

Management Plan Review

Extending the Sanctuary to include all of Hā'ena Ahupua'a, Kaua'i



Photo: Ed Lyman

Threats to species and habitats in Hā'ena

ʻĪlioholoikauaua (Hawaiian monk seals), found in the area between Hā'ena and Kailiū Points, are listed as an endangered species, with only 1,200 individuals worldwide. Threats to their population include bycatch and entanglement in marine debris and declining fish populations on which they prey.

As recognized by the state bill establishing the community-based subsistence fishing area, fish populations have declined around Hā'ena as a result of increased tourism and detrimental fishing practices.

Aligning with traditional management practices: ridge to reef resource conservation

On the north shore of Kaua'i, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (sanctuary) currently reaches from the eastern edge of Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge to Hā'ena Point, bisecting the ahupua'a (district) of Hā'ena.

In 2006, a Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) was established in Hā'ena, for the management of marine resources through traditional fishing practices.

Extending the western boundary to Kē'ē Beach to include all of Hā'ena ahupua'a would allow the sanctuary to better align with traditional management practices such as these.

Cultural significance in Hā'ena ahupua'a

Archeological records indicate that Hawaiians settled in Hā'ena as early as 1000 A.D. Lo'i (taro patches), imu (underground ovens), heiau (shrines) and burial sites all indicate a robust Hawaiian settlement in the area. Hā'ena Beach Park was once host to hukilau (traditional Hawaiian net fishing) and was called Maninihola for its abundance of manini.

A traditional fishpond, called Nai'a, now inactive was located in the ahupua'a. Several heiau were constructed in Hā'ena, including a heiau to Laka, the goddess of hula, which is located just inland of Kē'ē.

Kē'ē Beach marks the head of the Kalalau Trail, first built by the Hawaiian Government around 1860 to connect the isolated valley settlements. It allowed for trade of commodities such as oranges, taro and coffee between the ahupua'a of Hā'ena, Hanaka'ia, Hanakoa and Kalalau.

Surfing, an important cultural activity, is practiced at several breaks in Hā'ena, such as Tunnels, Cannons and Bobo's.

Biological significance in Kē'ē

The protected lagoon and reef off Kē'ē Beach support marine life from juvenile fish to endangered monk seals. While Kē'ē reef hosts a lesser diversity of species than neighboring Hanalei Bay, the abundance of small fish found in the lagoon indicate that it provides necessary habitat for juvenile fish. Two endemic wrasse species, hinalae lau-wili and 'ōmaka, as well as manini (convict tang), are the most abundant species on the reef. The inner lagoon protected by the reef provides good grazing habitat for surgeonfish. ʻĪlioholoikauaua (Hawaiian monk seals) have been sighted in the area between Hā'ena Point and Kailiū Point.



Photo: © Jason Wainman

A Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area encompassing the waters up to one mile off Hā'ena ahupua'a, was established in 2006 to address declining fish populations with traditional management practices.

What are the sanctuary boundaries in Hā'ena?

The current sanctuary boundary, on the north shore of Kaua'i, extends from Kaili Point eastward to Mōkōlea Point and out to the 100-fathom (600 ft.) isobath. The western boundary of the sanctuary on the north shore of Kaua'i intersects the Hā'ena ahupua'a just over one mile east of the western boundary of the ahupua'a.

