

PH0055859

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM  
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Hawaii
COUNTY: Hawaii
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 24 1974</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Kilauea Crater

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Ka Lua O Pele

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: *SW of Kilauea on HVM P*  
Summit crater of Kilauea Volcano, Island of Hawaii

CITY OR TOWN:  
30 miles from Hilo on State Rt. 11

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
2

STATE: Hawaii CODE 15 COUNTY: Hawaii CODE 01

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____

**4. AGENCY**

National Park Service, U.S.D.I.

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

STREET AND NUMBER:

STATE: Hawaii CODE 1700

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
National Park Service, U.S.D.I.

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE: D.C. CODE 08

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

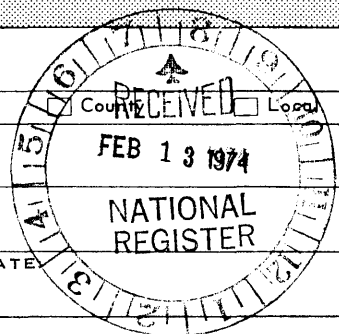
TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

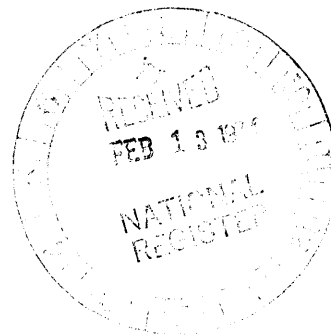
The summit of Kilauea volcano has collapsed to form a broad, shallow depression, technically a caldera. Within this summit depression is Kilauea Crater, well defined by almost vertical walls on all but a portion of the southern rim. On this portion, the lava flows of 1921 and earlier have eroded and buried any evidences of the crater walls. Within Kilauea Crater is Halemaumau, historically the most active lava vent. In the past, Halemaumau has contained a boiling lake of lava, which at times rose and overflowed onto the adjacent crater floor.

Although Kilauea eruptions have been characterized by mild, nonexplosive activity, on rare occasions water has filtered into the volcano's "plumbing," and the resulting steam pressure has caused explosions. One of these, which occurred in 1790, is noted in Hawaiian history because the hot blast of rock and dust overwhelmed and killed part of a native army marching near the crater. Since then, Halemaumau has been active many times; the great steam eruption in 1924 ended the lava lake, and enlarged Halemaumau in diameter from 1,400 feet to approximately one-half mile.

Roughly circular, on its north-south diameter, Kilauea Crater is approximately 2 miles (3.3 kilometers) long; on its east-west diameter, 1 3/4 miles long (3.0 kilometers), with a circumference of approximately 7 miles (11.2 kilometers). Crater wall height varies from approximately 477 feet on the northwest rim near Uwekahuna to zero on the south. The crater floor is uneven, is not level, and is composed of the hardened surfaces of historic lava flows, such as those of 1832, 1879, 1885, 1889, 1894, 1918, 1919, 1921, 1954 and 1961.

Kilauea Crater is a part of one of the world's most active volcanoes; its floor often tilts differentially and in total rises and falls at times as much as five feet in a short period. Earthquakes are numerous. Physical changes of and within the crater are normal and expected.

Trails, a paved road, and parking lot have been constructed within the crater in modern times.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                        |                                                  |                                                  |                                                  |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                                  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                 |                                                 |                                                         |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic    | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |                                                         |                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |                                                 |                                                         |                                          |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The frequent, almost continual, centering of volcanic activity at Kilauea Crater in prehistoric and historic times has affected human life, cultures, religions and undertakings; and in historic times has attracted local and worldwide governmental, tourist and scientific interests. Kilauea Crater has been, and is, both worshipped and studied.

To prehistoric Hawaiians, many historic Hawaiians, and to many contemporary residents of the Hawaiian islands of various ethnic backgrounds, Kilauea Crater was, and is, the permanent home of the Polynesian volcano goddess Pele. The goddess is believed to leave it for temporary residence at eruption sites outside the crater, but to always return to her home under Kilauea Crater, where she may rest, perhaps sleep, for the periods between eruptions of Kilauea, Mauna Loa, Hualalai and Haleakala volcanoes on the islands of Hawaii and Maui. Pele was the leading deity of a number of deities, such as Hiiaka (her sister), who assisted in volcanic matters, including earthquakes. Rival deities attempted to drown Pele with tsunamis. In Hawaiian legends, Pele was associated with events on all the major islands; entered into Hawaiian affairs directly in many of her animate and inanimate forms; and indirectly, through her demi-god agents. In prehistoric and protohistoric times, Pele had priests, temples and worshippers on all the major islands, and is believed to have been involved in important historic events, some of which are associated with the founding of the Kingdom of Hawaii, 1790-1795. Many individuals still believe in and make offerings to propitiate the goddess believed to have the capacity to kill people, and to destroy farms, homes, and land. Reward and punishment by Pele through her lava flows is a frequent motif in old and updated stories and lore.

