



# Hawaii Tourism Authority

Hawaii Convention Center, 1801 Kalakaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96815  
Website: [www.hawaii.gov/tourism](http://www.hawaii.gov/tourism)

LINDA LINGLE  
Governor

REX D. JOHNSON  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Telephone: (808) 973-2255  
Fax: (808) 973-2253

## NEWS RELEASE

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### HTA INITIATES RELEASES RESULTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HONOLULU – The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) has released the results of the Natural Resources Assessment, an in depth inventory of the state's frequently visited environmental sites. The primary goal of the assessment is to provide a strategic plan for the expenditure of the monies from the HTA Tourism Special Fund mandated for improving natural resource sites frequented by visitors. The project, conducted by the Honolulu planning firm PBR Hawaii, assessed the quality of the natural resource areas, identified and prioritized needed areas of improvement and provided recommended actions to improve the sites.

Overall, site assessments statewide revealed that the quality of the visitor experience may be negatively affected by aging facilities, deferred maintenance, vandalism, lack of parking, and difficulty finding and accessing the site, among others. More importantly, these same factors also negatively impact the natural resources themselves.

Of the 110 natural resource sites on the six major Hawaiian islands analyzed, 23 were given priority status and included five each on Kauai, Maui and Hawaii, six on Oahu, and one each on Lanai and Molokai (see attached list). PBR Hawaii prepared a strategic plan with complete project descriptions, including recommendations for physical improvements and management, as well as cost estimates, for each of the sites. (Copies of the HTA Natural Resources Assessment Report can be requested from HTA's Product Development Office, phone 973-2258.)

The plan is intended to guide policy makers and community leaders, as well as industry representatives and natural resource managers on how to effectively improve the quality of Hawaii's natural resources in order to both protect the resources and provide visitors with a unique natural experience. According to Peter Young, Chair of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), "The Department of Land and Natural Resources is working with the Hawaii Tourism Authority on the findings of the study and appreciate the great partnership that has been established between the HTA, visitor industry and DLNR."

The natural resources assessment also proposed management strategies to improve maintenance and conservation (prioritize facilities in need of maintenance by volume of use, degree of disrepair and potential for safety hazard), to prevent illegal activities (partner with community/neighborhood associations to establish community policing programs similar to the Neighborhood Watch program), to supplement funding (increase park concessions) and to increase public access (provide incentives to public landowners to dedicate or "will beach access" on oceanfront properties to the State of Hawaii through tax credits or other means). In addition, a program was produced with GIS software that displays the inventory form, photos and all relevant maps that may affect a site such as tsunami zones, etc., with just a click of the mouse.

The Hawaii Tourism Authority was created in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage the growth of Hawaii's visitor industry in a manner consistent with its economic goal, cultural values, preservation of natural resources and community interests. For more information on HTA and its programs, visit the HTA website at [www.hawaii.gov/tourism](http://www.hawaii.gov/tourism).

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For more information, contact:  
Sharon Freitas  
Hawaii Tourism Authority  
(808) 973-2272

## **HTA Natural Resources Assessment Priority Sites**

### **Kauai**

- 1) Haena Beach County Park
- 2) Haena State Park
- 3) Kokee State Park (Kalalau Lookout)
- 4) Waimea Canyon State Park Puu Hinahina Lookout
- 5) Wailua River State Park Opaekaa Falls

### **Maui**

- 1) Honolulu Bay/Mokuleia Bay Marine Life Conservation District
- 2) Kaumahina State Wayside
- 3) Waianapanapa State Park
- 4) Ahihi-Kinau Natural Area Reserve
- 5) Kamaole Beach Park No. 3

### **Hawaii**

- 1) Hapuna Beach State Recreation Area
- 2) Kealahou Bay State Historical Park
- 3) Punaluu Beach Park
- 4) Akaka Falls State Park
- 5) Waipio Lookout

### **Oahu**

- 1) Diamond Head Lighthouse Overlook
- 2) Diamond Head State Park
- 3) Laie Point State Wayside
- 4) Makapuu Point State Wayside
- 5) Manoa Falls
- 6) Pupukea Beach Park

### **Lanai**

- 1) Luahiwa Petroglyphs

### **Molokai**

- 1) Palaau State Park