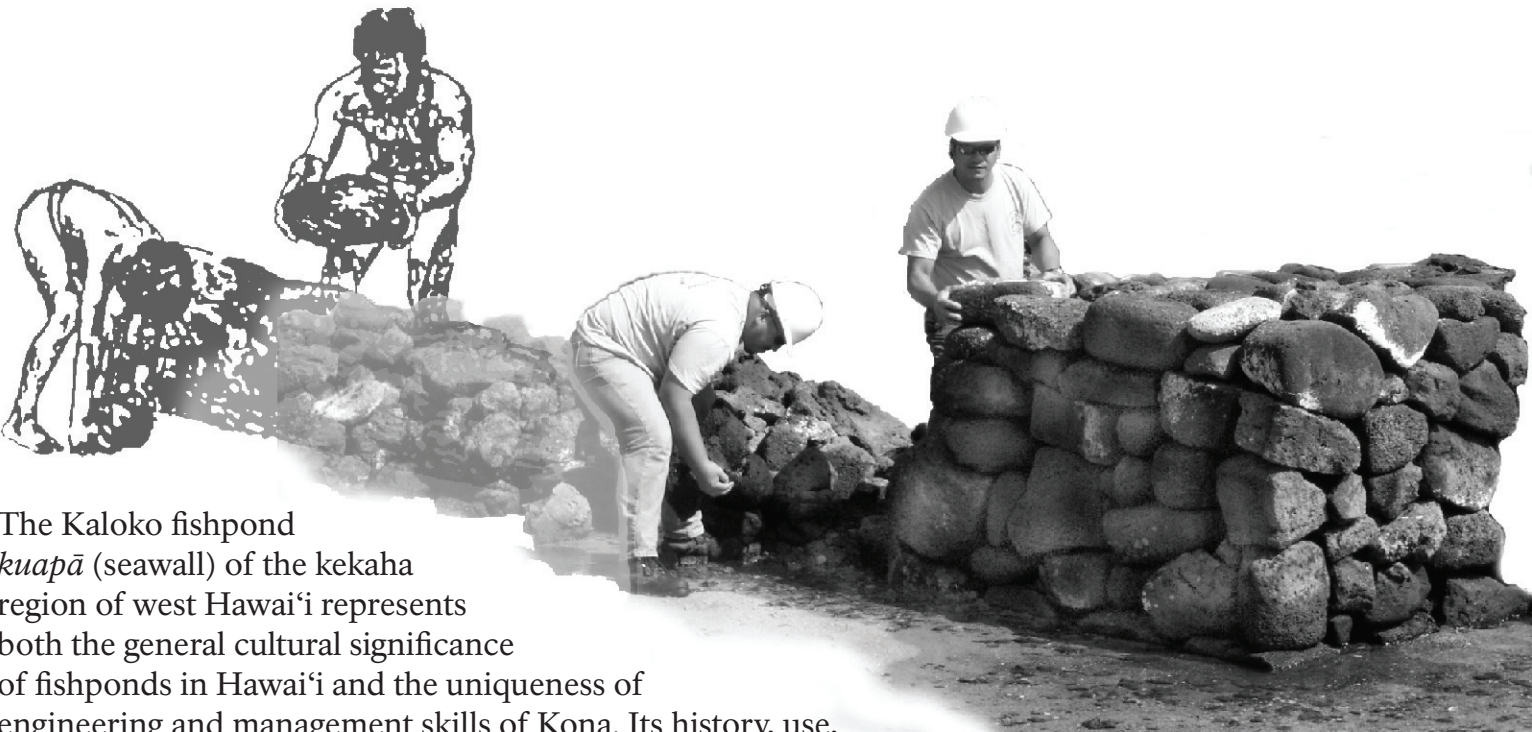




The Spirit of Kaloko-*Building in the shadow of the past*



The Kaloko fishpond *kuapā* (seawall) of the kekaha region of west Hawai‘i represents both the general cultural significance of fishponds in Hawai‘i and the uniqueness of engineering and management skills of Kona. Its history, use, destruction from neglect, and resurrection is a symbol for land managers, Native Hawaiians, and the people of the United States and the world.



An Ancient Spirit

The voice of the chants that describe Kaloko is cracked and dry with age. It has sounded for a millennium calling into existence the *wahi pana* (sacred places) and people of times past. The first reference to the pond comes in an oral history from chief Kamalalawalu, 300 years ago. How much older the wall is beyond that is hard to tell, but the *pana* have names that stretch into the *pō* (darkness of night and time). Genealogies trace the *kekaha* ‘*a’ole wai* (lands

without water- West Hawai‘i) in an unbroken line to Pa‘ao the Navigator who arrived here from Tahiti 200 years before Columbus sailed the Atlantic. Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park encompassed the fishpond in 1978. This is a place you can hear the voice of the land and generations of people away from the din of modern technology and commerce.

Just listen.



A Strong Spirit

A combination of mysticism, raw strength, keen intelligence, and people management skills are required to construct a *kuapā* of this scale. The seawall is 30-40 ft. wide and 6 ½ feet high stretching for 250 yards. It is five times greater than the average fishpond wall size in Hawai‘i. It is a giant puzzle of interlocking rocks. No cement is used, and the stones are not shaped. Masons describe the work not so much as placing the rock in the right spot, but listening to where the stone wants to be.

Legend holds that the *menehune* or little people built the fishponds in Hawai‘i. Other stories tell of lines of men miles long passing *pōhaku* (stones) hand to hand. Whoever made the wall, they did so in the perfect spot and in an ingenious fashion. The *kuapā* is porous. Water flows through and into the wall helping absorb the battering energy of the waves. Watch the water break along the wall. The angle of the *kuapā* deflects the wave. Notice the pattern of

breakers before they reach the wall. The waves build and break on a reef outside. Then they build again. The wall is deliberately placed at the point just before they break a second time, robbing them of their power. Engineers with laser transits and satellite data could not have done better.

The *kuapā* stood for hundreds of years as a testament to the people of Hawai‘i and their skills. It was not until people left the area and cement was put in the wall to reduce maintenance costs that the wall was destroyed by storms in the 1950’s.

The National Park Service is rebuilding the wall as part of an ongoing project to bring the pond to life. It is through project funds and federal support that the pond will live again.

A’ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia- No task is too big when done together by all.