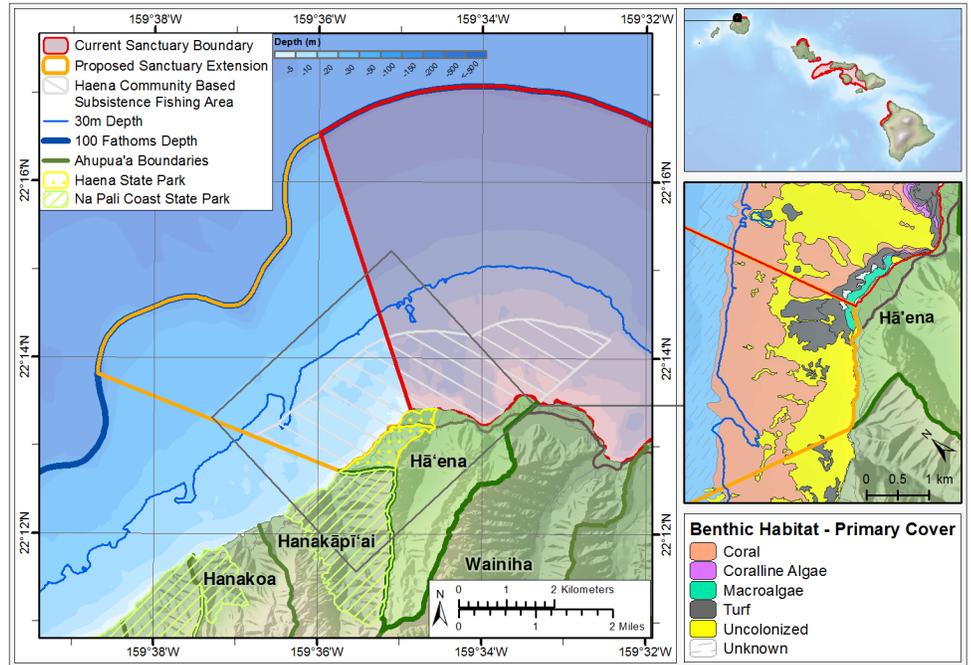
The sanctuary proposes to extend the western boundary of the sanctuary to Kē'ē Beach to include the full Hā'ena ahupua'a. By integrating this traditional land division into sanctuary management, the sanctuary is recognizing the natural contours of the land and the interrelationship between land and sea to effectively manage resources from the ridge to the reef.

Extending the sanctuary boundary to align with the ahupua'a boundary would establish a precedent for future sanctuary boundary changes. Since the original sanctuary boundaries were established to protect humpback whales and their habitat, only some of the current sanctuary boundaries currently align with traditional ahupua'a boundaries. The boundary adjustment would also make the sanctuary consistent with the boundary of the Hā'ena CBSFA. The total area of the proposed boundary expansion would be approximately eight square miles.



Photo: Ray Boland

At the edge of the steep bluffs of the Nā Pali Coast, Kē'ē reef and lagoon were once the site of hukilau (traditional Hawaiian net fishing).



Proposed boundary adjustment in Hā'ena.

How will the sanctuary's proposed plan affect Hā'ena?

Inclusion in the sanctuary could have a beneficial impact on the biological resources in the area, including monk seals, humpback whales and coral reef habitat, among others, through the sanctuary's expanded management scope, which will include a greater variety of biological resources within the sanctuary for consideration in research, monitoring and protection.

The cultural resources, including surf breaks and the lagoon in which hukilau was traditionally practiced, could benefit from inclusion through the sanctuary's commitment to perpetuating cultural heritage. The sanctuary could also support efforts of the CBSFA to manage resources through traditional fishing practices.

Will new regulations be introduced?

New and revised sanctuary-wide regulations will apply in existing sanctuary areas as well as in proposed boundary additions. A boundary adjustment is proposed for Hā'ena in the figure above.

How will sanctuary regulations change?

The revisions to the current sanctuary-wide regulations, proposed under Alternative 2, 3 and 4, would:

- (1) Clarify humpback whale approach regulation;
- (2) Combine the two regulations prohibiting the taking and possession of humpback whales into one regulation;
- (3) Remove the prohibition against discharge in the sanctuary;
- (4) Remove the prohibition against discharging from outside the sanctuary anything that enters and injures a sanctuary resource;
- (5) Remove the prohibition on altering submerged lands;
- (6) Add the authority to issue sanctuary permits and authorizations; and
- (7) Add sanctuary-wide regulations prohibiting the disturbance of submerged cultural and maritime heritage resources.