
**Cultural Assessment for Kahului Airport
Runway Reconstruction
J Kahala Chrupalyk
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To: Rowland Reeve
Cultural Resources Principal Investigator
SWCA Environmental Consultants

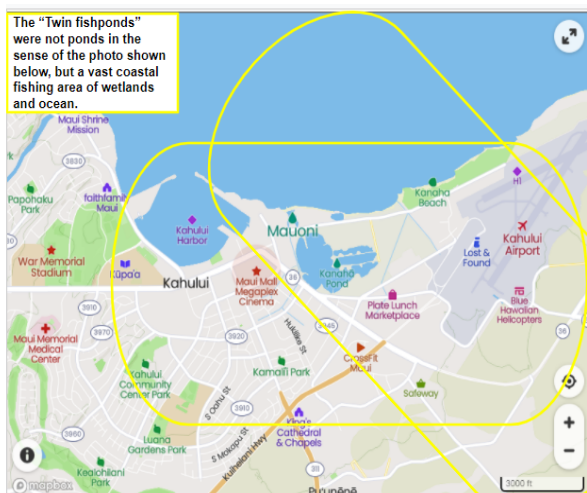
Aloha e Rowland,

Thank you for giving *Kanaka Maoli* an opportunity to weigh in on your cultural assessment regarding the Runway Improvement project and your company's position in the matter. This location of land is extremely important in terms of environmental and historical value for the *Mokupuni 'o Maui*.

Situated in *Moku 'o Wailuku*, the *Ahupua'a 'o Pū'ali Komohana* consists of a 183-acre fishpond known as *Loko I'a 'o Mau'oni*. The fishpond itself stretches from Haleakalā Highway [*Alaloa 'o Haleakalā*] and spans all the way down to the current day Kanahā Beach Park, and all the way up to where Harbor Lights sits today. The fishpond has been a favorite place among the royal families of Hawai'i since the 15th century, when Maui was at the helm of the Hawaiian Islands [*Ko Hawai'i Nei Pae 'Āina*]. *Kapi'ioho'okalani* was the chief who named this place after his twin children - daughter *Kahamaluihi'ikea'oihilani* and son *Kanahā'okalani*.

Long before *Kapi'ioho'okalani* took hold of this place, it was beloved by *Kihapi'ilani* who laid the first foundations to retain fish from these waters. Following the work, *Kapi'ioho'okalani* has gathered hundreds of people to pass the stones in the building of the fishpond walls. *Kamehamehanui* completed the building of the fishpond walls.

Mau'oni and *Kanahā* fishponds were widely treasured because there was quite an abundance of *pā'ā'ā*, *halalū* or *hahalalū*, and *akule* fish - enough to feed the entire island, in these fishing zones. However, late in the 1700s when *Kamehameha I* came to unite the islands, his principle forces landed in *Kahului* Bay where boats would dock on the sand bar, and a great battle was fought; battle that left many deceased in the area of the present day airport and stretching as far as *Pā'ia*.



The "Twin fishponds" were not little ponds in the sense of the photo shown, but a vast coastal fishing area of wetlands and ocean.¹

This area is full of burials from the fallen warriors during the late 1700s when *Kamehameha* came into Maui through *Kahului Bay* on his quest to unite the islands. The burials are said to span the entire *Hāna Highway* area, well into *Pā'ia*, including where the airport is today.²

Environmental Significance

The entire area where the Kahului Airport sits today was once a wetland, and still technically is. Aside from the widely unknown cultural significance of the area, there are also many environmental impacts to the natural habitat surrounding the Kahului Airport.

The 1910 dredging of the Kahului Harbor, benefitting nothing more than commercial application, has destroyed a vast wetland system, leaving the areas surrounding the airport in a poor state of infectious bacteria that is trapped between buildings and the industrial waste that lays along the waterways and lands throughout the area.

During the proposed reconstruction of the runways, I would advise the company to make sure to use material that will act as a natural filter to the affected lands, to create a system of pollutant filtration, to be mindful that the rising of the sea level is going to directly affect the airport, and to explore the possibility of running an underground method of allowing the excess groundwater to naturally filter. Right now, because of the dredging and the closing of the waterway that acted as a passage for natural flow, the water is stagnant - which breeds the germs that deprecate the natural environment surrounding the airport.

¹ <https://www.mauimagazine.net/kahului-maui-fishpond/>

² <http://totakeresponsibility.blogspot.com/2013/01/kanaha-pond.html>

There are many burials within the area of the airport, and there are some burial stones by the old stable road that runs behind the airport. Please bring an archaeologist into the groundbreaking area to assess possible remains that may still be in the area. In the past, zero consideration was given about these concerns and from what I know, the buried remains were either simply desecrated or not dealt with.



I do have one personal request, made from the cultural standpoint of the situation. Whereas it is redundant to fight the upgrading of the runway because the area has been largely desecrated long before the airport was moved to this location, it is really important that the history of this place not go as extinct as the natural environment already has. May I ask that your company request two story panels be placed in the airport to display both the environmental as well as the cultural history stories for the airport location?

Again, thank you for sharing the opportunity to share our knowledge with you. Let it be known that I have shared this letter from you with others, although I did open the letter quite late myself. Between an overload of emails and my working from other email boxes, I had not seen this particular email until this week.

With Sincere Regards,

J Kahala Chrupalyk

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