

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

James Campbell and Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuges

Planning Update 1, November 2008

Four species of endangered waterbirds--including the 'alae 'ula or Hawaiian moorhen--will benefit from the current refuge planning effort / USFWS

Comprehensive Conservation Planning begins at James Campbell and Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuges

Greetings! Over the next year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will be seeking input from the public, interested agencies, the Native Hawaiian community, and organizations regarding concerns, interests, and viewpoints about important refuge management issues. This information will be helpful as we develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and associated Environmental Assessment (EA) for James Campbell and Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuges (refuges).

This is the first in a series of planning updates we will distribute to keep you informed and invite your participation in the planning process.

As we begin the process, we have the opportunity to look at our habitat management and public programs from fresh perspectives. The purposes of the refuges will remain the same as when they were set aside to protect habitat for wildlife and provide wildlife-dependent recreation consistent with wildlife needs. Through the planning process, however, we

will review each of our public programs such as fishing and environmental education; and facility placements such as trails, parking lots, and signs; and our management of wetlands, riparian, and coastal dune habitats.

Your insights and observations are needed to provide a more complete and thoughtful process. Please share your ideas with us by attending upcoming public meetings or by submitting written comments (see page 8 for contact information).

Public Open House Meetings

Your participation is critical to the success of this effort—we want to hear from you!

Two Public Open House Meetings will be held December 9 and 11, 2008, in Pearl City and Kahuku respectively (see page 7 for details).



The ae'o or Hawaiian stilt.



The 'alaie ke'oke'o or Hawaiian coot.



The koloa or Hawaiian duck.

Three of Hawai'i's four endangered waterbirds are pictured above, the Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian coot, and Hawaiian duck. The fourth endangered waterbird, the 'alaie 'ula or Hawaiian moorhen is pictured on page 1. The refuges provide important breeding, feeding, and resting areas for these and other species. Refuge habitat management actions will be developed and analyzed during the CCP planning process / USFWS

Refuge Overview

The Refuges are part of the larger O'ahu National Wildlife Refuge Complex. James Campbell Refuge is located near the northern-most point on the North Shore of O'ahu. It was established in 1976 for the purpose of providing habitat for Hawai'i's four endangered waterbirds: ae'o or Hawaiian stilt, 'alaie ke'oke'o or Hawaiian coot, 'alaie 'ula or Hawaiian moorhen, and koloa or Hawaiian duck. Two wetland units make up the James Campbell Refuge the Ki'i Unit and the Punamano Unit.

The 126 acre Ki'i Unit is a remnant of a much larger marsh system that was altered during the sugar cane era. Seven sugar cane settling ponds are now managed to create mudflat, open water, and emergent marsh for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds and migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

The 134 acre Punamano Unit is a natural spring fed marsh, providing open water and emergent marsh primarily for the Hawaiian coot, Hawaiian moorhen, Hawaiian duck, and also migratory waterfowl.

The James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Act of 2005, Public Law 109-225, further expanded the refuge boundary to approximately 1,100 acres, incorporating additional wetland acreage and the last remaining intact coastal dune system on O'ahu. As funding is made available, the Service will work toward acquiring lands within its boundary.

The purpose of the James Campbell Refuge expansion area is to permanently protect an ecologically intact unit; provide habitat for Hawai'i's migratory shorebirds, waterfowl, seabirds, endangered and native

plants, endangered Hawaiian monk seals ('ilio holo i ka uaua), and green turtles (honu); provide for increased wildlife-dependent public uses; and assist with reducing flood damage to the refuge and local community.

James Campbell Refuge is an important breeding, feeding, and resting area for the Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian coot, and Hawaiian moorhen. The Hawaiian duck is also found here. In addition, the refuge also supports significant numbers of migrating and wintering kioea or bristle-thighed curlews.

