

**Detailed Assessment of Ahihi-Kinaiu Natural Area Reserve Draft Management Plan**  
**Department of Land and Natural Resources**  
**October 2010**

Public Comments due November 20, 2010

**Prepared by Dr. George R. Harker**

November 19, 2010

published on the Web at: [www.drleisure.com](http://www.drleisure.com)

Dedicated to the memory of a park literally taken off the face of the map.



Thirty years of efforts to utilize, restore and protect has been completed negated by a small group of well meaning but environmentally disoriented individuals.

Seventeen days (November 3, 2010 to November 20, 2010) is a very short window in which to assess the “management plan” as presented. Of course this short window for public comments is intentional, they are really not wanted at all! Fortunately I have been following this situation for some time, even offered and applied to be on the Advisory Board representing the citizens of Hawaii. I thought with my fifty years of experience and a Ph.D. in resource management from Texas A&M University I might be able to contribute something!

An interesting aside is that my Ph.D. was conferred in 1974 a year after the Ahihi reserve was created. I must have been predestined at that time to write this document. Fortunately the technological advances in computers and document production allowed me to produce this humble effort in the short time provided for public comments. Much more needs and will be said on my web site [DrLeisure.com](http://DrLeisure.com) as this situation evolves.

The key issue is the original legislation creating the reserve (1973) and how its purpose was misconstrued and changed in the rewrite and implementation of 2007.

It will take a considerable effort to return to a functioning open reserve of 2004, but that is what must be done if current and future generations are to experience and enjoy their heritage as reflected in this small portion of the planet.

At its face one would think that it would be a simple matter to open the reserve up and go back to what was in 2004. One would think that going back to hiking, bedroll camping, nature study and hunting would be a simple matter of opening up the network of trails and signs that ran through the area.

But it is not that simple much of the park infrastructure carefully thought out and implemented prior to 2004 has been destroyed. Tons of rock has been brought into the reserve and used to obliterate trail heads and sections of trail along the only road in the park. Internal components of trails within the park have been intentionally filled with rock and false trails created to divert people into sensitive areas. This was done to try and create the damage needed to suggest the hiker was the cause of damage to the resource. Trail markers have been removed and replaced by intentionally misleading ones.

Administrative rules have been placed on the books that make any visitor carrying such innocuous things as a bottle opener or a dinner knife a misdemeanor waiting to be apprehended.

Fortunately funding cuts for the Department of Land and Natural Resources should reduce enforcement of these rather bizarre rules. Closing the ninety nine percent of the park to people greatly reduces the number of rangers needed. Makena State Park with six hundred thousand visitors annually has never had a park ranger so why have so many in a mostly closed park

The collapse global economy will reduce the number of tourist substantially. Basic subsistence needs will necessitate harvesting the abundant supply of ungulates and tapping into the marine resources off shore.

In the pages to follow I have looked mostly at the history and at the conditions of the resource as they are reported in recent studies. I then look at the management objectives and how they related to the use of the area.

There is much more I could say and present on some of these issues but time constraints prevent me. Also much of the report on management technique application becomes rather irrelevant when the basic and fundamental management objective is incorrect and totally misstates the mission and intent of Ahihi Kinau Natural Area Reserve.

If you have questions or concerns or need further documentation please do not hesitate to contact me by Email [DrLeisure1@aol.com](mailto:DrLeisure1@aol.com), or by regular mail at George R. Harker, PO Bos 1137, Kihei, HI 96753.

**Note:** The Management Plan is presented and analyzed in the pages that follow. Material is presented in quotes following the page number of the document. My comments and analysis is presented after the notation: Note:.

Page 6

Forward

“ The planning process began with input from the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Advisory Group in 2004 and was reinvigorated in 2008 through a partnership between the Natural Area Reserve System and The Nature Conservancy’s Hawaii Marine Program.”

Page 6

“The purpose of this document is to describe the management actions needed to “preserve, protect, and enhance” the biological and cultural resources.”

