



RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE RECOGNITION AND PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORIC TRAILS OF THE EWA PLAINS

WHEREAS, the trails in the Ewa Plains area later known as MCAS Ewa and NAS Barbers Point, and today called Kalaeloa as administered by HCDA, are part of the greater Ewa Plains of West Oahu; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Plains is a massive ancient karst coral reef where ocean meets mountain streams and fresh rain water percolates through porous 100,000 year old coral to spawn freshwater shrimp and one of Hawaii's most diverse limu varieties; and

WHEREAS, these Ewa Plains trails and their adjacent historic sites provide clues as to how communities were linked socially, economically, and politically; which areas were important in early times, places of commerce, and religion; and where valuable forest or sea resources were once located; and

WHEREAS, these Ewa Plains trails were first identified after Western contact by Lt. C.R. Malden of the Royal Navy in 1825 and became known as the Malden Trails on the first published Oahu maps; and

WHEREAS, these Ewa Plains trails identified by Malden became used for ranching and horseback transportation and became an indelible part of West Oahu's 150 year old Paniolo and Pa'u horseback culture and early Hawaiian Kingdom history of ranches and farms which were the original Western economic settlements of the Ewa Plains; and

WHEREAS, these identified trails became the location where the Ewa Mill and Plantation was established and why the Oahu Railway was extended to this very important trailside agricultural community which allowed sugar cane to become the major economic engine of the Ewa Plains; and

WHEREAS, these Ewa Plains trails in 1925, due to the nearby location of Ewa Mill and the Oahu Railway, became incorporated into the US Navy development of Ewa Mooring Mast Field as a naval airship mooring site; and



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, these trails, springs, and underground karst water transport system later became further documented in State and Federal land surveys and aquifer maps, and in 1941 when the Ewa Mooring Mast Field became a US Marine Corps airbase known as Ewa Field, these walking and horse ranch trails continued to be used by the Marines and Ewa Plantation community for access to the shoreline; and

WHEREAS, after the Japanese air attack on December 7, 1941 and the great expansion of the area into military airports which became MCAS Ewa and NAS Barbers Point during WW-II, these trails were important for military training, patrols on foot and mounted Marine Corps horseback security patrols; and

WHEREAS, after the closure of the Marine and Navy airbases, published 1950s maps show the trails on former MCAS Ewa that are still used today by the Barbers Point riding club; and

WHEREAS, these historic horse and foot trails also link with the over 100 year old Oahu Railway right-of-way and Pearl Harbor Historic Trail plan that allows travel by foot, horse or bike from Pearl Harbor to Nanakuli, and which places the Ewa Plains trails as a center junction point and provides access to the Ewa shoreline; and

WHEREAS, an educational feature of these Ewa Plains trails could also be restored karst sinkhole sites along the trailways explaining the ecological system that sustains the limu, nourishes food sources such as freshwater shrimp and which helps perpetuate Ewa's offshore fisheries and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, these trails could become a cultural, historic, recreational and educational experience of walking, biking or horseback riding over trails featuring native Hawaiian plants, bird and aquatic life, telling cultural histories, explaining geological facts; and

WHEREAS, an Ewa Plains trails project could be a community supported endeavor bringing together cultural practitioners, educators, scientists, environmental and veteran organizations in a positive, holistic concept for community education, recreation and restoration; and

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



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WHEREAS, federal programs such as the National Park Service Battlefield Protection Program have already awarded a \$53,000 grant to help define the Ewa Field battlefield as an historic site, and which could include walking trails and points for historic interpretation; and

WHEREAS, federal programs such as the United States Fish & Wildlife Service have programs to restore Ewa Plains karst sinkholes and have already demonstrated that native freshwater shrimp can be restocked and flourish in these unique karst sinkhole habitats, providing working environments for education and training; and

WHEREAS, there are many interested individuals from equestrian clubs, biking, recreational groups; and schools, colleges and universities, and active duty military family morale, welfare and recreation organizations, that could benefit from and assist in supporting an Ewa Plains trails program; and

WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation department could also include in their US Navy transferred regional park lands for Kalaeloa, an Ewa Plains historic and cultural trails program, and further, may consider naming the park as Ewa Plains Regional Park in recognition of the history of the area; and

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

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 Ewa Plains historic trails; 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 and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.



RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY

TOM BERG

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 11 2012

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers