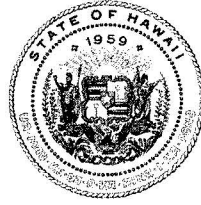
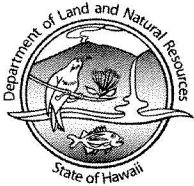


LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2009
9:45 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 49
URGING FULL PRESERVATION OF UNITED STATE MARINE CORPS AIR
STATION EWA AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT, MUSEUM AND RESTORED PARK
FOR THE STATE OF HAWAII**

House Concurrent Resolution 49 resolves to encourage the President, Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Interior to preserve Marine Corp Air Station Ewa, or a portion of it, as a National Monument. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this concurrent resolution.

As the concurrent resolution details, Marine Corp Air Station Ewa played a significant role in World War II as it was attacked before Japanese aircraft targeted Pearl Harbor. Three marines lost their lives in the initial attack on Hawaii, yet this part of the America's entry into World War II is overshadowed by the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Department believes that the Marine Corp Air Station Ewa represents a significant period in the history of Hawaii and the Nation and at the very least, parts of the Air Station should be incorporated into the Valor in the Pacific National Monument.

The Department is working with a group of interested individuals to nominate a portion of Marine Corp Air Station Ewa to the National Register of Historic Places. A National Monument designation would be an even more fitting tribute to the valor and sacrifices of all Marines.

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
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AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING

FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

From: Kiersten Faulkner [Kiersten@historichawaii.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 11:06 AM
To: EBMtestimony
Subject: HCR49, Relating to US Marine Corps Air Station 'Ewa

To: Representative Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Representative Isaac W. Choy, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business & Military Affairs

From: Kiersten Faulkner
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Committee Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2009
9:45 a.m.
Conference Room 312

Subject: HCR49, Relating to US Marine Corps Air Station 'Ewa

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing with concerns about HCR49, which urges full preservation of US Marine Corps Air Station 'Ewa as a National Monument, Museum and Restored Park for the State of Hawai'i.

HHF strongly supports current efforts to identify and preserve significant portions of the 'Ewa Marine Corps Air Station and to identify an appropriate boundary for nomination to the Hawai'i State and National Registers of Historic Places. However, in order to identify the most significant and intact areas for preservation, it is necessary to conduct a battlefield survey, historic research, delineate an appropriate boundary, and determine an inventory of contributing and noncontributing historic features.

Following the research and boundary determination, a plan for the preservation of those sites and features should occur. The preservation plan would identify the most appropriate methods, responsible parties, funding and operation mechanisms, and other means to accomplish these ends.

HCR49 recommends that this deliberate and thoughtful approach be cut short by urging that the former Air Station be designated a National Monument. A more appropriate approach would be to recommend that the Navy and its private, public and non-profit partners proceed with research and a battlefield analysis process. This type of research is a specialty within the preservation field, requiring qualified preservation professionals with experience in military history and battlefield preservation. Following the research step, a nomination should be prepared and submitted following the established procedures for all historic sites to be listed on the Hawaii Register and to be forwarded for consideration for the National Register.

Since 1974, Historic Hawai'i Foundation has been a statewide leader for historic preservation. HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, economic viability and environmental sustainability of the state.

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TESTIMONY: SCR 24

To: Rep. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Rep Isaac W. Choy, Vice Chair

Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business & Military Affairs

From: John Bond, Save Ewa Field

I, John Bond and Save Ewa Field, fully supports HCR 49 to have Navy Region Hawaii fulfill their lawful requirement for a factual and accurate Section 110 Historic Survey, as required by US Federal Laws and Statutes.

Save Ewa Field believes it is very imperative that significant histories of land, buildings, structures, especially those relating to the hugely important World War II Era, be accurately noted and cataloged so that they may be preserved and studied by future generations and historians.

We do not believe that the survey information that Navy Region Hawaii is using for this land transfer is accurate or defensible, and therefore they should be required to fulfill their obligations under preservation laws passed by the US Congress and as further directed by the President of the United States under Executive Order 13287: "Preserve America".

Losing these important details and records means a loss of our shared National Heritage. Since many good people paid the price in blood and tears for the freedoms we enjoy today, we cannot allow a real estate transaction to wipe away forever important historic sites and buildings that are the symbols of America's hard fought and valiant sacrifices in the Pacific War.

