

‘AIEA AHUPUA‘A

Ke Lihau Haaheo Mai la ka Ua i Kula o Aiea *The Cherished Dew in the Rain on the Plain of ‘Aiea*¹⁰

This chapter documents the significant Hawaiian cultural and natural resources in ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a as well as known community groups engaged in education, restoration and other place-based activities in the ahupua‘a. 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 ‘Aiea, both on KS and non-KS land.

Figure 34 and Figure 35 are aerial image and USGS map depictions, respectively, of ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a, which is located between ‘Aiea and Waimalu. Compared with most other ahupua‘a in this study and on O‘ahu, in general, ‘Aiea’s shape and configuration is atypical. Its uppermost point does not reach the ridge line of the Ko‘olau, but is subsumed by the land divisions of Hālawa and Kalauao.

Referring to well-known landmarks such as neighborhoods, roads and other infrastructures, the current (modern) boundaries of ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a are as follows. Starting from the makai end on the Diamond Head (east) side, it begins at a small park fronting Pu‘uloa next to Aloha Stadium (which is in Hālawa), heads northeast (mauka) and crosses several major roadways—including Kamehameha Highway, Moanalua Freeway, and the H-1; it then continues northeast through residential neighborhoods of ‘Aiea Heights, passing by ‘Aiea Intermediate School (which is wholly within ‘Aiea) and through the Camp Smith military base, and then continues northeast (mauka) through undeveloped lands above—and looking down (to the southeast) onto—the H-3 highway. As stated above, the top of the ahupua‘a (at Pu‘u ‘U‘au) does not reach the ridge line of the Ko‘olau, but represents a point at which ‘Aiea, Hālawa and Kalauao all meet. Turning to the southwest (and makai), the boundary of ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a passes through undeveloped forest lands down to the upper limits of the ‘Aiea Heights residential neighborhood, eventually crossing through the campus of ‘Aiea High School, then over the H-1, just past the Alvah A. Scott Elementary School (which is wholly within Kalauao Ahupua‘a), and finally back to Pu‘uloa right next to the McGrew Point residential neighborhood.

Table 7 is a summary of the significant wahi pana in ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a. Figure 36 is a GIS map depiction of ‘Aiea’s wahi pana. The wahi pana in this table are keyed to the map for ease of reference between them. The table (and numbered wahi pana on the map) is organized generally from makai to mauka.

Overview – Hawaiian Cultural Landscape of ‘Aiea

The literal interpretation of ‘Aiea refers to the genus *Nothocestrum* of endemic Hawaiian soft-wooded shrubs and trees (some of which were used for thatching and fire-making). Due to the narrow, steep-sided character of most of its main stream valley, ‘Aiea’s primary traditional settlement and lo‘i kalo area was limited to its lowermost reaches, very close to the shoreline of Pu‘uloa (see Figure 36). One kuapā-type fishpond, Kahakupōhaku, constructed along the boundary with Hālawa, and adjoining Hālawa’s Loko Kailōpā‘ia, had a famous stone built into its wall that divided these two ahupua‘a. A famous pūnāwai (fresh-water spring) named Waila‘a—located near the current post office—fed the lo‘i, along with ‘Aiea Stream (see Figure 36).

Handy (1940:81), describing his direct observations in the 1930s, had this to say about the main lo‘i kalo (irrigated taro gardens) and settlement area of ‘Aiea:

¹⁰ From “Make i Aloha nuiia (One Greatly Loved has Died),” a lamentation for P. Kauhi published in *Nupepa Kuokoa* (June 9, 1866).

The small area of low flatland covered by plantation camp, railroad, etc. below the old highway, was formerly in terraces. According to McAllister . . ., Mathison made the following observations on this region in 1821-22: The adjoining low country is overflowed [flooded by stream and spring water] both naturally and by artificial means, and is well stocked with tarrow plantations, bananas, etc. . . . The land belongs to many different proprietors; and on every estate there is a fishpond surrounded by a stone wall.

