

Permitted Interaction Group Report and Recommendations
Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Park Advisory Council
May 26, 2009

Summary of Preliminary Recommendations

Overall Vision and Master Plan Purpose

The master plan must preserve and perpetuate the existing character of the parks by maintaining the area's unique native ecosystems, vistas, trails and historic-cultural landscape by ensuring that public use does not compromise the integrity of the mountain's natural resources, wilderness values, and intrinsic qualities.

Preferred Alternative: Remedial Plan

- It is our conclusion that the selected alternative, Enhanced Park Facility Development Plan, and its component elements do not align with public comments or concerns. **We recommend the favored alternative to be identified as the "Remedial Plan" (not "Remedial Improvement Plan") and that the plan identify its constituent elements clearly to avoid any ambiguous references to expanded commercial activity, development or potential development within the parks.**
- We recommend that the plan consistently use one name to reference the preferred alternative throughout the document.
- The historic public input with respect to the various alternatives should be accurately reflected in the plan, including 1.2 on page 1-4, 2.1, 6.5 and Table 6-1 on page 6-8, and Table 6-2 on page 6-9. See Exhibit "A" and discussion under III(A)(1) of the Permitted Interaction Group Report.

Objectives of the Master Plan

We recommend that the following clear objectives be included in the Master Plan and expressly guide and govern interpretation of all Master Plan elements:

- Restore, maintain and/or repair in a timely manner park utilities and infrastructure.
- Protect, preserve, and cautiously manage archaeological resources, historic sites and traditional cultural places within Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State

Parks, and ensure the continuity of the traditional cultural values and practices that are unique to these parks without commercialization.

- Protect and restore the native flora, fauna, and habitats in the parks and surrounding natural areas.
- Remove invasive flora species.
- Protect and preserve significant historic and cultural sites and activities within the parks.
- Preserve scenic mauka and makai natural landscapes and vistas along the roadway leading to and through the parks, including geological features and forests.
- Keep the Kanaloahuluhulu meadow untouched and the area free of further development, such as expanded parking areas or new buildings that will require additional parking.
- Keep all improvements at Kanaloahuluhulu meadow within existing footprint and single-story with limited exceptions as discussed under III(C)(1), subject to concept and design approval by the Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks Advisory Council.
- Provide adequate staffing, equipment and supplies for timely quality restoration and ongoing maintenance of the parks' trails, facilities, infrastructure and natural resources.
- Maintain and support Kōke`e Natural History Museum as the primary interpretive site for the parks.
- Keep all lookouts free of concessions and retail services.
- Assure that no commercial signage will be allowed within the parks and ensure that all directional signage within the parks is unobtrusive, limited in number, and low profile.
- Maintain in a timely manner existing roadways to provide a natural scenic corridor and calm traffic by limiting road width.
- Conduct lease dispositions to maximize stewardship, access to accommodations, historic preservation, and cultural use by Kaua`i residents.
- Find alternative revenue sources to provide ongoing support for the operations of Kōke`e and Waimea Canyon parks so that the future funding of park operations is not dependent upon promoting commercial activities within the parks.
- Work with Hui o Laka, Kōke`e Leaseholders' Association, and other groups to develop volunteer programs for park maintenance and restoration projects. Provide volunteer housing and other incentives to encourage volunteering in the parks.
- Refrain from utilizing such artifices as uniformed rangers, entry station, signage or national park-like themes to create or reinforce an extraneous "park identity" for Kōke`e.
- Preference shall be on conservation values rather than developed recreation, commercialization and/or privatization of park resources.

Specific Proposals and Projects

Kanaloahuluhulu Meadow

Overall: Maintaining the existing character of the meadow and its facilities is critically important to the overall plan.

No New Park Visitor Center: We recommend that the existing historic Park Headquarters remain in place and be used as a Park Headquarters for issuance of park permits and related DSP needs. Basic safety information can be dispensed as brochures or verbally and visitors would be referred to the museum for other interpretive exhibits, maps and books.

No Short-Term Rentals: We recommend that there be no short-term rentals at the lodge (or anywhere within the Kanaloahuluhulu Meadow area) and that any additional short-term rentals be similar in design and scale to existing State Rental Cabins and sited only within the area currently used by the existing state rental cabins.

Limit Renovation, Repair and/or Replacement of Existing Buildings: We recommend that any proposed renovation or reconstruction of existing buildings at the meadow meet the following criteria:

- (1) There will be no new buildings and the renovation or replacement/reconstruction of existing buildings will be limited in scope and scale such that no additional parking will be required by the construction;**
- (2) Prior to renovation or reconstruction, proposed design and siting will be presented to the Council for public input and Council approval consistent with Koke`e vernacular architectural guidelines;**
- (3) If deemed appropriate and needed in order to consolidate new interpretive displays to avoid reliance on lookout and trail signage, add a small wing to the northern end of the museum similar in scale to the “weather display” room.**

Maintain Current Traffic Flow: We recommend that the road entrance to the meadow remain as it is currently configured. Do not create a T-intersection to direct traffic to the lodge and museum area, as it will create additional congestion.

Repair and Maintain In a Timely Manner Existing Campsite Amenities.

Concessions

- **We recommend that there be an absolute prohibition on concessions at lookouts. Allow current concession contracts with concessionaires at lookouts to expire.**
- **Any other proposed new concessions (beyond existing lodge, cabins, museum) must be brought to the Council for public input and Council approval.**

Entry Fee-Station-Gate Road Widening/Support Building/Parking Lot

- **As the revenue generated by Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks currently exceeds their operating expenses, there is no need for an entry fee. Explore other avenues of revenue generation statewide that will not have such a significant impact on our mountain roadway and our experience of entering Koke`e.¹**
- **Any expansion of Waimea Canyon State Park shall be for the purpose of preserving scenic mauka and makai natural landscapes and vistas along the roadway leading to and through the parks by avoiding development in or on the roadways, including new lookouts.**
- **Limit roadway width to 18'.**

Trails

- **We recommend that there be unobtrusive directional signage (standard Na Ala Hele) signs to identify trails, but no exhibits, interpretive displays or facilities, toilets, hubs, etc. at trailheads. Restore and maintain trails.**

¹ The DLNR has stated that an entry booth and fee will be instituted regardless of public sentiment, therefore:

- If there is to be an entry fee, 100% of such fees should support Koke`e and Waimea Canyon State Parks.
- If there is to be an entry station, it should be of small scale, no wider than 7' but with enough room to house a bathroom and two windows.
- If there is to be an entry station, there should be no support building or parking lot.
- If there is to be an entry station, to avoid having a gate for local traffic, we recommend that it be situated between the two incoming lanes with windows on each side.
- If there is to be an entry station, it should be situated farther up the mountain to: 1) avoid the traffic problems that would occur at the junction of Koke`e and Waimea Canyon Roads and 2) limit the roadway that would be transferred to DSP management.

- **We recommend that trailhead parking for Water Tank Trail and Kaluapuhi Trail be graveled and limited to 5-10 cars.**

Interpretive Signage

We recommend the support and expansion the interpretive efforts by and at the Koke`e Natural History Museum rather than using in-situ signage. All signage should be unobtrusive and kept to a minimum.