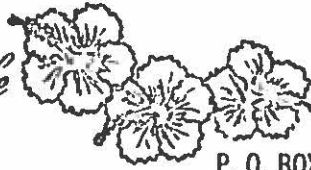


Kaneohe Outdoor Circle



April 2, 1973

P. O. BOX 32 • KANEOHE, OAHU 96744

TO: The Honorable Kenneth F. Brown, Chairman, and Members
Senate Committee on Ecology, Environment and Recreation
Seventh Legislature

SUBJECT: S. R. No. 136--Requesting that the Heeia Fish Pond Area
Be Reclassified Conservation

The Kaneohe Outdoor Circle appreciates the opportunity to speak in support of S.R. 136. We agree with the statements in the Resolution and have so testified before the House Committee on Parks & Fish & Game Management on a similar Resolution (No. 241), March 7, 1973. Our testimony is endorsed by the State Board of The Outdoor Circle which represents approximately 3,500 members.

S. R. 136 specifies the entire Heeia Pond area and "several surrounding land areas makai of Kanehameha Highway" to be included in the Conservation Classification. We would like to be even more specific in designating the land areas as that which are: (1) Below Alii Bluffs Subdivision, from Ipuka Street on the South to and including the 57 acres or more needed for the City's Biological Garden Park, and (2) Kealohi (Matson) Point to complete a Kaneohe Bay Sea Oriented Recreation Center.

At a general membership meeting of the Kaneohe Outdoor Circle held at Ulu Mau Village Restaurant in June, 1970, guest speaker, Mike McCormack, unveiled to a crowd of approximately 100 people his plans to build town-houses below Alii Bluffs Subdivision and out onto fingers of land in the Heeia Fish Pond. Windward citizens were shocked and dismayed by the proposal which reminded them of Hawaii Kai where a beautiful fish pond had also been filled in for such a marina development. A member of the City and County Planning Department Staff, Ian McDougall, was present and tried unsuccessfully to explain the complicated zoning which would permit such a plan to be implemented. It was and still is very confusing to the average citizen and emphasizes the dire need for a revision to the General Plan of Oahu so that State boundaries and City and County boundaries are not in conflict.

Following the June, 1970 meeting, several community groups conducted investigations to find out how Heeia Fish Pond was classified Urban in the first place by the Land Use Commission. It had been assumed that the landowners, the Trustees of the Bishop Estate--supposedly "the custodians of academic excellence in Hawaii and within whose trust rests the preservation of the pride and worth of Hawaiian culture" would not permit an area so steeped in history and natural beauty to be destroyed for a mere housing development and boat marina for the enjoyment of the wealthy few.

Also in 1970, hope for a Long-Range Planning and Recreational Development Plan for the Kaneohe Bay Area was given us by the State Legislature. An appropriation for \$500,000 under the C.I.P. was passed and signed into law by Governor Burns. On July 8, 1970, the Kaneohe Outdoor Circle wrote Governor Burns urging that the planning be undertaken as soon as possible and "(1) That an immediate moratorium be placed on all present plans for development (whether for parks, housing, utilities, or commerce) of the shoreline, fish ponds, and contiguous areas of Kaneohe Bay until such time as this Long Range Planning for the Kaneohe Bay Area is completed, and (2) That the Harbors Division of the Department of Transportation which has been charged with the preparation of the Long Range Plan, enlist in the initial stages the support of citizen groups."

*Quote from Standing Committee Report No. 154, March 14, 1973, in reference to H. R. 241, Richard H. Wasai, Chairman.

In his answer to us, Governor Burns made several suggestions in regard to the preservation of the fish ponds. He said, "It is my understanding that the matter of most immediate concern to the Kaneohe Outdoor Circle is the preservation of the remaining fish ponds in Kaneohe Bay. If this is true, then perhaps we should explore ways of doing so, either by direct acquisition or purchasing rights that are less than fee simple which would insure their preservation. This could be done through City or State parks programs, historical programs, and even perhaps through programs of the Fish and Game Division for use as experimental fish ponds or commercial ponds for the growing of shrimp as is now being proposed on Molokai."

The Governor added, "You will be interested to know that the present appropriation of \$500,000 covers more than just long-range planning or recreational development. Included are soils and coral analyses, reclamation of shoreline areas, and development of land use patterns and development plans. The latter two are primarily County functions and will require working closely with the City Planning Department."

Nearly three years has passed since that one-half million-dollar appropriation was passed. No one is able to give us an accounting of how (or if) the money was spent. We've been told that a portion went for a study of the sewage outfall at Mōkapu. We still don't have a long-range plan and Kaneohe Bay is fast reaching the point of "no return" from pollution caused primarily from siltation and sewage.*

Efforts on the part of concerned citizens have helped to insure the protection of three fish ponds at Kahalu'u, Kualoa, and Kahana. The Heeia Fish Pond has been judged worthy of the National Historic Site designation. We cannot afford to lose things which make Hawaii unique among the States of the United States and even in the world. It is our opinion that the preservation of Heeia Fish Pond and its surrounding environment can best be accomplished by the acquisition and management of the property by the State of Hawaii. Once it is under State ownership, Federal funds might be tapped--because of its National Historic Site significance--to restore it to a producing fish pond. The State Division of Fish and Game under the Department of Land and Natural Resources is aware of the possibilities for the use of the pond once it has been restored. The scarcity of fish around our islands and the resulting high prices should be ample encouragement for research and experimentation.

Finally, the City Parks and Recreation Program have a very worthwhile proposal for a botanical-zoological historical-recreational garden in the area contiguous to the Heeia Fish Pond. The Kaneohe Outdoor Circle is in full support of this plan and their broader plans for the Kaneohe Bay Sea Oriented Recreation Center which includes Kealohi Point and a modified Heeia Kea Boat Harbor and park complex.

There are thousands of small boat harbors throughout the world, but Heeia Fish Pond is one of so very few remaining examples of ancient Hawaiian engineering craftsmanship and a system of sea tillage which provided the primary source of protein for the ancient Hawaiians' diet. We, therefore, urge this Committee to request the State Land Use Commission to reclassify the total Heeia Pond and the surrounding land area to Conservation.

Respectfully submitted,

Boris S. Fleming
Mrs. B. R. Fleming, Chairman, Public Affairs Committee

ENDORSED BY:

Susan S. Fristoe
Mrs. Ashby J. Fristoe, President, Kaneohe Outdoor Circle

Robert Creps
Mrs. Robert Creps, President, The Outdoor Circle State Board

*Reference: Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology letter, dated 8/March/73 to the Citizens of Hawaii, signed by all 16 of the senior investigators at Coconut Island, Kaneohe Bay.