



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex

*Planning Update 2, February 2010*



*Aloha*

*This planning update is the second in a series of updates distributed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to keep you informed about the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) and Environmental Assessments (EAs) we are developing for the Keālia Pond and Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuges. This update provides an overview of the results of public scoping. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. See page 4 for my contact information.*

*Mahalo*

*Glynnis Nakai  
Project Leader*

'Alae ke'oke'o / USFWS

## Summary of Public Scoping Efforts to Date

To kick off the planning process for the Kealia Pond and Kakahai‘a Refuges, we mailed approximately 400 copies of Planning Update 1 in November 2009 to the public; local conservation groups; research organizations; local, State, and Federal government agencies; and others who have expressed an interest in the planning process. Planning Update 1 described the Refuges' purposes; draft wildlife, habitat, and public use goals; and preliminary issues to be considered in the CCPs.

### Results of the Public Meetings

Public meetings were held November 4 and 5, 2009, on Moloka‘i in Kaunakakai, and on Maui in Kihei. Eight people attended the Kaunakakai meeting and 16 people attended the Kihei meeting. The

planning team documented and collected public comments at the meetings, explained the CCP process, identified the Refuges' purposes, vision, and management, and described Refuge management issues, concerns, and opportunities acknowledged early in the planning process.

### Public Scoping Comments

We received a total of 14 written responses during public scoping, addressing issues including climate change, habitat management, partners and community, staffing and visitor services, environmental nuisances, research, facility management, and land acquisition. The comments are summarized on page 2. We will consider all comments as we develop the Draft CCPs and EAs.

# Thank You for Participating

*We learned a lot from your comments!*

Most of the comments we received during scoping expressed support for the Refuges, with an interest in addressing the following issues.

## **Kakahai'a Refuge**

### • *Habitat Management*

The need to actively manage habitats on Kakahai'a Refuge was identified in several comments, with the following suggestions for improving wetland habitat: Address restoration of the Old Pond's artesian springs, including using mechanical methods to increase water flow, restore the ancient fish pond, remove silt and invasive plants from the pond, and construct debris basins and/or brush dams upstream from the Refuge; and commit to long-term funding, staffing, and maintenance.

Other comments regarding the pond included: It is a waste of time and money to restore a pond that is not permanent; the pond should be open to the ocean; and restoring the pond would take water away from the Kawela Plantation.

### • *Partners and Community*

We received recommendations to improve communication and coordination among the County, State, and Federal agencies, and were advised that beach erosion may be caused by road crews mining sand from the Refuge. Several people asked what actions the Refuge can take to reduce impacts from flooding in the surrounding communities.

### • *Staff and Visitor Services*

A number of comments identified the need to station a refuge staff member on Moloka'i to learn about the island's resources and people, maintain the Refuge, initiate partnerships for conducting Refuge programs, coordinate with volunteers, and interact with local people. Some commenters would like a boardwalk, observation platform, and other amenities to be developed, similar to Keālia Pond Refuge.

### • *Climate Change*

We received recommendations for both Refuges to conduct an inventory and monitor climate change-related variables and trends, and explore how this data could be incorporated into wildlife management and environmental education on the Refuges.

## **Keālia Pond Refuge**

### • *Environmental Nuisances*

Some Refuge neighbors asked: Can you manage the pond to reduce dust and midge swarms originating on the Refuge? Midge control recommendations included: Request more funding for midge control; purchase and distribute a 3-year supply of methoprene/altosid; determine best practices for managing methoprene/altosid use; and implement back-up plans. Dust mitigation suggestions included implementing the current plan to use three pumps and obtaining a back-up pump.

### • *Research*

A few people asked: What invasive plants and animals occur on the Refuges, how are they impacting waterbird habitat, and what methods can be used to manage them? Recommendations included: Study the entire ecology of the pond, and partner with the University of Hawai'i to model the Refuge's annual and daily lifecycles.

### • *Facility Management*

Comments included: Conduct long-term planning to enable timely application for permits and funding for facilities, sign repairs, and equipment, such as a back-up well pump; and address the proposed north/south bypass road.

### • *Land Acquisition*

Advocates in favor of expanding the Refuge recommended reviewing adjacent parcels of land for sale to determine habitat protection and restoration values, and proposing Refuge expansion in the CCP.

• *Visitor Services and Outreach*  
Suggestions for improving visitor services included: Request a bus stop at the boardwalk; reduce the speed limit on North Kihei Road; plan for boardwalk replacement; and include the status of projects and a section for frequently asked questions on the Refuge's website.



*Hawaiian stilts* / USFWS



*A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper visits Kealia Pond during its migration from Siberia to Australia / © Tom Dove*

## About the CCPs

When Congress amended the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (Act) in 1997 it ratified an underlying philosophy that wildlife comes first on refuges. It also:

- Provided the Service with guidance for managing refuges to ensure the long-term conservation of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.
- Identified six priority wildlife-dependent public uses on refuges—wildlife observation and photography, hunting, fishing, interpretation, and environmental education.
- Strengthened the compatibility determination process used to assure that all activities permitted on a refuge do not conflict with the refuge's purposes and goals.

- Required all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) to be managed in accordance with an approved CCP.

In the Keālia Pond and Kakahai'a Refuges' CCPs we will describe goals, objectives, and management strategies for achieving the Refuges' establishing purposes. We will review the CCPs regularly and update them every 15 years or sooner if necessary. The CCPs will ensure that Refuge management reflects the Refuges' purposes, and the mission, policies, and goals of the Refuge System. Each CCP will also:

- Inform the public about proposed Refuge management actions.
- Provide a vision statement that

describes desired future conditions for the Refuge.

- Ensure that current and future public uses of the Refuge are compatible with its purposes.
- Provide long-term continuity in Refuge management.
- Provide opportunities for public input on management decisions and address public comments.

As we develop the CCPs, we will also be developing environmental assessments that evaluate the consequences of implementing various management alternatives. This analysis will be developed in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

## Planning Schedule

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Planning Update 1 Issued.....                | Completed October 2009  |
| Public Meetings .....                        | Completed November 2009 |
| Planning Update 2 Issued.....                | Completed February 2010 |
| Planning Update 3 Issued.....                | Spring 2010             |
| Public Review/Comment on Draft CCP/EIS ..... | Fall 2010               |
| Final CCP .....                              | Winter 2010             |

### *Tentative Planning Schedule*

Schedule dates are tentative and subject to change as the planning process progresses.



**Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex**  
P.O. Box 1042  
Kīhei, Hawaii 96753

**In This Issue:** A summary of your comments on the Keālia Pond and Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuges is provided.

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## How Do I Contact the Refuges?

For information or to be included on our mailing list contact:

**Glynnis Nakai, Project Leader**  
**Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex**  
P.O. Box 1042  
Kīhei, Hawai‘i 96753

**Phone: 808/875-1582**

**Fax: 808/875-2945**

**E-Mail:**

**FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov**

Please include "Maui NWRC CCP"  
in the subject.

**Find Us On the Web:**

<http://www.fws.gov/kealiapond>

<http://www.fws.gov/kakahaia>

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>

*A rainbow over Kakahai‘a Refuge / © Brigid Malloy*