

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Introduction

Ka‘ena Point NAR, and the greater Ka‘ena Point area which spans from Keawa‘ula Bay (also known as “Yokohama Bay”) on the Leeward Coast to Mokuleia on the North Shore is an area with many user groups who feel strongly about how it should be used and cared for. Historically, the Ka‘ena coast supported small fishing villages, and still is an important area for Hawaiian culture. The O‘ahu Railway and Land Company began operating a railway around the point in 1898 to service sugarcane operations. The Coast Guard constructed a passing light for navigation purposes in 1920. Because of its strategic location, Ka‘ena Point was actively used by the military for coastal defense after World War I through World War II. Military use declined after World War II and the railway ceased operation in 1947.

During the 1970s, the State began to purchase lands in the area for a proposed Ka‘ena Point State Park. In 1978, a Ka‘ena Point State Park Conceptual Plan was completed. Ka‘ena Point NAR was established in 1983, composed of twelve acres on the leeward side of the point. In 1986, an additional twenty-two acres on the windward side were added to the NAR. The project area is one of the last relatively wild coastal areas on O‘ahu and has been valued as a natural escape from the pressures of urban life and its primary uses include recreation, hiking, nature study, education, and the observation of wildlife. Shore fishing, spear fishing, and gathering of marine resources have traditionally been important uses of the Ka‘ena coast.

Ka‘ena Point itself is a culturally significant landscape. There is a strong relationship in Native Hawaiian culture between the people and the land on which they live. The ‘āina (land), wai (water), and kai (ocean) formed the basis of life and established the spiritual relationship between the people and the environment. This relationship is demonstrated through traditional mele (songs), pule (prayer chants), genealogical records, and stories about particular areas, celebrating the qualities and features of the land. The relationship to the land is also shown through the strong attachments of kama‘āina to their ancestral

homelands. Within the NAR is the Leina ka ‘Uhane (Soul’s Leap), a large basalt outcrop that is said to be where souls depart into the afterlife from O‘ahu, and as such, is a sacred feature in the cultural landscape of Ka‘ena.

Based on user surveys conducted in the 1990’s, upwards of 50,000 people visit K‘aena Point area each year. As a result of the diversity and number of user groups it was decided that extensive public outreach was needed to ensure the success of the project. Pre-consultation began with the advertisement for an outreach position, followed by formation of a multi-person outreach team in October 2007. Since then, the Ka‘ena Point Ecosystem Restoration Project outreach team has been very active in the communities surrounding Ka‘ena Point (both the Mokulē‘ia and Wai‘anae sides), and have consulted with thousands of individuals and community organizations to give everyone accurate information and provide them the opportunity to give feedback on the project. As a result of their work, the vast majority of people who have been contacted support this project strongly and are interested in ensuring that Ka‘ena Point NAR is protected for the long-term, despite the vocal objections of a few.

Approach

The success of this project was due in large part to the public support garnered the outreach team. They identified and initiated personal contact with as many stakeholders as possible] developing relationships with those with a strong connection to Ka‘ena. In conjunction with personal contact, materials were developed to facilitate the transfer of information (discussed in more detail below). Printed outreach materials include two brochures, a fact sheet on owls at Ka‘ena Point, a Frequently Asked Questions sheet and a teacher education packet containing brochures and lesson plan on native coastal environments in Hawai‘i. Also, a section of a real predator-proof fence (approximately 3’ wide and 6.5’ tall) was shown to stakeholders at various meetings. Finally, a project website was developed] to provide on-demand access to all relevant project information.

Outreach efforts began in the fall of 2007 in conjunction with the release of the DLNR pre-consultation scoping letter for the environmental assessment. During this time, the outreach team met with groups such as the North Shore Neighborhood Board, Wai‘anae Neighborhood Board, Mokulē‘ia Community Association, Wai‘anae Hawaiian Civic Club, Office of Hawaiian Affairs Native Hawaiian Historical Properties Council, Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, Sierra Club, Hawaiian Trail and Mountain Club, ‘Ahahui Mālama I ka Lōkahi, the Oahu Railway Society, The Coastal Defense Study Group, Friends of Honouliuli, Hawai‘i Audubon Society and Friends of Ka‘ena. Presentations were made to teachers and hundreds of students and team members also conducted many one-on-one meetings and site visits with respected kūpuna (native Hawaiian elders), community leaders, fishers and 4x4 club members where concerns were shared and addressed wherever possible.

The outreach team also conducted surveys at Ka‘ena Point on three weekends to get input from current users of Ka‘ena Point about why they visit Ka‘ena and what they think about the proposed fencing. The same survey was administered at the popular Hawai‘i Fishing and Seafood Festival held at Pier 38. Of the 141 respondents, 95% of whom were from Hawai‘i, 82% supported constructing the fence, 15% were possibly supportive, and 3% were unsupportive.

