

STATEMENT OF P. DANIEL SMITH, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION, AND PUBLIC LANDS OF THE HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE CONCERNING, H.R. 1906, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF LANDS TO PU'UHONUA O HONAUNAU NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IN THE STATE OF HAWAII.

April 16, 2002

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 1906, a bill to adjust the boundaries of Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park, in the State of Hawaii.

The Department supports H.R. 1906, if amended in conformance with this testimony. The legislation will adjust the authorized boundary of Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park to include the remainder of Ki'ilae Village and other adjoining lands within the park. The proposed expansion is located on lands immediately adjacent to, but outside the park boundary, and would add approximately 805 acres to the 182 acres already within the park. About one-half of the proposed new acreage contains known important physical remains of the native Hawaiian culture associated with the Pu'uhonua o Honaunau.

The Department previously testified in support of S. 1057, a similar bill that passed the Senate on October 17, 2001. That bill would add only 238 acres to the 182 acres already within the park and would authorize the addition of another 165 acres by donation if the lands were ever acquired. In light of the National Park Service's interest in protecting the entire Ki'ilae Village and its archeological resources, we recommend that H.R. 1906 be amended to incorporate the language of the Senate-passed bill.

Ki'ilae is an ancient Hawaiian settlement dating back to the late 12th or early 13th centuries. The settlement remained active until the 1930's, making it one of the last traditional Hawaiian villages to be abandoned. The proposed boundary adjustment consists of adding lands containing the archeological remains of this

Hawaiian village. Lands to be added to the park contain more than 800 archeological sites, structures and features. These include at least 25 caves and 10 heiau (Hawaiian temples), more than 20 rock platforms, 26 rock wall enclosures, over 40 burial features, residential compounds, a holua (recreational slide used by Hawaiian royalty), canoe landing sites, a water well, numerous rock walls and a wide range of agricultural features.

The proposed expansion dates back to a 1957 archeological survey conducted by the Bishop Museum. This survey found that the greater part of the ancient village of Ki'ila'e, as well as other significant Hawaiian archeological resources, were left outside of the park boundaries established by Congress in 1955.

Pu'uhonua o Honaunau's 1972 Master Plan identifies Ki'ila'e Village as one of the park's major resources and the master plan graphics show village remains extending well beyond the existing park boundaries. In 1992, a boundary study was prepared for the park. Both the master plan and the boundary study call for adding the "balance of Ki'ila'e Village" to the park. Up until last year, the property was unavailable because its ownership was not clear. The three heirs to the property have now settled the ownership issue, thereby clearing the way for the Park Service to acquire the land. This bill, if amended, would allow the boundary of the park to be expanded to protect this significant cultural resource.

In light of the President's commitment to reducing the backlog of deferred maintenance needs within the National Park System before incurring additional financial burdens, it is encouraging to note that the present owner of the land authorized for acquisition in the Senate-passed bill may consider donating one portion of the property to the National Park Service, while the other portion would be available for purchase and has been appraised at \$4.6 million. Funds to purchase this property would be subject to NPS servicewide priorities and the availability of appropriations. Since no development is contemplated within the boundary adjustment area, no line item construction or significant development costs are anticipated, although there would be some one-time costs after acquisition to conduct an inventory of archeological resources and remove non-native vegetation. We do not expect an increase to the park's base-operating budget.

There is strong local support to protect and include these resources within the Pu'uhonua o Honaunua National Historical Park, and it reflects the high level of cooperation, consultation, and strong commitment of local communities and governments toward the park. Local support for land acquisition projects is an important part of the Department's support for this legislation.

That concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions that you or the members of the subcommittee may have.