

# Ala Kahakai Interpretive Plan

**Community Stakeholder Meeting**

March 20, 2025



# Agenda

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- Introductions
- Project Background & Purpose
- Community Stakeholder Engagement
- First Site Visit Reflections (January 2025)
- Next Steps



# Introductions

## Project Team

- Nā Ala Hele (State of Hawai'i Trails and Access Program)
- National Park Service (Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail)
- Consultants
  - PBR HAWAII & Associates, Inc.
  - Hoa'āina Heritage Services, LLC
  - 106 Group



# What is “the project?”



# Project Goal

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*Produce a cooperative interpretive plan for the Ala Kahakai Trail Corridor using detailed input from community stakeholders.*

*The plan should blend NPS Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail and DLNR Nā Ala Hele standards, missions, design motifs, and plans.*



# What is an Interpretive Plan?



# What is an Interpretive Plan?

**Interpretation** is intentional communication that **connects people with places** of historical, cultural, and environmental significance.



# What is an Interpretive Plan?

An **interpretive plan** is...

- ...a document.
- ...a collaborative process.
- ...a collection of ideas, recommendations & guidelines for future implementation.



# What is an Interpretive Plan?

An interpretive plan... establishes themes and messages.

## Big Idea, Themes, and Topics

"The cities are but the branches of the tree of national life, the roots of which go deeply into the land. We all flourish or decline with the farmer." — Bernard Baruch, *American Agriculture: A Brief History* (2002)

**BIG IDEA**

Cultivate a sense of welcoming through the land.

THEME THEME THEME



## Land is a place to feel at home.



- What resources in southeastern Minnesota did people use to live and support their families?
  - › Zumbro River Watershed (including prairies, forests, rivers, and wildlife)
  - › Food (Indigenous plants and medicines; early settler agriculture)
  - › Shelter (Seasonal villages, including two large Bdewakantun wan villages near present-day Rochester; Stoppel Family cave; settler development of Rochester and towns in Olmsted County, Minnesota)



## Land is an opportunity to start a new life.

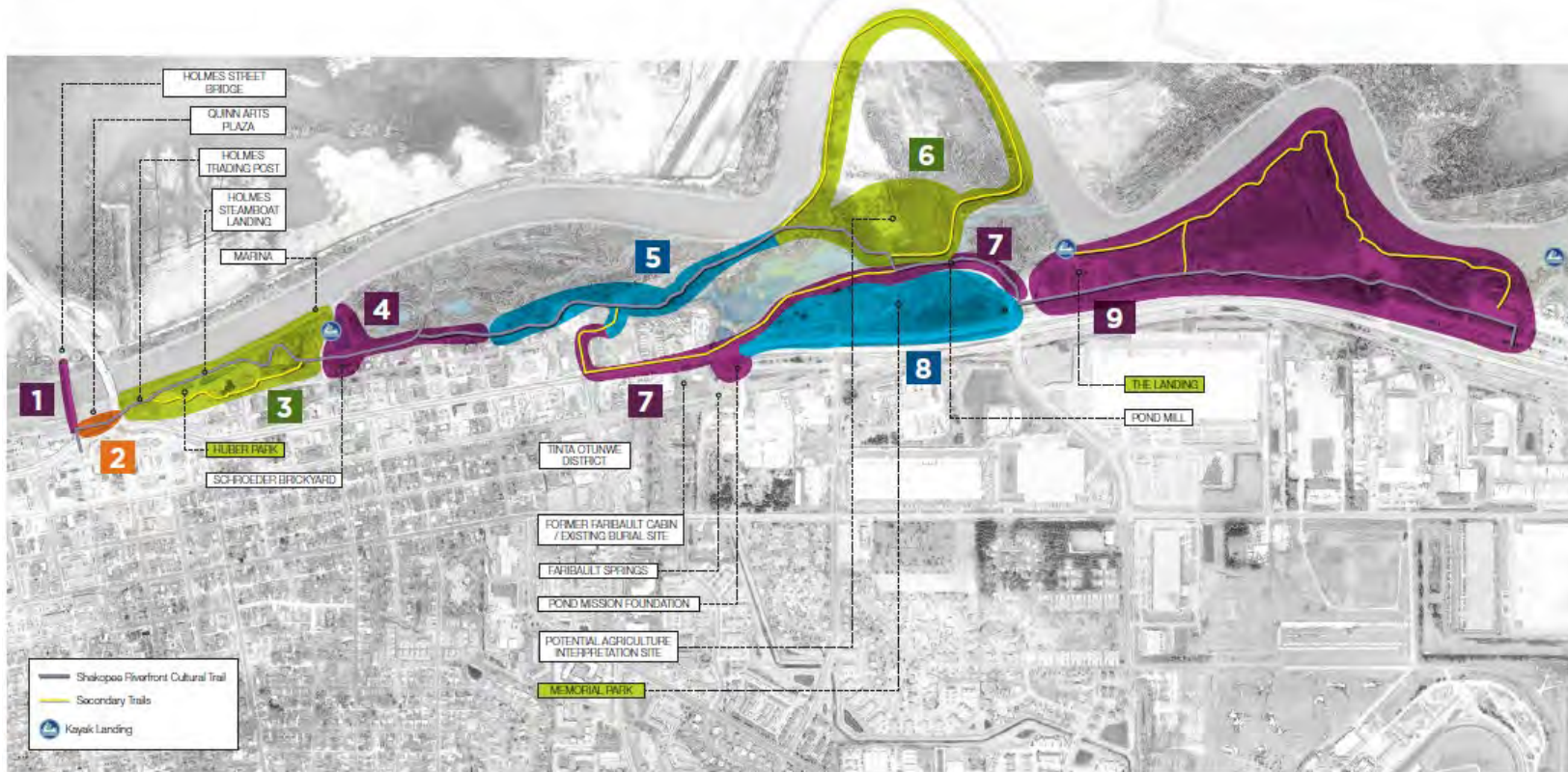


- Waves of immigration: Why did people come here?
  - › Ireland, Germany, Russia, Scandinavia (mid-1800s to early 1900s), including Stoppel Family motivations (political unrest, economic opportunity, and anti-German sentiment).
  - › Consequences of settler colonialism and displacement of Indigenous peoples
  - › Contemporary (late 1900s to present), like Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Bosnia, and Mexico
- How did immigrants support the American economy?
  - › Craftsmanship and skilled trades
  - › Emergence of wheat production in Minnesota late 1850s
  - › Diversified farming 1870s
- Acknowledge that starting a new life for one group may mean ending a way of life for another.



# What is an Interpretive Plan?

An interpretive plan... envisions and structures site experiences.

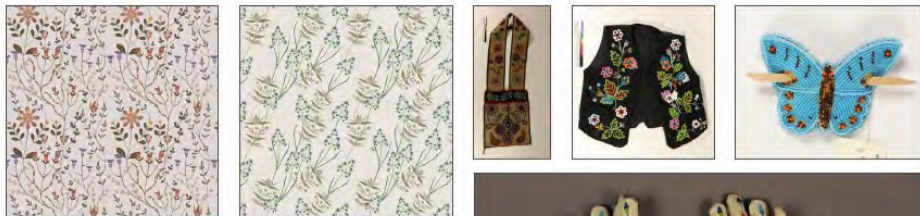


1. **CROSSING:** Holmes Street Bridge
2. **EXPRESSING:** Quinn Arts Plaza
3. **CONNECTING:** Huber Park
4. **MAKING:** Schroeder brickyard
5. **DWELLING:** between Schroeder brickyard and northern river flat
6. **CULTIVATING:** northern river flat
7. **TRANSFORMING:** Pond Mill, mission foundation, and Mill Pond channel
8. **REFLECTING:** Memorial Park
9. **EXPLORING:** The Landing: Minnesota River Heritage Park



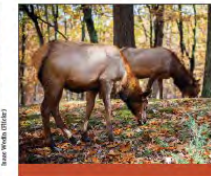
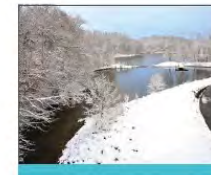
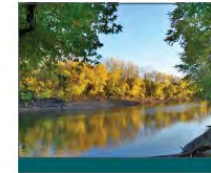
# What is an Interpretive Plan?

An interpretive plan... creates a design look and feel.



Dakota floral designs by Marlena Myles

Examples of Dakota beadwork from the Hocokata Ti collections



# Purpose of This Interpretive Plan

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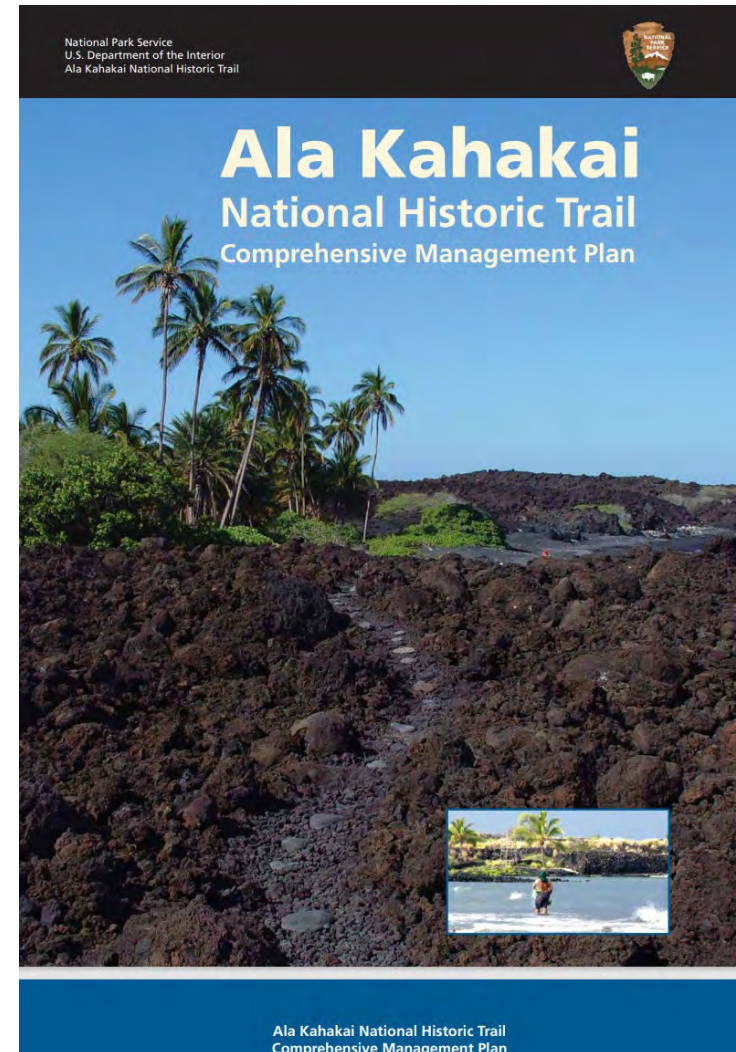
- Connection and reconnection
- Caretaking and stewardship
- Protection, preservation & respect
- Encouragement & inspiration



# Background – 2009 Management Plan

- Administration/Partnerships
- Status of Resources and Values
- Resource Protection Goals
- Trail User Experience Goals
- Community Vision & Interpretive Themes

Planning - Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail (U.S. National Park Service)



# Community Stakeholder Engagement

Some “big picture” questions for you



# Could we ask some big picture questions of you today?

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- What do the trails mean to you?
- What do they mean to your community?



# Could we ask some big picture questions of you today?

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- What would you like to communicate about the trails ...
  - ... to trail 'ohana?
  - ... to youth and future generations?
  - ... to visitors from outside the community?
  - ... to land owners and managers?



# Could we ask some “big picture” questions of you today?

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Your advice and guidance on locations:

- Where along the Ala Kahakai corridor would be good places for ...
  - ... encouraging visitors to experience the trails?
  - ... locating on-site interpretation?
- Where along the Ala Kahakai corridor are NOT appropriate places for ...
  - ... encouraging visitors to experience the trails?
  - ... locating on-site interpretation?



# First Site Visit - Reflections

January 22-25, 2025



# The site visit was...

“grounding”

“rewarding”

“intense”

“unique”

“enriching”

“heartwarming”

“emotional”

“insightful”

“fulfilling”

“enlightening”



