

KONA, MAI KA PU‘U O KAPŪKAKĪ A KA PU‘U A KAWAIHOA

Kona, from Kapūkakī to Kawaihoa

KONA ‘ĀINA INVENTORY

Niu Palena, Waikīkī Ahupua‘a, Moku o Kona



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NIU PALENA (WAIKĪKĪ AHUPUA‘A)

The caves at Niu have long been famous *Referring to canoe burials of chiefs that once were here* ³⁴

This chapter documents the significant Hawaiian cultural and natural resources in Niu Palena (Waikīkī Ahupua‘a) as well as known community groups engaged in education, restoration and other place-based activities in the palena. The main objective of this chapter is to create a comprehensive database of practical information about community initiatives dedicated to enhancing the lives of Native Hawaiians in Niu, both on KS and non-KS land.

Figure 127 and Figure 128 are aerial image and USGS map depictions, respectively, of Niu Palena. As described in the Introduction, some of the land divisions in this study are referred to as palena (boundary or partitioning or piece) of Waikīkī Ahupua‘a.³⁵ Niu, although it is considered a palena for the purposes of this study, is exceptional in that it is configured like a true ahupua‘a (although it is not very large in overall size). For example, its upper (mauka) limits reach the Ko‘olau ridgeline; and, its lower (makai) limits do, indeed, reach the ocean. By all measures, its resources are sufficiently abundant and diverse by Hawaiian standards.³⁶ As stated, however, for the purposes of consistency, we have chosen to use the 1881 Hawaiian Kingdom government boundaries, which consider Niu to be a palena of Waikīkī.

Referring to well-known landmarks such as neighborhoods, roads and other infrastructures, the current (modern) boundaries of Niu Palena, which is today synonymous with the Niu Valley residential subdivision and shopping center, are as follows. Starting from the south (makai) end on the eastern (Koko Head) side, the boundary starts at the shore near Holy Trinity School (which is wholly within Kuli‘ou‘ou Palena (to the east), heads north (mauka) over Kalaniana‘ole Highway and up through undeveloped land along the east side of Kūpaua Valley on the ridge boundary with Kuli‘ou‘ou; the boundary follows the ridge through undeveloped forest reserve land to the Ko‘olau ridgeline summit, where it turns to the west and follows the Ko‘olau District boundary at around 2,400-2,500 ft. elevation for a short distance; after turning back south (mauka), the boundary heads down through undeveloped lands and along the trail on Hawai‘iloa ridge through the Hawai‘iloa ridge residential neighborhood, back over the highway, and to the seashore at Kawaiku‘i Beach Park.

Table 25. Summary of Selected Wahi Pana in Niu is a summary of the significant wahi pana in Niu Palena. Figure 129 is a GIS map depiction of Niu’s wahi pana. The table of wahi pana is organized generally from makai to mauka.

Overview – Hawaiian Cultural Landscape of Niu

Other than the commercial shopping center and subdivision in the lowermost (makai) section of Niu Valley, this palena is almost entirely undeveloped, with an extensive upland forest. Niu literally means “coconut.”

Two main drainages, both seasonal (ephemeral), drain two valleys from the Ko‘olau ridgeline around an extensive mauka-to-makai oriented ridge known as Kūlepeamoā (literally, “flapping of chicken”). Kūpaua (literally, “upright clam”) Gulch drains along the east side of Kūlepeamoā Ridge; Pia Gulch

³⁴ McAllister (1933, in Sterling and Summers (1978:274) quoting Westervelt

³⁵ As explained in the Introduction, the boundaries of palena in this study are based on the 1881 Hawaiian Kingdom survey.

³⁶ In the Nu‘uanu chapter of this study, we discuss this point, and some historical specifics about “old O‘ahu” (prior to the invasions from Maui by Kahekili, and Hawai‘i by Kamehameha) in more detail that is not repeated in this chapter.

(literally, “arrowroot, starch”) drains the west side. These two drainages terminate around the makai (front) side of the base of the ridge.

A heiau with the same name of the ridge (Kūlepeamoā) is located at the foot of its (makai side) base. It was described in the early 1930s as fairly large (on the order of a maximum of 120 by 100 feet in area), and remnants of this temple likely still exist.