**Note:** This is the first time I have looked at resource management plan that took a park that had been operating for thirty years and destroys or ignores what has transpired. Analyses the resource base and suggest the human use was the most intrusive component in changing the character of the area after it was created. People hiking and camping in rugged terrain covered by relatively recent lava flows, blasted by military ordinance, used as a dump site, grazed by feral goats and deer and being told that the visitors to the island that wished to share this experience were damaging the resource by tramping.

Those thousand of visitors represented millions of dollars in revenue to the state of Hawaii. Hawaii is dependant on tourism for survival. To actively work to minimize or eliminate tourism visitation is to actively work to damage the livelihood of the people that live here.

Page 7

Acknowledgments

page 8

Executive Summary

page 9

1 Manage Human Use

2 Control Alien Species and Other Biological Threats

3 Prevent land-based impacts

4. Build and maintain the Reserve’s Management Capacity

page 10

1.0 The History and Status of the Reserve

1.1 Reserve Description and Setting

1.1.1.Geographic Setting

page 12

Geologic setting

page 14

### 1.1.3 Biological Setting

page 16

### 1.1.4 Social, Economic and Cultural Setting

Page 17

### 1.1.5 Physical Infrastructure Setting

page 18

## Legacy of Protection

### 1.2.1 Management Context

page 21

### 1.2.2 Management History

a) Management actions prior to Reserve establishment

b) Reserve established in 1973

page 22

c) 1980s: New discoveries, resource damage, management actions

d) 1990s-200's Kalua O Lapa Cave Sealed, ahupu'a tenant rights upheld, and commercial activity halted.

“Native Hawaiian burials near Kalua O Lapa, the cave was permanently sealed in 1992. The concrete seal was reinforced again in 1994..”.

“In 1997, the Lu'uwai family of Makena requested access to the Reserve for the purposes of teaching subsistence fishing to their children in their ancestral grounds. The Commission formed a working group that studied the request and consequently the family was granted a permit in 1999...”

**Note:** Rather incredible that no one can fish in the reserve. What more basic right than sustaining oneself through nourishment obtained from their ancestral grounds. I heard the head of the Lu'uwai family telling of exercising this permit under the eye of an armed DOCARE agent who went along to see that they didn't do anything contrary to permit.

Page 23

“As early as 2000, Hawaii Community Foundation funded Hawaii Wildlife fund to produce a naturalist training manual.. “ They found that “90 percent of area visitors discovered the Reserve through the publication **Maui Revealed** and their primary activity was snorkeling .. ...identified commercial activities ... such as hiking and kayaking.”

**Note:** First let us be aware that hiking was one of the purposes and intended use of the reserve. Beach and ocean access is viewed as a fundamental right of Hawaiians and is address in other state laws. Hiking, snorkeling and kayaking are probably the least intrusive forms of outdoor recreation one can have.

**Maui Revealed** gave good instruction on how to find things and also presented an aerial photo to assist in walking the trail in the lava flow. I am not aware of the reserve providing any information of equal or better quality.

Beginning about 2004 I became aware of concerted efforts by employees or associated parties working to obliterate trails, trail markings, and most any other information useful in getting around the park.

November 17, 2003 “The Department of Land and Natural Resources is pleased to present this draft Plan of Action to the NARS Commission. We are planning to hold a public informational meeting on Maui in the near future to share the draft Plan with the broader Maui community.”

The document titled, **Ahihi-Kina’u Natural Area Reserve/Keoneoio Plan of Action Draft for Discussion Purposes**. The ten page document identified issues that had been dealt with and made suggestions for others:

Recent Actions: Installation of Portable Toilets. Application for Funding from the Hawaii Tourism Authority which would provide funding for two Ranger position for three years, purchase a vehicle, continue funding for toilets (would address human waste issues in area, their words) install and maintain signage, install and maintain buoys, and conduct an archaeological survey. And other baseline studies.

