



POSSIBLE FUTURES OF

Hawai'i's Soul



Foreword

Hawai'i Executive Collaborative Rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul Core Committee

In 1970, a group of Hawaiian elders and non-Hawaiian civic leaders from across the state convened to grapple with issues facing Hawai'i at the time. One of their tasks was to help bring Hawai'i together by defining what is aloha, which renowned poet and philosopher Pilahi Paki articulated as the coordination of mind and heart within each person. Her definition of the Aloha Spirit was encoded into Hawai'i State law in 1986.

More than 50 years later, Hawai'i's unresolved issues and growing conflicts have the potential to divide our communities and affect everyone who loves and calls these islands home. It was now our turn to roll up our sleeves and confront the problems and urgency of what we are facing. Similar to defining aloha in the 1970s, our task was to begin the journey of rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul.

In August 2022, Hawai'i Executive Collaborative partnered with Reos Partners, an international social enterprise that helps people move forward together on their most important issues, to convene a team of 43 individuals from different backgrounds and perspectives that included Hawaiian elders and practitioners, community representatives, and business leaders.

Through Reos Partners' process called Transformative Scenario Planning, the team produced a set of four scenarios of possible futures facing Hawai'i. Mahalo to each of them for their candor, courage, trust, and willingness to be part of this unprecedented effort, and for helping to define Hawai'i's Soul.

Building on Aunty Pilahi's description of aloha, we believe that rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul is core to Hawai'i and ensures that it isn't lost.

Reimagining Hawai'i and its future is the kuleana of all of us, while remaining grounded in our Native Hawaiian culture and values. Our hope is that the scenarios presented in this report will encourage more transformative and courageous acts and leadership. We invite you to join us on this journey and share these stories, have the tough conversations, and devise and implement solutions on what can and must be done—individually and together—for Hawai'i and its people.

Definition of "Aloha Spirit" By Pilahi Paki

Akahai
to feel and to think
with kindness

Lōkahi
to stand firmly in unity
and in harmony

'Olu'olu
to balance your thinking
as well as your feelings

Ha'aha'a
to be humble; humility
expressed with modesty

Ahonui
to persevere; learn to apply
patience; to be patient you
learn to stand alone

Rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul Core Committee

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Scenarios for the Future of Hawai'i's Soul

Introduction

The Scenarios for the Future of Hawai'i's Soul are stories about what could happen in Hawai'i in the future, from 2022 to 2050. They are not stories about what will happen (forecasts) or what should happen (a vision). Rather, the scenarios hypothesize different ways the future could unfold for Hawai'i's communities, economy, environment, and culture. The purpose of these stories is to offer a shared language for talking together about what is possible and what must be done.

The starting point for these stories is the current environment. While some things about the future are certain and constant, such as Hawai'i's geography, these scenarios explore what is uncertain about the future, considering both factors within Hawai'i and external to it.

Why These Four Scenarios, Why Now?

Hawai'i faces uncertain times for which there is no existing roadmap to guide the way. In an uncertain future, scenarios help build shared capacity to talk together about how things could unfold. Thinking about the future together can help people collaborate to create the future they want. The intent of the scenarios is to provide a structure and language to help Hawaiians and residents of Hawai'i have those discussions about the future of Hawai'i.

The Scenarios for the Future of Hawai'i's Soul deal with fundamental questions about the future of Hawaiian identity, belonging, community, land, and spirit. The special essence of Hawai'i's soul is evident to those who live here, and for many, it feels as though that soul is at risk, and in danger of being lost.

These scenarios do not aim to predict the future or state a desired vision. They aim only to provoke new thinking, make opportunities and threats more visible, and enable richer, more useful conversations about what Hawai'i must do to nourish and sustain Hawai'i's soul.

These four stories are relevant, challenging, plausible, and clear. They are intended to support an open and constructive search for answers to core questions of Hawaiian identity: who is considered Hawaiian, and how do the people who live here relate to one another?

Scenarios play a unique role in strategic planning. Because they are fictional, and because they come in sets of two or more different, plausible stories, they offer the advantage of supporting informed debate without committing anyone to any particular policy position. Although we cannot predict or control the future, scenarios show us that we can work with and influence it.

The content of these scenarios was created by a scenario team - a group of Native and non-Native Hawaiians, cultural practitioners, the business community, philanthropy, education, housing, legal, social services, community organizing, and tourism sectors - who, together, explored questions about Hawai'i's future.



Hawai'i's Soul

"There's something special about this place," an oft-heard refrain from friends, family, and visitors to Hawai'i. Those who live here feel it, too, in the land, in the water, in the people. It is aloha. It is love and kindness, give and take, community, and abundance. It is the understanding that the health of culture, community, and individuals are inseparable from the health of 'āina (land). It is the kuleana (responsibility) to care for Hawai'i and each other so that people and place thrive together. It is Hawai'i's soul.

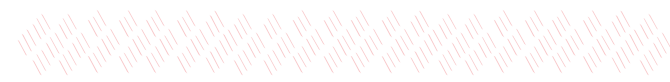
The scenario team met for two in-person workshops to craft these scenarios. During the second gathering, the team engaged in a conversation around the meaning of Hawai'i's soul from a space of openness, courage, and vulnerability. Unsurprisingly, each participant defined Hawai'i's soul in their own unique way, but what was striking about their collective effort was how strongly the definitions complemented and resonated with one another. The team humbly offers the sentiment above in an effort to capture that shared sense of soul.

