



MUNEKIYO HIRAGA

Planning. Project Management. Sustainable Solutions.

Karlynn K. Fukuda
PRESIDENT

Mark Alexander Roy AICP, LEED AP
VICE PRESIDENT

Tessa Munekiyo Ng AICP
VICE PRESIDENT

Michael T. Munekiyo AICP
FOUNDER

December 11, 2024

Yuki Lei Sugimura, Vice Chair
County of Maui
Maui County Council
200 S. High Street, 8th Floor
Wailuku, HI 96793

SUBJECT: Early Consultation Request for Proposed Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park; TMK Nos. (2)2-5-001:002, (2)2-3-002:099, and (2)2-5-002:001 Kula, Maui, Hawai'i

Dear Vice Chair Sugimura:

The County of Maui (County), Department of Agriculture (MDOA) is proposing the development of the Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park (UMAP) by improving 262-acres of land identified as TMK No. (2)2-5-001:002 (Parcel 2), and related water system improvements located on TMK No. (2)2-5-002:001 (Parcel 1), and TMK No. (2)2-3-002:099 (Parcel 99) in Kula, Maui, Hawai'i. See **Figure 1**, **Figure 2**, and **Figure 3**. We note that our office previously distributed a request for comments on the UMAP project in May 2022, however, the scope was limited to improvements for the UMAP site. Subsequently, the MDOA determined that additional improvements would be included in the scope of the project as it relates to water infrastructure to support the UMAP. A description of the updated project scope is provided below.

A. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The County of Maui developed the Kula Agricultural Park (KAP) in the 1980's, which was created to promote the development of diversified agriculture on Maui by providing appropriately sized agricultural lots at reasonable rent with long-term tenure. The existing park consists of 31 farm lots ranging from 10 acres to 30 acres for a total of 445 acres and supports 20 farm tenants. There are a multitude of crops being grown such as Kula onions, tropical fruits, vegetables, herbs, dryland taro, turf grass, landscape nursery products, and flowers. MDOA serves as the County's land management entity for the park.

In 2018, the County acquired 262 acres of land identified as Parcel 2 near the intersection of Omaopio Road and Pūlehu Road in lower Kula. This land, which was previously used to cultivate sugar cane, is approximately 2,000 feet makai (west) of the existing KAP. The MDOA proposes to use this land to expand the existing KAP with the new UMAP, and further bolster diversified agriculture on Maui.

Maui: 305 High Street, Suite 104 • Wailuku, Hawaii 96793 • Tel: 808.244.2015

Oahu: 225 Queen Street, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Tel: 808.983.1233

www.munekiyoHIRAGA.com

Received at BFED meeting on 12/17/2024

Early consultation request letters were distributed on May 26, 2022 for the original proposed action for development of the UMAP site. Since that time, the project has been revised to include water system improvements located on portions of Parcel 1 and Parcel 99 that will support the UMAP site. Parcel 99 is currently being proposed as the location for a new reservoir expansion site within the existing KAP. This early consultation letter amends the project as described in the prior early consultation request letter.

A. PROPOSED ACTION

In 2022, the proposed project included development of the UMAP by subdividing Parcel 2 into 18 lots, ranging in size from four (4) acres to 20 acres, that would be leased to local farmers and businesses for diversified agriculture. The revised UMAP proposed action has been reconfigured to consist of 28 improved farm sites to be leased to local farmers by the MDOA, and offsite improvements for the KAP's water system that will enable it to provide irrigation and fire protection service for the UMAP. The project will include improvements to roads and infrastructure, including electrical power infrastructure and an irrigation system using a new 2.4 MG water storage reservoir and additional booster pump at an existing pump station to deliver non-potable water to each farm site at the UMAP.

B. REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

The use of County lands and funds will require environmental review pursuant to Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) and Section 11-200.1-8, Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR). An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to evaluate the technical characteristics, environmental impacts and alternatives, as well as advance findings relative to the HAR Criteria for the project. The MDOA will serve as the approving agency for the EA.

A component of the onsite irrigation system is a proposed pipeline which will cross the Pūlehu Gulch as well as a potential road crossing for the UMAP. As such, a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination will be sought from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine if portions of the project are within the federal jurisdiction of the USACE, triggering the need for a Department of Army Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the State Department of Health. As may be applicable, Stream Channel Alteration Permits will be obtained from the State Commission on Water Resource Management. Coastal Zone Management Consistency approvals will also be sought from the State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, if needed.