Recommendations for Future Use Actions

“1. Make decisions for Management action Pursuant to DLNR’ Hierarch of Priorities Existing policy of DLNR when considering commercial activity proposals or management actions on state owned lands and waters is to use the following hierarchy of priorities:

“A. The Natural or Cultural Resource- the highest priority should go to the conservation of the resource. Only if an activity can be done in a way that *does not unduly damage the resource* should it be allowed.

**B. The General Public - If use or activity by the public can be done without undue damage to the resource, it should be the next priority.**

C. Commercial Activities - Commercial activities should be considered only if their impacts do not impinge on the resource #a above, or use by the general public, # b above.”

**Note:** All the data regarding use and degradation of the resource included in this report supports the hierarch of priorities mandated by the DLNR. Humans hiking through lava on reinforced gravel paths and through invasive species over grazed by ungulates clearly “does not unduly damage the resource.” Thus the #1 Priority becomes use by the General Public followed by Commercial activities. (In this case kayaking)

“2 Develop and Adopt a Long-Term Plan for the larger Area surrounding Ahihi Kinau/Keoneoio including Makena State Park and the State Lands in the Kanaio Beach area beyond Keoneoio

Many different plans have been proposed over the years for this area, recognizing the longstanding public desire to conserve and protect this stretch of coastline and the unique resources it contains for future generations. Parts of these plans have been implemented, while other portions have become outdated or forgotten or require additional resources. A new effort to consolidate these plans into an updated plan that addresses the current challenges facing

management of the area is needed.”

**Note:** This ten page plan goes on to suggest various solutions to perceived management problems but fails when it presupposes a problem that an objective look at the data demonstrates does not exist: “**Total Numbers of Visitors to These Sites:** Serious questions exist regarding the sustain ability of the natural habitats within the NAR given the volume of visitation currently occurring.”

Thirty years of human use by hiking and tent camping in a natural resource area which had been bombed, overrun by invasive species on both the land and water was of no particular consequence. The most noticeable human impact was the few private homes which involved resource consumption far in excess of the other human impact combined. Interestingly these are not identified or discussed within this planning document.

Page 24

e) 2004-2008 New era of increased management presence

April 1, 2004 The Maui News, “The Natural Area Reserve System (NARS) Commission will be asked Monday to approve a “conceptual plan” that will allow limited operations in the Ahihi-Kinau Natural Area Reserve and at adjoining Keonemio where the unencumbered lands will be assigned to the Division of State Parks.”

**Note:** At this stage it appears that things are moving a productive manner addressing perceived problems. It would be useful if this proposal and what ever came out of the meeting was presented as part of this report. A copy in the appendix would be useful.

Page 24

“In December, DLNR held a public informational meeting attended by 150 people supporting a ban on commercial activity in the NAR. Following Advisory group and Commission recommendations, commercial activity was banned in the area in April 2004 (Evanson 2005).”

**Note:** This entry does seem to suggest that the NAR Commission rejected the plan for allowing commercial activity in the reserve. A plan that made sense and provided a non intrusive interface between the land and water interface. Reviewing the material to evaluate this report it appears that **the southern most parking area is in fact not in the reserve but on unencumbered land which was turned over to the State Parks Division.** The commercial operation of the Kayaks from this parking area was not a NAR’s issue. It made no sense to preclude Kayaks from entering the reserve from the ocean.

September 13, 2005 The Maui News, Group demands reserve’s closure. “Last year, the group voted 8-1 to shut down the trails that lead to two popular snorkeling sites until a management plan could be approved. That recommendation went to the Natural Area Reserve System Commission, which endorsed the idea, but the panel was told by the attorney general’s office that changes of rules would need to happen first because hiking is a permitted use in the reserves.”

**Note:** That hiking is permitted in the reserve is not a trivial statement. It was the first and foremost purpose of the reserve. Studies in the days of the **Bureau of Outdoor Recreation** showed walking for pleasure as one of the most popular forms of recreation. The prudent environmentalist of my day knew that the way to justify keeping an area in a natural condition was to have people using it! I can not think of a more non intrusive way than to have people walking through on defined trails. Reflecting while writing this I remember my involvement building trails in the Cleveland Metropolitan Parks and in Glacier Bay National Monument with the National Park System.