James Campbell Refuge provides a strategic landfall for migratory birds coming from Alaska, Siberia, and Asia and also supports other wetland birds such as Northern pintail (koloa mapu), Northern shoveler (koloa moha), lesser scaup, Pacific golden plover (kolea), and ruddy turnstone ('akekeke). Although these migratory populations are small by continental standards, they represent some of the largest concentrations of these species in Hawai'i and the Pacific. A total of 117 species of birds has been documented on the refuge.

The refuge is closed to general public access, however, guided tours and grade school educational programs are offered during the Hawaiian stilt's non-nesting season.

Pearl Harbor Refuge is located on the southern coast of O'ahu and is comprised of three units. Two wetland units, Honouliuli and Waiawa, are located on the shores of Pearl Harbor. Kalaeloa is a coastal upland unit on O'ahu's southwestern point.

The 37-acre Honouliuli Unit and the 25-acre Waiawa Units were established in 1972 to protect and enhance habitat for the endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. Habitats found on these units include open

water, freshwater marsh, mudflat, grassland, and shrubland. They provide important breeding, feeding, and resting area for endangered waterbirds, a variety of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland birds. Some of the more common migrants are Northern pintail and Pacific golden plover. Neither unit is open to the general public, however, a highly successful grade school wetland education program is administered under a special use permit at the Honouliuli Unit.

The 38 acre Kalaeloa Unit was added to Pearl Harbor Refuge in 2001 when the Barbers Point Naval Air Station closed. Kalaeloa was established to protect and enhance the habitat for the endangered plant 'Ewa hinahina.

Located within the arid 'Ewa Plains, Kalaeloa consists of exposed coral shelf, rocky shoreline, and sparse vegetation. This site contains the largest remnant stand of 'Ewa hinahina and a reintroduced population of 'akoko, another endangered plant. Refuge management activities supplement these populations with nursery plantings and exotic plant control. Kalaeloa is also closed to the general public. An active volunteer program administers college level educational programs and habitat restoration activities.

The Kalaeloa Unit also provides a unique microhabitat called anchialine pools or sinkholes. These subterranean, tidally influenced pockets of coastal water without direct physical connection to the ocean support unique insects, plants, and animals, including two imperiled species of native shrimp.

National Wildlife What?

Refuges are places where wildlife comes first. The National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) comprises the world's largest collection of lands set aside specifically for wildlife and provides important habitat for native plants and animals. The Refuge System is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the following mission:

"To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans."

Preliminary Goals

Goals are broad statements intended to provide direction for the future management of the refuges. They are based on the purposes of the refuges, the mission and policies of the National Wildlife Refuge System, input received through this planning process, and the key issues identified as most significant to the refuges. The planning team has developed the following preliminary goals for both refuges and would like your input on them.

- Goal 1. Protect and intensively manage seasonal wetland habitats to meet the life-history needs of endangered waterbirds to promote their recovery as well as other migratory birds.
- Goal 2. Protect and less intensively manage seasonal and semi-permanent wetland habitats to meet the life-history needs of endangered waterbirds to promote their recovery, as well as other migratory birds.
- Goal 3. Protect, manage, and restore coastal coralline plain habitat at the Kalaeloa Unit.
- Goal 4. Acquire, restore, protect, and manage habitats in the James Campbell Refuge expansion area to meet the life-history needs of endangered waterbirds; to promote their recovery; to provide habitat for other migratory birds; and to meet refuge staff facility needs.
- Goal 5. Collect scientific information (inventories, monitoring, and research assessments) necessary to support adaptive management decisions on the refuges in support of Goals 1-4.
- Goal 6. Provide interpretive and educational opportunities for students and teachers to enhance their understanding of the value of the Refuge System and the ecology and management of the refuges.
- Goal 7. Offer visitors opportunities to enjoy, value, learn about, and support the refuges.
- Goal 8. Protect the educational, scientific, and spiritual values of historical and cultural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Preliminary Issues to be Considered

As part of the CCP process, a range of possible alternative management approaches will be explored and evaluated, including current management practices. The effects of the various alternatives on the biological resources

and local communities will be evaluated in an EA in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The planning team has identified some potential issues to be considered. We would like to hear your comments on these

issues, and any other topics of concern, at our public meetings. If you aren't able to attend one of our public meetings, please submit your comments in writing to the refuge (see page 6 for contact information).