The MAJOR HISTORIC POINTS about Ewa Field...

Ewa Field is one of the first Airfields in Hawaii, hand carved out of Kiawe and Sisal Forest in 1925 and is currently 84 years old, as of 2009. Much of the work was done with picks, shovels and machetes- and only a very few mechanized tractors and dirt haulers.

Ewa Field was the designated mooring site for the U.S. Navy's Dirigible Program of the 1930's, and later its mooring mast was converted into an air traffic control tower- one of the most unique at that time in aviation history. Ewa Field was considered "High Tech" in its day.

4 U.S. Marines: Sgt William E. Lutschan, Sgt Karolo Micheletta, PFC William G. Turner, and PFC Edward S. Lawrence, were killed defending Ewa Field, against the direct enemy action of the Empire of Japan's armed Naval Air Force. 2 civilians: Yaeko Lillian Oda (6 years old) and Francisco Tacderan (34 years old), residents from Ewa Community, were also killed as a result of the attack.

Over Ewa Field was the widely depicted in films air battle between US Army P-40's and Imperial Japanese Navy fighter-bombers. Pilots Taylor and Welch arrived from Haleiwa Airfield, still wearing parts of tuxedos, aloha shirts and armed only with light 30 caliber ammunition, and engaged an overwhelming number of enemy planes, shooting some down and dispersing the rest.

Ewa Field was very likely the first place attacked on December 7 because it was the major USMC fighter base standing in the way of the air attack on Pearl Harbor. The attack on Ewa was so well coordinated and precise that it was clear that the Japanese Navy had spent considerable time and effort on taking out what they considered a very key tactical military fighter air base.

Ewa Field Marines were the one's send to Wake Island a week before the attack on Pearl Harbor. These Ewa Marines fought a heroic one month resistance against an overwhelming Japanese Invasion and it was the first time in history, for both the US and Japan, that a sea invasion force was successfully repelled by US forces. The Wake Island battle, where even Ewa Marine pilots fought in hand to hand combat, inspired the hugely influential 1942 film "Wake Island".

Ewa Marines again rose to great WW-II fame and destiny during the Battle of Midway, when they conducted suicidal air missions against superior Japanese forces, losing their lives, but causing the needed distraction of enemy forces and resulting in the crucial sea battle tipping in the favor of the US Navy. The US Marine aviators were basically America's Kamakazi, by knowingly flying to their deaths in completely out-classed planes in this epic air-sea battle.

During 1942-1945 MCAS Ewa was the major Marine Aviation Headquarters in the Pacific during World War Two (WWII), a staging and transit point for all Marine Aviation assets moving into combat against the Empire of Japan's Air, Naval and Ground Forces. The famous and decisive island invasion tactics of the Pacific War were largely conceived and developed at MCAS Ewa.

MCAS Ewa is the birth place of Marine Fighter Squadron 214th, known as "The Blacksheep", including many other famous Marine Aviation units, and also where many famous USMC Aces were trained or formed into fighter squadrons.

In July, 1944 MCAS Ewa was visited by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz.

During 1944-45 MCAS Ewa was the predecessor of today's Camp HM Smith Pacific Command Headquarters- for then USMC General HM Smith.

MCAS Ewa Field should be considered for National American Battlefield status and be placed on the list of National Historic places as a National Landmark, and made into a National Monument, for American citizens and visitors from around the world to see and

remember when they come to Hawaii.

The December 7, 1941 attack on Ewa Field was witnessed by three still living EYE-WITNESSES from Ewa Village... Joel Fujita and his wife Francis, who both witnessed the December 7th attack on the Ewa Field main gate. Joel later served with the famed 442nd in Italy where he saw fierce combat and friends killed. Ramsay Hishinuma, who now lives in Aiea, was at Onelua Beach, Ewa Beach on December 7th and witnessed several US Navy and Japanese planes shot down and crash in the ocean or in the Kiawe trees around and near Ewa Field.

***** EWA FIELD MOVIES *****

The hugely influential early 1942 Classic film “Wake Island”...

The US Marines that were featured in one of the greatest and most influential war films ever made were from Ewa Field! The movie was “Wake Island”, released within months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and it is credited with so many mass public enlistments in the military, especially the Marines, that military recruiters set up branch offices at nearly every theatre where the film was shown, signing up tens of thousands of recruits.