Further down the page: “Ramsey received an ovation from the group and members of the public following his detailed presentation that would forbid access to much of the 2,000 acres that are covered with sharp aa lava and dangerous cliffs above treacherous offshore swimming conditions. Armed with guidebooks that give incomplete or inaccurate information, tourist unprepared for the hostile environment often fall, suffer dehydration or get lost.

“It’s pandemonium out there,” Ramsey said.

The guidebook singled out was “**Maui Revealed.**”

**Note:** One of the things proposed in the 2003 plan mentioned above was closing the off road parking access adjacent to the Fishbowl. This added another half mile to a three quarter mile trip across hot lava. The guidebook couldn’t keep up with the changes in park rules. Plus the various markings on the road and particular telephone poles were also altered or destroyed. On the trail itself essential markings were spray painted over and often adjacent rocks were pulled over and into the trail.

I was particularly interested in Matt Ramsey’s statistics on park users getting injured. I was keeping track of the people breaking their necks and other body parts at Makena State Park’s Big Beach or Oneloa Beach (not to be confused with Oneloa Beach at West Maui) Averaging about three broken necks a month and numerous other broken bones I was perplexed that the few situation Matt noted seemed insignificant. Also some of the situations sounded like they were related to preexisting conditions that the person involved bore some responsibility Given the long walk to the Fishbowl and deliberate defacing of trail markings I was surprised that more people than was reported suffered from heat exhaustion or getting lost..

March 28, 2006 The Maui News: Gate reduces the abuses at Keoneolo

“At the meeting, there was little to report on the proposed *rules changes that would allow the trails to two coves in the Ahihi-Kinaiu Natural Area Reserve to be closed, at least temporarily until a management plan gets adopted.* Ramsey said the process was moving along but that it could be several months before the rules could be adopted.” (Emphasis added)

**Note:** One would get the impression that only the trails and presumably two cove’s would be closed and then only temporarily. But that is clearly not what this about. The intent is to *close the park to human access for this and future generations.*

Another item of interest that gives some insight into just what the preservation of the resource means to Ramsey and his associates: “The cave in the reserve that had been furnished and occupied by a woman has been sealed up. Ramsey said all the woman’s belongings were removed and *an inventory of the cave was conducted before it was closed with cement and lava stones.*”

**Note:** Well, I guess we could look at the inventory records at an interpretive site. The dialogue could be something like this: “Look at this 75 separate lava rocks partially exposed on the left side ranging from one inch to fifteen feet.”

“That’s nothing! They found a dead cave cricket over behind a rock. Doesn’t say whether it was killed by the rock or not.”

“Can you believe this? Mongoose poop which appeared to be fresh....”

Just what was this cave anyway? In this part of the world a cave is often the entrance to a lava tube. I have been in a few as I traveled around the islands. One over in Hana runs for miles up the mountain and down to the sea. Even if ran only half a mile this would be an extraordinary thing to see. But it has been plugged with concrete and lava rocks. Why are we introducing modern man made edifices into the natural wilderness already being heavily trampled by man? Concreting shut lava tubes is not maintaining the natural condition of the reserve. *This is probably the crux of the problem Reserve personnel have a much different view about what constitute preservation of a resource. It appears to be one hundred eighty degree’s out of phase with most professionals that I know!.*

One of the prohibitions in the Chapter 13-2009 -4 (18) To enter into any cave, as defined in section 6D-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or any portion thereof; This was not in the Statutes at the time of this incident.

May 15, 2006 Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments to Chapter 13-209, Hawaii Administrative Rules.

13-209-3 Permitted activities. Hiking(,) and nature study [, and bedroll camping without a tent or other temporary structure] of group size of ten or less are permitted except where restricted pursuant to sections 13-209-4.5 and 13-209-4.6. Hunting is a permitted activity pursuant to hunting rules of the department.”