Two articles urging public input were published in the Hawai‘i Fishing News (circulation 10,000) the newsletter of the Hawaiian Trail & Mountain Club (circulation 300), the DLNR-DOFAW newsletter (*Nā leo o ka ‘āina, Voices of the Land*) as well as via mass media. Both the *Honolulu Advertiser* and *Honolulu Star Bulletin* (the two major daily newspapers at the time) published stories. On television, news stories were aired on KHON, KHNL News 8 and KGMB. On basic cable channel OC 16’s *Outside Hawai‘i* program, a 30 minute television show broadcasted statewide, three stories were aired, including a 10 minute video created by Mara Productions. A presentation made to the Wai‘anae Neighborhood Board was aired repeatedly in early 2008 on ‘Ōlelo Community

Media. Two outreach representatives also participated in a 30 minute television show on ‘Ōlelo, “William ‘Āila Presents,” which aired in December 2008.

The outreach team also made a concerted effort to reach schools in the region. Letters and informational materials were sent to 16 schools and presentations were made to numerous school groups including the Sierra Club High School Hikers and the NOAA sponsored Papahanaumokuakea Ahahui Alakai program. Specific attention was paid to the Leeward Coast where Wai‘anae High, Nānākuli Intermediate/High, and Kamaile Academy had classroom presentations to introduce the project followed by a separate hike along the Wai‘anae coast. All schools were then brought together for an educational sharing/gathering (ho‘ike) at Camp Erdman in Mokulē‘ia. Outside Hawai‘i also filmed some of the field trips and the hō‘ike and aired two additional shows. Students worked on group projects related to Ka`ena Point, which included PowerPoint presentations, games played with elementary school students, and a series of short videos. In total presentations were made to about 125 students and approximately 70 participated in the hikes. Outreach was also conducted at fairs at four of the major colleges and universities on O‘ahu. Ka`ena Point was recently chosen as the permanent site for the “Navigating Change” program, an environmental education program based at Ka`ena Point run by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

From 2009-2011 the state also hired a Ka`ena Point Ambassador funded by a grant from the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority and the USFWS. The incumbent was stationed primarily in the Ka`ena Point NAR to educate the public, provide volunteer coordination and lead service visits as well as cultural monitoring during the construction period.

Materials produced

An important component of the public outreach process was developing educational materials \ to convey information and the outreach message to stakeholders and the general public. A key component of these materials was commissioning artwork of the area and its wildlife which was used as the

foundation for all outreach materials thereby providing a more cohesive look. A variety of tools were used to accomplish public education including a website, brochures, magnets, FAQ's, fence replicas (miniature and full size) and signs that were posted in the reserve itself. Some of these items, such as the fence replicas, brochures and magnets, were brought to presentations and meetings to distribute directly to individuals. Others, such as FAQ's and website addresses were distributed via e-mail and media stories to a larger audience. Finally, for those that had not been informed of the project through direct contact with the outreach team or via television or printed media, signs were designed and posted on the reserve itself to inform visitors of the project and its purpose. Below is a summary and pictures, were applicable, of the specific materials developed.

Website

For widespread information dissemination, a website for the project was developed that contained all the content and downloadable copies of documents, brochures and videos. The website was set up soon after the formation of an outreach team and was initially housed under the Natural Area Reserves Section of the Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) website. After the first year, the site was moved to a separate, easy to remember web address at www.restorekaena.org. To give a sense of what the fence might look like in the actual setting, artist's renderings were produced from three vantage points, which were available on the website. The organization of the website was as follows:

Home 2 paragraphs introducing the project

Treasures

- Cultural resources
- Current public use
- Wildlife
- Native plants

The Project

The problem- outlined predation issue with photographs

The solution- introduced the fence concept

How would a fence affect access? Views?