MCAS Ewa was a major inspiration for “Flying Leathernecks”

John Wayne and Robert Ryan co-starred in “Flying Leathernecks”, a intense WW-II Pacific Islands movie produced in 1951 by RKO studio chief Howard Hughes, which featured thrilling air combat footage and some actual scenes shot at Ewa MCAS, which was the hub of USMC Aviation in WW-II.

Ewa Field Historic Park - Pacific War History Museum, Ewa Field

The Ewa-Kapolei area has an enormous opportunity to be the location of a major visitor attraction- The Pacific War History Museum.

Imagine actor Tom Hanks lending his name as an Honorary Chairman, helping to raise money for this cause, and possibly director Steven Spielberg also appearing for a fund raising effort. It could happen... There is no Pacific War History Museum in Hawaii, yet Ewa Field has the land and the actual history that would make it the perfect location.

It is entirely possible- if we can work together, to make this happen. The fact is, Ewa Field and the adjoining area, would be perfect because there are numerous interesting and very authentic WW-II quonset huts, aircraft hangers, fighter plane revetments, and of course, the authentic site of the actual December 7, 1941 attack, visible in the concrete ramp which was strafed by Japanese Zeros.

The most significant air combat dogfights and air battles of December 7 all took place over, or adjacent to, Ewa Field. Ewa Field and the grounds that became Ewa MCAS are more directly tied into the History of the Pacific War than almost any other single

location in the Hawaiian Islands.

There is also a major air logistics history involving Ewa MCAS and the most classic of all airplanes, the C-47 transports, which still fly today in many places around the world. Among Marine pilots flying these Ewa planes was then very famous film actor Tyrone Power. Virtually all US Marine Pacific War planning and operational support was conducted through Ewa Field and Ewa MCAS, including most major fighter aircraft training and logistics support.

It is extremely rare to find a still completely intact 1941 airfield, especially one that was attacked in the very first minutes of the greatest war mankind has ever witnessed! The real historic value of this is really astonishing- for people to actually be able to go out and SEE and touch the actual 1941 airfield. They can actually SEE the bullet strikes and cannon fire marks made by attacking Japanese warplanes on the morning of December 7, 1941. Still very visible are extensive concrete spauling from intense fuel fires as shot up planes burned up. This has NOT been paved over! Its still there, and an honest Section 106 historic survey will document this!

Millions of visitors would greatly enjoy seeing this actual historic treasure. The millions of visitors to the USS Arizona prove that this is a very viable attraction concept. How dumb would it be to destroy an original American battlefield and site of great history for a shopping mall? Possible uses for an Ewa Field Historic Park would be as a location for filming movie and television scenes, hopefully including a major motion picture project and perhaps a regular television series. There has already been plans discussed for a Movie-TV Sound Stage at the Kapolei Business Park which would be a counterpart to the State's Diamond Head studio facility.

There are several buildings- Quonset Hut structures, Revetments, and a medium sized 1943 Aircraft Hanger which should be saved and which would make ideal structures for various historic preservation groups to display aircraft, vehicles and various other historic artifacts of a museum quality. These could also be the places where Historic Military Re-Inactors and groups with WW-II Era themed sets could have their offices and meetings. This would facilitate also their involvement with movie and television production organizations that might use the airfield.

With some of this resolved hopefully, we can then move towards the next part of the process which involves the official creation of an historic park site, perhaps called Ewa Field Historic Park. The Historic Park could be the location for a variety of known local historic interest groups, including possibly now a Hawaii Military Vehicle Preservation Association group which is quite substantial and active on Oahu. Also nearby is the Hawaiian Railway museum which will soon have a fully operational steam locomotive running on several miles of restored and operational track.

I think that based upon the land that the city will be conveyed, this could be joined together, with their consent of course, into a larger historic park concept. I believe it is fully in the City's interest to do so, as what we can do then is utilize the National Park

Service's offer of a federally funded National Battlefield Protection grant to do the necessary survey work. Also there are other NPS grants also available for Heritage Tourism and "Preserve America" grants which could actually be quite substantial, based upon other similar cases. Nearby Ewa Village is already a federally listed Historic District and the adjacent Oahu Railway line is also on the National Historic register.