**Note:** The area [ between brackets ] is removed. Bedroll camping of thirty years is no longer allowed. Underlined is new regulation. Only ten or less can be in the park without a special permit. Section 13-209-4.6 explains in some detail (four pages plus of the bill) what the requirements Also contained in that section is information on closure and hours. Basically they can close all or whatever for up to two years.

I understand that public school teachers, bird watcher clubs, hiking clubs, Boy and Girl Scout leaders, YMCA are queuing up and actually fighting in lines for an opportunity to get a permit and visit the reserve, **NOT!**

Section. 13-209-4.5 list prohibited activities. Number (14) *To have or possess the following*

tools, equipment, or implements: fishing gear or devices, including but not limited to any hook-and-line, rod, reel, spear, trap, net, crowbar, or other device that may be used for the taking, injuring, or killing of marine life; cutting or harvesting tools or gear, including but not limited to chainsaws axes, loppers, any mechanized or manual sawtooth tool, seed pickers, or machete, that may be used for the taking, injuring, or killing of plant life; and hunting gear or tools that may be used for the taking, injuring, or killing of wildlife, except as permitted by the hunting rules of the department. And (15) ***To hike, conduct nature study, or conduct any activity with a group larger than ten in size;***

page 25

***“From 2009-2010 the level and intensity of management of the reserve was five full-time Rangers, providing some staff presence seven days a week, 365 days per year, 16 hours per day in two daily shifts.”***

**Note:** The management objective of closing ninety nine percent of the reserve was achieved in August 2008. This management scheme was deemed so successful that it has been continued for another two years.

OK, let us see the result. What are the statistics for use? How many people visited the reserve daily during this time period? Where did this use occur? How many people were arrested for bringing fishing rods into the area? How many boats were ticketed or confiscated for entering the closed marine component?

How many groups over ten were encountered in the reserve? How many people died in the reserve? How many people were cited for camping in the reserve or having a blanket?

How many permits were processed? How many people took advantage of the permit process?

How many nature hikes were conducted in the reserve and who lead them?

What brochures were used to interpret the reserve? It would be good to include an example in the final management plan.

How many cats, mongooses, rats, goats and Axis deer were removed?

How many poaching incidents were observed and how many arrest occurred?

How many times were the police and/or DOCARE personnel called to the park?

Where can the daily logs and records of visitor use at the park be viewed or obtained? Summaries of this material should be included in the management plan. Material for the last six years (beginning 2004) would be most beneficial.

What effect did the tsunami earlier this year (2010) have on the tidal pools?

How many Hawksbill turtles were found dead in the reserve and what was the cause of death?

The death of Hawksbill in the Aquarium found September 4<sup>th</sup> is noted. One has to wonder if the area had been open for use that this turtle could have been unhooked and saved!

Did the elimination of “human trampling” in 99% of the reserve result in any noticeable results? Or did the browsing and trampling by ungulates continue unabated?

With the data collected by a “*staff presence seven days a week, 365 days per year, 16 hours per day in two daily shifts*” we ought to have good information on which to assess the environmental impact of the implemented management plan associated with the park closure..

page 26

f) recent studies conducted

“The Fish and Wildlife funded study (Brook 2004) surveyed the anchialine pools... The study recommends that visitors should not be allowed within 100 m of any pool and that staff block or redirect all trails that come within this distance from anchialine pools.”

**Note:** Earlier the study said: The anchialine pools “are the *premier example of anchialine resources in the nation.*”, (emphasis added). This an assessment of the pool after thirty years of protection in the reserve utilizing signs and having people utilize the area for hiking, camping, nature study and hunting as provided in the enabling legislation of 1973. In this context the study recommends that trails to the pools be blocked and diverted? Blocking and diverting coupled with sign removal will encourage people to make their own way to the pools for closer examination and possible bathing.

g) Recent rules changes and buoy and road issues near resolution

“In 2005, the Advisory Group and NARS Commission requested that the DLNR temporarily close portions of the Reserve to prevent further resource damage. However, the Attorney General’s Office concluded that it was not currently within the legal power of the Commission or the Board to close off portions of an entire Reserve unless it was a matter of public safety. The requested closure would require a rule change. Acting on this guidance....”

