NĀ AHUPUAʻA O TURTLE BAY RESORT

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL BRIEF


Waialee
Kaiwa
Kawela
Kaapaa
Pahipahialua
Kaunala
Pualau
Ulupehupehu
Hanakaoe
Kaalo
Kawela
Kaapaa
Pahipahialua
Waialee
Kaunala
Pualau
Kaena
Malikahana
Kaipapau
Hauula
Makaa
Kaaka
Kahana
Papaaiko
Haleaha
Kaaao
Puhemike
Waiono
Makaua
Kaaawa
Kaluanui
Kahaluu
Waiahole
Waikane
Waiahole
Waikane
Kaalaea
Punaawai
Kukuiolo
Kahalu.
M. Ananula.

Moku o Koʻolauloa

Turtle Bay Resort is located in the moku (district) of Koʻolauloa on the northern and northeastern-most side of Oʻahu. Each of the six Oʻahu moku are further divided into subdistricts called ahupuaʻa. The most detailed historical maps name 32 ahupuaʻa in the moku of Koʻolauloa, and the Resort spans seven of them.

From the west side of Kawela Bay to the west side of Kahuku Point, they are: ʻŌpana ("the squeeze"), Kawela ("the heat"), Hanakaʻoe (translation unknown), ʻŌiʻo ("bonefish"); Ulupehupehu (translation unknown); Punalau ("many springs"); and Kahuku ("the projection"). More generally, this area is considered to be Kahuku, and much of the early cultural and historical records focus on Kahuku.

The ahupuaʻa of ʻŌiʻo, Ulupehupehu, Punalau are comparatively small, and various records and governmental surveys treat them as smaller subdivisions, or ʻili, of either the Kahuku or Hanakaʻoe ahupuaʻa. Kawela is also occasionally linked with ʻŌpana to the west. Most maps will demarcate Kawela, Hanakaʻoe, and Kahuku as distinct ahupuaʻa. For the purposes of this brief, **Hanakaʻoe**, **Kawela**, and **Kahuku** will be treated as the three primary ahupuaʻa of interest.