The neighborhood of the Pearl River is very extensive, rising backwards with a gentle slope toward the woods, but is without cultivation, except around the outskirts to about half a mile from the water. The country is divided into separate farms or allotments belonging to the chiefs, and enclosed with walls from 4 to 6 feet high, made of a mixture of mud and stone. (bracket added)

Two heiau were known from ‘Aiea, including Keaīwa (currently restored and preserved as part of a well-known state park in the uplands above ‘Aiea Heights), which was known as a training grounds for haumāna (students), their kumu (teachers) and practitioners of lā‘au lapa‘au (traditional Hawaiian medicine). Keaīwa means “mysterious” or even “incomprehensible.” There was another heiau (Kaonohiokala) further down the valley—at the current location of the campus of ‘Aiea Intermediate School, about which little information survives. A sacred stone (Pōhaku o Kī‘i), once located near the intersection of Moanalua Road and Nalopaka Place—just inside the boundary with Kalauao—was moved about 25 year ago to the current location of the U.S. Post Office in ‘Aiea.

Like most of the other ahupua‘a in the moku of ‘Ewa, ‘Aiea’s uplands once provided abundant resources including a variety of native, endemic, and Polynesian-introduced plants, as well as pōhaku suitable for making ko‘i (adzes) and other implements.

Mo‘olelo (Oral-Historical References)

Compared with other ahupua‘a in ‘Ewa Moku, there are relatively few mo‘olelo that refer specifically to places in ‘Aiea.

Kamakau (1961:169) mentions ‘Aiea in the context of a great battle fought on December 12, 1794, which was part of Kamehameha’s victory over Maui’s (then) control of O‘ahu:

. . . a great battle was fought on the ground of Ka-lani-manuia between Kalauao and ‘Aiea in ‘Ewa. The heights of Kuamo‘o, Kalauao, and ‘Aiea were held by the right wing of Ka-lani-ku-pule’s forces commanded by a warrior named Koa-lau-lani. . . Ka-lani-ku-pule himself with the main army held the middle ground between ‘Aiea and the taro patches.

The most extensive oral-historical information that specifically relates to ‘Aiea deals with Keaīwa Heiau, which may have also been known as “Heiau Hoola,” or “Healing or Life Giving Heiau” (Sterling and Summers 1978:11). This information, and the selection below, was published by Clarice B. Taylor in the 1950s; she got her information from several reliable sources, including Mary Kawena Pukui and Anne Peleioholani Hall. Taylor wrote this entry entitled “Keaiwa Heiau, the Medical School.”

At the time the Keaiwa heiau at the top of Aiea Heights was discovered in 1951 to be the ruins of an ancient medical center, few Hawaiians knew of its ancient usage.

Eminent anthropologists acknowledged that they had never heard of such centers but were convinced when several Hawaiians independently told of them.



In telling of these centers, Mrs. Mary Kawena Pukui, associate in Hawaiian culture at the Bishop Museum, translated the name Ke-a-iwa as “Incomprehensible.”

The thought being that no one could explain the powers of the priests or the herbs used in healing.

She said Ke-a-iwa came from an obsolete word aiwa-iwa which means the mysterious or the incomprehensible.

Further confirmation of the use of Ke-a-iwa has lately been given to me by Paul Keliikoa, a Hawaiian living in Aiea.

Mr. Keliikoa has the story from his grandmother Kamoekai.

In her day Ke-a-iwa was interpreted as “a period of fasting and meditation” and the heiau was so named because novitiates in the art of healing spent long hours in fasting, praying and meditation.

Kamoekai also told her grandson that the very young were taken to Ke-a-iwa to be trained as kahuna lapaau. There they were taught the prayers needed to compound medicines and heal the sick.

They cared for the great herb gardens which lay beyond the heiau walls.

After the novice learned his first steps in the art of the kahuna lapaau, he was sent out to other medicinal centers to learn the advanced art of diagnosis and other treatments.

Mr. Keliikoa’s interpretation of the name means a change in the pronunciation. Not Ke-a-iwa, but Ke-ai-wa.

Ke-ai is the Hawaiian word for fasting.

