacts on the unique characteristics of the park are highlighted in the accompanying Mitigation Matrix.

Degree to Which Effects on Quality of the Human Environment would be Likely to be Highly Controversial.

There were no highly controversial effects identified during preparation of the Environmental Assessment, during the public review period, or from the Section 7 of NEPA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act consultation.

Degree to Which the Possible Effects on the Human Environment are Highly Uncertain or Involve Unique or Unknown Risks.

There are no highly uncertain effects, nor any unique or unknown risks.

Degree to Which the Action May Establish a Precedent for Future Actions with Significant Effects or Represents a Decision in Principle about a Future Consideration.

The selected action is consistent with the park's 1994 General Management Plan and Resource Management Goals and Objectives. Nothing described in the selected alternative precludes or

constrains future actions, nor does it commit the NPS to other impacts with significant impacts. It does not set a precedent for future actions with significant impacts or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.

Whether the Action is Related to Other Actions with Individually Insignificant but Cumulatively Significant Impacts

Implementing the selected alternative will have no significant, cumulative impact.

Degree to Which an Action may Adversely Affect Districts, Sites, Highways, Structures, or Objects Listed in or Eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or May Cause Loss or Destruction of Significant Scientific, Cultural, or Historical Resources.

Implementation of Alternative 2 should have no adverse effect on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places and should not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

Degree to Which the Action May Adversely Affect an Endangered or Threatened Species or Its Habitat that has been Determined to be Critical Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

The selected action would have no apparent adverse effect on endangered or threatened species.

Whether the Action Threatens a Violation of Federal, State, or Local Law or Requirements Imposed for the Protection of the Environment.

No such violations will occur.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & AGENCY CONSULTATION

The NPS conducted both internal scoping with appropriate NPS staff and external scoping with the public, and interested and affected groups and agencies.

Internal scoping was conducted with an interdisciplinary team from Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP beginning in January 2007. Prior to the January 2007 interdisciplinary team meeting, data needed to identify potential impacts to resources had been obtained during site visits to the proposed project area by interdisciplinary team members and other technical experts. Additional internal scoping meetings were held in 2009 to discuss the purpose and need for the project; various alternatives; potential environmental impacts; past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects that may have cumulative effects; and to develop mitigation measures. The team developed five alternatives, three of which are analyzed in the EA. Seven additional alternatives were considered but dismissed. The team also reviewed impact topics to be analyzed and determined which topics needed no further consideration.

As part of the external scoping process, information regarding the Cultural Center planning process was collected from Na Hoapili o Kaloko-Honokōhau Advisory Council meeting minutes (1997-2006), the Spirit Report and GMP (NPS 1994). Additional community meetings were held with interested parties beginning in March 2008, culminating in the formation of the group

Makani Hou o Kaloko-Honokōhau whose mission is to partner with the NPS for the creation and management of the Cultural Center.

External scoping was initiated with the distribution of a scoping letter to inform the public of the proposed Cultural Center, and to generate input relevant to the preparation of this EA. The scoping letter, dated January 7, 2010, was mailed to 103 interested parties including local, state, and federal agencies; special interest groups; academic institutions; businesses; and individuals (62). In addition, the scoping letter was mailed to the park's descendants. Scoping information was also posted on the park's website.

Two external scoping meetings were held, in open-house format: January 20, 2010, at Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park and January 23, 2010 at Kaloko-Honokōhau. In addition to the January 7, 2010, scoping letters, the scoping sessions were publicized via flyers posted at both parks, announcements in North Hawai'i News, Hawai'i Tribune Herald, West Hawai'i Today, and Big Island Weekly, and a submission of a community announcement to the radio station KAPA

During the meetings, informational displays were presented including history of the Cultural Center concept, an overview of Makani Hou o Kaloko-Honokōhau, and detailed descriptions/depictions of the Alternatives. Sixteen members of the public attended the two sessions. Comments were submitted via "sticky notes" directly adhered to displays, note cards, personal communication with park staff and on "mana'o forms" (a questionnaire created to collect comments regarding the Center and alternative preferences). Twenty-five comments were received during the meetings. Of those, five were specific to the alternatives; all of which supported Alternative 2 (the park preferred alternative). The remainder of the comments were: 1) general comments, 2) questions concerning how the Center will operate including parking issues, and 3) suggestions for the Center's curriculum. No comments were received that were unsupportive of the project, and no additional alternatives were suggested.

