

# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



**National Park  
Service**

**WELCOME –  
We will begin shortly**

**June 7, 2023**



# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



**National Park  
Service**

Draft Air Tour  
Management Plan for:

## Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

**June 7, 2023**



# Welcome

- Thank you for joining us today.
- Today's meeting focuses on the draft Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) for Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.
- We invite you to share your feedback on this draft ATMP.
- Specific instructions will be provided throughout this meeting on how to submit your questions.
- This meeting is held pursuant to the National Parks Air Tour Management Act (NPATMA) and its implementing regulations.



# Presenters

- **Eric Elmore** – FAA, Senior Policy Advisor
- **Vicki Ward** – NSNSD, Overflights Program Manager
- **Rhonda Loh** – NPS, Superintendent
- **Danielle Foster** – NPS, Environmental Protection Specialist



# Asking Questions

- Throughout the meeting, we invite you to share your questions. Please submit questions using the Google form posted by the FAA in the chat.
- Questions will be addressed at the end of the presentations as part of the Q&A portion as time will allow.
- The purpose of today's meeting is to provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions and clarify information so that you can submit official comments.



# Submitting Official Comments

- All written comments for the record must be submitted via the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) site or sent to the mailing addresses listed on the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park PEPC site.
- These written comments become part of the official record.
- Please note that written comments must be submitted on or before **June 20, 2023, at 8:00 PM HST.**



# Format of Meeting

- This meeting will be 90 minutes long.
- We will adjourn at 7:30 PM Hawai'i Standard Time.
- In the event questions are addressed before this end time, we will continue to hold the meeting until this identified end time to allow for any additional questions that might come in.



# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



**National Park  
Service**

**Overview of the  
National Parks Air  
Tour Management  
Act and Air Tour  
Management Plans**

**June 7, 2023**



Photo: J. Wei

# NPATMA Overview

- Requires the FAA, in cooperation with the NPS, to develop an Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) for those parks where operators have applied to conduct commercial air tours.
- An ATMP applies to commercial air tours:
  - Within ½ mile of a park; and
  - Below 5,000 feet altitude above ground level (AGL).
- Does not apply to general aviation, commercial airline, or military flights.
- Commercial air tour operators apply for FAA Interim Operating Authority (IOA) in order to operate over National Park System units.



# Air Tour Management Plans

The objective of this draft ATMP is to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations on the Park's natural and cultural landscapes and resources, Native Hawaiian Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) including Native Hawaiian sacred sites and ceremonial areas, Wilderness character, and visitor experience.