(Clarice B. Taylor, “Tales About Hawaii,” *The Saturday Star-Bulletin*, February 28, 1959)

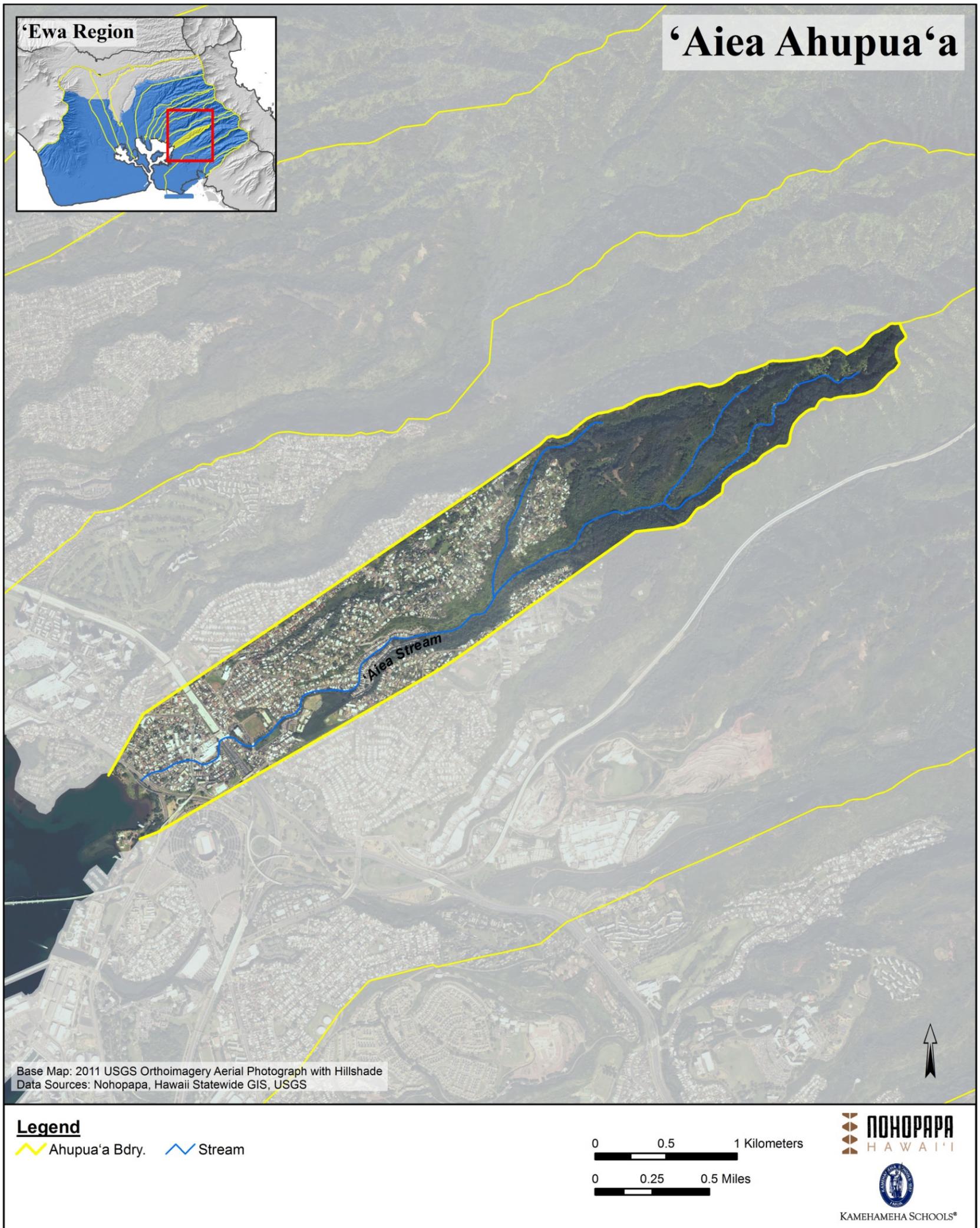


Figure 34. Aerial image of 'Aiea Ahupua'a

