

Aloha, Jerry,

We have received Mr Peter Yee's comments on our draft EA for our proposed open ocean fish farm off Unualoha Point, in Kona. We thank OHA for their input, and hope that we can adequately resolve your agency's questions and concerns.

A number of the statements made by Mr Yee assert that our draft EA is inaccurate or just plain wrong in several important cultural areas. Therefore, before we provide a formal response to OHA's comments, we would like to clarify or resolve any apparent differences between the information provided to us during our community and kupuna consultations, and the information that has been provided to OHA. We would therefore like to obtain the names and contact information for Mr Yee's sources. If you have no objections, we will approach these people, to try to ascertain the basis for any misunderstandings or miscommunications.

We would specifically like to resolve the discrepancies between information in our draft EA, with the following statements made in Mr Yee's letter :

1. *"Several members of the community state that they do fish, dive and gather crabs in the area"*. This comment directly contradicts all of the evidence that we have gathered from kupuna in the area, and other highly knowledgeable fishermen. Perhaps your sources fish and dive on the reef area that lies shoreward of our proposed farm site? Perhaps they gather a'ama crabs along the shore, rather than Kona crabs in the proposed lease area? As our site ranges from 150 – 200 ft deep, over bare sand bottom, we would be very surprised if anyone was diving in this area.

2. *"Native Hawaiian fishermen take care of the ('opelu) ko'a"*. Again, all of the evidence that we have gathered from our observations, our discussions with the community and the kupuna, and from Kepa Maly's extensive investigation with the Kala'oa kupuna, indicate that there is currently no feeding, fishing, or maintenance of the 'opelu ko'a in this area.

3. *"None of the examples are from the Keahole fishing area ... Only two (Hawaiians), Mahealani Pai and Paul Chung-Hoon, are from this specific Kona area" ... and later "It is clear that there was not adequate consultation with the hawaiian and Native Hawaiian community to provide information for a cultural impact assessment"*. It appears that there is some confusion among your sources as to which families are from the Kala'oa area of Kekaha. We do not claim to know these lineages ourselves, but we have relied on our Hawaiian sources to direct us to those individuals who have direct tenant links to the Kala'oa ahupua'a, and specific knowledge of the location and status of the 'opelu ko'a. In all cases, our sources have told us that we had met with the appropriate kupuna. We repeatedly asked for any other contacts who might be able to provide information in this area, and we were given no names beyond those we had contacted.

Our meeting with Kala'oa kupuna included Valentine K. Ako, Robert Punihaole Sr., George 'Kino' Kahananui Sr. We had also approached Sam Keananaina by telephone, but he was unable to attend the meeting. Ruby McDonald, OHA's Community Resource

Co-ordinator in West Hawaii has confirmed for us that these kupuna are not from Waimea, but are among the main kupuna from the Kala'oa area. Are your sources claiming that these individuals are not from this ahupua'a, but are from elsewhere? If so, then is there some means by which we can resolve this apparent discrepancy between our various sources?

We have also met with David Roy's kupuna group, and a number of other fishing experts or cultural practitioners from the area, including Karen Haleamau, Aka Mahi, Angel Pilago, Ed Stevens, Daniel Akaka Jnr and Hank Fergestrom. In addition, Hannah Springer, Dickie Nelson, Lunakanawai Hauanio (Alena Kaiokekoa's son) and Josephine Kamoku were also all in attendance at the West Hawaii Fisheries Council Meeting at which we gave a presentation on our project. In addition, Kepa Maly has provided us with an assessment of the cultural significance of the waters offshore of Keahole that was prepared for the earlier CO2 dumping study.

We are following up on your suggestion to contact both Junior Kanuha and Josephine Kamoku. However, it seems that perhaps you or your sources have perhaps only accessed one of the several meeting transcripts that we have provided on our website – i.e. our meeting with the Royal Order of Kamehameha. We have also provided transcripts for several other meetings. Perhaps you might wish to review our web site in more detail, particularly the following : 1. Informational Meeting at NELHA (18 KB), 2. Local Community Interest Core Group Meeting (11KB), and 3. Local Kupuna Group (24 KB). Our feeling from all of these meetings was that, while there might still be some concerns, the Native Hawaiians with whom we consulted were not opposed to our proposal, nor were there areas of cultural impact that they thought that we should address further. After further reviewing this information on our web site, could you please provide more specifics on how you think we should extend these discussions, if we have no indication of any potential cultural impacts?

Further, could you also please provide us with more information on your concerns r.e. biodiversity and bioprospecting. We have not addressed these concepts in the draft EA because we did not think them relevant. It appears to us that these two concepts, while of concern to Native Hawaiians in their assertion of rights and claims over the ocean, will not have any direct impact on, or be impacted by, our proposed activities. Could you please provide us with some specific guidance on the areas where your concerns lie?

We thank you again for your input. We hope that with such assistance we can strengthen our proposal, and our project, for the betterment of our oceans, Kona's community, Hawaiians and Hawaii.

Mahalo, and aloha,

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