# STATE OF HAWAI'I DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

# Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands Honolulu, Hawai'i February 24, 2012

BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES STATE OF HAWAII HONOLULU, HAWAII

REGARDING:

Conservation District Use Application (CDUA) MA-3613

APPLICANT:

Auwahi Wind Energy, LLC

AGENT:

Munekiyo & Hiraga, Inc. / Mitch Dmohowski

LOCATION:

Ulupalakua, Makawao, Island of Maui

TMK:

(2) 2-1-004:006

AREA OF PARCEL:

1,571 acres

AREA OF USE:

1.6 acres

SUBZONE:

General

# **DESCRIPTION OF AREA AND CURRENT USE:**

The project site is located in Ulupalakua, district or Makawao, Island of Maui (Exhibit A); the region surrounding the proposed Papaka Road New Alignment is characterized by largely undeveloped, open ranch lands, related development and the occasional single family residence structure. Facilities that support local ranching operations, including an existing ranch road, are located in the general vicinity of the Papaka Road New Alignment. The proposed project site (Parcel 6) is owned by the Ulupalakua Ranch and is being made available to Auwahi Wind Energy, LLC to help facilitate the construction of the wind farm, which is also located on Ulupalakua Ranch lands. The area of the Papaka Road New Alignment is approximately two (2) miles mauka of the shoreline and the landscape is further characterized by a gradually sloping rocky terrain that includes several small, shallow gullies.

Current uses at the proposed project site include ranching and grazing activities; similarly the area was previously graded and cleared during the initial construction of the ranch roads and pasture lands. The project area has been utilized as pastoral lands for cattle ranching prior to the current owner's purchase of the Ulupalkua Ranch property in 1963 and in its current capacity. In addition to the already graded areas, and ranch road, a firebreak, that runs approximately 1700 linear feet along the western edge of Parcel 6, was previously cleared and graded to prevent the spread of grass fires to adjacent parcels.

The Papaka Road New Alignment is part of the larger Auwahi Wind Farm project currently being proposed and consists of three major parts: 1) Wind Farm Site, 2) Generator Tie-Line and Interconnection Substation, and 3) Construction Access Route. The portion of the Papaka Road New Alignment subject to the requirements of the Conservation District Use Permit comprises the most mauka 2347-feet of the proposed Construction Access Route, which is a small portion of the entire 4.6 mile construction access (Exhibit B).

#### Resource and Environment

The Papaka Road New Alignment project site is characterized by a combination of dry, rocky pasturelands and shrub-scrub vegetation that has been degraded and altered during more than 100 years of cattle ranching practices. The grassland / scrub-shrub pasture community supports primarily non-native grasses with common species, such as akia, a'ali'i, glycine and 'uhaloa, dominating. There are no rare, threatened or endangered species present at the proposed project site as the area has been extensively grazed on the past and the existing vegetation includes many introduced species. Vegetative density varies significantly throughout the year; the winter months the primarily non-native cover increases considerably in density while during drier summer months much of the grass withers away. Vegetation at the project site is also impacted by the grazing cycles of livestock, where the livestock will remain in the area until most of the edible flora has been consumed.

Faunal surveys were completed for the Auwahi Wind Project and covered the various Auwahi Wind Farm project sites including the Papaka Road New Alignment project area. Many of the species listed in these reports were not observed in the vicinity of the Papaka Road New Alignment, although Best management Practices will be strictly adhered to. Some of the species of concern include:

- Sixteen (16) species of endemic or indigenous invertebrates were observed in the vicinity of the project site; invertebrate species of concern were not, however, documented in the vicinity of the project site.
- Ten (10) avian species, protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), were documented during surveys of the entire Auwahi Wind Farm project and some species may appear in the vicinity of the Papaka Road New Alignment project site. Most of the species protected under the MBTA are introduced (e.g., cattle egret, mourning dove, barn owl) and quite common in the region.
- There were two (2) Hawaii State species of concern that may occur in the vicinity of the Papaka Road New Alignment, the Hawaiian short-eared owl and the Pacific golden plover.
- Five (5) State and Federally listed wildlife species are known to occur (have been observed in a portion of the Auwahi Wind Farm Project), or could occur in the vicinity of the project site including the Hawaiian petrel, Newell's shearwater, Hawaiian hoary bat, Blackburn's sphinx moth, and Nene.