Handy (1940) described an area above (mauka of) the highway and below the base of the ridge as follows:

Two sizable gulches are included in Niu. They are dry today, but marshy land on the flats above the highway seems to indicate springs or underground flow and the probable presence of terraces in the old days. (Handy 1940:74)

A kuapā (walled, shoreline) fishpond, Kuapapa, once was located at the shoreline; it was filled in and used for residential development in the 1950s.

Burial caves that once held chiefly remains, some in canoes, were reported at Niu, but no specific locations are reported here because they have apparently been looted in the past.

Like other ahupua‘a in Kona Moku, the upland forest in Niu was a reliable source of various native, endemic, and Polynesian-introduced plants. These upland resources provided not only food products—especially when famine struck—but also medicinal plants, wa‘a (canoe) trees, and other needed items (e.g., for religious practices, hula, and so on). High-quality basalt for making tools such as ko‘i (adzes) could also be obtained in the upper forest region. A trail was once located that went all the way up to the Ko‘olau ridgeline. A modern trail in this area may be the old trail, but specific geospatial data are lacking.

Mo‘olelo

Compared with other palena in Kona Moku, there are relatively few mo‘olelo that refer specifically to places in Niu. It is a place briefly mentioned in mo‘olelo as a place famous dieties pass through such as the Legend of Keahia, and Hi‘iaka and Pele. While Niu was once known for its substantial springs or subsurface flow such as Kupapa Fishpond as well as Kalauha‘eha‘e (a site that was once a summer home and royal taro patch of Kamehameha and Queen Ka‘ahumaanu), the general the mo‘olelo that refer to Niu share of a trail or fishing cultivation and resources.

Another version of the previously noted story of traveling mullet of O‘ahu is about the wife of the chief at Lā‘ie who grew sick and begged her husband for some of the sweet mullet of ‘Ewa from her brother Kaihuopala‘ai (the Hawaiian name for the west loch of Pearl Harbor). The husband traveled to ‘Ewa and Kaihuopala‘ai agreed to send fresh ‘ama‘ama (mullet) to his sister. Kaihuopala‘ai told the husband to travel back to Lā‘ie along the Kona coast and the ‘ama‘ama would be sent after him. The husband thought that he meant that he would send a messenger with the fish after him.

When the husband of Kaihukuuna reached **Kapukaki**, (now known as Red Hill), he stopped to rest, anxiously scanning the country behind him to see if he could see the messenger with the fish. He could see no one, and so he hurried on; resting at **Kahauiki** (Fort Shafter), and then at **Kou, Honolulu, Waikiki, Kaalawai**, at each halting place looking backward to discover the bearer of the fresh amaama.

When, finally, he arrived at **Niu** an aged couple who lived near the beach asked the tired wayfarer to stop with them and partake of uwala [sweet potatoes], roasting in an imu [oven]. Glading [sic] accepting their invitation, he was just sitting down to eat when the elemakulekane,--the old man,--looking out at the sea, cried in amazement. The ocean was teeming with fish as far as the eye could see. (Henriques 1916)



The fish followed the husband all the way back to Lā‘ie, and after that followed the same migration in October every year.

In addition to the abundance of fish, Niu is also known for a narrow trail that began at Niu and led through the valley of Kaili‘ili-iki till it went up a Ko‘olau mountain and down into Waimānalo. The Hawaiian Language Newspaper, Ku‘oko‘a printed an article dated February 10, 1922, titled *Loa‘a Kekahi mau Alahele o ka wa Kahiko*, that notes this trail.

It was said that the Hawaiians traveled on this trail from **Waimānalo** to **Niu**, and from **Niu** to **Waimānalo**. The population was large and in these places in centuries past It was about seventy-five years ago that the Hawaiians stopped using this trail . . . they thought that when they got to the top of **Kilohana** the descent would be steep, but when they got up by the mountain trail they found that the ropes they brought were of no use. They said that the other side of the mountain toward Waimanalo was very steep, yet descent was very good and they had no trouble getting down to the ground below. (Ka Nupepa Kuokoa 1922)