**Note:** This is the beginning of the end of the reserve as a place for human activity. With the successful implementation of the rule changes anyone attempting to utilize over ninety-nine percent of the reserve would be a criminal subject to arrest, fines, and jail.

page 27

“New rules went into effect in January 2007 (HAR 13-20901) A total of 11 rules were modified or added including the ability to create and enforce visiting hours and close a Reserve or portion of a Reserve for up to two years.”

“On the authority provided in the rule changes, the Advisory Group and NARS commission

recommenced the BLNR adopt a two-year action plan, August 1, 2008-July31. 2010 (NARS 2008)....

...In June 2010 the NARS Commission recommended and the Board approved a second staff request for access restrictions for the period August, 2010-July 31, 2012.”

**Note:** With the closure of 99% of the park, reduction of the available parking, and the list of items prohibited from being brought into the park every person is a criminal.

The current brochure produced in 2008 has removed the park from the face of the map. The park is a white area devoid of any manifestations of what makes this area of interest. It is as if the Hawaiian people, their culture and their lands never existed. Visitors are excited to see the goats and the deer.

Park rangers utilize parking spaces which are in short supply. Turnover of parking spaces is rapid. It does not take long to scan the horizon. It does not take long to see that the signs in abundance are a list of inane prohibitions that evoke memories of going through airport security on the way over. In fact the activity at the scanners showed more flesh than the bathing suite clad youngster nearby. Well so this is paradise? Maybe the goat has a more symbolic meaning than one thought: *“Did someone get your goat?”*

h) 200-2010: Management planning process

Page 30

1.3.1 Critical threats

a) Threats identified

b)Using the conservation Measure Partnership system

page 31

1.3.1 Human use

a) Levels and impact of human use

**“Trampling is the most common source of damage from people.** Trash and waste, vandalism, poaching and entry into restricted sensitive areas also contribute to resource degradation”

**Note:** With people excluded from ninety-nine percent of the reserve it will be a good opportunity to test this hypothesis. Take some pictures of places throughout the park every thirty days over the course of the closure. Document the document the trampling and browsing. You might even photograph a goat or two. I expect it will be found that the supposed trampling from people was really trampling from ungulates all along!

“The high volume of visitors to the Reserve results in crowding, traffic and parking issues and a general lack of awareness of how to help protect and preserve natural resources and of Native Hawaiian and regional culture and history.”

page 32

b) Location and patterns of human use

page 33

c) safety and facilities

d) illegal activities

1.3.2 Alien species and other Biological Threats

a) Critical threat in Hawai'i

page 35

b) Alien species in the Reserve

“Browsing, grazing and trampling by introduced hoofed animals (deer, goats, pigs); introduced insects; predators on native plant seeds; woody plant species growing around anchialine pools and archeological sites; marine alien fish and invertebrates, and water and seabird predators.”

c) Alien species on land

“Coastal dry shrubland and forest are inundated by very high levels of browsing by deer and goats which give the alien plant species a competitive advantage. “

page 36

d) Alien species on near shore and coral reef ecosystems

page 37

1.3.3. Land-based impacts

a) effects of run-off on coral reefs

**Note:** The discussion focuses on various sources of pollution but fails to mention that the sources described originate in the reserve from the private inholdings

b) Low levels of run-off in the Reserve

c) Need for preventive action

“The effects of current structures in and adjacent to the Reserve are thought to be low, in terms of pollutants, night light pollution (which can disrupt wildlife), ...”