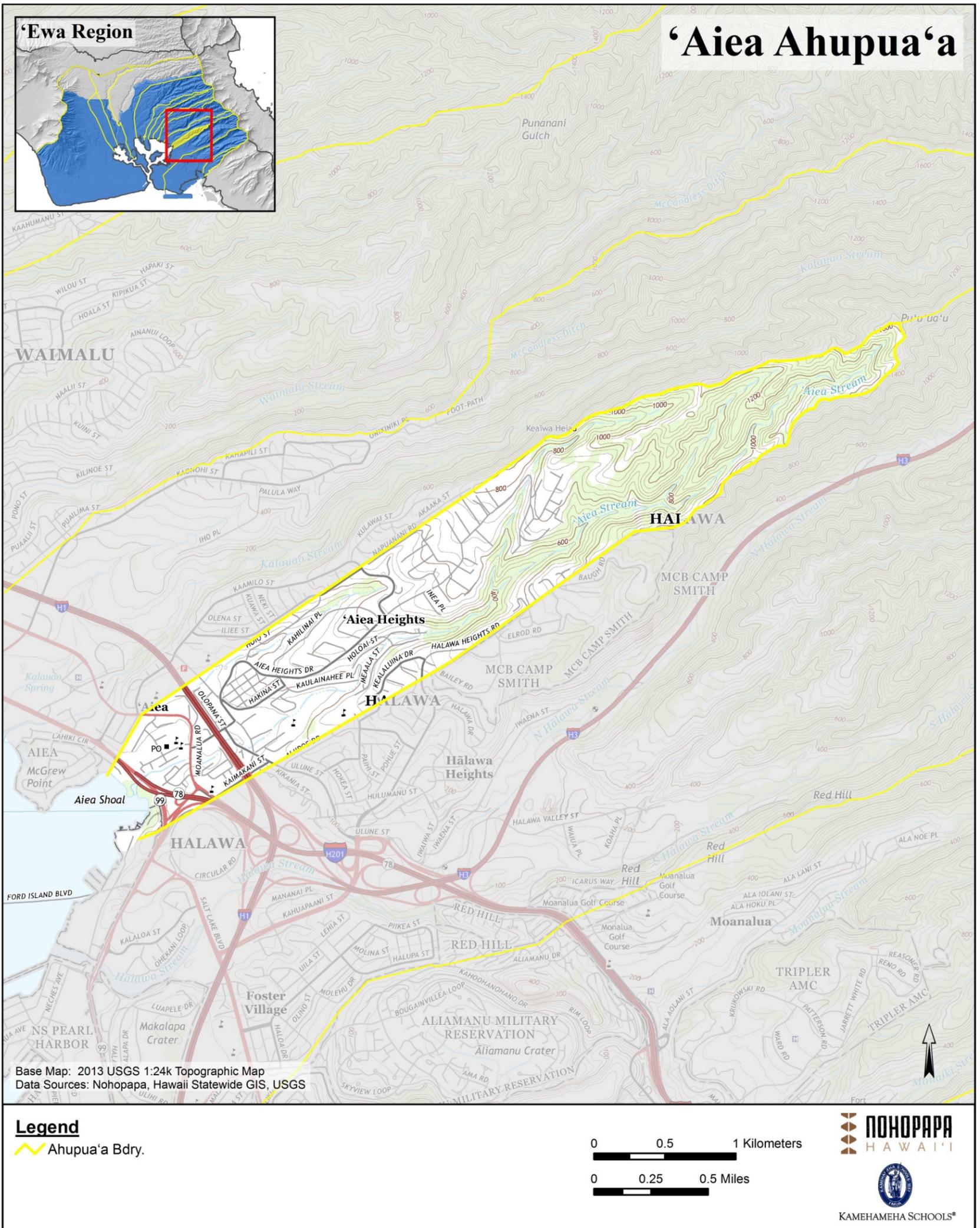


Figure 35. USGS map of 'Aiea Ahupua'a

Table 7. Summary of Selected Wahi Pana in ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a