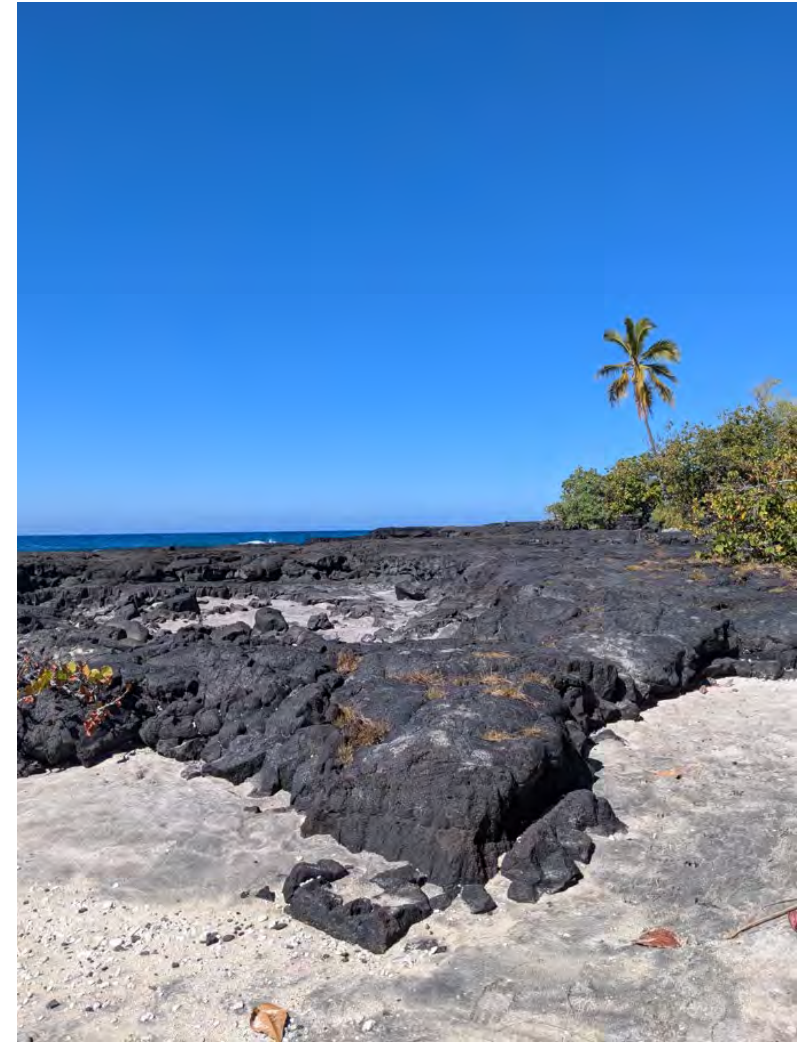
# First Site Visit Reflections

The trails in this corridor are a connection between places, and a connection between people of today and the past



# First Site Visit Reflections

The trails connect people to each other and to 'āina.  
They foster those reciprocal relationships.

