



RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF A HISTORIC TRAIL IN EWA.

WHEREAS, ranching and horseback transportation are an indelible part of Hawaii's Paniolo culture and early Hawaiian Kingdom history, with ranches being the original Western economic settlement of the Ewa Plains served by a trans Ewa Plains horse trail network identified as the Malden Trail in 1825 by British surveyors; and

WHEREAS, prior to development of Ewa Mooring Mast Field in 1925 as a naval airship mooring site, surveyor photos show the area to have an extensive limestone karst sinkhole landscape with early trails used by the local population on foot and horseback; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Plains are a massive ancient coral reef where, deep underneath the surface, ocean meets mountain streams to spawn freshwater shrimp and one of the world's most diverse limu populations resulting in the need for Hawaiian trails, and these trails were later used as horse and pack animal trails after the arrival of Western immigrants to the Hawaiian Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, military maps exist of the horse trails of the former Marine Corps Air Station ("MCAS") Ewa area going back to the 1950s which validate that these trails are over 50 years old and eligible for the National Historic Register as historic trails; and

WHEREAS, these trails link up with the over 100 year old Oahu Railway and the Pearl Harbor Historic Trail plan that proceeds from Pearl Harbor to Nanakuli with the proposed Historic-Cultural Ewa Plains Eco-Trail System being at the very center of this major trail plan; and

WHEREAS, one of the main reasons for the designated horse trails was the existence of numerous karst sinkholes in the former MCAS Ewa area that have never been scientifically mapped and documented and should become an important feature of an Historic-Cultural Ewa Plains Eco-Trail System in Kalaeloa; and

WHEREAS, the early Ewa Field United States Marine Corps ("USMC") Command History noted that there were sinkholes as large as railway boxcars, with reports of military bulldozers falling into large sinkholes, indicating that more large underground caverns remain to be discovered; and

WHEREAS, another feature of these trails could be these ancient karst sinkholes, which could be restored by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service in a manner similar to those near Barber's Point lighthouse, with informative signage



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explaining the ancient reef of Ewa Plains and how mountain water and ocean tides mix to create and sustain marine life and food sources such as freshwater shrimp and limu; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa community already has highly qualified Hawaiian cultural practitioners able to teach the public, and especially school children, the story of the Ewa Plains as the "House of Limu" with the great varieties of gastronomic and medicinal limu; and

WHEREAS, these cultural historic eco trails will be a complete recreational and educational experience of walking, biking or horseback riding around a circuit of trails abutting native plants and marine life and telling Hawaiian cultural histories, geological histories, December 7 battlefield and WW-II era histories of MCAS Ewa; and

WHEREAS, this will be a community supported endeavor bringing together Hawaiian cultural experts, military historians, educators, scientists and environmental and veteran organizations in a positive, holistic concept for preservation, education and restoration; and

WHEREAS, recreational trails could qualify for federal Recreational Trails Program funding, as well as STP Flexible, Transportation Enhancement, and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program funding and could be consistent with the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, federal programs such as the National Park Service Battlefield Protection Program have grants and funds to develop the Ewa Field battlefield; and

WHEREAS, federal programs such as the United States Fish & Wildlife Service have programs to restore some of the more important Ewa Plains karst sinkholes; and

WHEREAS, there are many interested individuals from veterans organizations; Hawaiian cultural organizations; ecological and environmental organizations; equestrian clubs and groups; biking, jogging and running clubs; and schools, colleges and universities that could benefit from such a multi-faceted recreational, cultural and historical experience; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it supports the establishment and designation of a historic trail in Ewa that would include the preservation of ecological and cultural history of the region and allow access for recreational and educational activity; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration, the State, and the United States government are urged to participate in the development and establishment of the historic trail in Ewa; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Governor, the President of the United States, the Commander of United States Pacific Command, the Hawaii Community Development Authority, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and Hunt Companies, Inc., 4401 North Mesa, El Paso, Texas 79902-1107.

INTRODUCED BY:

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers