



The ahupua`a of Hawai`i were established by the ali`i to organize the distribution of resources and people. An ahupua`a traditionally ran from the mountains to the near-shore reef, and optimally included land and ocean resources that would sustain the population living in the ahupua`a. All of the residents in the ahupua`a had kuleana, responsibilities, to care for the resources and support the konohiki and the chief of the island. During the time of ke ali`i Mailekukahi – around the 15th-16th centuries – the ahupua`a system functioned most efficiently and the island populations thrived. It is estimated that the number of people living on O`ahu during that time rivaled the population of today.

Use of the pig's head on the symbol replicates what was used in ancient times. Back then, the pig's head, often carved kukui wood, was mounted on an altar – or ahu – of stones. This monument marked the boundary line of the land section.

The moku (district) of Ko`olaupoko extended from Ka`oio Ridge on the north end of Kualoa, to Kuli`ou`ou Ridge on the south end at Maunaloa Bay. It included the ahupua`a of Kualoa, Hakipu`u, Waikane, Waiahole, Ka`alaea, Waihe`e, Kahalu`u, He`eia, Kane`ohe, Kailua and Waimanalo. This project is aimed at raising awareness among the people of these 11 ahupua`a about their traditional boundaries and their kuleana to malama – protect – their natural and cultural resources. By learning where the boundaries lie, residents and businesses can practice stewardship in their ahupua`a through clearing streams, picking up litter, replacing alien vegetation with native plants, learning about their cultural and natural resources, and in many other ways.

The Ko`olaupoko Ahupua`a Boundary Marker Project was initiated in 2009 by the Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, initially as a partnership with two other clubs, the Kailua and Waimanalo Hawaiian Civic Clubs. After receiving grants from the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, a steering committee was formed to plan the project and identify boundaries.

Invited to participate on the steering committee were members of the Kahalu`u, Kane`ohe, Kailua, Waimanalo and Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Boards and, later, the Maunaloa Hawaiian Civic Club. Also invited to participate were members of The Outdoor Circle, Hawaii's Thousand Friends, and representatives of the State and County transportation departments.

Among the steering committee's first actions was to seek out and agree upon a traditional boundary map for the ahupua`a of Ko`olaupoko. Maps from 1876, 1902 and 1927 were reviewed. The 1876 map done for the Kingdom of Hawai`i was eventually selected because it represented the last traditional map recognized by the Ali`i of the Kingdom of Hawai`i. The subsequent maps, drawn after the Overthrow of 1893, adjusted at least one of the O`ahu boundaries – moving the Ko`olaupoko boundary from Kuli`ou`ou Ridge to Makapu`u. In the 1876 map, the Hawaii Kai area (known traditionally as Maunaloa) was a part of the Ko`olaupoko moku, or district.

The committee members and transportation officials toured the moku, working to identify the traditional boundaries in modern times. Once the locations were agreed upon by community and government representatives, a final list was prepared and circulated to all of the participating organizations.

The steering committee accepted a State DOT recommendation that the project focus first on installing signage, with the goal of ultimately installing the stone ahu markers. The signage would be considered temporary until the communities in each of these ahupua`a were ma`a (knowledgeable) about their boundaries.

Design of the ahu symbol, which was to go on the signage, was crafted by sfd's Daryl Mauioliola Fujiwara. This design has been approved by the State Department of Transportation and has become a state standard, acceptable for use on signage in any other ahupua`a statewide.



**Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club**  
P. O. Box 664, Kaneohe, HI 96744  
(808) 235-8111 | malamapono@aol.com  
[www.koolaupokohcc.org](http://www.koolaupokohcc.org)

# Ahupua`a Kaneohe



Presented by the Hawaiian Civic Clubs and  
Neighborhood Boards of Ko`olaupoko



HAROLD K.L. CASTLE  
FOUNDATION

# Kaneohe

Contrary to modern interpretations, the name of this ahupua'a is probably not meant to reflect on a story of an angry husband and his bamboo stick. Hawaiian researchers believe the name actually refers to a sacred grove of bamboo - 'ohe - that grows near the large heiau of Kukuiokane dedicated to the god Kane. The name means, "the sacred bamboo grove of Kane."

Descriptions of the vast ahupua'a of Kane'ohe offer high praise for the large population and culture of the area in ancient times. In "Hawaiian Planter," Handy says:

"Kane'ohe is one of the most complicated terrace areas in the islands. It can be comprehended only in the light of its stream system. It is still one of the most active communities in planting commercial taro, and a goodly portion of its lowland terraces, tucked away in pockets flanked and often hidden by low hills, or by the town itself, are still planted in taro (for milling) by Hawaiians who own the land and by Orientals who lease land or are hired.