With proper historic preservation and an accurate historic look, the Ewa Field Historic Park could become a major international visitor attraction where people would come to see the historic WW-II December 7th airfield, see historic aircraft, vehicles, view re-inactments with possibly even fly-overs of vintage WW-II aircraft that would be based on the old Barbers Point NAS side of Kalaeloa. It can all work together to be a very substantial theme attraction and employ many people in interesting and creative work opportunities.

The really important aspects for the West Oahu community would be a new Ewa Field Historic Park with an aviation and WW-II Era military history theme providing a range of interesting and creative employment possibilities, but which could also be enjoyed as a public park facility with walking trails, bike trails, archery, baseball field, etc.

We need to have a standard, and virtually ALWAYS done Historic Survey, called a Section 106 (Federal Preservation Law Statute) for this property, which consists of 150 acres of Public, Tax Payer purchased Federal Land, under the administration of Navy Region Hawaii, which is part of a BRAC Land Transfer. Normally, as has often been the case, land like this would have been transferred to the Department of Interior and administered as National Park lands- which is what virtually everyone has wanted with the 150 acres called Ewa Field.

The ENTIRE original 1941 airfield attacked on December 7, 1941- the concrete and asphalt-tarmac still is there! It has not been re-paved since the base closed in 1952! The airfield was greatly EXPANDED, and the Navy later built their golf course over the later base expansion. But- since the base closed in 1952, to this day, you can clearly see in Google air photos (really good USGS air photo data), that the original 1941 airfield was NEVER touched or re-developed- EVER!

WHY is it that the original Navy Golf Course developers, the engineers who re-aligned Geiger Road, and the engineers who constructed the FAA beacon facility ALL carefully avoided the ORIGINAL 1941 airfield? It was because they had RESPECT for the SACRED HISTORY of the 1941 airfield.

Sincerely,

John Bond
Save Ewa Field - National Monument - American Battlefield

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 5:39 PM
To: EBMtestimony
Cc: bennettj009@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for HCR49 on 3/3/2009 9:45:00 AM

Testimony for EBM 3/3/2009 9:45:00 AM HCR49

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: John D. Bennett
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: bennettj009@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 2/25/2009

Comments:

I fully support House Concurrent Resolution No, 49

The former Ewa Marine Corps Air Station, also known as Ewa Field and Ewa Mooring Mast Field, should be preserved for the public's use and designated a NATIONAL MONUMENT as it was the site of the first shots fired in anger by aircraft of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) on that fateful day of December 7, 1941, which resulted in loss of the majority of the forty-nine aircraft based at the field. Also damaged in the attack were buildings and equipment belonging to the United States Marine Corps.

Damage to airplanes, buildings and equipment can either be repaired or replaced, but nothing can return the lives of the valiant marines, PRIVATE WILLIAM G. TURNER, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS EDWARD S. LAURENCE and SERGEANT CARLO A. MICHELETTO who gave their lives in support of their country during the attack on Ewa Field. Two innocent civilians of Ewa, YAEKO LILLIAN ODA and FRANCISCO TACDERAN also tragically lost their lives during the dastardly attack on American soil.

A valiant sortie was carried out on December 7, 1941 by two fledgling Army Air Corps pilots, SECOND LIEUTENANTS KENNETH M. TAYLOR and GEORGE S. WELCH, who rushed from their quarters at Wheeler Field to the dispersal field at Haleiwa where they were able to fly two P-40 aircraft in pursuit of any IJN aircraft, both pilots engaged IJN dive bombers in the vicinity of Ewa Moring Mast Field in an epic dogfight. For their heroism, both were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in lieu of the MEDAL OF HONOR, which they rightfully earned.

Ewa Field went on in the war to become Ewa Marine Corps Air Station, It was headquarters of Marine Air Wings, Pacific (MAWPac), organized in San Diego on August 15, 1942, redesignated to Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (AirFMFPac) and subordinate commands, which illustrated the important role Ewa Field played in the War against Japan. The airfield was an important staging place for all Marine aviation assets moving into combat against the armed forces of Imperial Japan. It was also the birthplace of Marine Fighter Squadron 214 (VMF-214) known as the "Black sheep Squadron" which went on to engage the enemy over the South Pacific causing the loss of many IJN aircraft.

Based on the above, I feel that the designation and development of Ewa Field as a National Monument, Museum, and Restored park would preserve this very important American site.

Respectfully Submitted,

John D. Bennett
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