"In the extensive cycle of native Hawaiian myths and chants about Pele she is always portrayed as a restless and violent-tempered wanderer. She may be seeking a new home, inspecting her domains,

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

(continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Apple, Russell A.  
 1953 They study Hawaii's volcanoes. In The Hawaii Weekly, July 12, Honolulu, pp. 4-5.

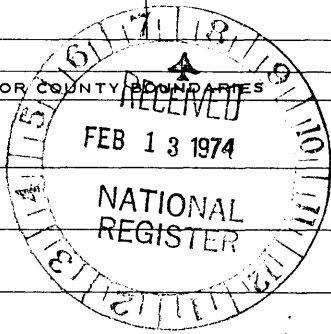
1954 A History of the Land Acquisition for Hawaii National Park, M. A. thesis, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, mss., p. 20.

(continued)

HR  
 NO  
 UTM

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		N. LATITUDE	W. LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	19° 24' 14"	155° 18' 12"				
NE	19° 26' 32"	155° 16' 14"				
SE	19° 25' 20"	155° 15' 00"				
SW	19° 23' 32"	155° 16' 58"				
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.854						
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES						
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
Hawaii	15	Hawaii	01			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE			



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Russell A. Apple, Pacific Historian		DATE: 5/25/73
BUSINESS ADDRESS: National Park Service, U.S.D.I.		
STREET AND NUMBER: Suite 512, 677 Ala Moana Blvd.		PHONE: 808/521-3027
CITY OR TOWN: Honolulu	STATE Hawaii 96813	CODE 15

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

Yes  
 No  
 None

*Sunao Kido*  
 State Liaison Officer Signature

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is  National  State  Local

*Norman H. Chapman* 20 NOV 1973  
 Federal Representative Signature  
 Regional Director, Western Region

Title \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*John W. ...*  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/24/74

ATTEST:

*Charles ...*  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 7-24-74

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STATE <b>Hawaii</b>	
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**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

engaging in battle with the water spirits who are her natural enemies, or journeying to competitions in sports, games and dances. When her body does not travel, her spirit, able to take different forms, does" (Luomala 1972:28). Many Hawaiian families claim descent from the goddess.

Pele worship centered and centers at Kilauea Crater, but today is sometimes subrosa and private. To many scientists, Christian missionaries and ministers and others, Pele is the personification of volcanism by unsophisticated people to explain this geologic process, certain events of Hawaiian and other Polynesian island histories, and certain parts of Hawaiian culture.

Traveling and resident non-Hawaiians have left extensive literature concerning their visits to, observations and impressions of, Kilauea Crater, the goddess Pele phenomena, and volcanism for the period 1823 through 1911. These included touring Christian missionaries, the U. S. Exploring Expedition under Wilkes, tourists, and scientists from Europe and America. Their volcanic observations have been compiled by Brigham (1909) and Hitchcock (1911). Kilauea is one of the most studied and best understood volcanoes in the world. Scientists have been keeping a careful record of its volcanic activity since 1911, when the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory was established by Dr. Thomas A. Jaggar, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with that institution's sponsorship and financial help from residents and businesses in Hawaii. These geologic studies continue today under the direction of the Geological Survey, U. S. Department of the Interior.

Local, national and worldwide interest in Kilauea Crater caused it to be the principal justification for the National Park, within which since 1916 it has been the focal point of attention, visitation and study.



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- Beckwith, Martha  
1940 Hawaiian mythology, New Haven, (1970, reissue, Honolulu).
- Brigham, William T.  
1909 The volcanoes of Kilauea and Mauna Loa. Memoirs of the  
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, II, 4. Honolulu
- Eaton, J. P. and C. K. Wentworth  
1962 The Hawaiian Volcano Observatory. In Thrum's All About  
Hawaii, Honolulu.
- Handy, E. C. S. and M. K. Pukui  
1958 The Polynesian family system in Ka'u, Hawai'i. Wellington
- Hitchcock, Charles H.  
1911 Hawaii and its volcanoes. Honolulu
- Luomala, Katherine  
1972 Disintegration and Regeneration of the Hawaiian hitchhiker  
legend. In Sonderdruck aus Fabula, Berlin.