#### Culture, Architecture and Archeology

Archeological, cultural and architectural resources have been identified and documented in the Archeological Inventory Survey (AIS) and the Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) which covers the

entire Auwahi Wind Farm project area including the Papaka Road New Alignment. A pedestrian survey of the entire Auwahi Wind Farm project area of potential effect (APE) was conducted in 2007 and again in 2010 to determine the significant historical and cultural sites within the vicinity of the proposed project. A total of 52 archeological sites were identified within the entire 4.6 mile Papaka Road APE of which only eight (8) archeological sites are situated within the Conservation District along the Papaka Road New Alignment (Exhibit C). The sites consist of freestanding walls, terraces, and other similar architectural components that would have been used for habitation, agriculture and ranching practices. Radiocarbon dates of charcoal samples indicated primary occupation from the late 1500s through 1800, with the earliest occupation occurring at approximately during the 1400s.

The majority of the archeological sites are recommended as significant under criterion "d", while others were significant under criterion "e", Recommendations for this project site include preservation; data recovery in the form of detailed mapping and data recovery in the form of excavations. The proposals for preservation, including a detailed history of a largely unstudied historical area, are clearly outlined in the AIS.

#### **PROPOSED USE:**

Auwahi Wind Energy, LLC is proposing to construct a new alignment of Papaka Road for the purpose of transporting large equipment and heavy machinery to the Auwahi Wind Farm site. Papaka Road, the existing pastoral road used for Ulupalakua Ranch operations, was identified as the optimal route for the transport of machinery, equipment and wind turbine components to the main wind farm project work site. The use of Papaka Road for the transportation of large and heavy deliveries will require modifications to the existing ranch road network including, at various segments, widening, smoothing out horizontal and vertical curves, and the construction of drainage improvements. The entire road will also be re-surfaced with all weather gravel. In order to avoid impacts to certain identified resources or to avoid impassible or inconsistent terrain the 2,347 linear foot portion of Papaka Road in the Conservation District will have to be realigned and a new road segment created (Exhibit D-F).

The proposed Papaka Road New Alignment includes the realignment of the upper portion of Papaka Road (in the Conservation District) that will provide adequate conditions for the deliveries and will offer capacity to safely handle the delivery of wind turbine generator components and other necessary heavy equipment. The new alignment of Papaka Road will become the primary ranch road for ranching access in the future while the existing portion of the Papaka Road located in the Conservation District will be abandoned and no longer utilized. The new gravel roadway will also serve as a fire-break to help mitigate the potential impacts of grass and brush fires that could potentially impact the ranching activities, agricultural and residential structures.

#### **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS:**

The Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands (OCCL) referred the application to the following state agencies for review and comment: DLNR - Engineering Division, Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), Land Division, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW); The Hawaii Department of Health, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE); similarly the application was referred to the following county

agencies: Maui County Department of Planning, the Maui County Department of Public Works and the Kihei Public Library and the Makena Community Association.

It should be noted that comments for the entire Auwahi Wind Farm Project have been previously reviewed during the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. The Papaka Road New Alignment project represents a very small portion of the overall Auwahi Wind Farm Project.

Comments received from the following agencies have been summarized by staff as follows:

# Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)

No comments.

# DLNR - Engineering Division

The project site, according to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), is located in Flood Zone X. The Flood insurance Program does not have any regulations for developments within Flood Zone X.

Applicant response: We acknowledge that the project is located in Flood Zone X, based on the FIRM classification system. We concur that this zone does not have special regulations for development.

# DLNR - State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD)

No comments.

#### DLNR - Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)

No comments.

#### DLNR – Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE)

No comments.

#### DLNR – Land Division

No comments.

