

Interview 3/site visit with Sam Kaho`okaulana to Kaheka and other coastal areas (by Chuck Langlas, with Jennifer Waipa) 2/29/2000

(The first three features are pretty much straight out--from the end of the road at the lava flow to the first 25 mph sign farther back west. Sam notes that few people went there besides his family, because it was a long ways to walk from the nearest pullouts--to the east at High Castle, to the west at H_lei.)

lae 1, Kaheka (photos 4-4 & 5 Sam Kahookaulana and Jennifer Waipa talking at lae 1; photo 4-7 lae 1 from the west (Ka`ū side)

Lae used by Sam's grandfather and father as lae ulua, place for old style ulua fishing by hanging bait from an `ohi`a stick, later used by Sam; there's a crack for the butt of the stick and you point the stick out toward S.W.; there's a shallow indentation where the fisherman pounds palu (of puhi, eel) to attract ulua.

His grandfather used to catch puhi from the pali, using a pole and line baited with fish fillet; drop the weighted line to the bottom and puhi will bite the bait first. (There's no place close by to catch puhi by chumming and using a handline in coastal rocks.)

His father lost an ulua here--it got stuck on the rock pulling it up; when his father climbed down to push it off from the rock, the hook straightened out and the fish dropped down into the water and was lost.

The coast to east of the lae was good for catching menpachi before the flow brought sand in to the coast. The coast to west of the lae is good for catching moi since the sand came in.

A short distance east is a poho (hole) usually filled with water that they used for washing off. Some times it has salt.

lae 2, Kaheka (photo 4-6 lae 2 from the east, photo 4-8 rock windbreak on the lae, photos 4-9 & 10 lae 2 from the west)

Lae (a sea-arch) used for slide-bait ulua, all sides of the lae. Especially favored by Kaipō Kaawaloa (the father of Sam Kaawaloa, grandfather of Samson Kaawaloa). He died there of a heart attack while bringing up an ulua. (Isaia Kealoha saw it--he was fishing at lae 1 at the time).

The rock windbreak on the lae was "always there" according to Sam. But the rock shelters mauka of the lae are new, "probably made by campers."

crack, Kaheka (photos 4-11 & 14 crack from west, w. lae 2 in the background; photos 4-12 & 13 crack from above; photo 4-15 crack from east)

Crack was used by his grandfather to climb down to pound

`opihi on the bottom below the pali, the only place you could get down in the area. At age 10, Sam used stay up above and to watch his grandfather pounding below; all he could do was worry. (Later young guys used to go down with rope all along the pali to pound `opihi for sale.) Sam said that his grandfather was the only one who knew about the crack, but he told someone and pretty soon everybody from Kalapana knew.

`akia

There are quite a few plants of `akia (as well as `ulei) in the Kaheka area. Sam said there used to be a lot up in the Royal Gardens area. They used to use it for rope--ripped off the bark and braided it, e.g. to truss pigs they caught hunting up there. He used to hunt up there, but it's hard to get in now over the lava flows.

lae 3, Kaheka but farther west--just east of the coconut grove (photo 4-22 lae 3 from the west) We were looking for the lae that Aku Hauanio showed me earlier and Sam took me to this one.

He caught an ulua here once. There's not a really good crack for sticking the pole into. He stuck it into a sort of crack, then stuck in 4 pins and tied ropes between the pins, to form an x over the butt-end to hold it down.

We walked farther west toward the coconut grove. Saw a big old `opihi midden with the shells pretty decomposed. Sam decided it's probably from the 70s or 80s--because it looks old, but must be from after they started going down with ropes to get `opihi here. Right below the pali here there was a "good `opihi stretch." Right in front of the coconut grove, Sam says his brother and cousins pole-fish here (not him though, he goes farther east). There's a c-shape there that Sam says is recent, from the 80s. At a point a little farther west, his brother goes for ulua with slide-bait.

45 (named for the old 45 mph marker there; now replaced with a 35 mph marker) (Photos 4-23 & 24: 45 from the west, with coconut grove seen dimly in the background, photo 4-25 plastic pipe at 45 to hold fishing poles)

Sam points out a long area at 45, about 100 feet long, west of the stone wall, where fishermen cast for ulua. usually they use slide-bait, but Same says you could use a "plug" (plastic lure) too. There was a shelf, then a drop off not far out. You cast out beyond the drop off and you would catch ulua. Sam says there's been plenty ulua caught here.

Lae 4 (just out from the MP 18 marker, same as the one shown me by Ben Hauanio) (Photos 5-1 & 2)

Sam says this lae was used by Uncle Robert Keliioomalua too (as well as Ben Hauanio). We saw a shallow depression there for pounding palu, a c-shape with some boards in it. Sam says they burn wood there--which they're not supposed to do--to cook the puhi that they pound for chum (to make it smell more).

Here Sam talked about the difficulty of sticking in a heavy `ohi`a stick, holding it out over the pali and bringing the butt-end back into the crack. He uses bamboo instead of `ohi`a because it's lighter.

Additional notes:

--Sam says ulua season runs from May to September.

--Sam stopped fishing about two years ago, after all his fishing equipment was stolen from his garage (at Pahoa). He tried once after there, bought a rod at Walmart and went w. his brother; but it didn't feel right, so he gave the rod to his brother and hasn't gone back since.

Sketch maps:

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Jennifer Waipa and Charles Langlas, 2/29/2000

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