

Land Use Commission  
Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism  
235 South Beretania Street Suite 406  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: IAL Designations

Dear Members of the Land Use Commission,

First off, I want to thank you for your time and consideration on this matter regarding Hawaii's Important Agricultural Lands (IAL). These decisions are critical to the sustainability and survival of our island home. Your voluntary work is very much appreciated. I have two primary concerns with this process, both of which relate to Native Hawaiian cultural agricultural traditions.

In my home community of Kaneohe, we have at least four major areas that are historically used as agricultural production that I would like to point out:

- Luluku, lo'i terraces which also include other ag such as banana;
- Haiku Valley, which include lo'i terraces and was traditionally used for Hawaiian medicinal plants and is being restored as we speak;
- Lower Haiku and into Iolekaa, which include kuleana lands, lo'i terraces and other ag currently owned by Kamehameha Schools;
- Heeia wetlands, which are HCDA lands and provide the largest active agriculture in Kaneohe.

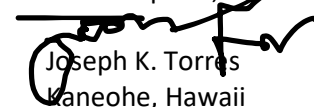
In greater Koolaupoko, there are many more traditional Hawaiian agricultural sites that are currently being reclaimed and used for agriculture. Heeia wetlands alone provide over 400 acres of lo'i and other agricultural production, along with jobs for local residents. Koolau Aina Aloha is an affiliation of aina-based organizations in the Windward region that includes approximately 20 active sites across the moku for cultural and agricultural education. It is my understanding that the Urban designation in the area excluded the entire swath of land after Waimanalo and up north to Kualoa falls into this category which stems from the City's initial preparation to create a second city in Windward Oahu, which we all know ended up in Kapolei. This Urban designation was never reversed despite the deep wealth of ag land and a community that supports our natural resources and sustainability.

How can this moku, a land district known historically as the 'bread basket' of Oahu, be excluded from IAL designation? The process the City has undertaken is flawed at best, having only three island-wide meetings, with only one single meeting for the entire Windward coast from Makapuu to Sunset. This is far from adequate outreach in our community.

Furthermore, I am concerned that Native Hawaiian traditional farming and agricultural practices are not being addressed appropriately in this process. It is also concerning that the seat for a Cultural Practitioner on the Land Use Commission remains vacant during this extremely important IAL designation process. This greatly diminishes the Native Hawaiian voice in the conversation.

I humbly request the LUC to reject the City and County of Honolulu's proposal of IAL and have review and rerun their selection and outreach to landowners and the community at large.

Malama pono,



Joseph K. Torres  
Kaneohe, Hawaii