On behalf of the MDOA, we are writing to respectfully request early consultation comments on the proposed project in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 343, HRS and Section 11-200.1-8, HAR.

Yuki Lei Sugimura, Vice Chair
December 11, 2024
Page 3

We would appreciate receiving any written comments you may have regarding the proposed project by **January 10, 2025**. Please address your comments to:

Munekiyo Hiraga
Attention: Korwyn Roberts
305 High Street, Suite 104
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

OR

Email: planning@munekiyohiraga.com

Should you have any questions regarding this Chapter 343, HRS early consultation request, please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 983-1233. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,



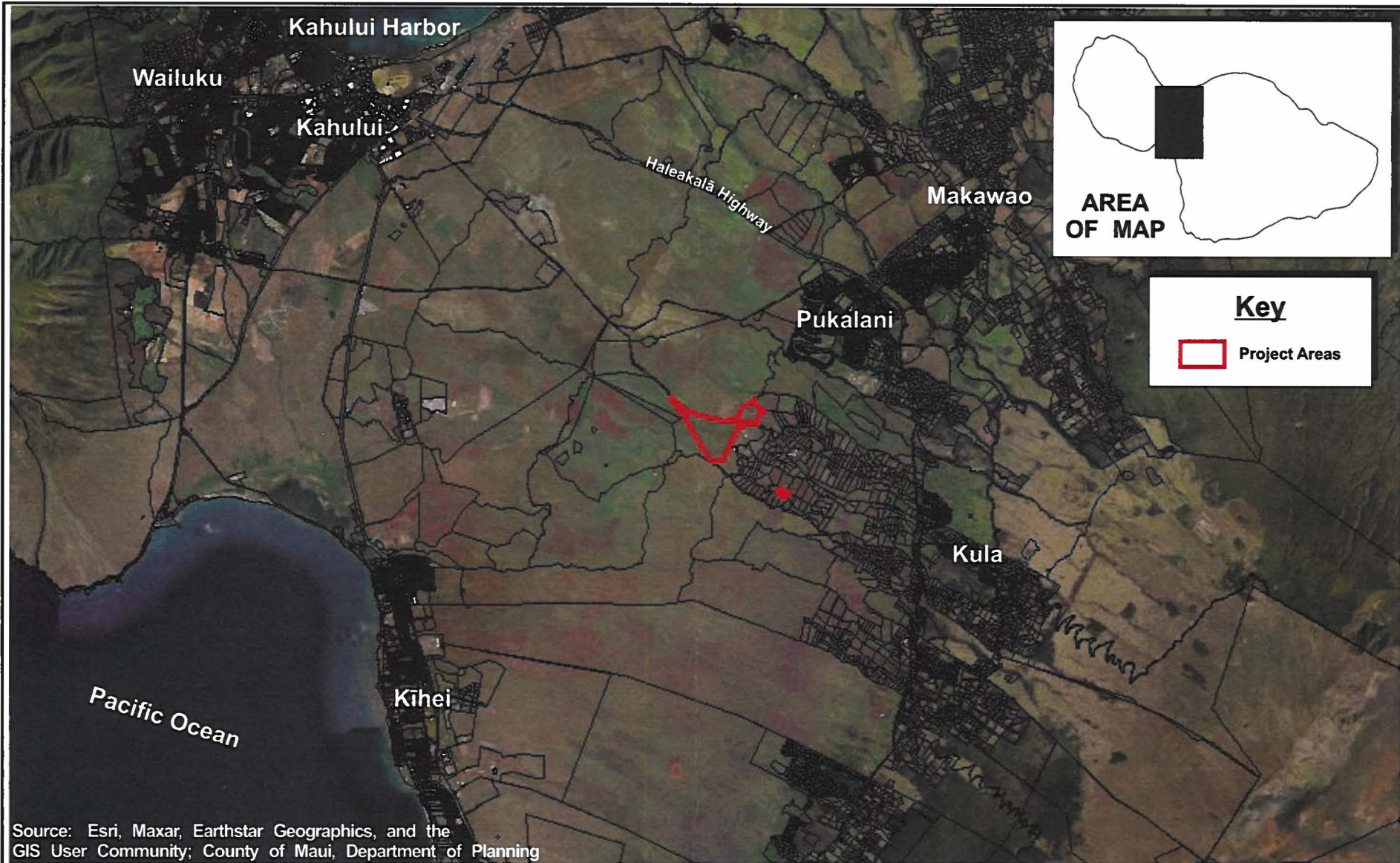
Korwyn Roberts, AICP
Senior Associate

KR:ab

Attachments

cc: Rogerene "Kali" Arce, Department of Agriculture (w/attachments)
Koa Hewahewa, Department of Agriculture (w/attachments)
Dan Shupack, Department of Management (w/attachments)
Christopher Kim, Department of Water Supply (w/attachments)
Darren Unemori, Warren S. Unemori Engineering, Inc. (w/attachments)