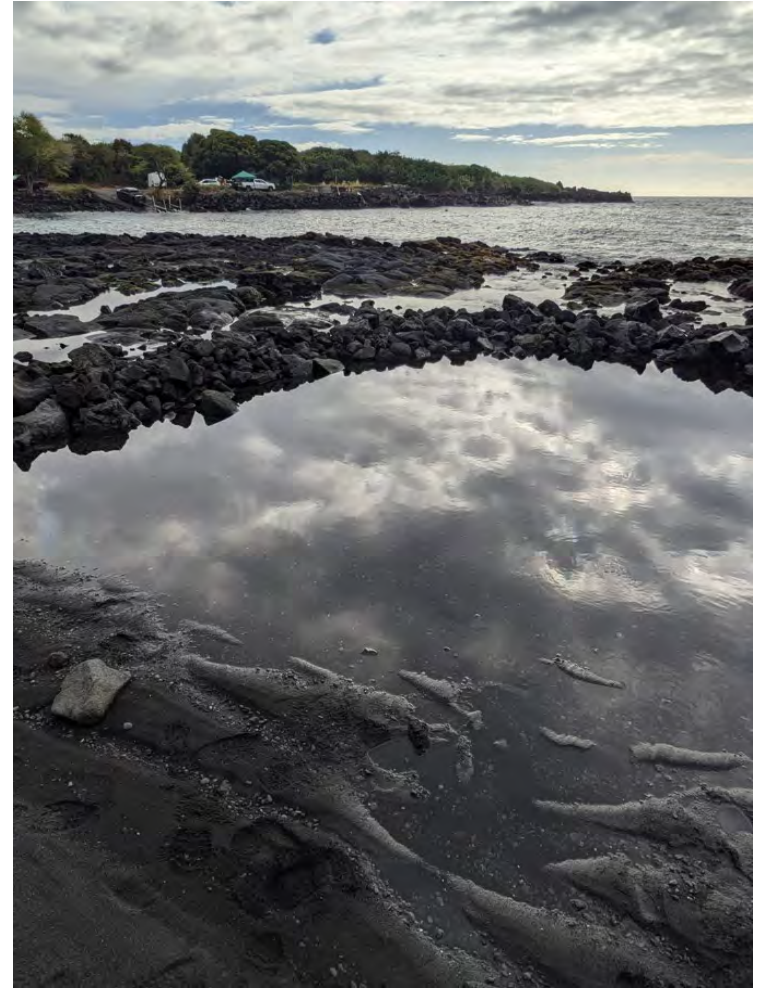


# First Site Visit Reflections

The trails are people.

Community relationships to the trails are deeply personal and emotional.

The trails are treasured Kānaka Maoli heritage.



# First Site Visit Reflections

**Kuleana** is a central value, practice, and message for our work, encompassing both rights and responsibilities.



# First Site Visit Reflections

Each moku, ahupua'a, and place along the corridor has distinction and variation.

This includes differences in:

- Trail construction/condition
- Awareness and access
- Stewardship
- Community/familial relationships
- Land ownership and management



# First Site Visit – Visual Impressions

OBSERVATION:

**Layers of color compose the landscape.**

- LATERAL
- EXAGGERATED
- DISTINCT
- EARTHEN
- MONOCHROMATIC



# First Site Visit – Visual Impressions

OBSERVATION:

**Contrast hides within the details.**

- VIBRANCY
- ENERGY
- PARTNERSHIP

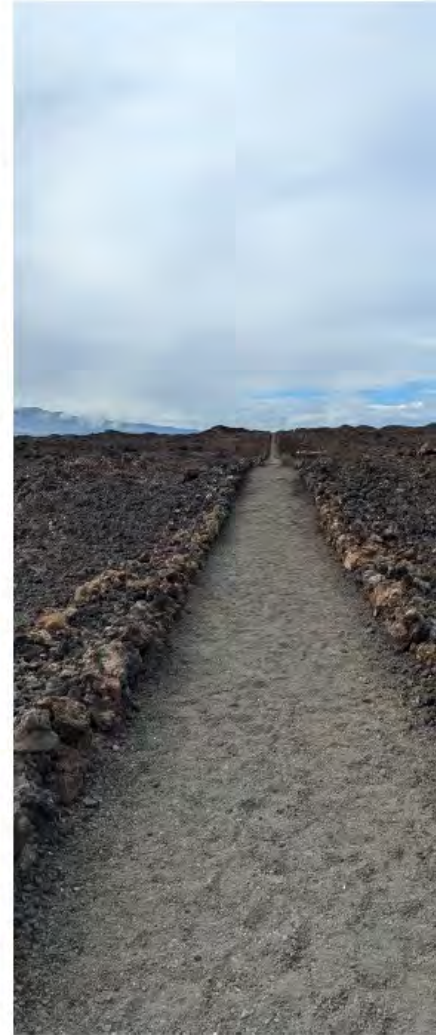


# First Site Visit – Visual Impressions

## OBSERVATION:

**Moments of reflection and  
expanse captivate your senses.**

- OPENNESS
- OPTIMISM
- SPACE
- CONNECTION
- BOLD



# Next Steps



# Project Schedule

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# Next All-Team Site Visit

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- May 27-29
- More site visits
- In-person community stakeholder meeting



# Guidance for Moving Forward

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- What should guide development of the interpretive plan as we take the next steps in the process?
- What else do we need to know or consider as we move forward with this work?



# Community Stakeholder Engagement

- Participate in a group that regularly meets?
- One on one interview?
- Stay connected distribution list?
- Some other way?

If you would like to contribute to this effort, how would you like to be engaged?



# Community Stakeholder Group

- Meet on a monthly basis (typically online)
- Assist the team with “big picture” questions
- May be asked to review report sections

## Example questions:

1. Overall themes – are we getting it right?
2. If we offer different interpretive strategies, which do you feel would be most effective in engaging youth in your community?
3. Help us with more technical questions like mapping areas of kuleana and stewardship



# Mahalo Nui

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If you have any questions or comments,  
please contact:

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