During the 30-day scoping period, two responses were received by mail: one declining any further comment and one in favor of the project and requesting more information.

On December 1, 2011, the NPS requested the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provide a species list and other pertinent information regarding the proposed action of constructing and operating a Cultural Center in the park. On December 20, 2011, the USFWS sent the NPS a species list. On January 14, 2013, the NPS requested USFWS concurrence with the NPS determination that construction and operation of a Cultural Center may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, federally listed species in the park; and on February 15, 2013, the USFWS sent a letter of concurrence with the park's determination.

On March 31, 2011, the NPS submitted a consultation letter under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to the Hawaii State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) seeking review and concurrence of proposed area of potential effects (APE), for the construction and operation of the Kaloko-Honokōhau Cultural Center within Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP. Additionally, the NPS requested review and comments on the undertaking and the park's determination of no adverse effects to historic properties. The NPS did not receive comments

from SHPD at this time. On February 14, 2013, the NPS sent another letter to the SHPD stating the NPS expanded the proposed APE to include all lands within the boundary of Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP. The boundary of the park is inclusive of the Honokōhau Settlement National Historic Landmark. The NPS also stated the alternatives evaluated in the EA had been modified (from descriptions considered during the scoping phase). As before, the NPS requested review and comments on the undertaking and the determination of no adverse effects to historic properties. The NPS again did not receive comments from SHPD.

The EA for the Cultural Center at Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park was open for public review and comment from January 25, 2013, to March 18, 2013 and EA was posted on the park's website. An announcement appeared in the local newspaper, West Hawaii Today, on January 30, 2013, informing the public of the EA's availability for public comment. The NPS received a total of four responses. All of the responses were in support of the Cultural Center and the park's preferred alternative, locating the Cultural Center at a previously disturbed location south of the Kaloko Fishpond.

One respondent recommended the use of more Hawaiian language to "flavor" the EA. Where it seemed appropriate, Hawaiian words were used in the EA and English words were subordinated in parenthetical clauses. To the extent it can, the NPS will strive to use more Hawaiian language in future planning documents for this and other projects.

It was recommended that UTVs necessary to transport visitors to the site should park a respectful distance from the *kauhale* (homestead). The NPS, in consultation with representatives of *Makani Hou o Kaloko-Honokōhau* and other native Hawaiians and community members, will work to balance the needs of participants with disabilities (and compliance with any applicable law) with appropriate respect for the *kauhale* in deciding where UTVs may be parked.

A request was received asking the National Park Service to be more flexible regarding the construction and operation of the Cultural Center. Within applicable laws, regulations and policies, the NPS will strive to work closely with partners when making construction and operational decisions for the Cultural Center, so that Center participants will be able to better understand and appreciate the Hawaiian way of life as it was lived by ancient Hawaiians at Kaloko-Honokōhau while ensuring that participants are safe and the construction and operation of the Cultural Center has the least amount of adverse impact on the surrounding resources.

A comment was received asking the National Park Service to refer to the Cultural Center as the Cultural Live-In Center, as it is described in the 1974, Honokōhau Study Advisory Commission's report (Spirit of Kaloko Honokōhau). The report called for a Live-In Education and Cultural Center. The term "Cultural Center" is a broad term that includes the live-in component of the Cultural Center. The EA clearly states there will be overnight events and participants would be allowed to stay for up to seven days at the site; this guiding principle will continue to be communicated as project implementation gets underway.

CONCLUSION

Based on information contained in the Environmental Assessment as summarized above, the minimal nature of public response during the scoping and public review periods, and the capability of the mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential impacts, it is the determination

of the NPS that constructing and operating a Cultural Center at Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the human environment. Therefore, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act regulations, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required, and undertaking the construction and operation of a Cultural Center at Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP will be implemented as soon as practical.

Recommended:



Rhonda Loh, Acting Superintendent
Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park

5/7/13
Date

Approved:



Christine S. Lehnertz, Regional Director
National Park Service, Pacific West Region

5/15/2013

Date