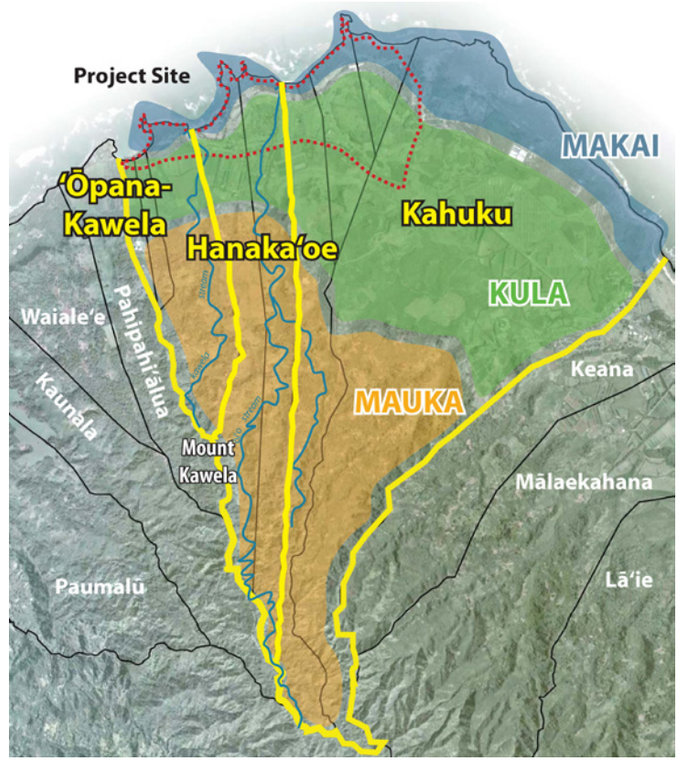
Coastal Features of the Three Ahupuaʻa

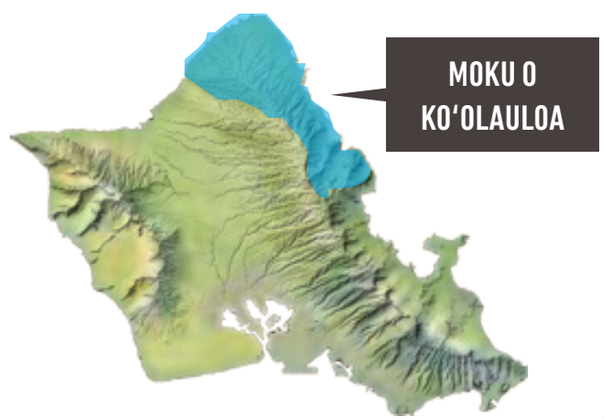
Within these three ahupuaʻa are three bays: Kawela Bay to the west, Turtle Bay in the center, and Kuilima Bay to the east.

Kawela Point separates Kawela Bay from Turtle Bay. The shoreline near here was known as Wakiu ("northwest wind sound"). Turtle Bay is a recent name, so called because it attracted nesting turtle. The Hawaiian name for eastern section of the bay is Waikalae. It means "divided water" because the ʻŌʻio Stream, which runs through Hanakaʻoe, used to split into two. One branch emptied into Turtle Bay and the other at Kuilima Cove near the hotel.

Kuilima Point separates Turtle Bay from Kuilima Bay and is the location of the existing Turtle Bay Resort. Kuilima is a somewhat recent name, at least for the point. Kuilima was actually the name of the kula region away from the coast. The traditional name for the point is Kalaeokaunu, meaning "the point of the alter." It's likely that a small fishing shrine was once located there. The narrow point that runs along the eastern end of Kuilima Cove is called Kalaekamanu ("the point of the bird"). And the cove itself was known as Kalokoiki, or "little pool." It has long been a favorite swimming site.

Kahuku Point is Oʻahu's northernmost point and marks the eastern end of Kuilima Bay. The traditional name for Kuilima Bay is Kaihalulu, or "roaring sea." The traditional name for Kahuku Point is Kalaeokaunaʻoa. It's named for the kaunaʻoa, which is a type of worm snail that cements itself to rocks, often in colonies. These mollusks were once common along the point, and they could be very painful when stepped on. The beach that lies to the southeast of Kahuku Point is known as Hanakaʻīlio.





Early History

The early history of most places in Hawai'i are preserved in mo'olelo (stories), mele (song), and 'ōlelo no'eau (proverbs). Those that have been recorded for Kawela, Hanaka'oe, and Kahuku offer a glimpse into ancient life and bring to our attention the wahi pana (storied places) that connect the present to the past.

Kawela and Hanaka'oe

Kāne is one the four major gods in Hawaiian mythology. As the god of creation, he is considered the preeminent god. In the ancient stories, Kāne is often accompanied by the god Kanaloa, who in many ways acts as a complementary force, the ying to Kāne's yang. When paired together, they often play the role of cultivators and water finders. Interestingly, the connection to water has almost everything to do with the importance of awa. Awa is their primary food, and water is required to consume it.

There are plenty of local legends that speak of Kāne and Kanaloa traveling throughout the islands and creating springs along the way. Kawela/Hanaka'oe is one such region.

Long ago, it was said that the residents of Kawela and Hanaka'oe had to travel far into the valley to reach the nearest source of freshwater. One day, a man who no one had seen before happened to join a party venturing to the valley for water. Exhausted by the trek, they they stopped to rest at the valley's entrance when suddenly, the stranger struck a stone and caused water to burst forth. The identity of the stranger was now clear. It was Kāne, and the stone was called Waikāne.

Just outside of Kawela Bay, there is an offshore island and reef called Papa'amoi ("scorched threadfish"). It was known as a place where Kāne and Kanaloa had frequently gone "to scoop for fish."

Kahuku, by David Howard Hitchcock, 1917

Keaneakua, circa 1930

Kahuku

An Unstable Land

"Kahuku, 'āina lewa," was a common remark, meaning "Kahuku, an unstable land." At one time, the area was known throughout the islands for its tendancy to rock to and fro. This may have something to do with Kahuku's unique origin story.