Wildlife and Habitat Resources

Refuge management is focused on endangered species, specifically Hawaiian waterbirds and Hawaiian plants. We also consider migratory shorebirds, waterfowl, seabirds, the endemic pueo or Hawaiian short-eared owl, endangered and native plant species, endangered Hawaiian monk seals, threatened green turtles, and unique habitats. Considerable effort is needed to restore and manage habitats for these species.

Pest species compete with native species for food and space or can cause direct mortality. Pest plants like California grass and pest animals such as introduced rats,

Indian mongooses, feral cats, and American bullfrogs all impact native species, especially the endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. An inventory and monitoring plan has not been developed for all resources of concern on the refuges. In addition, baseline surveys of many species and their habitats are lacking due to limited staffing and funding. The lack of data hinders the refuges' ability to respond effectively to resource impacts and to use adaptive management to evaluate the effectiveness of its management practices.

Rapid development along coastal O'ahu is bringing with it a host of issues and problems that have the potential to negatively affect

refuge resources. The Service will work with other agency partners including the State, City, and County governments to provide management recommendations that minimize harmful effects from these development-related issues.

Restoration of new lands being acquired for the James Campbell Refuge will convert existing aquaculture ponds to both moist soil management units and freshwater emergent marsh; remove shrubby vegetation/invasive trees from transition areas; and restore grazed and highly traveled (foot and motor vehicle) dune habitat. Restoration/conversion of these lands will occur after land acquisition and expiration of current leases and will be a logistic and fiscal challenge.

Land Acquisition

The James Campbell Refuge's boundary was expanded from 342 to 1,100 acres, by Public Law 109-225, in May 2006. Lands within the

acquisition boundary have been appraised for purchase. Only partial funding for acquisition is available. Several long term and short term lessees currently occupy the land and will be offered

continuance of leases and relocation assistance. Current lessees conduct a variety of activities, including grazing, ti cultivation, and aquaculture. The shrimp farms and associated roadside food stands are well known locally.

Protection of Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic and cultural sites are known to exist on both James Campbell and Pearl Harbor Refuges. A thorough cultural resource survey needs to be completed for Pearl Harbor Refuge.

Some historic or cultural sites may limit land management activities. Human burials are known to exist in the sand dunes within the proposed acquisition. World War II bunkers are located within the proposed acquisition area and at the Kalaeloa Unit. Protection of these sites from vandals and

looters will be a management concern. Looting of sites at Kalaeloa has already occurred. There are no known cultural practice sites on the refuges. However, a fishing shrine, a Native Hawaiian heiau, and a Native Hawaiian salt gathering site are found adjacent to the James Campbell Refuge.

Visitor Access and Activities

The Service has a strong commitment to allow wildlife-dependent recreational uses on refuges. Wildlife-dependent uses are defined by law and policy as wildlife observation and photography, hunting, fishing, interpretation, and environmental education. James Campbell and Pearl Harbor Refuges are closed to most public uses to protect endangered species and sensitive habitats from human disturbance. However, the Service works with partners to offer opportunities for environmental education on both refuges and limited tours during the Hawaiian stilt non-nesting season at James Campbell. The Service is concerned about balancing visitor

use and wildlife protection. Visitor facilities can be constructed in a manner that prevents disturbance to wildlife and habitat.

Providing wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities on the James Campbell expansion area is one of the area's purposes. Considerable interest exists for fishing, environmental education, interpretation, wildlife observation, and photography. Kahuku High and Intermediate School has indicated an interest in using the refuge as a multidisciplinary environmental education site. This program would also support the Services' Connecting Children with Nature initiative.

The local community has expressed interest in having public

access across the refuge's dunes. A boardwalk trail may be considered in order to allow access to the beach without damaging the dunes. The need may arise to close beaches due to Hawaiian monk seal or green turtle presence, but the Service does not have authority to restrict human use below mean high tide. The Service will need to coordinate with the State of Hawai'i to control/restrict access as needed.