# Maui County - Planning Department

The Final EIS for the Auwahi Wind Farm Project, including the realignment of Papaka Road, was accepted by the Maui County Planning Commission (Commission) on August 9, 2011.

The Maui County Special management Area (SMA) Use Permit (SM1 2011/0002) and County Special Use Permits (CUP 2011/0002 & CUP 2011/0003) were approved by the Commission on November 8, 2011, for the Auwahi Wind Farm Project.

There are no specific conditions associated with Papaka Road outside of the County's SMA.

Applicant response: While the Papaka Road New Alignment work site is outside the SMA and not subject to SMA regulations we will comply with the conditions listed in the Auwahi Wind Farm Project SMA permit (SM1 2011/0002) and the CUPs (2011/0002 & 2011/0003).

#### Maui County - Department of Public Works

No comments.

# State Department of Health - Clean Water Branch (CWB)

The DOH CWB issued a Notice of General Permit Coverage for the subject project (CWB File No. HI R10E024, dated January 12, 2012) for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System general permit coverage for discharges of storm water associated with construction activities.

Applicant response: We acknowledge that the DOH – CWB issued a NPDES Notice of General Permit Coverage for the Project on January 12, 2012. The NPDES permit addresses discharges of storm water associated with construction activities. The standard comments found at the Departments Land Use Planning Review Program have been reviewed and addressed in the context of the proposed Auwahi Wind Farm project, in the FEIS.

# Makena Community Association

No comments.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

Following review and acceptance for processing, the Applicant's Agent was notified, by letter dated *December 13, 2011* that:

- 1. The proposed use is an identified land use in the Conservation District General Subzone, pursuant to Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), §13-5-22, P-13, LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (D-2), Road construction and major erosion control projects; This use requires a Board Permit, please be advised, however, that this finding does not constitute approval of the proposal;
- 2. Pursuant to §13-5-40(a), HAR, a public hearing will not be required;
- 3. In conformance with Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, as amended, and Chapter 11-200, HAR, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been reviewed and accepted by the County of Maui Planning Commission on August 10, 2011 and notice was published in the August 23, 2011 issue of the Environmental Notice; and
- 4. The proposal does not appear to be in the Special Management Area (SMA).

Notice of this CDUA was published in the January 8, 2012 issue of Environmental Notice.

#### §13-5-30 CRITERIA:

The following discussion evaluates the merits of the proposed land use by applying the criteria established in HAR §13-5-30.

1) The proposed use is consistent with the purpose of the Conservation District.

The objective of the Conservation District is to conserve, protect and preserve the important natural resources of the State through appropriate management and use to promote their long-term sustainability and the public health, safety and welfare.

Staff is of the opinion that the proposed action will not negatively impact the natural resources of the area. Natural Resources, the environment, water supply, and the ecosystems of the State will not be adversely impacted by the proposed action. Existing land uses will not be impacted and the character of the land will not be substantially affected by the Papaka Road New Alignment.

2) The proposed land use is consistent with the objectives of the Subzone of the land on which the use will occur.

The objective of the General Subzone is to designate open space where specific conservation uses may not be defined, but where urban use would be premature. The construction of a new access road is an identified land use in the General Subzone. The land on the subject parcel has historically been used for grazing and ranching activities with predominately dry, rocky pasturelands and scrub vegetation dominating. The proposed Papaka Road New Alignment represents only a minor portion of the Ulupalakua Ranch grazing lands and therefore will not substantially alter the suitability of the land.

3) The proposed land use complies with the provisions and guidelines contained in Chapter 205A, HRS entitled "Coastal Zone Management", where applicable.

Recreational resources: The subject parcel does not currently support any ocean or shoreline recreational activities due to the distance from the shoreline (+2 miles mauka) and the extensive ranching practices on the private property. There is no public access from the subject parcel to any sandy beach, fish pond or surfing site.

Historic resources: An archeological inventory survey (AIS) was completed for the proposed Auwahi Wind Farm project. Historical and native resources were discovered in the vicinity of the proposed project; the project design aimed to minimize impacts to cultural resources.