In ancient Hawai'i, Kahuku was believed to have been a separate island that had drifted to O'ahu. Stories differ as to how the two became attached. In one version, Kahuku was fastened with large hooks in two locations: Pōlou and Kalou. Pōlou was a pond on the oceanside of the old Kahuku Mill. At a depth of 80 fathoms, it was said that one could actually see the hook. It was made of kauila, the hardest of the Hawaiian woods. Kalou was a second pond, located north of Kawela Bay in Waiale'e. Kalou literally means "the hook." The demigod Māui has been credited with fastening Kahuku to O'ahu.

Fishing at Kahuku Point

Kahuku Point is the northernmost point on O'ahu. There were at least two sites there that confirm its importance for fishing. Keanakua ("the godly cave") is the name of a ko'a, or fishing shrine, that has since been destroyed. When the weather was bad and the ocean rough, fishermen would conduct ceremonies and leave offerings there to improve conditions. The shrine was an enclosure made of flat coral rocks, 5.5 feet wide by 11 feet across. The inside was paved with smaller pieces of coral.

Kalaeuila ("the lighting point") is the name of a former heiau (temple) at Kahuku Point. It too has since been destroyed. For a heiau, it was relatively small. The archaeologist J. Gilbert

Punahoʻolapa, present day

McAllister, who observed traces of Kalaeuila's foundation in 1930, considered that it might have been a koʻa. His informant, however, confirmed that it was indeed a heiau; on many occassions, she had heard the sound of drums.

Where Springs Meet

Punamanō and Punahoʻolapa are the names of two neighboring springs located in Kahuku.

Punamanō means "shark spring," so named because of an old moʻolelo about a shark that once lived there. The shark had accidentally been caught in a Kahuku couple's fishing net. It was a pup, and they set it free in the spring near their home. A breadfruit tree was planted near the spring, and the couple had noticed that the fruit seemed to go missing. They suspected a thief was to blame, so one day, before leaving for the uplands to farm, they told the shark to keep watch over the breadfruit.

Punamanō, present day

Later, the woman's brother happened to come to the house to fetch some fruit from the tree. The fruit rolled into the pond, he reached for them, and he was promptly killed by the shark. Meanwhile, the sister sensed something was amiss with her brother. She rushed over to his home to discover that a new spring, Punahoʻolapa ("restless spring"), had appeared. Her brother was nowhere to be seen. The water was reddened with blood and served as evidence of an underground connection between Punamanō and Punahoʻolapa.

Punahoʻolapa is also tied to another waterway, this one being way out in Waiphau some thirty or so miles away. In every version of the tale, a kapa log with a distinctive sound is lost when it slips into a pool of water fed by a spring. The owner of the log searches far and wide for it, eventually hearing its distinctive sound somewhere in Waipahu. The new owners claim to have found the log in a stream and did not believe it possible that it had somehow floated to Waipahu underground.

To test the Kahuku owner's theory, the party travelled back to the scene of the log's disappearance. Some tī leaves were gathered, wrapped into a bundle, and set into the Kahuku pond. Within days, the bundle disappeared, at which point the party travelled back to Waipahu. Sure enough, after several days of careful observation, the bundle of ti leaves came floating down the Waipahu Stream. At that, the kapa log with the sonorous sound was returned to its rightful owner. The place in Waipahu were the ti leaves reemerged came to be known as "Ka pukana wai o Kahuku," or "Outlet of the water from Kahuku."

Observations of Post-Contact Kahuku

The first written description of the area is from 1779 and appears in the journal kept by James King, a lieutenant aboard Captain James Cook's third and final voyage to the Pacific. His observation suggests that prior to contact with the West, Kahuku was a well-managed district and quite populated for its time. An entry on February 28, 1779 reads:

> Run round the Noern [Northern] Extreme of the Isle [Oahu] which terminates in a low point rather projecting [Kahuku Point]; off it lay a ledge of rocks extending a full Mile into the Sea, many of them above the surface of the Water: the Country in this neighborhood is exceedingly fine and fertile: here is a large Village, in the midst of it is run up a high pyramid doubtlessly part of a Morai.