Liability and safety concerns exist for the establishment of roadside pull-offs. The Federal Highways Administration and Hawai'i Department of Transportation would be involved in the design of pull-offs. Development of an observation tower near the Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor Refuge is ongoing in connection with the planning and construction of the Pearl Harbor Historic Trail.

Flooding on James Campbell Refuge and in the local community

Flooding is an issue during high rainfall for both the James Campbell Refuge and local community. Spring floods can drown water-

bird nests and chicks (depending on time of year) and bring in floodwater contaminants and a high sediment load. The local high school, homes, and some businesses flood due to poor drainage. Many believe that much of the

flooding is the responsibility and fault of the refuge. While not true, education is needed to change this perception. Additionally, one of the purposes of the refuge expansion is to assist with the flooding issue in the local area.

Facilities Maintenance

Vehicles and heavy equipment; shop and storage buildings; boundary fencing; weather stations; ditches, dikes, and impoundments; water control structures; and wells and pumps all require maintenance. Due to the environmental conditions (e.g., constant wind containing salt spray and precipitation, warm temperatures, high humidity) associated with this coastal

marine environment, degradation of equipment and facilities is accelerated and often exceeds normally acceptable mainland standards for maintenance costs and schedules. In addition, the distance needed to transport supplies and equipment often adds to the cost of conducting refuge management activities.

The establishment of a visitor contact station and refuge complex office is needed to provide an on-

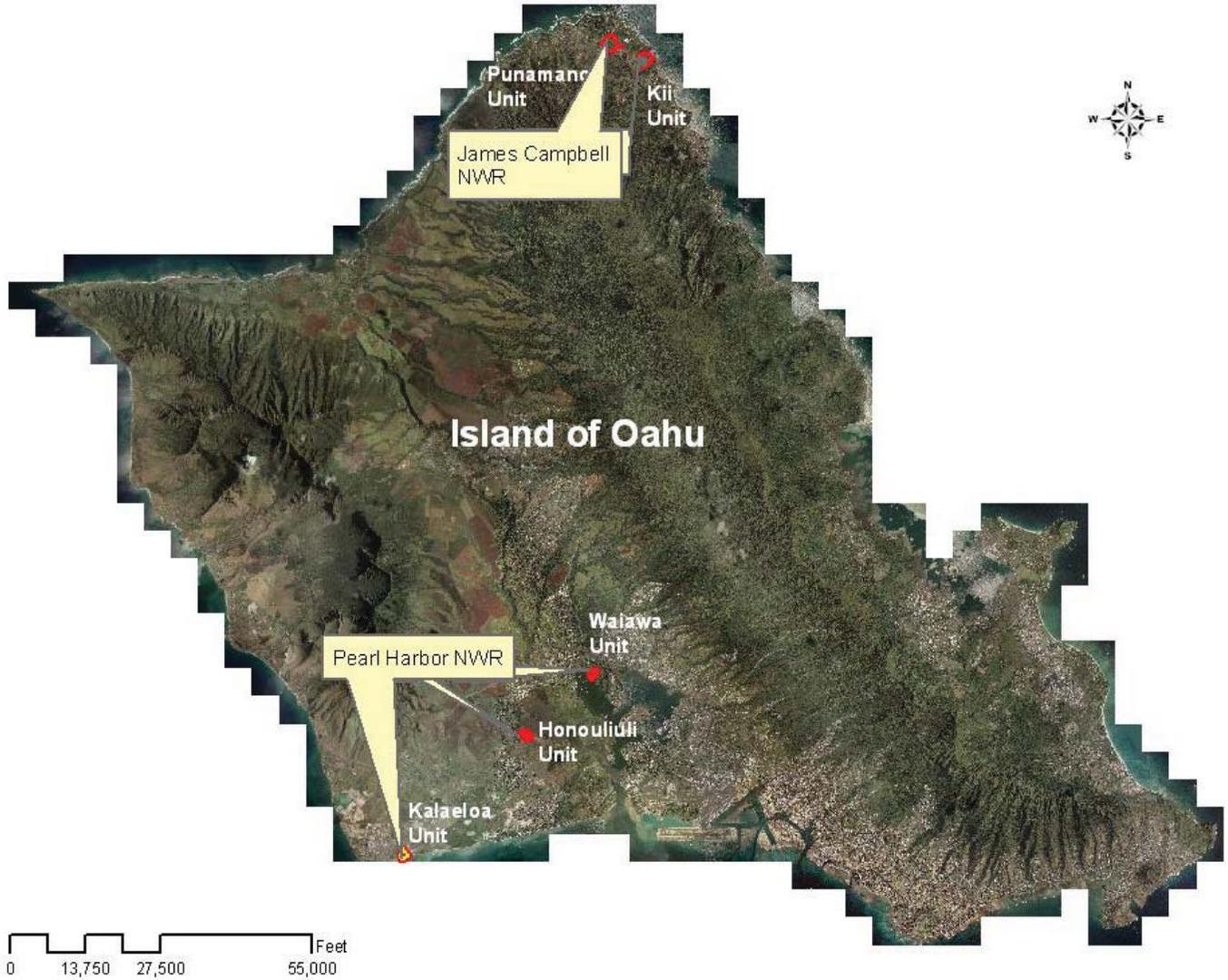
site presence and increased public visitor use opportunities. The current refuge office is located 20 miles from both refuges making it inconvenient for refuge staff to meet with partners, other agency representatives, and refuge visitors. Additionally, the refuge office provides no visitor service facilities (interpretative displays, public restrooms) or opportunities to greet the public. The pending James Campbell acquisition will provide an opportunity to construct visitor facilities and an on-site office building.