Scenic and Open Space resources: The Papaka Road New Alignment will not add any visual impediments or alter the open space characteristics of the general region as the scope of the project does not include vertical development.

Coastal ecosystems: Due to the distance from the shoreline, the numerous structures and existing land uses between the proposed project site and the shoreline, the impacts to

coastal ecosystems should not increase from the proposed project. Storm water management, grading for drainage and road-cut erosion control techniques will be implemented to protect from an increase of sediment runoff to the shoreline.

Economic uses: Due to the location of the proposed Papaka Road New Alignment no coastal development is proposed. The overall Auwahi Wind Farm Project will be beneficial to the Hawaii's economy and the local population by providing an alternative energy source for long term, sustainable development.

Coastal hazards, Beach protection, and Marine resources: The proposed project does not include any land use near shoreline resources or the need for shoreline erosion control structures. The flood zone designation for the project site is X which has no regulations for development.

4) The proposed land use will not cause substantial adverse impact to existing natural resources within the surrounding area, community or region.

The proposed construction activities for the road work are limited to grading, drainage improvements, gravel resurfacing, and realignment of an approximately 2374-foot long segment of an existing ranch road currently in use by Ulupalakua Ranch. While the Papaka Road New Alignment will result in an increased capacity, including large transport vehicles, access to the road will be restricted during and after construction of the Auwahi Wind Farm. The BMP's outlined in the development plans will be implemented during the grading phase to reduce the impacts of noise, dust and runoff. The design of the roadway minimizes the potential impacts to archeological resources in the area while the limited area of work and proposed mitigation measures will reduce significant impacts to the local flora and fauna.

5) The proposed land use, including buildings, structures and facilities, shall be compatible with the locality and surrounding areas, appropriate to the physical conditions and capabilities of the specific parcel or parcels.

The Papaka Road New Alignment will not interfere in ranching activities. The technical characteristics of the proposed work, such as grading and gravel resurfacing, will meld with existing land uses. The proposed work will continue to support ranching operations and will be compatible with the existing ranch characteristics of the area, as the new road will improve existing ranch road conditions.

6) The existing physical and environmental aspects of the land, such as natural beauty and open space characteristics, will be preserved or improved upon, whichever is applicable.

The natural beauty of the Ulupalakua Ranchlands will remain unaltered due to the limited project area. Upon completion of construction of the Auwahi Wind Farm, access will continue to be limited and there will be no increase of use along the Papaka Road. The existing portion of Papaka Road, not utilized for the New Road Alignment, will be abandoned. As such, the existing pastoral character of the general region will be preserved.

7) Subdivision of land will not be utilized to increase the intensity of land uses in the Conservation District.

The proposed project does not involve subdivision of Conservation District land.

8) The proposed land use will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare.

The long-term land use of the new alignment will replace the existing ranch road. Access is currently limited and access post-development will continue to be limited. BMPs will be implemented during the construction phases to limit the effects of noise, dust, and runoff; similarly there are no residences in the vicinity of the proposed project.

# **DISCUSSION:**

Auwahi Wind Energy, LLC is proposing to construct a new alignment of the existing Papaka Road to provide access for large machinery and equipment for the Auwahi Wind Farm Project. The current Papaka Ranch road section, located in the conservation district, will be abandoned once the new road section has been completed. The new road alignment includes road grading, road re-surfacing and drainage improvements that will provide adequate access for large construction and delivery vehicles.

A Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and an Archeological Inventory Survey (AIS) were included as appendices in the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which outlines the impacts the proposed project may have on valued cultural, historical and natural resources and the location and type of archeological sites present at or near the project site. In the unlikely event subsurface prehistoric deposits or human burials are inadvertently discovered during construction or land uses activities, such activities would be immediately suspended in the vicinity of the discovery and State Historical Preservation Division (SHPD) would be notified. The archeological resources located within the Papaka Road New Alignment project site were recommended "No Further Action" indicating that the determination documented in the AIS was sufficient according to the standards of the SHPD.