Just thirteen years later, contact's deleterious effects on the Native Hawaiian population, mostly from disease, were already apparent. Referencing Lieutenant King's 1779 description of the area, British Captain George Vancouver wrote in 1784 that

"the country did not appear in so flourishing a state, nor to be so numerously inhabited, as he represented it to be at that time, occasioned most probably by the constant hostilities that had existed since that period."

Some fifty years later, in 1833, E.O. Hall had this to say about Koʻolauloa in general: "Much taro land lies waste, because the diminished population of the district does not require its cultivation." In the whole Koʻolauloa District, a total population of 1,345 was recorded in 1853; 1,187 in 1860; and 1,082 in 1878. For comparison, Koʻolauloa's population in 2010 was 21,406.

Māhele

Until the Māhele of 1848, no one technically owned any land in Hawaiʻi. ʻĀina (land) was regarded not as a commodity or asset to be bought, sold, or even possessed. ʻĀina, quite literally, is "that which feeds." It approximated something closer to a family member, deserving of respect, care, and reverence.

During the reign of Kamehameha III (Kauikeaouli), Hawaiian land tenure evolved into something that resembled Western property regimes, with deeds and titling, plus the usual possessory and use rights. This process was called the Māhele, meaning "to divide." Through the Māhele, interests in land were first clarified and then awarded to individuals from one of three categories: the Mōʻī (the Crown), the aliʻi (chiefs), and the makaʻāinana (commoners).

An initial phase was a period of quitclaiming among the ruling class to sever undivided interest in lands over which they maintained authority. Any lands retained were subject to payment of a commutation fee (in the form of either cash or land), which acted to terminate the Mōʻī's undivided interest in all lands.

This first division was completed in March of 1848. It resulted in 240-plus aliʻi taking life estates to 1.5 million acres of lands, with Kauikeaouli doing the same to 2.5 million acres. Payment of a commutation fee by the claimant to the government converted these life estates into fee simple estates. These fees were often settled with transfers of land, which formed a land base for the government. Government lands were separate and distinct from Kauikeaouli's ʻāina, which came to be known as the Crown Lands.

The ahupuaʻa of Kahuku and Kawela were initially retained by Kauikeaouli as Crown Lands. The ahupuaʻa of Hanakaʻoe — including ʻŌiʻo, Ulupehupehu, and Punalau — was designated Government Lands. Within these ʻāina, smaller awards were made to the makaʻāinana (commoners) who resided there. There were 64 such awards in Kahuku and seven in Kawela.

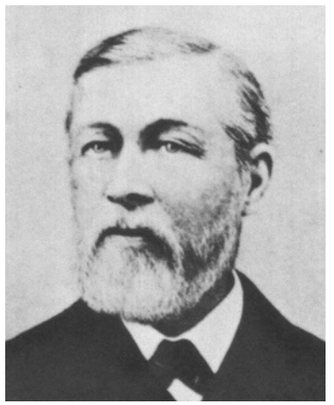
Post-Māhele

Private ownership turned land into capital, and in the hands of Hawaiʻi's 19th century industrialists, Kahuku's cultural history for the next 120 years was defined primarily by ranching and sugarcane.

Kahuku Ranch

In 1851, Kauikeaouli sold the ahupuaʻa of Kahuku, plus several others along the North Shore, to his land agent Charles Gordon Hopkins. Hopkins used the land to establish Kahuku Ranch, at which point, life in Kahuku took a turn for the worse. The

Charles Gordon Hopkins



James Campbell

missionary John Emerson made this sad observation (as retold by his son) about the relationship between a Kahuku rancher and the area's residents:

> He was so autocratic that the natives could not own a dog, or pasture a cow or horse without his consent. The depredations of his herds and flocks on their small homesteads became unbearable, but they appealed in vain for the protection of their beloved hala trees[1] and patches of vegetables. . . . With the fading of the forests the people also disappeared and the once populous district of Kahuku became a lonely sheep and cattle ranch.