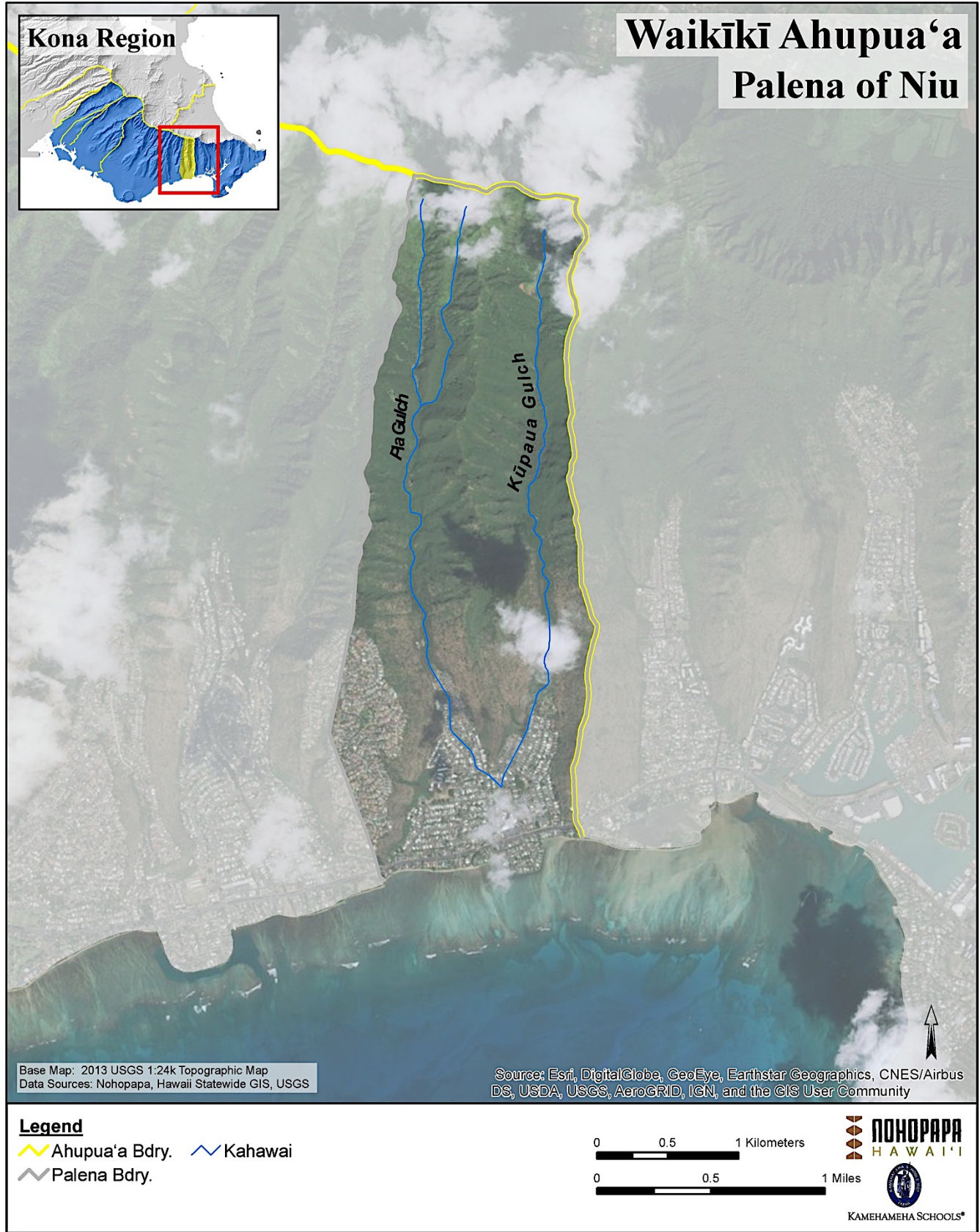
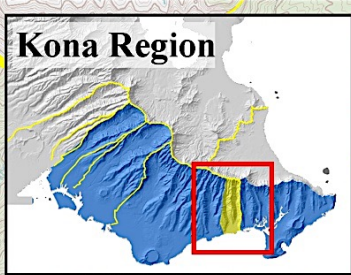


Figure 127. Aerial image of Niu Palena



Waikiki Ahupua'a Palena of Niu



Base Map: 2013 USGS 1:24k Topographic Map
Data Sources: Nohopapa, Hawaii Statewide GIS, USGS

- Legend**
- Ahupua'a Bdry.
 - Palena Bdry.