| Wahi Pana ¹ | Type | Location/ Place Name | Associated Mo‘olelo/ Other Oral History ² | Current Disposition | Comments ³ |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| Loko Kahakupōhaku (1)* | Fishpond (Kuapā type) | Near Hālawa boundary (loko abuts Kailōpā‘ia fishpond in Hālawa) | There was once a large stone in the wall separating Kahakupōhaku from Kailōpā‘ia fishpond (in Hālawa); stone marked the boundary between the two ahupua‘a | Filled in (destroyed) by urban development many years ago | Described in early 1930s* as “small pond of 3 acres with a semicircular wall of evenly spaced basalt 1050 feet long, 5 feet wide, 3.5 feet high, without outlet gates (makaha)”; alternative spellings include Kahakapōhaku, Kakupōhaku & Kakupōkaku |
| ‘Aiea Stream Lo‘i & Settlement Area (2) | Lo‘i kalo (irrigated taro) & House sites | ‘Aiea kai – mouth ‘Aiea Stream (makai side of Moanalua Rd.) | -- | Filled in (destroyed) by urban development | -- |
| Waiola‘a (3)** | Pūnāwai (fresh water spring) | Current location of ‘Aiea Post Office | Purportedly reserved for royalty in old times | Filled in (destroyed) by urban development | Also called a “sacred pond” in some documents; Pōhaku o Ki‘i was moved here (between 2 palms at ‘Aiea Post Office) in 1994 |
| Pōhaku o Kii (or Ki‘i) (4)** | Sacred stone | Original location near intersection of Moanalua Rd. & Nalopaka Place | -- | This stone was moved in 1994 to the post office (location of Waiola‘a) | -- |
| Kaonohiokala Heiau (5) | Heiau | Currently the ground of ‘Aiea Intermediate School | Ka‘onohiokala described by Kamakau (in <i>Ka Po‘e Kahiko</i> , The People of Old) as a personal god of a famous prophet (kāula) named Kapihe | Presumably destroyed a long time ago | Also Ka‘onohiokala |

| Wahi Pana ¹ | Type | Location/ Place Name | Associated Mo'olelo/ Other Oral History ² | Current Disposition | Comments ³ |
|------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Pōhaku'ume'ume (6) | Natural rock outcrop (hill, elev. 600 ft.) | Ridge line between Hālawa and 'Aiea Ahupua'a | Moku'ume'ume ("Ford Island"); legendary rock identified in Boundary Commission documents | Probably destroyed – current location of a large water tank | Given its name, a possible fish-spotting location, viewing down to Moku'ume'ume |
| Po'ohōlua (7) | Natural feature (hill or ridgetop, elev. 900 ft.) | Ridge line between Hālawa and 'Aiea Ahupua'a | -- | Natural feature in undeveloped area – presumably still intact | -- |
| Kaula'ināhe'e (8) | Natural feature (hill or ridgetop, elev. 1,000 ft.) | Ridge line between Hālawa and 'Aiea Ahupua'a | -- | Natural feature in undeveloped area – presumably still intact | Literally "dry the octopi" |
| Keaīwa Heiau (9) | Heiau – possibly dedicated as a traditional school of Hawaiian medicine | Mauka lands (elev. approx. 900 ft) above current upper limits of 'Aiea Heights residential neighborhoods | Kahuna named Keaīwa (see Comments); said also to have been built in the time of Kākuhihewa (16 th -17 th century ruler of O'ahu); young people would be taken here for training as "kahuna lapaau" | This restored and preserved heiau is part of Keaīwa Heiau State Park | According to Pukui et al. (1974:101), Keaīwa means "the mystery (said to be the name of an early priest and to refer to his mysterious healing powers)"; Pukui has also suggested the translation "the incomprehensible" |
| Kealakaha (10) | Natural rock outcrop (hill or ridgetop, elev. 900 ft.) | Along boundary ridge line with 'Aiea Ahupua'a | -- | Natural feature in undeveloped area – presumably still intact | Literally "the turning road" |
| Nahuina (11) | Natural feature (hill or ridgetop, elev. 1,240 ft.) | Along boundary ridge line with 'Aiea Ahupua'a | -- | -- | -- |
| Aiwahine (12) | Natural feature (hill or ridgetop, elev. 1,400 ft.) | Ridge line between Hālawa and 'Aiea Ahupua'a | -- | Natural feature in undeveloped area – presumably still intact | -- |

| Wahi Pana ¹ | Type | Location/ Place Name | Associated Mo'olelo/ Other Oral History ² | Current Disposition | Comments ³ |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pu'u 'Ua'u (13) | Natural feature (hill or ridgetop, elev. 1,600 ft.) | Point along ridge lines where boundaries for 'Aiea, Kalauao & Hālawa meet | -- | Natural feature in undeveloped area – presumably still intact | Hill named for the 'ua'a (dark-rumped petrel), a seabird that flies inland to nest; is an 'aumākua (deified ancestor or family god) to some; and a favored food often reserved for the ali'i (Genz et al. 2010) |

Notes:

¹ Wahi pana in this column are keyed to the cultural and natural resources map on the next page. For each wahi pana, the number in parentheses is included on the map below in red.

² References for more information on "Associated mo'olelo/other oral history" are listed in this column, where applicable.

³ General references used in compiling information in this table include McAllister (1933), Pukui et al. (1974), Sterling and Summers (1978).

* Unless indicated otherwise, all of the quoted descriptions about fishponds come from McAllister (1933).

** Information on these two wahi pana, and map locations, come from oral history recounted by John Ka'imikaua, collected in 1994 by Nathan Nāpoka (reported in Cruz et al. 2010, but no specific reference is cited by Nāpoka's report).



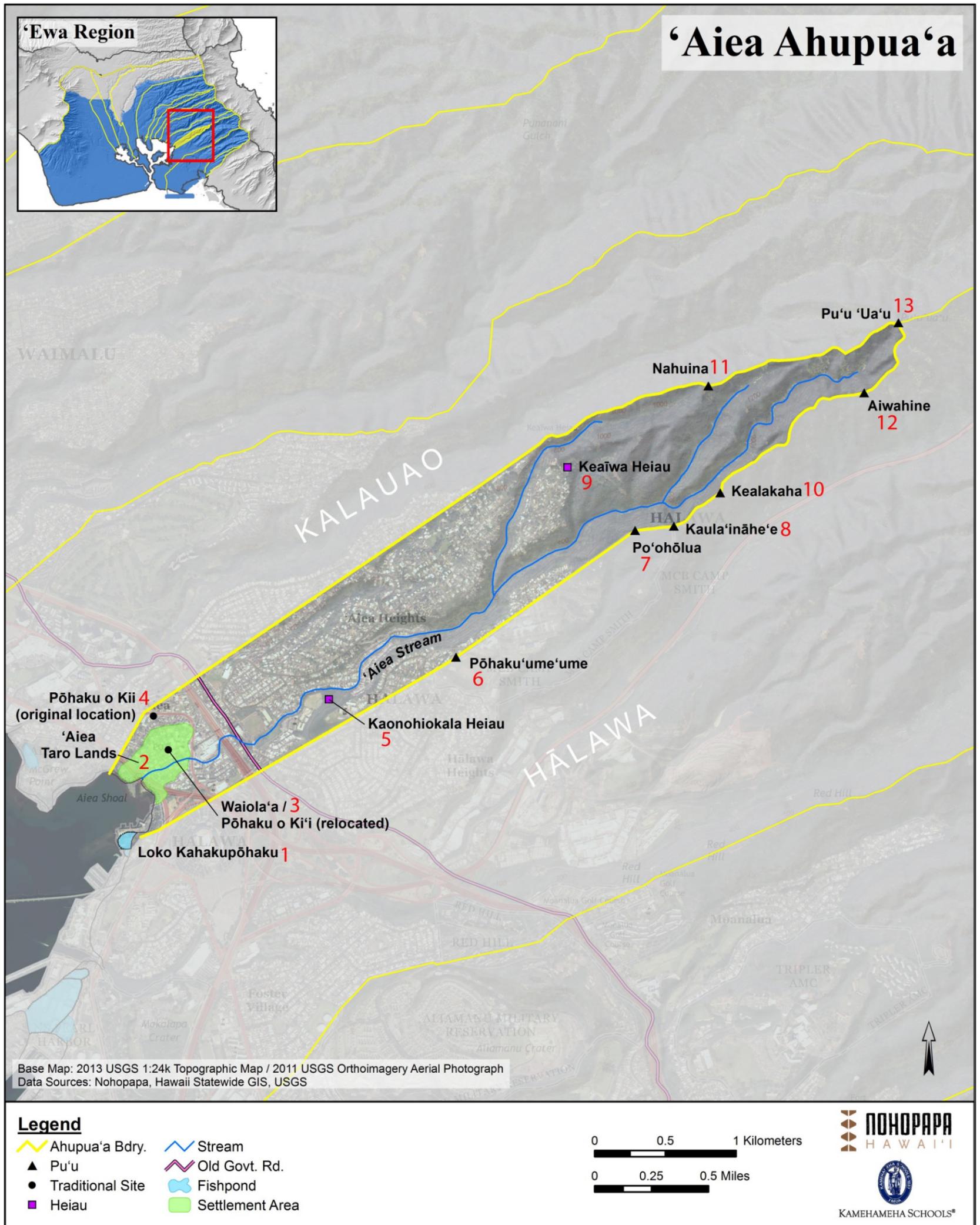


Figure 36. GIS map depiction of significant Hawaiian cultural and natural resources in 'Aiea Ahupua'a



Figure 37. 1932 photo of 'Aiea Sugar Mill with fields spanning 'Aiea, Kalauao, and Waimalu Ahupua'a (Hawai'i State Archives, reprinted in Scott 1968:822).