Issues Outside the Scope of the CCP

Some of the issues we view as outside the scope of this CCP follow.

- The State of Hawai'i's proposal to purchase Turtle Bay properties.
- Resort and housing development proposals in the vicinity of the refuges.
- Wind power generation.
- Flood control project design.

James Campbell and Pearl Harbor NWRs Unit Locations



Pacific green turtles have been observed using the beaches on James Campbell Refuge / USFWS

You are invited to the first Public Open House Meetings

The first public open house meetings are opportunities for you to help us identify issues to be addressed in the CCP and to have your questions answered about James Campbell and Pearl Harbor Refuges and the CCP planning process. Two open-house style public meetings are scheduled at different locations for your convenience.

Leeward Oahu

Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Time: 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Place: Leeward Community College
96-045 Ala Ike
General Technology Bldg., Room 105
Pearl City, HI

North Shore

Date: Thursday, December 11, 2008

Time: 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Place: Kahuku Community Center
56-576 Kamehameha Highway
Kahuku, HI

Kahuku meeting to be rescheduled.

Planning Schedule

Planning Update 1 issued.....	November 2008
Public Meetings.....	December 2008
Planning Update 2 issued.....	Spring 2009
Planning Update 3 issued.....	Spring 2010
Public Review/Comment on Draft CCP/EIS.....	Spring 2010
Final CCP.....	Winter 2010

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



One of the purposes of the James Campbell expansion area is to permanently protect habitat for endangered species such as the Hawaiian monk seal / USFWS

How Do I Contact the Service or Provide Comments?

We will be documenting verbal comments at the public open house meetings or you can send written comments, ideas, and questions to us via mail, fax, or e-mail using the following information:

Refuge Manager
O'ahu National Wildlife Refuge Complex
66-590 Kamehameha Highway
Hale'iwa, Hawai'i 96712

Phone: (808) 637-6330
Fax: (808) 637-3578

E-mail:
FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov

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



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Ala Moana Boulevard Room 5-231
Box 50167
Honolulu, HI 96850

Change of address requested.

In this issue:

Your comments on the James Campbell and Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuges are requested. What natural resource issues are important to you?

You are also invited to our Public Open House Meetings, scheduled for December 9 and 11, 2008, see details on page 7.