# Air Tour Management Plans

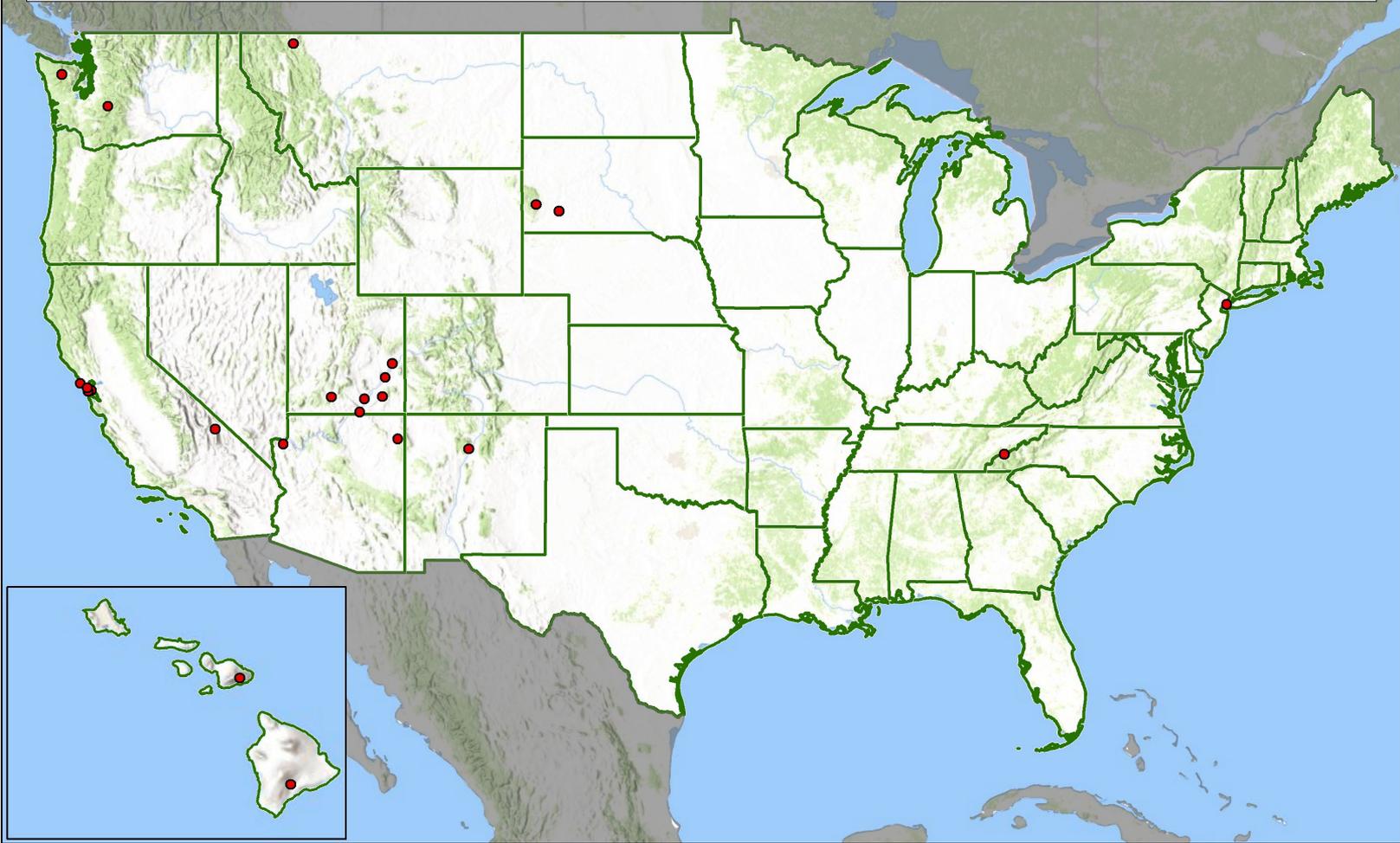
An ATMP:

- May prohibit commercial air tour operations in whole or in part;
- May establish conditions for the conduct of air tour operations including routes, altitudes, time-of-day restrictions, restrictions for particular events, maximum number of flights, etc.;
- Shall apply to all commercial air tour operations within ½ mile outside the boundary of a national park;
- Shall include incentives for the adoption of quiet aircraft technology;
- Shall provide for the allocation of opportunities to conduct air tours when the ATMP limits the number of operations; and
- Shall justify and document the need for measures taken pursuant to items above and include such justifications in the record of decision.



**23 Parks**

- Mount Rainier National Park (WA)
- Olympic National Park (WA)
- Point Reyes National Seashore (CA)
- San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (CA)
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA)
- Muir Woods National Monument (CA)
- Death Valley National Park (CA/NV)
- Glacier National Park (MT)
- Bryce Canyon National Park (UT)
- Canyonlands National Park (UT)
- Rainbow Bridge National Monument (UT)
- Natural Bridges National Monument (UT)
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT)
- Arches National Park (UT)
- Canyon de Chelly National Monument (AZ)
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NV/AZ)
- Bandelier National Monument (NM)
- Mount Rushmore National Memorial (SD)
- Badlands National Park (SD)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (NC/TN)
- National Parks of New York Harbor (NY)
- Haleakalā National Park (HI)
- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (HI)



# ATMP Updates

## Completed ATMPs

- Mount Rainier National Park (WA)
- Olympic National Park (WA)
- Point Reyes National Seashore (CA)
- San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (CA)
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA)
- Muir Woods National Monument
- Death Valley National Park (CA/NV)
- Glacier National Park (MT)
- Bryce Canyon National Park (UT)
- Canyonlands National Park (UT)
- Natural Bridges National Monument (UT)
- Arches National Park (UT)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (NC/TN)

## Completed Voluntary Agreements (VA)

- National Parks of New York Harbor (NY)

## Ongoing ATMPs

- Haleakalā National Park (HI)
- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (HI)
- Badlands National Park (SD)
- Mount Rushmore National Memorial (SD)
- Bandelier National Monument (NM)
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT)
- Rainbow Bridge National Monument (UT)
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NV/AZ)
- Canyon de Chelly National Monument (AZ)



# ATMP Development

- For each ATMP, the agencies:
  - Publish proposed ATMPs in the Federal Register;
  - Hold at least one public meeting; and
  - Comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other legal requirements.
- The purpose of today's meeting is to review the components of the draft ATMP.



# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



**National Park  
Service**

**Draft Air Tour  
Management Plan for:**

**Hawai'i Volcanoes  
National Park**

**June 7, 2023**

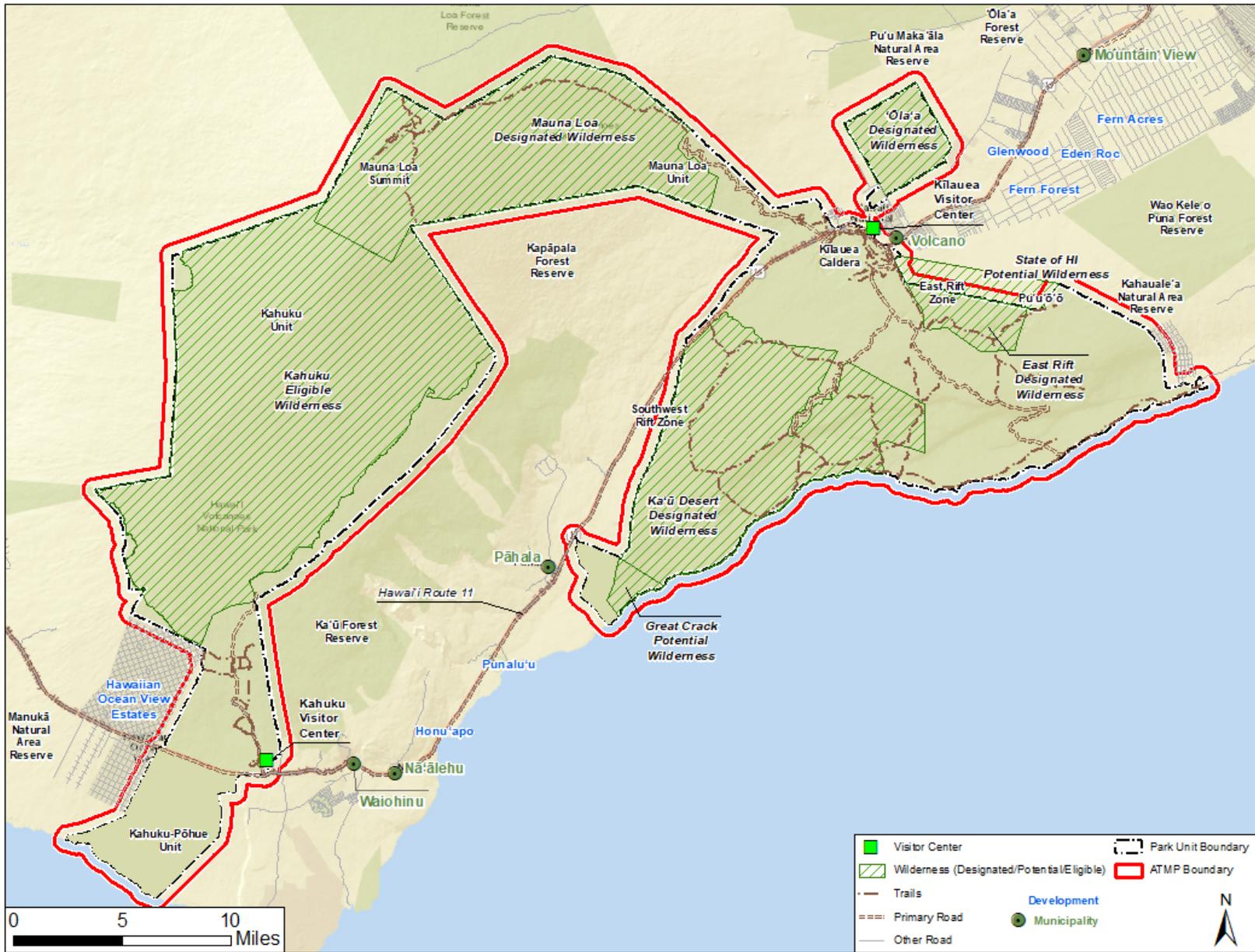


# Park Overview

- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park includes two of the most active volcanoes on Earth, Kīlauea and Mauna Loa, the largest active volcano on Earth rising more than 30,000 feet from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.
- The Park protects 354,461 acres, 123,100 acres of which are legislated as Wilderness, and 128,865 acres of eligible or potential wilderness.
- 1.58 million visitors in 2022.



Photo: J. Wei



# Park Resources

- The Park protects diverse habitats ranging from coast to subalpine, lush rain forest to desert that provide refuge for native wildlife species, over 90% of which are only found on the Hawaiian Islands, including:
  - Hawaiian hoary bat, Hawaiian monk seal, hawksbill sea turtle, 'i'iwi, and nēnē