"This ahupua'a was described in glowing terms a century and a half ago by Portlock. '...The bay all round has a very beautiful appearance, the low land and valleys being in high state of cultivation, and crowded with plantations of taro, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc., interspersed with a great number of coconut trees, which renders the prospect truly delightful.'

"The flatlands of Kane'ohe are broken up between hills into chains of pockets connecting along its stream channels. On the north side of the ahupua'a near the boundary of He'eia, Kea'ahala Stream flows into Kalimukele, coming out of He'eia. Some of the best terraces now in use are inland of the highway and are irrigated by Kea'ahala; a large old terrace system extends down stream below the highway. An elaborate system of water rights prevailed in ancient times throughout these sections irrigated by Kea'ahala.

"Waialele (formerly Paniohelele) Stream, and Hi'ilaniwai, which joins it just above the highway an eighth of a mile east of Kane'ohe town, watered terraces both above and below the highway; these terraces are now used mostly for truck gardening. There were formerly a few terrace sections farther up Waialele, which, however, was but a short stream. Hi'ilaniwai is a very long stream running back to the slopes draining Pu'u Lanihuli.

"The kula lands between the streams were planted in pandanus, wauke, bananas, and sweet potatoes. Hawaiian kalo malo'o was not planted here. The number of names of ili and kuleana on kula lands along the Hi'ilaniwai and its tributaries, however, indicates intensive cultivation of products other than taro."

According to historian Marion Kelly, Kane'ohe was the breadbasket of O'ahu, particularly in times of drought. Its extensive farmlands flowed from the foot of the pali Ko'olau all the way to the bay, where they joined with dozens of fishponds. The population of the area is said to have numbered in many thousands, as much help was needed to tend these fishponds and farmlands.

The chief for this ahupua'a was considered waiwai (wealthy) because of the abundance of flowing streams, farms, and wahi kapu (heiau) throughout Kane'ohe. When Kamehameha the Great first gazed down from Nu'uaniu Pali upon the lands of Kane'ohe, he was stunned by the richness of these lands, and took much of the area as his own by right of the conquering chief.

Hi'ilaniwai means "carrying heavenly waters", and is the name of a stream and waterfall that winds from the pali down through the hills, joining with two other streams in Kane'ohe. It is described by Henry Hodges Parker, who wrote long ago:

"In a secluded dell near the base of the hills that mark the village's western limit stood an altar of rough stone...The altar was strewn with wild-fruit leaves, and not far off a mountain stream threw its spray from the over-topping rocks onto a platform of solid stone. The spot was named 'Adoration by Water - Hi'ilaniwai.' Here a priest functioned in a religious rite called 'Hiu wai', which means 'union in water.' The religious rites at this altar served as a sort of dedication or offering of a child, or children to the use of some deity, for a special purpose. A priest of no mean rank was required to officiate at the altar; water was the medium of approach to the god; incantatory recitations accompanied the dedicatory act and a

columnar shaft of smoke usually announced the occasion. These waters were sacred and used in acts of ceremonial cleaning. A great deal was carried away in gourd shells to be used in the native's home life in cleansing, in spiritual healing or propitiation for sin."

Located at the end of Waikalua Road is a place famous in the history of our Hawaiian people. Now referred to as Kane'ohe Beach Park, it was once a beautiful white sand beach visited by the high ali'i. Samuel Kamakau describes a pivotal historical event there:

"It was in January, 1737, that the two hosts (Alapai's and Peleioholani) met, splendidly dressed in cloaks of bird feathers and in helmet-shaped head coverings beautifully decorated with feathers of birds. Red feather cloaks were to be seen on all sides, both chiefs were attired in a way to inspire admiration and awe, and the day was one of rejoicing as that of the ending of a dreadful conflict. So it was that Peleioholani and Alapai met at Naoneala'a in Kane'ohe. The canoes were lined up from Ki'i at Mokapu to Naoneala'a and there on the shoreline they remained, Alapai alone going on shore. The chiefs of O'ahu and Kaua'i and the fighting men and the country people remained inland, the chief Peleioholani alone advancing. Between the two chiefs stood the counselor. Naili first addressed Peleioholani and said, 'When you and Alapai meet, if he embraces and kisses you let Alapai put his arms below yours, lest he gain the victory over you.' This is therefore to this day the practice of the bone-breaking wrestlers at Kapua and at Naoneala'a. Alapai declared an end of war with all things as they were before, the chiefs of Maui and Moloka'i to be at peace with those of O'ahu and Kaua'i; so also those of Hawai'i. Thus ended the meeting of Peleioholani with Alapai at Naoneala'a.