K:\DATA\WUE\Kula Ag Park Exp\Apps\0ECL\2024 ECL\2024 EC Letter.docx



Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community; County of Maui, Department of Planning

Figure 1 Proposed Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park Regional Location Map



Prepared for: County of Maui, Department of Agriculture



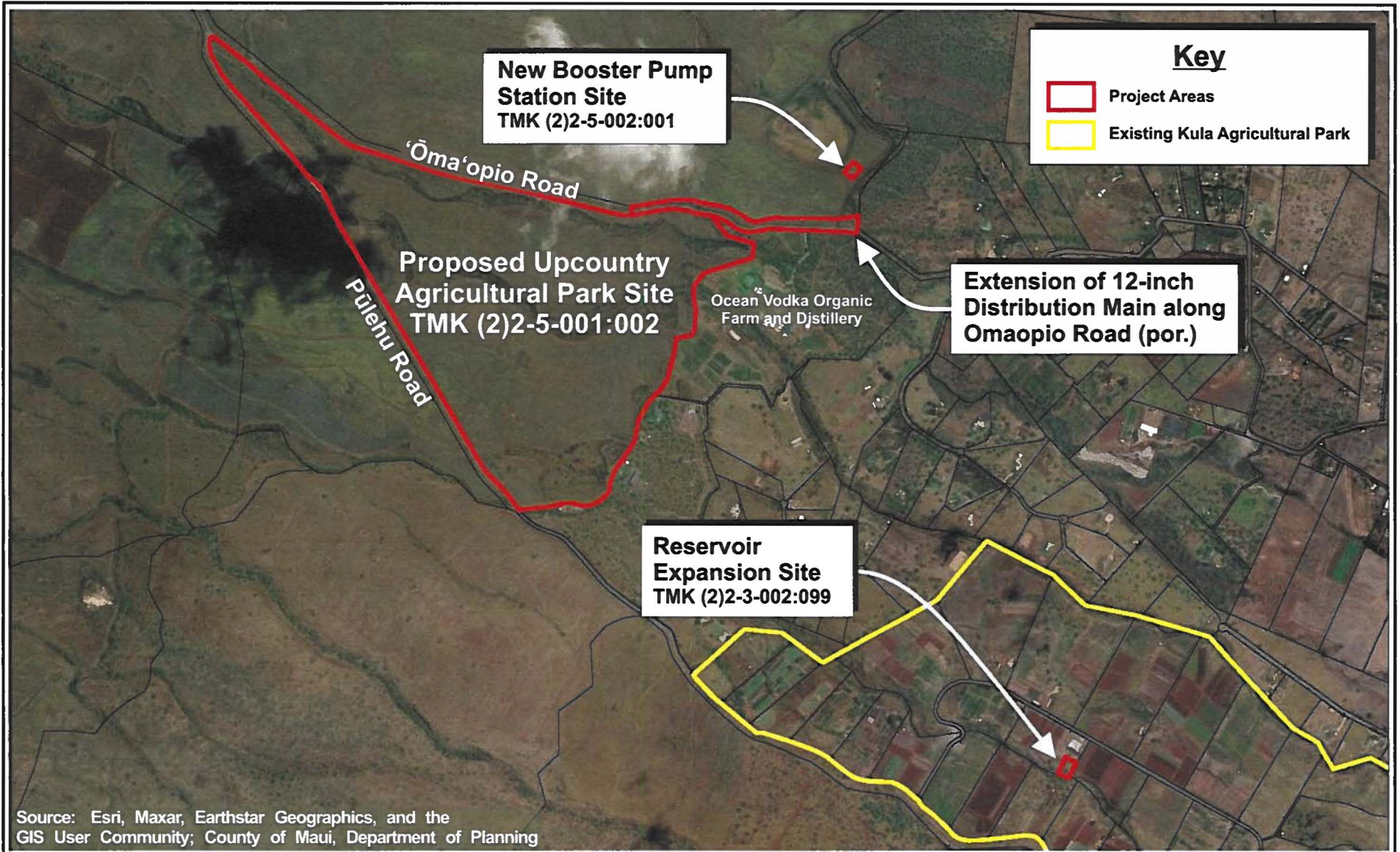
