



# Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge Land Protection Planning Study

*Planning Update 1, May 2005*

## Aloha

This is the first in a series of updates provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to share information on a proposal to expand the Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge currently protects coastal cliff and upland habitats. The Service is proposing to expand the Refuge by up to 217 acres. The proposed addition of coastal and wetland habitats, would complement the habitat currently protected by the Refuge.

### How Do I Comment on the Proposal?

Your participation is encouraged throughout the planning process. Contact information is on page 4. The Service would like to receive comments on the information provided in this Update by ~~June 1, 2005.~~

**Comment Period was extended to June 30, 2005.**

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Photo USFWS



*Wildlife habitat along the Kilauea River could be conserved as part of the Kilauea Point Refuge.*

### What is the Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge?

Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) was established in 1985, when the land was transferred from the U.S. Coast Guard to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). The Refuge currently consists of 199 acres of protected land on the northernmost tip of Kauai. The Refuge was established and is managed to provide habitats for a host of increasingly rare Hawaiian wildlife and plant species.

### What is the Land Protection Planning Study?

**The Legislation.** The Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-481) was signed on December 23, 2004. This Act authorized the Service to acquire up to 234 acres of land, in five specific parcels, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. In addition to existing Refuge purposes, the Act states that “the Refuge shall be managed for (1) the protection and recovery of endangered Hawaiian water birds and other endangered birds, including the Nene (Hawaiian goose); and (2) the conservation and management of native coastal strand, riparian, and aquatic biological diversity.” The Act also authorized funding to acquire land and water, and develop, operate, and maintain the Refuge.

**Service Action.** The Service is initiating a study to determine the feasibility and effects of acquiring and managing high quality wetlands and coastal bluff and dune habitats, as additions to the Refuge, and conserving the native wildlife species that occur there.

**The Study Area.** The five parcels specified in the legislation comprise the study area. The study area includes sea bluffs and coastal dunes, the Kilauea River estuary with its unique ecological and biological diversity, and a portion of the River which includes one of the largest waterfalls in the State.



*Nēnē (Hawaiian Geese)*



*Honu (Green Sea Turtle)*



*Koloa Maoli (Hawaiian Duck)*

*Threatened and endangered species, including those pictured, would benefit from protection and management of additional habitat.*

*Photos USFWS*

## What are the Preliminary Alternatives?

One of the primary components of the expansion planning process--described on page 3--is developing Refuge expansion alternatives within the study area. Four preliminary alternatives for the proposed expansion, including a no-action alternative, are provided below for your review and comment. Within the study area, there are approximately 17 acres that do not contain coastal or river habitats. This acreage was excluded from all alternatives.

It is Service policy to acquire land only from landowners who are willing sellers. The legislation stated that “All acquisitions of land or waters under this Act shall be made in a voluntary manner and shall not be the result of forced takings.” Acquisitions are subject to funding availability.

**Under Alternative A**, the No-Action Alternative, the Service would not expand the Kilauea Point Refuge. The No-Action Alternative is the baseline to which the other alternatives are compared.

**Under Alternative B**, the Coastal Alternative, the Service is proposing to expand the Refuge by approximately 52 acres. This alternative proposes acquiring from willing sellers 35 acres of coastal bluff, 5 acres of coastal dune, and 12 acres that include the mouth and estuary of the Kilauea River (see map 1).

**Under Alternative C**, the Riverine Alternative, the Service is proposing to expand the Refuge by approximately 182 acres. This alternative proposes to acquire from willing sellers 165 acres of important lowland habitats that include tidally influenced brackish and freshwater wetlands, and riparian, upland shrub, and forest habitats; 12 acres of coastal river mouth and estuary; and 5 acres of coastal dune (see map 2).

**Under Alternative D**, the Coastal plus Riverine Alternative, the Service is proposing to expand the Refuge by approximately 217 acres. This alternative proposes to acquire from willing sellers the following habitats: 12 acres of coastal river mouth; 165 acres of brackish and freshwater wetlands, riparian, upland shrub, forest, and portions of the Kilauea River; 5 acres of coastal dune; and 35 acres of coastal bluff. Alternative D would protect a variety of habitats ranging from coastal bluffs for nesting seabirds, beach dunes for ‘Ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua (Hawaiian Monk Seals) and Honu (Green Sea Turtles), open water of the Kilauea River, tidally influenced riverine wetlands for four species of endangered wetland birds, and upland shrub and forest for native habitat restoration (see map 3).

