

Haleakalā National Park

Maui, Hawai'i

Kalahaku Overlook Area Management

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Photo credits: SRGII

Aloha Kākou,

The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for proposed improvements to Kalahaku Overlook in the Summit District of Haleakalā National Park. The improvements would enhance the visitor experience and visitor safety, and protect natural and cultural resources.

This newsletter provides information about the proposed improvements, development of the EA, and ways to participate. NPS invites public input on relevant issues, potential alternatives, concerns, opportunities, or topics that should be addressed.

Your participation in this planning process will improve the outcome and ensure protection of resources.
Mahalo nui loa.

Sincerely,

Natalie B. Gates
Superintendent, Haleakalā National Park

Haleakalā National Park

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Proposed Project

Haleakalā National Park proposes to rehabilitate Kalahaku Overlook for visitor safety and enjoyment and to protect natural and cultural resources.

Kalahaku Overlook consists of a parking area; a vault toilet; four sets of mortared lava rock stairs; and a trail to a partially enclosed structure that overlooks Haleakalā Crater. There is also a separate trail, delineated by a rock wall, west of the parking area that showcases a Haleakalā silversword planting area. The overlook structure, trails, stairs, and rock wall are all considered contributing features to the Haleakalā Highway historic district and are eligible for listing on the State and National Register of Historic Places. Sensitive species in the area include the federally threatened *ʻāhinahina*, or Haleakalā silversword (*Argyroxiphium sandwicense* subsp. *macrocephalum*) and the endangered *ʻuaʻu*, or Hawaiian petrel (*Pterodroma sandwichensis*). The Kalahaku Overlook area contains designated critical habitat for the Haleakalā silversword.

Kalahaku Overlook is one of four locations in the park where visitors gather to watch sunrise and sunset and enjoy broad crater vistas. Up to several hundred people may visit the area daily. Options for improvements include delineating and creating visitor use areas; installing interpretive signs; and trail repair.

The Environmental Assessment

The NPS will prepare an EA in compliance with environmental and cultural regulations to explore alternatives to meet project objectives; evaluate potential issues and impacts to park resources and values; and identify measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required on potential impacts to threatened and endangered species. Consultation with the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division is required on potential impacts to cultural resources.

The NPS encourages the public to provide input on the proposed actions, environmental and cultural considerations, potential alternatives, and any other relevant issues that should be considered. Input during the initial phase will be considered during preparation of the EA. The public will have another opportunity to formally comment during review of the draft EA.



Silversword Trail at Kalahaku Overlook



Alternatives Being Considered

Various improvements for Kalahaku Overlook are being considered. The EA will include a No Action Alternative and two action alternatives. Alternatives should ensure the safety and enjoyment of park visitors, and the protection of natural and cultural resources. The NPS may include other alternatives, or change the improvements included in the alternatives based on public feedback, implementation feasibility, and potential impacts to resources.

ALTERNATIVE 1: No Action

- **Maintain the status quo.** There would be no improvements made to Kalahaku Overlook.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Improve Existing Features And Add Viewing Areas

- **Improve the Silversword Trail.** Remove asphalt and resurface with local rock and cinder. Repair the adjacent rock wall. Add a crosswalk to indicate best access to and from the parking stalls.
- **Increase Designated Viewing Areas into Haleakalā Crater.** Construct 1-3 new designated viewing areas along the Haleakalā Crater rim using local rock and cinder.
- **Improve Trail Delineations.** Clearly delineate existing trails (i.e. Kalahaku Overlook Trail). Delineate the trail terminus at the existing overlook structure. Create and delineate trails to new viewing areas.
- **Install Signage and Barriers.** Add new signage to inform visitors about threatened and endangered species in the area. Install additional signage to remind visitors to stay on marked trails. Install barriers along the south end of the parking area.
- **Install a Fully Accessible Viewing Area.** Construct a viewing platform near the parking area that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. The viewing area may include an interpretive wayside.

ALTERNATIVE 3: Improve Existing Features And Add Interpretive Area

- **Improve the Silversword Trail.** Remove asphalt and resurface with local rock and cinder. Repair the adjacent rock wall. Add a crosswalk to indicate best access to and from the parking stalls.
- **Improve Trail Delineations.** Clearly delineate existing trails (i.e. Kalahaku Overlook Trail). Delineate the trail terminus at the existing overlook structure.
- **Install Signage.** Add new signage to inform visitors about threatened and endangered species in the area. Install additional signage to remind visitors to stay on marked trails.
- **Install a Structure for Interpretative Activities.** Construct a structure near the existing overlook structure for ranger-led and self-guided interpretation.

Impact Topics

The NPS preliminarily envisions assessing impacts to: Geology, Topography, and Soils • Vegetation • Wildlife • Species of Special Concern • Habitat • Air Quality • Soundscape • Lightscape • Cultural Resources • Historic Resources • Park Operations • Human Health and Safety • Visitor Use and Experience • Wilderness



Next Steps

The following project schedule outlines some of the key steps in the environmental compliance process.

Haleakalā Kalahaku Overlook Area Management EA Schedule

| Milestone | Fall 2017 | Winter 2017/2018 | Spring 2018 | Summer 2018 | Fall 2018 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Public comment period | | | | | |
| Develop and refine alternatives | | | | | |
| Prepare the EA | | | | | |
| Public review of the EA | | | | | |
| Issue Decision Document | | | | | |

How to Participate

Haleakalā National Park is asking for public input on the overall vision for the Kalahaku Overlook area from December 4, 2017, to January 8, 2018. During this period, the public is encouraged to share your thoughts.

More information may be obtained and comments submitted online at the NPS Planning, Environmental, and Public Comment (PEPC) website: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/Overlook>. Comments can be also submitted by mail (to Haleakalā NP, Kalahaku Overlook Area Management EA, P.O. Box 369, Makawao, HI, 96768), or by email to HALE_Superintendent@nps.gov with the subject line "Kalahaku Overlook Area Management." Comments submitted through other methods will not be accepted. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted. Comments are accepted December 4, 2017 to January 8, 2018.

A public meeting will be held Thursday, December 7, 2017 in the Mayor Hannibal Tavares Multi-purpose room (in the building next to the pool) in Pukalani from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Park staff will provide information about the proposed project, answer questions and accept comments.

Mahalo for your interest and participation.



Kalahaku Overlook Viewing Structure