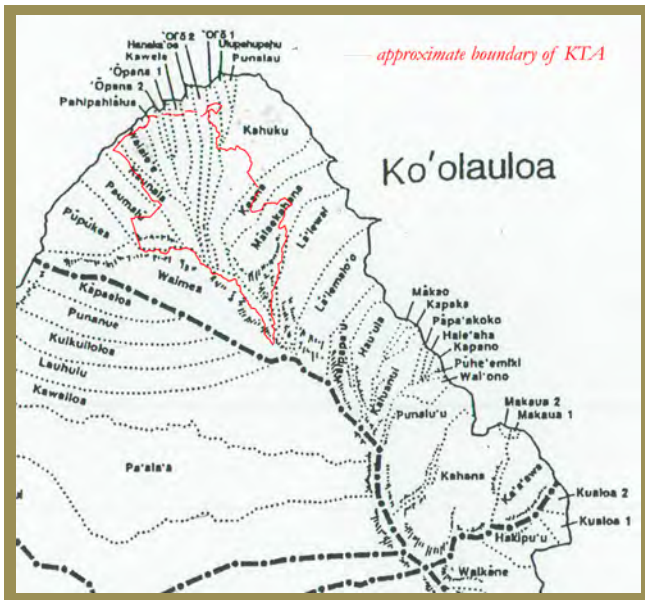


Kahuku Training Area (KTA), located in O`ahu's Ko`olauloa District, includes approximately 9,480 acres and is the largest contiguous ground-maneuver training area on the island.

KTA is within upland portions of 15 ahupua`a. These include, from north to south, portions of Waimea, Pūpūkea, Paumalū, Kaunala, Waiale`e, Pahipahi`ālua, `Ōpana, Kawela, Hanaka`oe, `Ōio, Ulupehupehu, Punalau, Kahuku, Ka`ena, Mālaekahana, Lā`ie, and Kaipapa`u. The environment of northern Ko`olauloa is unique on O`ahu, with narrow coastal flats adjacent to upraised limestone cliffs and relatively short, narrow valleys which quickly become rugged and steep not too far inland. The area is also one of the windiest on O`ahu.



Ahupua`a map prepared by the Hawaiian Studies Institute, 1987

Kahuku Army Air Base 1941 to 1946

On December 10 1941, the War Department began construction of a pursuit field on the northern tip of O`ahu at Kahuku Point. Kahuku Army Air Base was activated on June 26, 1942 and became an important training facility for pilots assigned to Wheeler Army Airfield. The runways were ideal for training flights as they possessed good approaches, excellent length and fine takeoff clearance. The length and width of the two runways could accommodate heavy bombers as well as cargo transports. The absence of hangers attested to the airfield's use for the duration of the war. The large tsunami that hit the Hawaiian Islands on April 1, 1946 caused extensive damage to the air base. Flight operations ceased and the property was later returned to its owners.

The coastal land which Kahuku Army Air Base once occupied is now divided between a resort and golf course, aquaculture farms, ranches and the James Campbell Wildlife Refuge.