Figure 128. USGS map of Niu Palena

Table 25. Summary of Selected Wahi Pana in Niu

Wahi Pana	Type	Location/ Place Name	Associated Mo'olelo/ Other Oral History ¹	Current Disposition	Comments ²
Niu Fishery	Near-shore (reef) fishing grounds	Fronting Niu kai and its fishpond (see below)	--	While greatly depleted and altered by modern development, this fishery is still there	--
Loko Kuapapa	Fishpond (kuapā, walled, shoreline type)	Currently residential neighborhood (Niu Iki Circle)	Once part of a large tract of land belonging to Kamehameha I and serving as a summer home, later granted to one Alexander Adams (1848), who had served the King as a seaman	Filled in long ago by development	Reportedly once several acres in area w. a 2,000 ft. long, semi-circular wall; w. some sections of wall as much as 8 ft. wide; made of waterworn basalt
Kūlepeamoā Heiau	Heiau	Base of front (makai) end of Kūlepeamoā Ridge	Place name translates literally as “flapping of chicken”	Remnant portions of this heiau structure are still there	Originally described (in early 1930s) as “120 feet wide and 5 feet high, with the length ranging from 40 to 100 feet. . .”
Burial Caves (Not depicted on map)	Canoe burials of chiefs	Not reported here	Associated with chiefs whose burials were watched over by “devoted guard”	Likely mostly disturbed/altered	McAllister (in 1933) reported “All of the burials have been disturbed and plundered.”

Notes:

¹ References for more information on “Associated mo’olelo/other oral history” are listed in this column, where applicable.

² General references used in compiling information in this table include McAllister (1933), Pukui et al. (1974), Sterling and Summers (1978).