Construction activities would comply with applicable federal, State and County regulations and standards, and employ best management practices to minimize construction related impacts. As the proposed new alignment section consists of grading and re-surfacing of a limited segment of Papaka Road with all-weather gravel, a permeable treatment, and increases in surface runoff will be minimal with peak flow of post-development runoff to be substantially similar to predevelopment runoff levels. Native vegetation cover will not be affected nor will any critical habitat be removed or altered. Noise and air quality potential impacts will be mitigated through compliance with the Department of Health regulations. Since the project site is within an area where intense grazing and ranching practices have altered the land and the current land use is grazing and pasturelands staff believes that the no historic, archeological or natural resources will be affected by this proposal.

# **RECOMMENDATION:**

Based on the preceding analysis, Staff recommends that the Board of Land and Natural Resources **APPROVE** this application for the Papaka Road New Alignment located in Ulupalakua, Makawao, Island of Maui, TMK: (2) 2-1-004:006, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The permittee shall comply with all applicable statutes, ordinances, rules, and regulations of the federal, State and county governments, and the applicable parts of HAR §13-5-42;
- 2. The permittee, its successors and assigns, shall indemnify and hold the State of Hawai'i harmless from and against any loss, liability, claim or demand for property damage, personal injury or death arising out of any act or omission of the permittee, its successors, assigns, officers, employees, contractors and agents under this permit or relating to or connected with the granting of this permit;
- 3. The permittee shall comply with all applicable Department of Health administrative rules. Particular attention should be paid to HAR §11-60.1-33, "Fugitive Dust" and to Chapter 11-46, "Community Noise Control," and Chapter 11-54 "National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System";
- 4. Before proceeding with any work authorized by the Department of the board, the permittee shall submit three (3) copies of the construction plans and specifications to the chairperson or an authorized representative for approval for consistency with the conditions of the permit and the declarations set forth in the permit application. Two (2) of the copies will be returned to the permittee. Plan approval by the chairperson does not constitute approval required from other agencies;
- 5. Unless otherwise authorized, any work or construction to be done on the land shall be initiated within one (1) year of the approval of such use, in accordance with construction plans that have been approved by the Department; further, all work and construction of the infrastructure must be completed within three (3) years of the approval. The permittee shall notify the department in writing when construction activity is initiated and when it is completed;
- 6. All representations relative to mitigation set forth in the accepted environmental assessment or impact statement for the proposed use are incorporated as conditions of the permit;
- 7. The permittee understands and agrees that the permit does not convey and vested right(s) or exclusive privilege;
- 8. Where any interference, nuisance, or harm may be caused, or hazard established by the use, the permittee shall be required to take measures to minimize or eliminate the interference, nuisance, harm, or hazard;
- 9. Best Management Practices (BMP) shall be used for the proposed project;

- 10. The permittee shall obtain a county building or grading permit or both for use prior to final construction plan approval by the department;
- 11. In issuing this permit, the Department and Board have relied on the information and data that the permittee has provided in connection with this permit application. If, subsequent to the issuance of this permit, such information and data prove to be false, incomplete or inaccurate, this permit may be modified, suspended or revoked, in whole or in part, and/or the Department may, in addition, institute appropriate legal proceedings;
- 12. Provisions for access, parking, drainage, fire protection, safety, signs, lighting, and changes on the landscape shall be provided;\
- 13. Except in case of public highways, access roads shall be limited to a maximum of two lanes;
- 14. Obstruction of public roads, trails, lateral shoreline access, and pathways shall be avoided and minimized. If obstruction is unavoidable, the permittee shall provide alternative roads, trails, lateral shoreline access, or pathways acceptable to the department;
- 15. Cleared areas shall be revegetated, in accordance with landscaping guidelines provided in this chapter, within thirty (30) days unless otherwise provided for in a plan on file with and approved by the department;
- 16. The permittee shall obtain a county building or grading permit or both for the use prior to final construction plan approved by the department;
- 17. The permittee acknowledges that the approved work shall not hamper, impede, or otherwise limit the exercise of traditional, customary, or religious practices of native Hawaiians in the immediate area, to the extent the practices are provided for by the Constitution of the State of Hawaii, and by Hawaii statutory and case law;
- 18. In the event that unrecorded historic remains (i.e., artifacts, or human skeletal remains) are inadvertently uncovered during construction or operations, all work shall cease in the vicinity and the permittee shall immediately contact the State Historic Preservation Division;
- 19. All representations relative to mitigation set forth in the accepted (final) environmental impact statement (EIS), the archeological inventory survey (AIS) and the cultural impact assessment (CIA) for the proposed use are incorporated as conditions of the permit;
- 20. Other terms and conditions as prescribed by the chairperson; and
- 21. Failure to comply with any of these conditions may render this Conservation District Use Permit (CDUP) null and void.