# Park Resources

- The Park is significant to Native Hawaiians as an ethnographic landscape, and as a place exhibiting spiritual power and the deity Pele.
- There are over 40 historic properties that consist of a concentration of historic structures, archeological sites, cultural landscapes, trails, roads, and ethnographic features
- Designated by UNESCO an International Biosphere Reserve (1980) and World Heritage Site (1987).



Photo: J. Ferracane



Photo: R. Loh

# Existing Air Tour Conditions

- Ten commercial air tour operators currently hold Interim Operating Authority (IOA) for a combined total of 26,664 flights per year over the Park.
- The three-year average of reporting data (2017-2019) is 11,376 total flights conducted by the ten operators each year.
- Annual number of commercial air tours at the Park is limited by the IOA.
- There are no designated parameters on route or time-of-day; no procedures to establish no-fly periods.

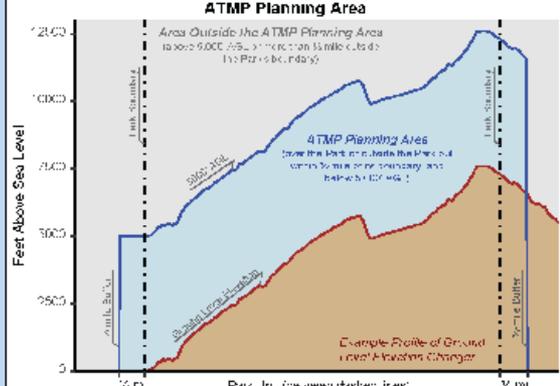
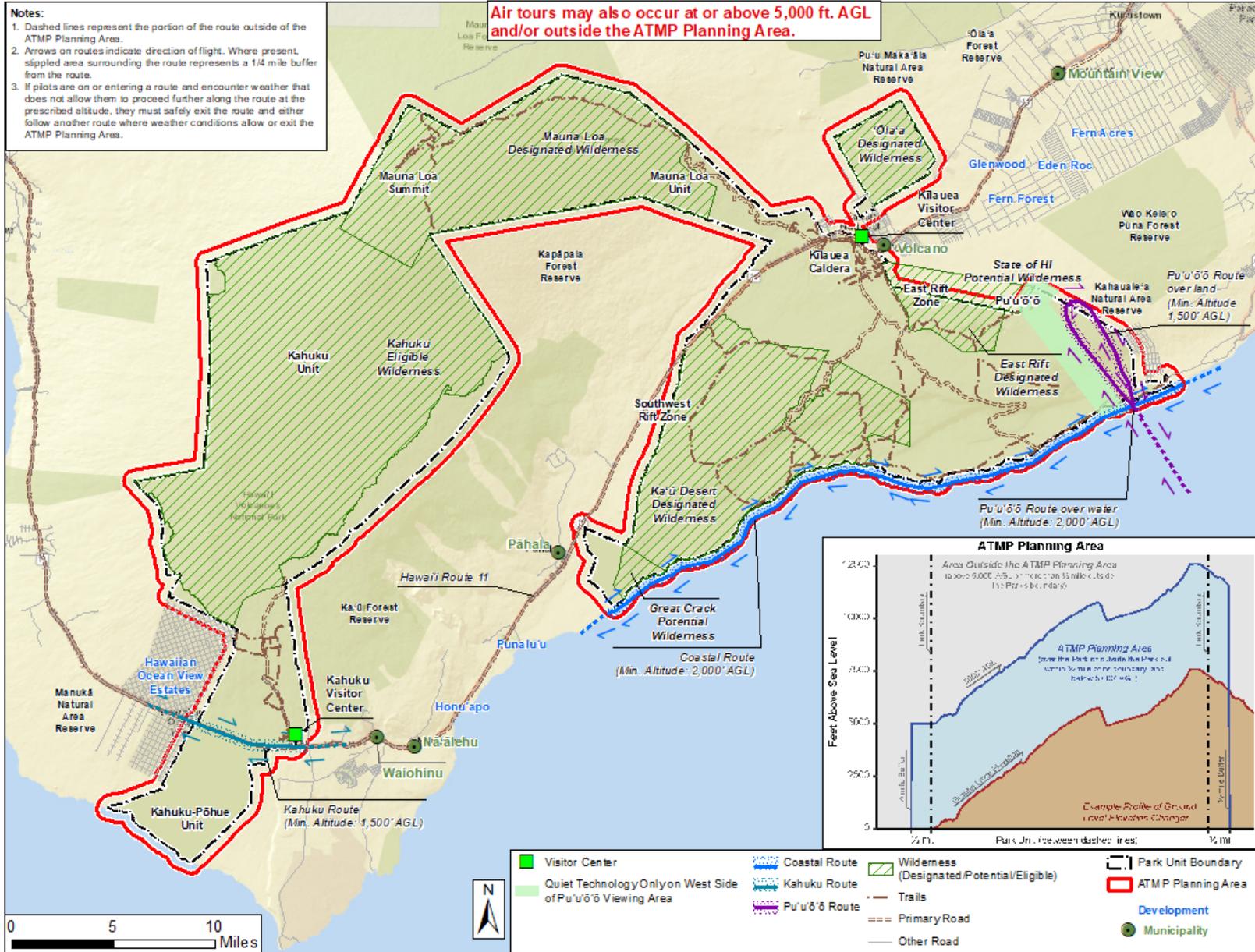


