

Gordon K. Leslie
82-6012 Manini Beach Road
Captain Cook, HI 96704
(808) 936-1479

September 26, 2000

Timothy E. Johns, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources
P.O. Box 62, Honolulu, HI 96809
Fax: (808) 587-0390

Re: Kealakekua Bay State Park

Dear Mr. Johns,

For the past twenty years State Parks has been trying to impose its ideas on the community. Both State Parks and their "development consultants": Belt Collins has acted arrogantly and insensitively in regards to the cultural concerns of our ohana and the local community. They came here and staged these presentations run by their 'facilitators', which have the effect of manipulating the testimony to conform with their preconceived ideas, then return to Honolulu and put their spin on what happened and publish it in books with pretty picture covers, all of which has little to do with the true wishes of the community.

There are some basic things which should be understood:

- 1) The community does not want the development of a Visitor Center at all! The so called Conceptual Plan was developed only because those who were foolish enough to stay in the meetings were told there must be a visitor Center somewhere. The majority of us walked out when we saw how the meetings were being manipulated by your consultants and their facilitators.
- 2) Pali Kapu o Keoua is a sacred place. On the Ka'awaloa side, it is the site of the burial caves of our Ali'i. It is the location of the ancient Hawaiian trail over which the image of the o Lono was carried each year at the makahiki. Kealakekua means the pathway of the gods. There are perhaps two meanings: 1) The pathway on which the image of the god was carried, and 2) a more esoteric meaning as a place of direct spiritual connection with the gods.
- 3) Interpretive Facilities are in and of themselves culturally insensitive. Modern depictions of some scholar's speculation of what life in our ancient time might have been is fundamentally demeaning to our culture. We want none of this.

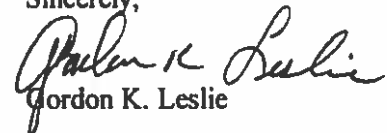
As I was quoted on page G-29 of the so called Conceptual Plan: "The State needs to start over again. This Plan proposal is not acceptable." A precondition to State Parks moving forward with any form of Environmental Assessment process for any improvements what so ever must be for the Conceptual Plan to be first officially set aside by the BLNR.

If this does not happen, we will force a full EIS process under HRS chapter 343. Our attorney reminds us that in the 2000 legislature, they added the category of "cultural impacts" to the EIS laws and that this has concept of requiring State Agencies to respect cultural impacts has been upheld in two very recent Supreme Court cases.

I understand that Belt Collins has distributed a "preliminary" Phase One Development plan to the County and other agencies in preparation for an EA. I strongly urge you to make an immediate written directive that this process is to be halted until there has been full and proper consultation with the community. I attach a form which I have passed out to members of my ohana and the community to record each individual's concerns and make it absolutely clear that we must be consulted under the provisions of HRS chapter 343.

On the proposed Phase One Development plan which Belt Collins sent to the HI Planning Department (of which I recently procured poor xerox copy) there is a reference to the 2nd Community Meeting at which votes were taken: How many people are in favor of the Leslie Plan (which should have been phrased as the Community Plan): 52 in favor, 2 against; How many people are in favor of the DLNR Plan: 0 in favor, 53 against. There follows a "Response to the G. Leslie proposal." I find it ridiculous that I have not been sent a complete color original of this document and that I have not been "consulted" about the proposed EA at the same time as the HI County Planning Department. In spite of my long community participation, I have also never received a copy of the Conceptual Park Plan!

Sincerely,


Gordon K. Leslie

cc. Russell Kokubun, Landboard Member
Martha Yent, State Parks
Belt Collins
Michael Matsukawa Esq.
Gary Gill