*Aerial view of
Kahuku Army
Air Base in
1943*



For more information, please contact the Cultural Resources Program
808-655-9709

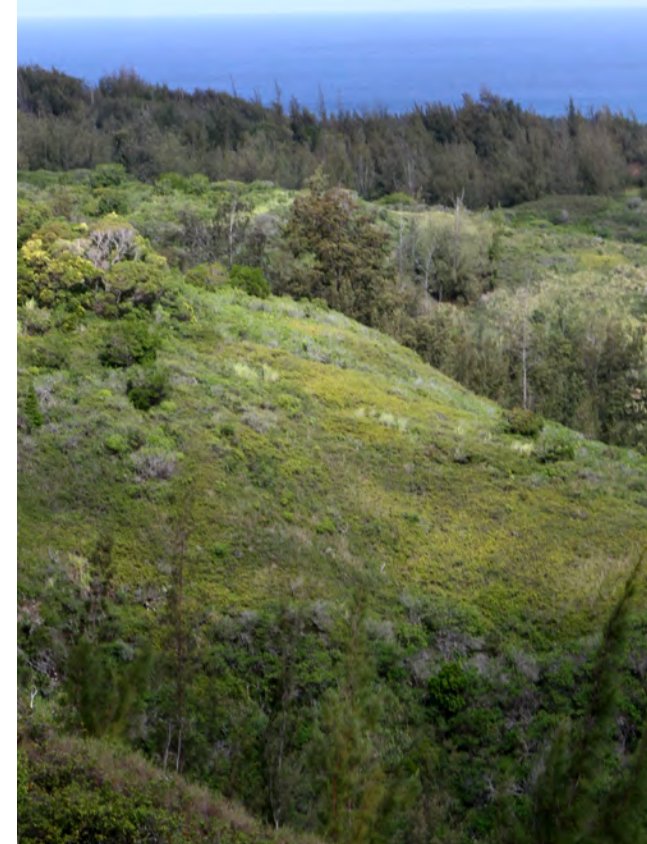
<http://www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil/sustainability/CulturalResources.aspx>

U.S. Army Garrison-Hawai'i
Cultural Resources Program



Military Heritage Resources

Kahuku Training Area



National Historic Landmarks are exceptional places. They form a common bond between all Americans. While there are many historic places across the nation, only a small number have meaning to all Americans - these we call our National Historic Landmarks.

~ National Park Service

Opana Radar

National Historic Landmark, Designated 1994

The Opana Radar Site marks the first operational use of radar by the United States in wartime. In December 1939, the U.S. military established an Aircraft Warning Service that used radar for defense. Six mobile radar detector sets were established on O`ahu. In November of 1941, the mobile radar set from Schofield Barracks was moved to the Opana Radar Site at Kahuku, a location 532 feet above sea level that provided an unobstructed view of the Pacific Ocean. The unit was comprised of four trucks carrying the transmitter, modulator, water cooler, receiver, oscilloscope, operator, generator and antenna.

On December 7, 1941, the Opana Radar Site was manned by two privates who detected the approach of a mass of aircraft at 7:02am while practicing with the radar equipment. The men reported their findings to the temporary information center at Fort Shafter. The lieutenant that received the report reasoned that the activity was a flight of Army B-17 bombers scheduled to arrive that morning from California and advised the radar crew not to worry. The privates at Opana continued to track the planes until 7:40 when contact was lost in the background interference as the planes approached O`ahu. Only after the men had secured their equipment and were headed back to their base did they realize the aircraft they had monitored were Japanese planes on their way to attack Pearl Harbor and other O`ahu military installations. The missed opportunity to correctly identify the incoming Japanese air attack is one of the great “what might have beens” of military history.



Today, a modern Navy telecommunication station occupies the top of the hill adjacent to the Opana Radar Site. Since the 1941 radar was a mobile unit, there is no physical evidence of it at the site.

Nike Missile Launch Site 1961 to 1970

The Kahuku Nike Missile Launch Site is the most intact of the Nike missile sites remaining in Hawai`i and represents an important development in the history of American civil air defense.

After World War II, escalating hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union caused the U.S. to develop a more comprehensive defense system to protect its population centers. The Nike Hercules missile system was installed nationwide and four launch sites were built on O`ahu at Kahuku, Bellows Field, Barbers Point and Dillingham. The facility at Kahuku was constructed in 1960.



underground control station

The Kahuku Nike Missile Launch Site contained three separate but integrated areas: the Launcher Area, the Control Area, and the Administration Area. The Control Area was located at the top of Mount Kawela at an elevation of approximately 1,200 feet.



guard tower

Initially in Hawai`i, missiles were fired during service practice at remote controlled aircraft targets that were launched northeast of Kaua`i from aircraft. The Nike batteries in Hawai`i were the only sites other than Alaska that actually fired missiles in practice firings from their sites. During practice firings in 1962 and

1964, Hawaii Guardsman from the Battery “B” at the Kahuku site set world distance records for a “kill” on a remote controlled target aircraft with the Nike Hercules missile.



warhead building where missiles were assembled

SOURCES

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"Opana Radar Site". National Historic Landmark summary listing. National Park Service. Retrieved 2014-02-04.

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