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2 September 2004

Steven W. Long  
Steven W. Long, AIA & Associates  
P.O. Box 223459  
Princeville, HI 96722

Re: Archaeological Assessment along a portion of Mud Lane in Waimea, Hawai'i (TMK 4-8-3:05)

Dear Steve:

As per your request, Pacific Legacy conducted an archaeological field survey of a section of the old Mud Lane Road corridor in the *ahupua'a* of Waiko'eke'e, District of Hāmākua, Island of Hawai'i (Tax Map Key # (3)4-8-3:05). Fieldwork was conducted Pacific Legacy archaeologist Rowland Reeve on 27 August 2004. The survey area consisted of a 50 foot by 1/4 - mile stretch of road easement, which forms part of a 660 acre parcel being purchased by Stephen W. Long AIA & Associates from the County of Hawaii.

The survey area lies along the route of the former Mud Lane Road which stretched from the Mamalahoa Highway east and south toward Kukuihaele. For the past fifteen years this 1/4 acre section of the road corridor has been closed to vehicular traffic and vegetation has been allowed to grow up along the route. At the present time a walking trail runs down the approximate center of the easement following the course of the old road bed.

Although it is flanked on either side by pasturelands, the abandoned section of road corridor is shaded along most of its length by ironwood trees. Portions of the corridor are also covered by thickets of guava saplings. The corridor runs down slope at approximately a ten to twenty degree angle.

The course of the Mud Lane Road follows the route of an old stage coach trail that once ran from Hilo to Waimea. At the plantation manager's residence in Kukuihaele two extra horses were added to the coach for the hard climb up to Waimea town. From the 1920s onward the Mud Lane Road was maintained by the Hāmākua Sugar Plantation. A retired plantation supervisor, Paul Christensen, informed Rowland Reeve that the route was regularly graded for heavy truck transport through the area. When the Hāmākua Plantation went out of business in the 1990s the 1/4 mile stretch of road that comprises the survey area was abandoned.

In order to ascertain whether any historic properties rest within this 50 foot by 1/4 mile section of the road corridor, Rowland Reeve conducted a surface survey of the entire area. Despite the presence of numerous ironwood trees and guava groves, visibility throughout the area was relatively good with very little brush or grass cover to obscure surface features. The ground surface was, for the most part, blanketed by a thin layer of ironwood needles, except along the trail where foot traffic had exposed soil, roots, and rock. The terrain within the survey area was found to be somewhat uneven. Water runoff had followed the roadbed, cutting shallow

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erosional gullies into the slope. Also present were berms of earth that appear to have resulted from the activities of bulldozers grading the road bed.

No surface historic properties were encountered during the course of the survey. There was also no visible evidence of subsurface cultural deposits.

Prior to the survey, a neighboring property owner asserted that there exists visual evidence of a 500 year old hand-laid Hawaiian trail within the quarter mile stretch of the former roadbed. No evidence of such a trail was found during the survey. There are, however, patches of eroding bedrock that, because of their patterns of wear and breakage, suggest stretches of rough paving. Without careful inspection these sections of crumbling bedrock might be mistaken for a paved roadbed composed of set boulders. The consistency in the type of stone found in these areas, the pattern of cracks between them, the size of the stones, and their location in relationship to the surrounding terrain all suggest that these are stretches of eroded outcrop rather than an intentionally laid roadbed. A series of digital photographs were taken documenting the visual nature of these outcroppings and are on file at our O'ahu office.

Traditional Hawaiian trails were simple footpaths wide enough to accommodate one, or occasionally two individuals walking abreast. Paved roadbeds, of the type suggested by the sections of eroding bedrock in the survey area, were occasionally constructed during the historic period in areas that were too rough or muddy for vehicles to travel over the natural terrain. There is nothing to suggest that the immense expenditure of manpower required to construct such a road bed would be justified along this stretch of the old stage coach trail. The frequent grading involved in maintaining a plantation road, however, often cuts down to and uncovers stretches of bedrock. Once exposed to the weather these bedrock outcrops begin to break apart and take on the aspect of closely packed individual stones.

It appears probable that the bulldozing undertaken to maintain the Mud Lane Road during the plantation era disrupted and or destroyed any archaeological sites that may once have rested within the road corridor. The archaeological field survey undertaken on 27 August 2004 did not encounter evidence of any historic properties in the designated survey area.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding our findings.

Sincerely,



Paul L. Cleghorn  
Senior Archaeologist  
Pacific Basin Division