Get Involved how to behave in the reserve, volunteer opportunities

News and Events- media coverage, cleanups, project updates

Education outreach efforts, ambassador information, school groups

Learn More

FAQ's- downloadable copies of the FAQ's

Downloads- brochure, EA, predator removal summary

Photos and videos photo gallery, project documentary, media clips

Blog

Contact us

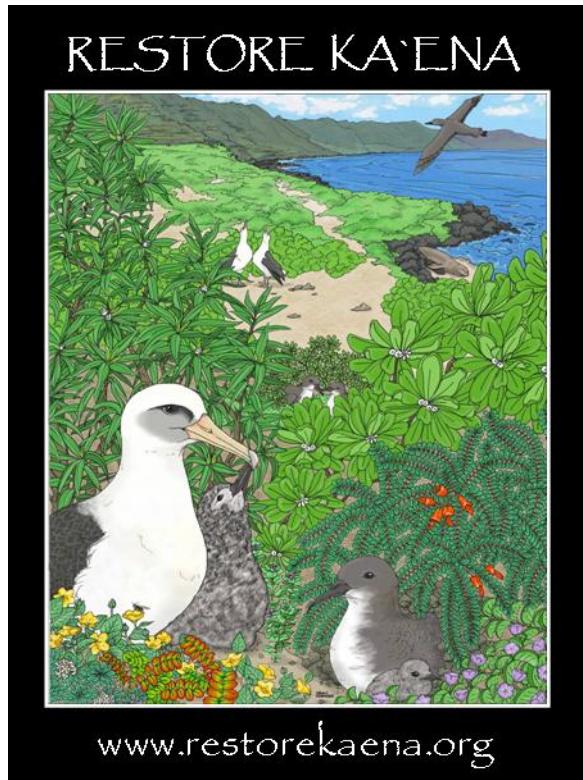
The website was updated as needed and was a convenient forum from which to distribute information, particularly when specific questions or issues were raised about a component of the project, and to announce upcoming public meetings and project events. It will remain active until the end of 2012.

Brochure

Concurrent with the development of a website a brochure was developed for distribution to individuals as well as in downloadable form on the website. As the construction date approached, a small insert was inserted that discussed the project status, construction protocols and the subsequent rodent removal so as not to reprint the entire brochure.

Magnet

At the same time that the website was moved to its unique URL, a 4" x 3" magnet was developed as an easy way to remind people to check back on the website for project updates and the latest information. The magnet was a simple black background with the project artwork as the graphic and a link to the website as seen below:



FAQ and briefing packets

An FAQ was developed as an easy to read way of answering some of the most common questions and concerns that project staff was receiving. Questions that were covered included:

- Where is Ka'ena Point?
- What's so special about Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve?
- What's the problem at Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve?
- Why are dogs not allowed?
- Why build a pest-proof fence?
- What will the fence look like?
- Will the fence be an eyesore that takes away from the beauty of Ka'ena Point?
- How will the fence affect access?
- Will cultural sites be impacted?
- How long have seabirds been using Ka'ena Point?

Will the very birds you are trying to protect fly into it and get injured or die?

What will the effects of the fence be on Pueo, the native Hawaiian Owl?

How do you know these fences work?

Who is paying for this project?

When will the fence be built?

How long will it take to build the fence and how long will it last?

How does the community feel about this project?

Will the public be able to comment on the plans for the fence?

As the construction date approached, a specific FAQ was developed since the reserve would not be closed to the public and required cooperation by everyone to make the reserve a safe place to visit during that time. Most of the common questions were addressed in the construction insert for the brochure (will the reserve remain open?, when will it be finished?, etc), but there were specific questions that were raised by community members that were addressed in the FAQ instead:

Is the construction going to impact nesting birds?

Is the fencing corridor flagged?

Were any endangered plants run over by machines and are they flagged?

Are local companies involved?

Is there a toilet for crews?

In addition to FAQ's that were geared towards the general public, an in-depth briefing packet was developed for decision makers, spokespeople and the media that provided a more in-depth summary of the project to date with sections on:

Project description

Location

Resources

Need for a predator-proof fence

Fence alignment and design

Biological monitoring

Public outreach

Chronology

The combination of the FAQ and briefing packets enabled rapid distribution of information to various individuals and groups on short notice and was invaluable in facilitating the distribution of correct information to the community. Several media advisories and news releases were developed (with accompanying video B-roll), working closely with DLNR's Public Information Officer. This was instrumental in getting media coverage at key times.

Summary

By the completion of the project, the combined outreach efforts reached nearly 3,000 people from O‘ahu who may have had some connection to Ka‘ena Point, and engaging those who truly care about this special place in the process of making this project the best it could be. Tens of thousands more were reached as a result of media coverage during that time. The vast majority of the public were very supportive of the project, despite a vocal minority who opposed the project. While the opponents were a vocal minority that objected to the fence primarily on spiritual grounds, they were effective at spreading their message and took a considerable amount of time to respond to. While considerable amounts of detail could be provided on those objections, they are a matter of public record and are outlined in detail in the contested case proceedings referred to earlier. For controversial projects such as these, it is important for team members to be available to respond to crises as they arise. Being proactive is not only crucial, but one also has to react, adjust, and develop new strategies as situations arise as well as keep supporters updated throughout a potentially long and drawn out process. In conclusion, outreach is not a one-time investment where the message is disseminated in the beginning via various methods. It is a constant process that needs to adapt to the situation as it changes, and one cannot assume that a supporter will always remain so unless

the team keeps in contact with them and provide updated information as needed. As a result of the dedicated and extended effort put forth by the team, this project was able to proceed to completion. With the help of a coordinated outreach team, Ka‘ena Point, one of the most publically visited state-owned natural areas in Hawai‘i, and is one of the few areas that the public can enjoy and learn from watching an ecosystem restoration project in action.