Respectfully submitted,

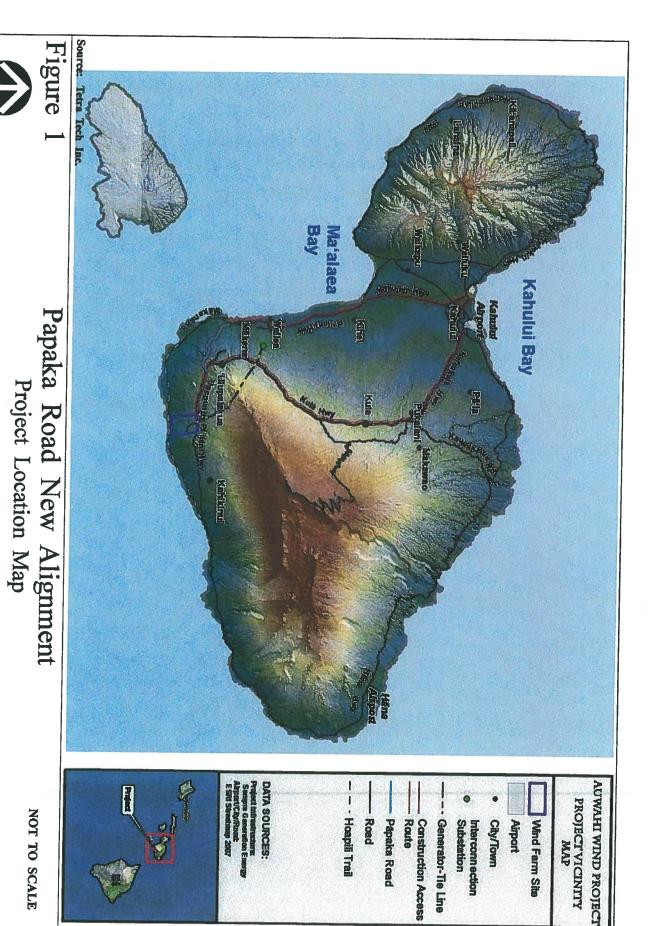
Alex J. Roy, M.Sc.

Staff Planner

Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands

Approved for submittal:

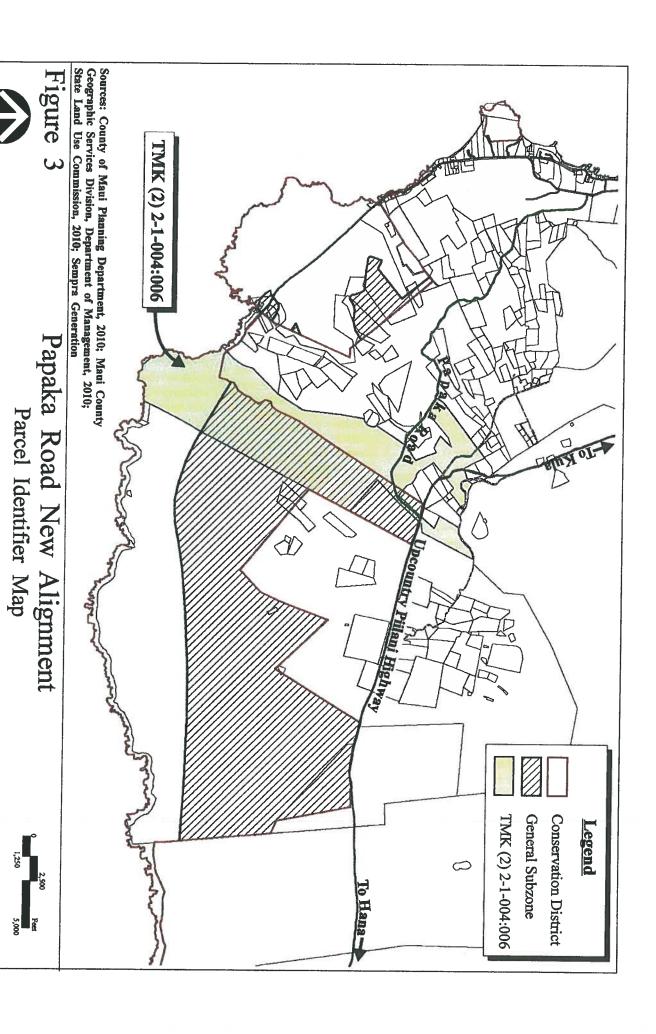
William J. Aila, Jr., Chairperson Board of Land and Natural Resources



Prepared for: Auwahi Wind Energy LLC

EXHIBIT A

MUNEKIYO & HIRAGA, INC.
Sempra\WindFarm\Permitting\Dec 2011 Rev CDUA\ProjectLocation

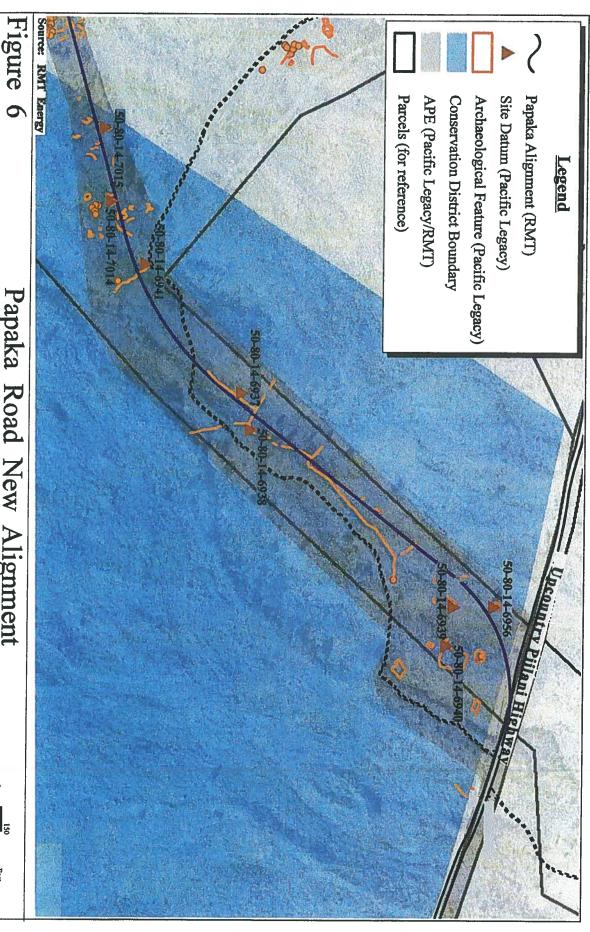


Prepared for: Auwahi Wind Energy LLC

EXHIBIT B

MUNEKIYO & HIRAGA, INC.

Sempra\WindFarm\Permitting\Dec 2011 Rev CDUA\ParcelIdentifier



Prepared for: Auwahi Wind Energy LLC

Papaka Road New Alignment Historical, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

**EXHIBIT** C



Sempra\WindFarm\Permitting\Dec 2011 Rev CDUA\archaeological survey map

**EXHIBIT** 

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# EXHIBIT E

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