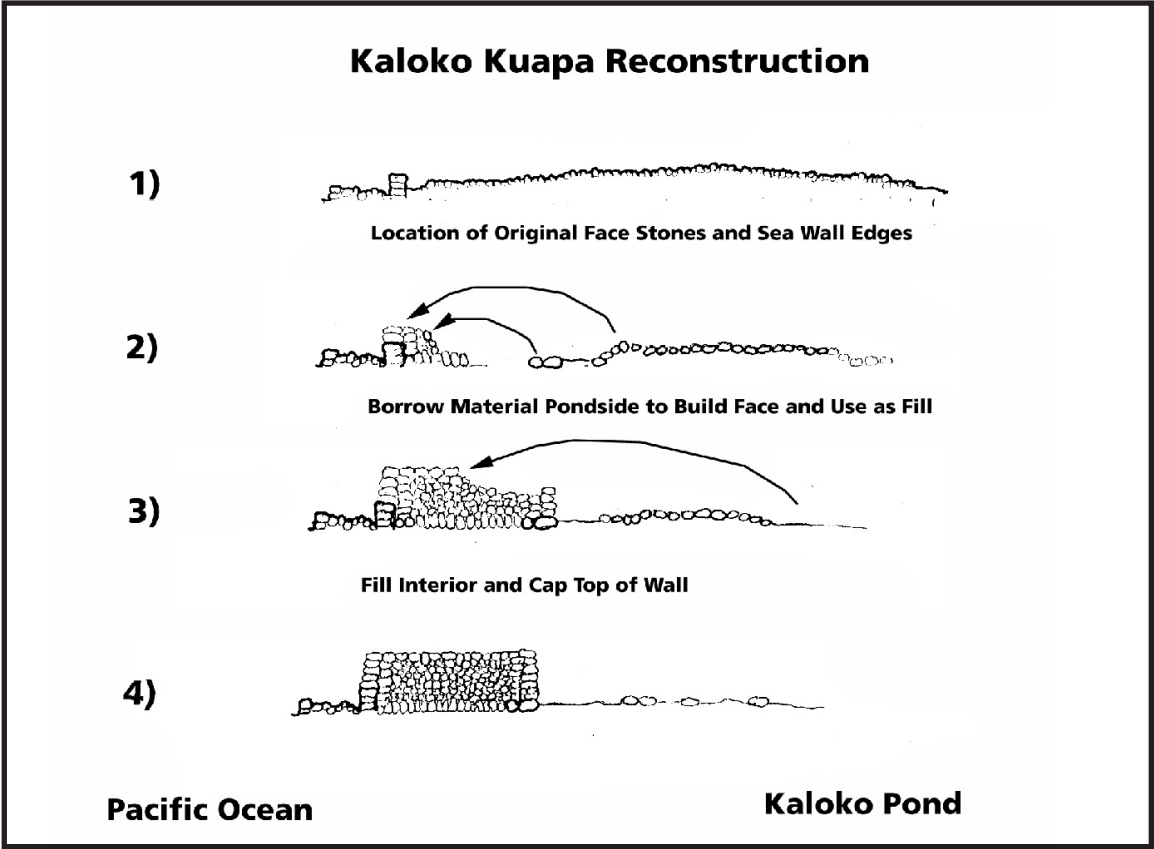
Kaloko Kuapa- Sea wall

A Guiding Spirit

The National Park Service’s (NPS) mission is to preserve the area, and also to perpetuate and promote traditional Hawaiian culture. Therefore, reconstruction of the *kuapā*, and revitalizing the management of the pond using ancient methodology is a goal that has not yet been achieved. However, the pond has been cleared of non-native vegetation and the southern *auwai kai* (waterway or sluice) and *kuapā* have been rebuilt during the past four years. A “Save America’s Treasures” grant and continued community and government support mean that the project will continue and the research and discoveries surrounding the area will persist.

No records show exactly how the fishpond has changed since it was built. The NPS relies on archeological evidence such as discovering the large base stones, and oral histories to guide the reconstruction. Master masons skilled in traditional stone wall construction are on staff. We are fortunate to have the guidance of one *kupuna* (elder) who lived in the area and worked on the *kuapā* as a youth.

Perhaps the greatest guidance comes from the chants and prayers of generations of Hawaiians, and the sheer mana of Kaloko-Honokōhau. It is our hope that you share in the process and feel the power of Kaloko.



Additional Information

Books

Tide and Current: Fishponds of Hawai‘i by Carol Araki Wyban, University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997

Native Use of Fish in Hawaii by Margaret Titcomb, University of Hawai‘i Press, 1972

Hawaiian Fishponds by Cathrine C. Summers, Bishop Museum Special Publication 52, 1964

Ancient Hawaii Shore Zone Fishponds: An evaluation of survivals for historic preservation, By Russel Apple and William K. Kikuchi, National Park Service, Honolulu, Hawaii

Periodicals

Aquaculture in Ancient Hawaii by Barry Costa-Pierce, *BioScience*, May 1987, Vol. 37 No.,5

Prehistoric Hawaiian Fishponds, by William K. Kikuchi, *Science*, July 23, 1976.

Internet Sites

A Cultural History of Three Traditional Hawaiian Sites on the west coast of Hawai‘i Island: Online Book at http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/kona/historyt.htm

Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park Home Page
<http://www.nps.gov/kaho>

Education Materials

Education Material and Programming about fishponds can be received from the Pacific American Foundation *Kahea Loko* program, 33 South King Street, Suite 205, Honolulu, Hawaii (808) 533-2836