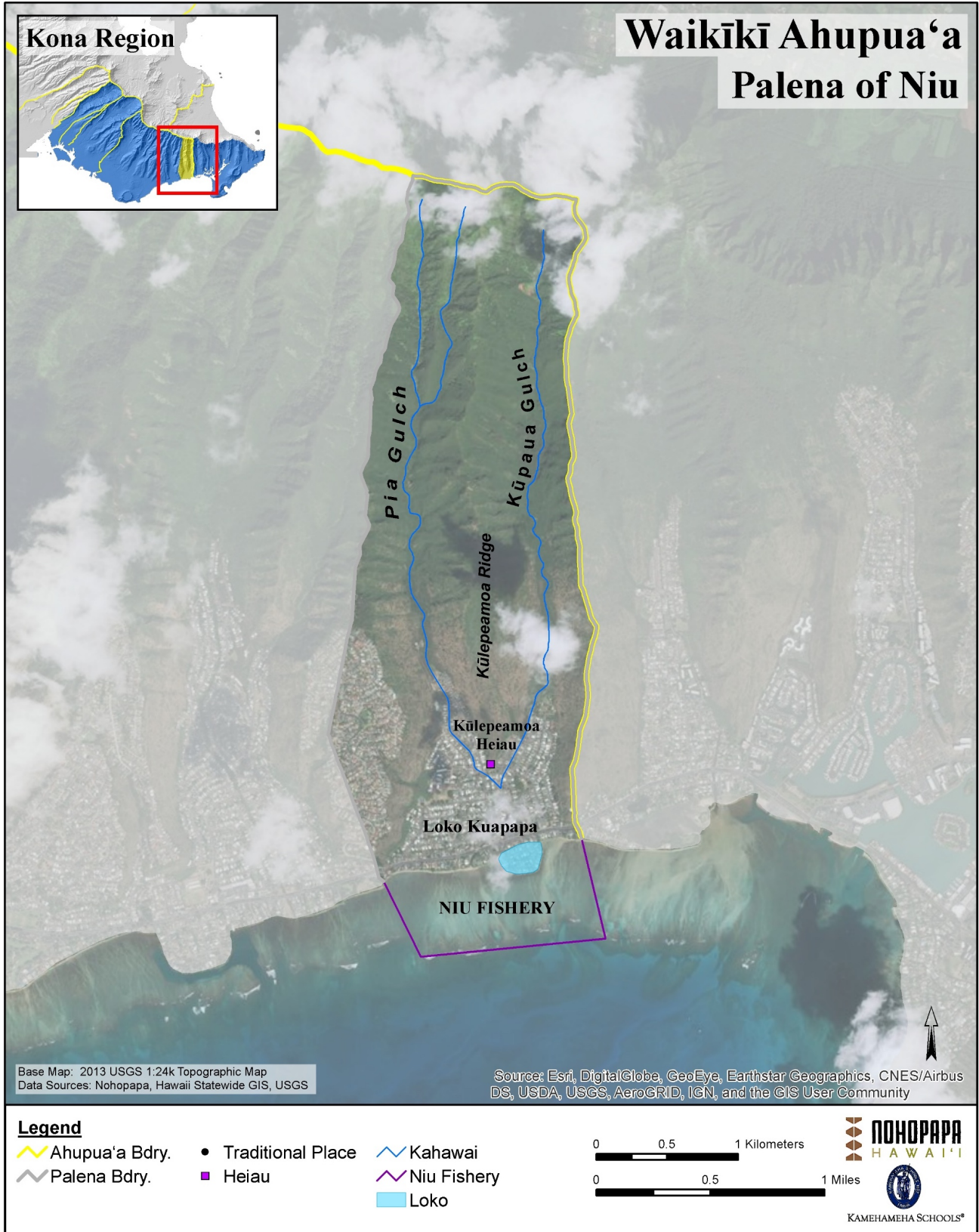


Figure 129. GIS map depiction of significant Hawaiian cultural and natural resources in Niu Palena (Waikiki Ahupua'a)



Figure 130. 1886 photo of horses drinking fresh water from an offshore spring in Niu (Bishop Museum Archives CP705092)



Figure 131. 1925 photo of Kupapa Fishpond (Maunalua.net)



Figure 132. ca. 1897-1901 photo looking towards Lē'ahi (Diamond Head) from Niu (Bishop Museum Archives CP103418)



Figure 133. 1919 photo of Kalanianaʻole Highway near ʻAina Haina and Niu (Bishop Museum Archives SP202198)



Community Groups in Niu

This section provides a summary of the community groups in Niu, including details about their organizational profile, activities and services they provide, target audiences they service, new and existing partnerships, and strengths, opportunities, challenges, and needs of the organization. More specific information on the organizations capacity (such as planning and assessment, staffing, funding and resources, communication, and site access, management, and security) can be found in the table in Appendix D.

Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center

In 2008, the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center (MFHC) was formed to preserve and steward two of the last open freshwater sources of Maunalua - Kalauha'eha'e loko i'a and Kānewai Spring and loko i'a. Their mission is "E ho'ōla kākou i nā loko i'a a Maunalua – let us properly preserve the fishponds of Maunalua for the purpose of cultural and environmental preservation and revitalization for generations to come." MFHC short-term vision for Kalauha'eha'e loko i'a, "Convert the existing right-of-entry to a long-term management lease from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Continue restoration and management of the spring which will continue to restore freshwater to Maunalua Bay, and help to restore ecological balance and revitalization to bring back native limu and fish." Their long-term vision, "Continue restoration and management work, restore the flow of underground water that was cut off during the widening of Kalaniana'ole Highway so this site will be a cultural, natural and educational resource in perpetuity." MFHC short and long-term vision for Kānewai Spring, "Manage the spring as is and continue to educate students and volunteers. Demolish the existing house to build a culturally appropriate structure to serve as an education and heritage center in perpetuity."



Figure 134. MFHC volunteers clearing vegetation at Kalauha'eha'e loko i'a (Photo credit: MFHC)



Figure 135. MFHC volunteers at Kānewai Spring loko i'a (Photo credit: MFHC)

Community Outreach & Survey Results

Organization Profile:

Contact person	Angela Correa-Pei
Address	643 Papahehi Place, Kuli'ou'ou, HI 96821
Phone number	(808) 382-8336
Email	correapei@gmail.com
Website/Social media	http://maunaluafishpond.org https://www.facebook.com/MaunaluaFishpond
Year organization formed	2008
501c3 status	Yes

Services, Target Audiences, & Partnerships:

Sites they mālama	Kalauha'eha'e loko i'a in Niu, O'ahu and Kānewai spring, Kānewai loko i'a in Kuli'ou'ou, O'ahu
Services provided	Community engagement, Cultural development (i.e. cultural activities, crafts, practices), Cultural resource management, Education, Family Engagement, Food production & security, Marine resource management, Natural resource management, Research, Sustainability, and Teacher Professional Development. Specific programs and activities include schools and community groups who come to volunteer and learn about the cultural and natural resources of these sites including the broader area.
Use of place based curriculum?	Yes, maps, mo'olelo, oral histories, research (pictures, videos).
Use of cultural protocols, activities, and practices?	Yes, mele, oli planting, dry stack wall building, mahi'ai (niu, 'uala, native plants).

Public volunteer work days?	Yes, standing community workdays are the third Saturday of the month and other days are scheduled. As a condition of receiving funding from the City & County of Honolulu’s Clean Water and Natural Lands Fund, the City required that our on-site activities be limited to three-times a month and that no more than 30 people are on site at a time. This condition was a result of neighboring private homeowners petitioning the City to deny funding as the neighbors did not want a non-profit community based program in their neighborhood.
Student School groups (& ages) they service	0-4 years (Pre K), 5-8 years (K-3rd grade), 9-13 years (4th-8th grade), 14-18 years (9th-12th grade), 18+ years (Post-secondary)
Community groups they service	Yes, MFHC works with many schools but one regular school is Mālama Honua.
Existing organizational partners	Yes, Mālama Mauanalua, NOAA, Huli, Kaiser High School, Waldorf, Holy Trinity Church, UH - West O’ahu, ‘Iolani School, Paepae o He’eia, and many more.
Organizations wanting to partner with in the future	Yes

Additional Mana‘o: All of the MFHC board member, many of their families have been in Kuli‘ou‘ou and Niu for generations, are forever committed to these wahi pana and the work of their organization.



Additional Resources for Niu Palena

Table 26 is an annotated summary of additional resources for readers who seek additional information regarding the natural and cultural resources of Niu Palena, Waikīki Ahupua‘a.

Table 26. Sample of Resources for Niu Palena*

Author & Year	Title	Summary of Key Content
Handy (1940)	<i>The Hawaiian Planter, Volume 1. His Plants, Methods and Areas of Cultivation</i>	The Hawaiian Planter, Volume 1, published in 1940, catalogued what Handy perceived as Native Hawaiian agricultural traditions defined by Handy as planting and cultivation. Handy identified and discussed the plants raised by Hawaiians, the types of locality and areas in which they were planted, and the different varieties, methods of cultivation, and uses of the plants.
Ishihara et al. (2016)	<i>Archaeological Literature Review and Field Inspection with Cultural Study for the Kalauha‘iha‘i Fishpond Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Niu Ahupua‘a, Honolulu (Kona) District</i>	This Literature Review and Field Inspection report for Kalauha‘iha‘i Fishpond is located along the Niu shoreline. The study includes various ka‘ao, mo‘olelo, traditional and historical accounts, as well as traditional cultural practices also tied to the palena of Kuli‘ou‘ou and Niu.
Maly and Maly (2003)	<i>Ka Hana Lawai‘a a me Nā Ko‘a o Na Kai ‘Ewalu: A History of Fishing Practices and Marine Fisheries of the Hawaiian Islands</i>	This study details archival historical documentary research, and oral history interviews to identify and document, traditional knowledge of Hawaiian fisheries—including those extending from mountain streams to the beaches, estuaries and near-shore, and extending out to the deep sea—and changes in the nature of fishery resources of the Hawaiian Islands as recorded in both written and oral histories. The resources cited in this study were compiled through archival and ethnographic research conducted by Kepā and Onaona Maly over the last 30 years, and from additional research with specific emphasis on fisheries, conducted between August 2002 and May 2003.

* This table does not include general references that apply to all of the ahupua‘a in this study, including Sterling and Summers’ (1978) *Sites of Oahu*, McAllister’s (1933) *Archaeology of Oahu*, and Pukui et al.’s (1974) *Place Names of Hawai‘i*.

*Resources listed in alphabetical order.