## What are the Goals of Conserving the Area’s Wildlife Habitats and What Species would Benefit?

Protection and management of coastal strand, estuary, riparian, and grassland habitats would complement endangered species recovery efforts at Kilauea Point Refuge, and nearby Hanalei Refuge, by providing endangered waterbirds another area for roosting, feeding, and nesting as well as offer public use opportunities.

Wetland habitat in the estuary and adjacent ponds provide habitat for the endangered Nēnē (Hawaiian Goose), Koloa maoli (Hawaiian Duck), ‘Alae ke’oke’o (Hawaiian Coot), ‘Alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Moorhen), and Ae’o (Hawaiian Stilt). —>

Estuary waters support all four species of native stream gobies, along with other native fish, prawns, shrimp, invertebrates, and juveniles of several important recreational and commercial marine fish species.

Coastal bluffs provide nesting habitat for seabirds such as the Mōlī (Laysan Albatross), Ā (Red-footed Booby), Ūa'u kani (Wedge-tailed Shearwater), Koa'e kea (White-tailed Tropic Bird), Koa'e ʻula (Red-tailed Tropic Bird), and resting habitat for the Ā (Brown Booby) and Iwa (Great Frigatebird). Beach dunes provide potential resting habitat for the endangered ʻĪlio-holo-i-ka-uaua (Hawaiian Monk Seal) and threatened Honu (Green Sea Turtle).



*Habitat important to the endangered ʻAlae ʻula (Hawaiian Moorhen) could become part of the Refuge.*

*Photo USFWS.*

## What is the Expansion Planning Process?

The process is carried out as follows.

- The planning process integrates three components—detailed study and planning, extensive public involvement, and environmental compliance.
- The documentation that evolves from the process includes an environmental compliance document, a land protection plan, and a conceptual management plan. The alternatives can range from no Refuge expansion to proposing to include all or part of the study area lands.
- These draft documents are provided to the public for review and comment to ensure the interested public is informed about the Service’s proposal. Your comments are considered as we develop final documents.
- Based on the refuge expansion alternatives presented in the final documents, Service decision-makers will select an alternative for implementation.

Your participation is encouraged through out the process. Now is a good time to get involved because the planning process has just begun.

*If you would like to be added to or deleted from the mailing list for this project, please let us know, contact information is on the last page.*

## What Happens Next?

This Update begins public scoping. Comments received by June 30, 2005, will be considered during development of the draft planning documents. Beginning in June, public comments will be reviewed and the Service will begin drafting an environmental compliance document, a land protection plan, and a conceptual management plan. The availability of the draft documents and public review and comment period, will be announced in future planning updates and news releases. A schedule of key planning steps follows (dates may change):



*Endangered ʻĪlio-holo-i-ka-uaua (Hawaiian monk seals) could use the area’s beach.*

*Photo USFWS.*

### The Planning Process Schedule

Public Scoping begins/Planning Update 1 is issued.....May 2005  
 Public Scoping Comment Period Ends.....June 1, 2005  
 Draft Documents Distributed/Public Comment Period Begins..August 2005  
 Public Comments on Draft Documents are Due.....September 2005  
 Notice of Decision.....December 2005

**Comment Period was extended to June 30, 2005.**



## USE OUR E-MAIL OR WEBSITE

### E-mail Comments to:

***FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov***

(Please use "Kilauea Point  
Refuge" in the subject.)

Refuge Planning Website:

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

## Who Do I Contact?

### Send Comments or Requests for Planning Information to:

Cathy Osugi, Wildlife Biologist  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
911 NE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232  
Phone: (503) 231-6838 or toll free (877) 312-1751  
Fax: (503) 231-6187

**Comment  
Period was  
extended to  
June 30,  
2005.**

### For Information on the National Wildlife Refuge System, contact:

Michael "Mitch" Mitchell, Deputy Project Leader  
Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
PO Box 1128  
Kilauea, HI 96754  
Phone: (808) 828-1413 Fax: (808) 828-6634

### For Information on Land Acquisition, contact:

Georgia Shirilla, Chief, Acquisition Branch  
Division of Realty  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
911 NE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232  
Phone: (503) 231-2236 or toll free (800) 662-8933  
Fax: (503) 231-6161



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service  
Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
PO Box 1128  
Kilauea, HI 96754

*Address correction requested*

In this issue:

Review a proposal  
to expand the  
Kilauea Point  
National Wildlife  
Refuge.

Visit the Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge Website at: <http://pacificislands.fws.gov/wnwr/kauainwrindex.html>