Page 41

1.4 What we're protecting

a) Seven priority targets for protection

“They are: 1) anchialine pool, (2) coastal marine, (3) coral reef ecosystem, (4) cultural landscape, (5) lava flow, (6) native shrubland, and (7) wilderness qualities.

page 42

#### 1.4.1 Anchialine Pool

Current status is Good

##### a) Overview

“The Cape Kinau pools have been spared from these threats and are considered the most biologically intact and diverse aquatic habitats in Hawai’i and the nation (Brock 2004.)

**Note:** *This is the situation after the thirty years of exposure to use by people and ungulates known to utilize the reserve.* These were characterized as such a significant threat that people should be excluded from the area! *This statement alone best characterizes the preposterousness of the reserve closure to people!*

Page 45

#### 1.4.2 Coastal Marine

Current status is Good

##### a) Overview

“The primary threats to these areas are human trampling, poaching, water flow and quality changes, and climate change.”

**Note:** An interesting assessment given thirty years of intensive use by people concentrated into the coastal marine area by park design access. *Another example demonstrating that people use of the reserve is not a problem!*

Page 51

#### 1.4.4 Cultural Landscape

Current Status is good

##### a) overview.

“The rich cultural landscape of the Reserve includes Native Hawaiian village sites,...”

“Cultural sites within the Reserve have been damaged by tree growth, trampling by hoofed animals, as well as by human trampling, impacted by human waste and trash, and by direct vandalism such as spray painting.”

**Note:** Thirty years exposure and is in good shape. It is interesting to note the “as well as human trampling, impacted by human waste and trash.” Apparently animal waste is of little significance. One wonders how the differentiation is made regards trampling. Have efforts been made to note make up of general trampling based on foot or paw prints? Is the inference that people tend not to follow and stay on the paths provided? Is there any correlation between park visitors wandering off the trails when trail marker signs have been obliterated or trails filled by rocks to conceal their location? (I have documented this in my videos and have been told by people I judge reliable that this was done by state employees in an effort to make their case for

closure.)

page 54

#### 1.4.5 Lava Flow

Current status is Good

a) Geologic setting and age of lava flows in Ahihi....

page 57

#### 1.4.6 Native Shrubland

Current status is Poor

a) overview

“Of this vegetated area, approximately 18 percent is native and 82 percent is non-native. These areas are largely mauka of the road except at Keone’o’io and Kanahena.”

“The primary threats to native vegetation are browsing and grazing by feral ungulates, vegetative damage by alien insects, and drought conditions.”

**Note:** To my astonishment no mention is made of human trampling. *One has to wonder why much of the park has and continues to be closed to humans when feral ungulates are acknowledge as the primary threat to native vegetation!*

Page 61

#### 1.4.7 Wilderness Qualities

Current Status is Good

a) Overview

The mandate for the Natural...

1) “People-centric, where human needs for renewal and recreation are paramount, and 2) Eco-centric, where wilderness is safeguarded by a relative lack of human impact.”

**Note:** The Ahihi reserve is not a wilderness by any stretch of the imagination. The area was extensively utilized by man in a continuum which began with the first Hawaiians arriving by sea many years ago and continuing to present day. True the native Hawaiians have been forced out but lip service is made to allowing them access to these lands acknowledging the relevancy and continuation of human use. Area of the reserve have been used in the last one hundred years as bombing range, cattle ranch present day, camping area (designated as such in 1973 enabling legislation), hunting area (also in original legislation). Additionally a number of residences are within the reserve ....

Page 63

#### 2.1 Management Framework

**Note:** The management framework developed in this plan is predicated on the idea that Ahihi

reserve fits the conceptual framework of the Natural area reserve as published in HRS 195-1 which states: (1) the state of Hawaii possesses unique natural resources, such as geological and volcano logical features and distinctive marine and terrestrial plants and animals. Many of which occur nowhere else in the world, that are highly vulnerable to loss by the growth of pollution and technology; (2) these unique natural assets should be protected and preserved, both for the enjoyment of future generations, and to provide base lines against which changes which are being made in the environments of Hawaii can be measured.