John Emerson died in 1867, a year after the Kahuku Ranch changed ownership, so one can fairly assume that the rancher in question is Charles Hopkins.

The Kahuku Ranch was sold to Robert Moffitt in 1866 and then

1. Kahuku was famous for its hala (pandanus trees), as expressed in this ʻōlelo noʻeau: "Nani i ka hala ka ʻōiwi o Kahuku." Translation — The body of Kahuku is beautified by hala trees.

to Judge H.A. Widemann in 1873. By that point, the ahupua'a of Kawela and Hanaka'oe had been added to the Ranch holdings, which spanned spanned roughly 15,000 acres. Widemann owned the Ranch for less than a year before selling it to Julius L. Richardson, who then sold it to James Campbell in 1876 for $63,500.

Kahuku Plantation

In 1889, Campbell leased much of his Kahuku landholdings to Benjamin F. Dillingham. Dillingham had outlined a plan for putting the Kingdom's fertile lands in O'ahu's western and northern districts to maximum use. He called it "The Great Land Colonization Scheme." He formed the Hawaiian Colonization Land and Trust Company ("HCLTC"), which was supposed to buy up the lands, and then divide and develop them for purchase or lease as homesteads and farms. He figured that, once populated, a rail line between Honolulu and these outer districts would follow.

The scheme, as originally conceived, was never fully realized; however, Dillingham did go ahead with the construction of a railroad system under Oahu Railway & Land Company ("Oahu Railway"). Construction began in 1889, and it took ten years for the line to reach Kahuku. He hired two hydrographic engineers, James D. Schuyler and G. F. Allardt, to study the water resources along the proposed line. In Kahuku, they observed that, "water is bursting out in places all along the coast, generally near the foot of the hills, or about midway between the foot-hills and the ocean."

Encouraged, Dillingham secured the Kahuku lease from Campbell for a term of 50 years at $50,000 annually. He then subleased a portion of this land to James B. Castle, who owned huge tracts of Kailua and Kāne'ohe and was working on long-term plan to develop the entire windward side of O'ahu. Castle, Dillingham, and Campbell, plus Lorrin A. Thurston, came together to form the Kahuku Plantation Company in 1890. The company relied on artesian wells to water its 2,800 acres, which produced its first sugarcane harvest in 1892.

Benjamin F. Dillingham

James B. Castle

The Kahuku Sugar Mill in the early-1900s

Although small by most standards, Kahuku was a complete operation from the start, with its own mill and railway system. It was the first plantation in Hawai'i to use a mechanical derrick to load harvested cane onto trucks for transport out of the fields. Nevertheless, its managers struggled to compete in an area severely limited by the rugged terrain, so it expanded.

The fields of the Ko'olau Agricultural Company were bought in 1925. In 1931, an additional 1,700 acres of the Laie Plantation were purchased. Production peaked in 1935, with 4,490 acres under cultivation and a crew of 1,137 workers producing an annual output of 21,873 tons of sugar. Shipping costs went up when Oahu Railway ceased operations in 1947. Eventually, competition from foreign plantations forced Kahuku Plantation's closure in 1971.

For eight decades, the mill and plantation were the lifeblood of the Kahuku community, which grew as business grew. Successive waves of contract workers from China, Japan, Portugal, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines made Kahuku their home and raised families there. There were several major labor strikes between 1898 and 1941, which prompted improvements in community life. Stores, shops, a theater, golf course, gymnasium, and clubhouse came up around the mill. The railroad brought goods and provided opportunities for outings. Better houses were built for plantation workers, some of which still line the highway. They are now independently owned.

One year after the mill's closure, Del Webb opened the Kuilima Resort Hotel and Country Club. In 1984, after a $17 million renovation, the resort reopened as the Turtle Bay Hilton & Country Club. The Kahuku Sugar Mill was finally dismantled in 2005.