

November 17, 2006

Hawaii County Planning Department  
101 Pauahi St., Ste. 3  
Hilo, HI 96720

Dear Mr. Yuen and Staff,

The Sea Mountain Five, LLC plan for the development of Punalu'u in Ka'u is a recipe for disaster. It will negatively impact the coastal and marine environments, the local residents, Hawaii tourism, and Hawaiian archaeological sites and the native Hawaiian way of life.

Most of the residents of Ka'u and of Hawaii Island are offended and outraged by a proposal to destroy one of the most beautiful and sacred places on our planet. Punalu'u is a special place where people go to reconnect with Mother Nature and with themselves. It is the home of several important Hawaiian gods. Persons destroying or even tampering with this sacred place are inviting calamity into their lives,

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Group 70 International, Inc. is weak and deficient in many areas. One area where much more work and research must be done is infrastructure. These are some of the questions:

Regarding section 5.1.12.1:

- 1) Have hydrological studies been conducted of the entire Punalu'u area to determining the depth below the surface of the groundwater, the location of underground streams, and the rainfall patterns?
- 2) Has a study of the current contamination of the aquifer and ocean waters been done?

Regarding section 5.2.7.2:

- 1) By whom was the "marine study" conducted?
- 2) What were the results of the marine study?

Regarding section 5.2.12.3:

- 1) The wastewater treatment plant will convert 90% of the plant influent to usable recycled water. Exactly will happen to the remaining 10% of the wastewater or sewage?

- 2) Have studies been conducted to determine if effluent that would be discharged to the ground through dry wells will detrimentally affect the aquifer or regional coastal waters?
- 3) During rainy periods all the effluent will have to go into the dry wells because irrigation of the golf course will be unnecessary. Will this result in increased contamination of the groundwater and coastal waters?
- 4) According to the DEIS “the only long-term impact of the on-site wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system would be to provide a substantial amount of the irrigation water required for maintenance of the golf course.” What about the long-term buildup of harmful contaminants that will be infused into the ground? Eventually these contaminants will reach the underground streams and result in the pollution of the ocean waters and coastal ponds – is this not correct?

I have assessed that there has not been enough attention paid to the eventual pollution of the aquifer and the ocean waters and coastal ponds. The inevitable contamination of these waters will result in extreme damage to the marine life. Swimmers, divers, and fishermen will contract ear and respiratory infections.

The proposed development will be located dangerously close to the ocean. The possibility of sewage spills occurring is extremely high because of flooding, earthquakes, and tsunamis. A single sewage spill at Punalu'u would be disastrous.

On the subject of worker housing: What type of housing will be provided and where will it be located? Will the housing be of the same quality as is proposed for the resort?

Let's face it; this proposed development is a terrible idea. It would be a giant setback for mankind if it were to be approved by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Hector Esparza  
Ka'u Resident