

KŌKE`E STATE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL

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July 23, 2009

Laura Theilen
Department of Land and Natural Resources
Post Office Box 621
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96809

Re: Master Plan for Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks

Dear Ms. Theilen,

On behalf of the Kōke`e State Park Advisory Council, we are writing to request that you attend our next meeting to discuss next steps regarding the master planning process for Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks. We will be meeting on **Thursday, August 13, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. at the Kaua`i County Council Chambers.**

As you may know, the Kōke`e State Park Advisory Council was created to, among other tasks, review and assist in updating and revising the Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks Master Plan. In line with this purpose, the council established a Permitted Interaction Group to do a close reading of the DLNR's pre-final master plan and report back with recommendations. We were both a part of this group. These recommendations are posted on the Advisory Council website at kokeeadvisory.org.

At the July 2, 2009 meeting, the council as a whole considered the report and recommendations of the Permitted Interaction Group. Public testimony was also received both via the council website and in person. After careful consideration, the council as a whole (7-1) adopted the following resolution:

The Kōke`e State Park Advisory Council shall ask the DLNR to rewrite the Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks Master Plan consistent with the recommendations of the Permitted Interaction Group and, if the DLNR is not willing to rewrite the Master Plan, the Council recommends that the DLNR reject the master plan even if it means writing additional legislation.

While we are cognizant that the consultant's contract is finished as is the EIS and master plan, we expect the DLNR will make every effort to work with our council and our community to rewrite the plan.

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Over the years the DLNR has publicized the fact that the master planning process provided many opportunities for public participation. In fact, thousands of people have participated in this master plan process over the years; yet, the resulting Master Plan for Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks, while containing many good aspects, overall reflects a disregard for the thoughtful, informed, passionate and consistent input DLNR received from the public. Please see the public testimony and comments posted on the advisory council website.

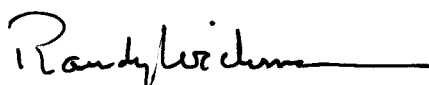
We may be facing a conflict in values, which we are anxious to discuss with you. While the community has consistently asked that the master plan reflect an overall vision focused on perpetuating the existing character of the parks, the DLNR's preferred alternative "Enhanced Park Facility Development Plan" focuses on facility development, attracting increased visitor traffic, and increasing revenue generation to support all of Hawai'i's State Parks. We are sympathetic to the statewide need to support all of our State parks, but would like to work with the State in looking at alternatives to master plan proposals that increase built "amenities", commercial and other revenue generation plans that will affect Kaua'i's most fragile and most revered park forever.

There is considerable expertise and willingness to assist the State, both within the council and within the community, to avoid any additional cost to the DLNR or the State and we are looking forward to partnering with you to create a plan that all of us can sign off on. We hope you will take the time to carefully review our report and recommendations and ask any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



CANEN HO'OKANO
Chair



RANDY WICHMAN
Vice-Chair

xc: Governor Linda Lingle
Dan Quinn
Lauren Tanaka
Senator Gary Hooser
Representative Roland Sagum
Representative James K. Tokioka
Representative Mina Morita
Kōke`e State Parks Advisory Committee members (via email)