Community Groups in ‘Aiea

This section provides a brief summary of two community groups in ‘Aiea.

Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club

The Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1963 and continues to be a very active in the community today. The club currently volunteers with organizations such as the Aloha Festivals, Friends of the Royal Hawaiian Band, Great Aloha Run, Hawai‘i Maoli, Hawai‘i Youth Opera Chorus, Historic Washington Place, Kawaiaha‘o Church, Loko Ea Fishpond, Mauna ‘Ala, Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame, and National and International Conventions that come to Hawai‘i. Members of the Club put on demonstrations of the art of coconut weaving, lei making, poi pounding, tapa, and feather lei making at the Conventions they attend.

The Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club did not participate in the community outreach efforts, but their organizational contact information is below.

Organization Profile:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Contact person | Toni Lee and Charlie Kapua |
| Address | P.O. Box 66, Aiea, Hawaii 96701 |
| Phone number | 808-479-3263 |
| Email | pearlharborhawaiian@gmail.com |
| Website/Social media | phhcc.weebly.com |
| Year organization formed | 1963 |
| 501c3 status | Yes |



Figure 38. PHHCC members honoring our Ali'i by cleaning Mauna 'Ala (photo credit: Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club).



Figure 39. PHHCC members welcome the Hōkūle'a to Pu'uloa in February 2018 (photo credit: Hawai'i Peace and Justice).

Pa'i Foundation

The PA'I Foundation was founded in 2001. It is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit arm of Pua Ali'i 'Ilima, a hālau hula founded in 1977 by kumu hula, Victoria Holt Takamine. The foundation was established to serve the needs of the Native Hawaiian community and provide educational outreach programs on Hawaiian culture and advocates for the protection of native rights and natural and cultural resources. The geographic reach of PA'I Foundation programming is primarily Hawai'i, but the Foundation also reaches audiences in the continental United States and internationally. The mission of the Foundation is to preserve and perpetuate Native Hawaiian arts and culture for future generations.

In the mid-2000's PA'I established a five-year curator agreement with the DLNR, State Parks Division to oversee the protection and restoration of Kea'iwa Heiau, a recognized traditional cultural property. Plans included the development of a restoration plan for the historic property and the surrounding area of the state park. It is unclear if the restoration plan was ever completed.

The PA'I Foundation did not participate in the community outreach efforts, but their organizational contact information is below.

Organization Profile:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Contact person | Vicky Holt Takamine |
| Address | 904 Kohou Street, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96817 |
| Phone number | 808-844-2001 |
| Email | info@paifoundation.org |
| Website/Social media | www.paifoundation.org |
| Year organization formed | 2001 |
| 501c3 status | Yes |



Figure 40. Keaīwa Heiau in the uplands of 'Aiea (photo credit: State Parks Division).

Additional Resources for ‘Aiea

Table 8 is an annotated summary of additional resources for readers looking for more details on the natural and cultural resources of ‘Aiea.

Table 8. Sample of Resources for ‘Aiea Ahupua‘a

| Author & Year | Title | Summary of Key Content |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Maly and Maly (2012) | He Mo‘olelo ‘Āina – Traditions and Storied Places in the District of ‘Ewa and Moanalua (in the District of Kona), Island of O‘ahu: A Traditional Cultural Properties Study | Wide range of historical literature including primary Hawaiian language resources; writings of early residents, some pertaining to Kalauao; documentation of native lore, land tenure (1848-1920s), surveys (1850-1930s), testimonies of witnesses before the Boundary Commission (ca. 1860s-1920s), records of land conveyances, and historical narratives describing the land and people spanning the period from the late 1700s to the 1920s. This 874-page monograph is a searchable pdf |