# Draft ATMP for the Park

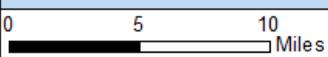
Attribute	Existing Air Tour Conditions	Draft ATMP
Number of Air Tours Authorized Per Year	IOA: 26,664 flights per year 3-Yr. Average (2017-2019): 11,376	1,565 flights per year
Routes and Altitudes	No mandatory routes or no-fly zones.	Three routes including the Kahuku Route, Coastal Route, and the Pu'u'ō'ō Route with minimum altitude requirements of 1,500 ft. AGL over land and 2,000 ft. AGL over the ocean.
Time-of-Day Restrictions	No restrictions, may occur at any time	On days where air tours are permitted: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM for non-quiet technology flights. 9:00AM – 5:00 PM for quiet technology flights.
Day-of-Week Restrictions	No restrictions, may occur on any day of the week	No-fly days on Sunday Only quiet technology flights are allowed on Wednesday
Restrictions for Particular Events	No restrictions, may occur on any day of the year	Mandatory 5-mile standoff distance limited to the ATMP planning area. Two months' notice provided to operators.
Training, Education, and Meetings	No interpretive training, education or annual meeting.	Mandatory training and annual meeting. Helicopter operators required to complete the FAA Introduction to Fly Neighborly training.

- Notes:**
1. Dashed lines represent the portion of the route outside of the ATMP Planning Area.
  2. Arrows on routes indicate direction of flight. Where present, stippled area surrounding the route represents a 1/4 mile buffer from the route.
  3. If pilots are on or entering a route and encounter weather that does not allow them to proceed further along the route at the prescribed altitude, they must safely exit the route and either follow another route where weather conditions allow or exit the ATMP Planning Area.