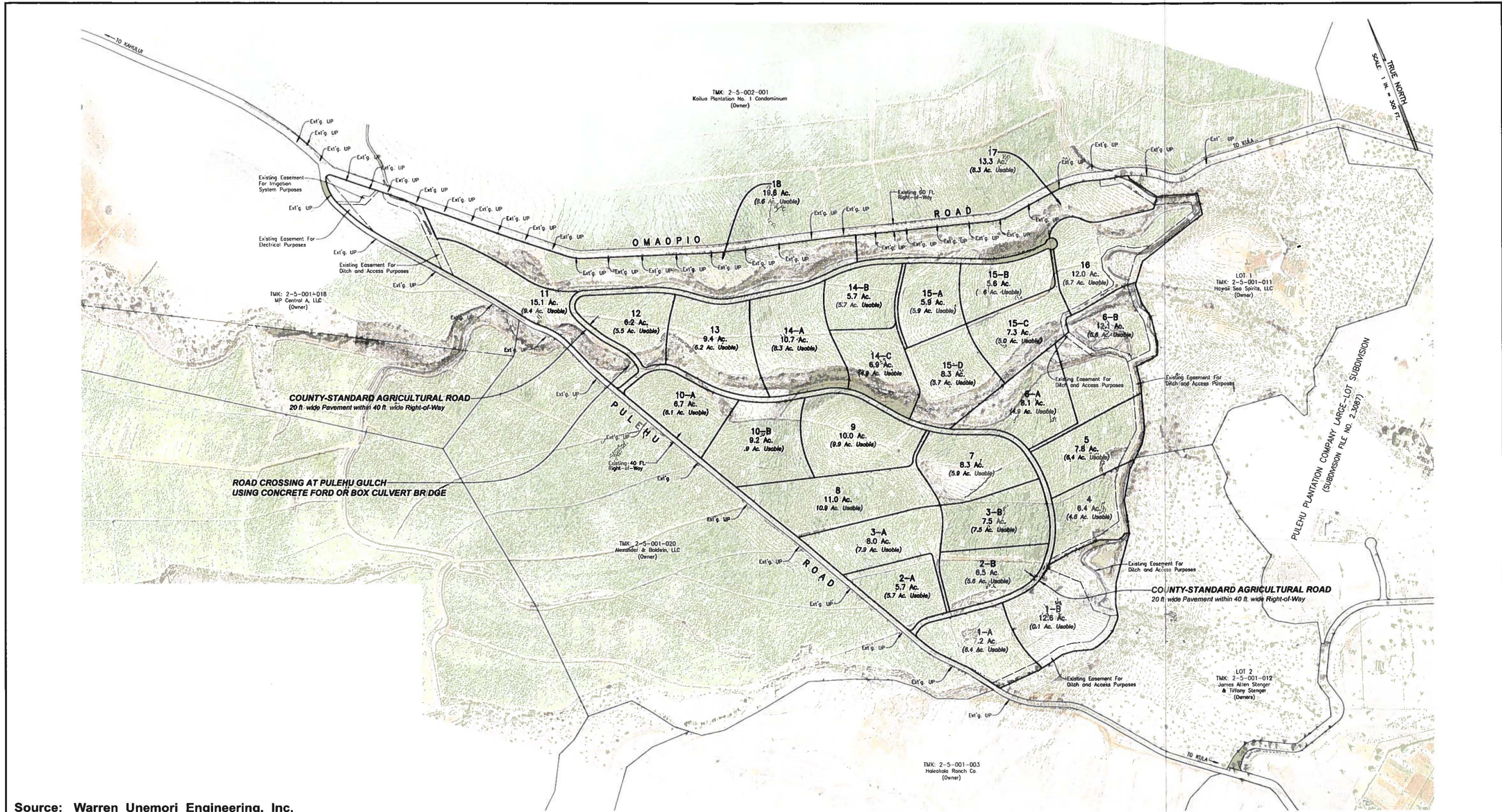


Figure 2

Proposed Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park
Project Location Map





Source: Warren Unemori Engineering, Inc.

Figure 3

Proposed Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park Preliminary Subdivision Map

NOT TO SCALE



Prepared for: County of Maui, Office of Economic Development