Regrettably, as the proceeding assessment of the natural and cultural resources demonstrates flora and fauna have already been ravaged extensively by mans activity. The reserve doesn't need to be preserved, it needs restoration. Restoration efforts were begun in 1973 and severely curtailed in 2004. At about that time efforts were begun in earnest to reverse what restoration had been done and to drive the human users of the park out or into very limited areas of the park.

These are the human activities that the legislature mandated in 1973.. For about thirty-five years these activities were carried out in the reserve. In recent years tourist began to enjoy the ambiance of walking a lava field, looking into a tidal pool, and getting their car broken into. In the seventies to about 2000 plus or minus effort evolved to adjust to change. Roads were paved etc.....

Ahihi reserve has little value as an example of truly pristine natural environment. But is landscape of lava rock interspersed with invasive species sure looks more natural than many hotels. Ahihi rock formations can hold their own against the manufacture waterfalls across from the Grand Wailea. The green power box and the telephone box lend authenticity to crafted "natural" environment. The lava rock looks like a plowed field to many. The unassuming visitor usually doesn't know the difference between an indigenous plant and an invasive species. Just as well for most of the flowing plants cultivated along the highway to obscure the ocean view are imported.

## 2.2 Our Visions, Mission, and Management Goals

page 64

c) Four goals

"This management plan has four management goals that address priority management needs: 1)managing human uses, 2)controlling alien species and other biological threats, 3) preventing land-based impacts, and 4 ) building management capacity.

page 65

### 2.3.1. Goal1. Manage Human (H) Use

objective H1 - Reduce the Negative Impacts of Visitors and Increase Safety strategic Actions

Action H1(a) - Set and manage visitor limits and access points.

page 66

Action H1 (b) Effectively enforce use regulations, by zone.

Action H1(c) Establish and maintain visitor entry and passage systems.

Page 67

Action H1(d) Gather relevant information regarding visitor levels and user behavior

Action H1 (e) Review and adjust Reserve boundaries as needed

Action H1 (f) Minimize the impacts of unexploded ordinance.

Objective H2 Protect and Stabilize Cultural Resource Sites

page 68

Objective H3 Preserve Knowledge and Promote Awareness of the Reserve

page 69

Objective A1 Control Ungulate Populations

page 70

Objective A2 Control Priority Alien Plants and Animals in Terrestrial Habitats

page 72

Objective A3 Control Priority Alien Organisms in Aquatic Habitats

page 73

Objective A4 Actively Restore Native Plant and Wildlife Assemblages

page 74

Objective L1 Maintain High Coastal Water Quality

Objective L2 Reduce Upland Development Impacts

page 76

Objective L3 Prevent or Minimize Manmade light Pollution Within Reserve Boundaries

2.3.4 Goal 4. Build and Maintain the Reserves' s Management (M ) Capacity

Objective M1 Secure and Sustain the Level of Human and Financial Resources Needed

page 77

Objective M2 Provide Biological Resource Status Information for Management

page 78

Objective M 3 Provide on-site infrastructure to meet Management Needs

page 79

Objective M 4 Initiate and Maintain Strategic Partnerships

2.3.5 Strategic Courses of Action and Use of Results Chains

page 83

2.4 Budget and Sustainable Finance

page 89  
2.5 Measuring Success

page 91  
Appendix  
Figure 28, Map of private land ownership within the Reserve (Stephanie Tom)

page 100  
Glossary

page 102  
References

**Note:** Conclusion and Recommendations

The Proposed Management Plan presented clearly lays out why the conditions that existed prior to 2004 regarding use by humans should be reinstated in whole.

The DLNR policy of benign neglect as poor as it is, can not compare with the damage done in the last few years by those that manipulated and misinterpreted the data presented in this report.

If you have questions or concerns or need further documentation please do not hesitate to contact me by Email [DrLeisure1@aol.com](mailto:DrLeisure1@aol.com), or by regular mail.

Dr. George R. Harker,  
PO Bos 1137,  
Kihei, HI 96753.