**Air tours may also occur at or above 5,000 ft. AGL and/or outside the ATMP Planning Area.**



- |   |                |  |                    |
|---|----------------|--|--------------------|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Visitor Center         | Coastal Route  | Wilderness (Designated/Potential/Eligible) | Park Unit Boundary |
| Quiet Technology Only on West Side of Pu'u'ō'ō Viewing Area | Kahuku Route   | Trails                                     | ATMP Planning Area |
|   | Pu'u'ō'ō Route | Primary Road                               | Development        |
|   |                | Other Road                                 | Municipality       |



# Justification for Measures Taken

- Annual flight limits are intended to protect Park cultural resources, reduce impacts to biological resources, improve visitor experience, and protect Wilderness character.
- Minimum required altitudes of 1,500 ft. AGL over land and 2,000 ft. AGL over the ocean protects land and marine species and their critical habitats and reduces impacts to visitor experience.
- Day-of-week and time-of-day restrictions would reduce noise and visual impacts to the Park's cultural resources and protect Native Hawaiian traditional practices.
- Reducing the intensity of air tour noise to Park visitors would improve Wilderness character and visitor experience.
- Operator training, education, an annual meeting, and semi-annual reporting facilitate effective implementation of the ATMP.



# NEPA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in development of the draft ATMP.
- NEPA requires that the agencies:
  - Consider the human and natural environment that could be affected by their action (ATMP).
  - Determine the appropriate level of NEPA review.
  - Prepare associated environmental review documents.
- The agencies considered over 1,400 public scoping comments obtained February 28 through April 1, 2022, on the potential alternatives, information obtained during consultations, and assessed the environmental impacts while developing the draft EA. The draft EA is currently available for public review and comment.



# Section 106 / NHPA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in development of the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Section 106 includes the requirement that the agencies:
  - Define the Undertaking and Identify Consulting Parties;
  - Determine the Area of Potential Effects and Identify Historic Properties;
  - Assess Effects to Historic Properties; and
  - Resolve Adverse Effects, if Any, to Historic Properties.
- The FAA and the NPS have consulted with SHPD, Native Hawaiian Organizations and individuals, and Consulting Parties. The agencies considered over 25 comments during scoping of the alternatives regarding potential impacts to cultural resources.
- The FAA proposed a finding of no adverse effects to historic properties in a letter that was sent to the SHPD and all Consulting Parties.



# Section 7 / ESA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in development of the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Section 7 includes the requirement that the agencies:
  - Ensure their actions do not jeopardize the existence of any species listed under ESA or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat.
- The NPS and FAA have consulted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and anticipate a determination of may affect, not likely to adversely affect for the:
  - ōpe‘ape‘a, nēnē, forest birds including ‘akiapōlā‘au, ‘alawī, Hawai‘i ‘ākepa, ‘i‘iwi, and ‘alalā, seabirds including ‘akē‘akē, ‘a‘o, and ‘ua‘u, reptiles including green sea turtle, hawksbill sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, loggerhead sea turtle, and olive ridley sea turtle, and Hawaiian monk seal.

# Public Review of the Draft ATMP and Draft EA

- The FAA and the NPS invite official comments from the public, agencies, Native Hawaiian Organizations, and other interested parties on the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Official comments must be received on or before **June 20, 2023, at 8:00 PM HST.**
- Submit your official comments:
  - Online: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/HawaiiVolcanoesATMP> or <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/HawaiiVolcanoesDraftATMPandEA>
  - Via Mail:

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Kaitlyn Rimol, V-326  
Attn: Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park ATMP  
55 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02142



# Next Steps

- Following the end of the public comment period, the FAA and the NPS will:
  - Review the comments and use them to inform the final ATMP.
  - Complete Section 106, Section 7, and any other necessary consultations and compliance.
  - Conclude the NEPA process and sign a decision document.
- Upon the completion of the public comment period, consultations, and NEPA process, the ATMP will be finalized. The final ATMP will be available on the FAA and the NPS websites.
- Once the final ATMP is in place, the FAA will update Operations Specifications for each air tour operator.



# Questions and Comments

- **During the meeting**, please submit **questions** using the Google form posted by the FAA in the chat.
- Please submit your **official comments** for the record on or before **June 20, 2023, at 8:00 PM HST**:
  - Online:  
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/HawaiiVolcanoesATMP> or <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/HawaiiVolcanoesDraftATMPandEA>
  - Via Mail:  
Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Kaitlyn Rimol, V-326  
Attn: Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park ATMP  
55 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02142

## Protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

*Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment -including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