It is the kuleana to care for Hawai'i and each other so that people and place thrive together. *It is Hawai'i's soul.*

Scenario Summaries

Multiple Possible Futures of Hawai'i's Soul

'Iwa



Great frigatebirds - are birds whose appearance warns of incoming storms

In 'Iwa, the structures of Hawai'i's governing system do not change, and access to power, influence and opportunity is increasingly controlled by those from outside. The nature of the economy is extractive, built around using the land, culture, and people in Hawai'i to drive economic profits. 'Iwa sees those who are benefiting under the current conditions continuing to benefit, while those who are currently struggling see their lot deteriorating.

In this scenario, Hawai'i's soul is lost.

Manu O Kū



The white tern - is a native Hawaiian bird that thrives in both ocean and urban environments

In Manu o Kū, the structures of Hawai'i's governing system do not change, and traditional Hawaiian values are increasingly embraced and embodied by leaders in business, politics, and civil society. Manu o Kū sees access to power, influence, and opportunity being driven by those inside Hawai'i. This widespread adoption of Hawaiian values fundamentally shifts how people and institutions in Hawai'i engage with one another, and the term "Hawaiian" grows less fraught.

In this scenario, Hawai'i's soul is transformed.

Nēnē



The Hawaiian goose - is a bird that is known to fly in pairs

In Nēnē, Native Hawaiians seek and receive Federal acknowledgement as Indian Tribes and establish a government-to-government relationship with the United States. The term "Hawaiian" is defined as a person holding citizenship in the tribal government. Hawaiians in this scenario feel reconnected to land, and a subsistence economy emerges on Hawaiian lands. Nēnē enshrines existing tensions between the Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian communities in new structures.

In this scenario, Hawai'i's soul is split in two.

'Ua'u



The Hawaiian petrel - is a bird that guides voyagers to unknown lands

In 'Ua'u, regulatory power and governing authority shift toward the individual states. A weakened federal government leads some states to leave the union, and Hawai'i becomes its own sovereign nation. As an independent nation, Hawai'i becomes a political and economic target for existing world powers. All citizens of the new nation are considered Hawaiian. 'Ua'u occurs via a major shift in the longstanding international order, and contains the most uncertainty around Hawai'i's future.

In this scenario, Hawai'i's soul is tested.

Comparison of the Scenarios

	'Iwa	Nēnē	Manu o Kū	'Ua'u
How is Hawai'i governed?	Current governance structures and power dynamics continue.	A sovereign Native Hawaiian government in parallel with current governance structures.	Current governance structures are transformed by Native Hawaiian ways of being, knowing, and doing.	Hawai'i becomes an independent sovereign nation.
How does the world see Hawai'i?	As a tropical playground.	As an example of two governance systems co-existing on shared territory.	As a model of sustainability - balanced growth and stewardship of land, people, and economy.	As a target for advancing political and economic ambitions of other global actors.
Who controls access to power?	Outside wealth, power, and influence increase over time.	Parallel power structures - Native Hawaiian government holds influence on Hawaiian lands, current power structures elsewhere.	Local wealth, power, and influence, shaped by Native Hawaiian values.	The new Hawaiian government, with reduced access to outside capital.
What is the nature of Hawai'i's economy?	Extractive - "What can I take from this land, people, and culture to enrich myself?"	Subsistence economy on Native Hawaiian lands - "How can I use this place to sustain myself?" - alongside a capitalist economy.	Regenerative - "How can my economic activity enrich this land, people, culture, and economy?"	Survival - "What must we do to meet the needs of our citizens?"
How is healing facilitated?	Through individual effort and practice.	Through federal recognition and reconnection to land.	Through a widespread embrace of aloha 'āina and Hawaiian values.	Through sovereignty, and a renewed sense of autonomy and empowerment.
Who is considered Hawaiian?	"Hawaiian" continues to be defined through blood quantum.	"Hawaiian" is defined by citizenship in the new tribal government.	"Hawaiian" is defined by cultural norms and practices - those who embody aloha. Native Hawaiians retain identity as kanaka.	"Hawaiian" is defined by citizenship in the independent nation of Hawai'i.
What happens to Hawai'i's soul?	Hawai'i's soul is lost.	Hawai'i's soul splits in two.	Hawai'i's soul is transformed.	Hawai'i's soul is tested.

'Iwa

Great frigatebirds -
birds whose appearance
warns of incoming storms



About The Art



'Iwa

The hand-cut art of the 'Iwa bird accentuates its split tail. Its flight pattern usually signals an oncoming storm.



Ua 'Ohe Kāpala

Bamboo stamping is an original Native Hawaiian art form and aesthetic. Bamboo stalks were traditionally incised with a shark tooth, featuring angled iconic shapes, inspired by the surroundings and elemental phenomenon.

Each angle incised is a representation of ua (rain and/or incoming weather systems).

In 'Iwa, the structures of Hawai'i's governing system do not change, and access to power, influence and opportunity is increasingly controlled by those from outside. The world views Hawai'i as a tropical playground, and the nature of the economy is extractive, built around using the land, culture, and people in Hawai'i to drive economic profits. 'Iwa sees those who are benefiting under the current conditions continuing to benefit, while those who are currently struggling see their lot deteriorating. Many Native Hawaiians and multi-generational local families migrate to the continental U.S. as a result of increasingly difficult living conditions, and are replaced by wealthy immigrants. Hawaiians continue to be formally defined by blood quantum, and healing is piecemeal and left to individual effort. In 'Iwa, Hawai'i's soul is lost.

In **2022**, shifts in workplace culture as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are solidified broadly across the United States, with employers increasingly permitting remote work for employees, particularly in the tech sector. Hawai'i sees increased migration of tech workers and their families from the continental U.S. The Senate, House of Representatives, and key governorships in the U.S. are controlled by office holders with little interest in supporting or promoting indigenous rights and welfare.

In **2025**, a U.S. president who is hostile to the expression of Native Hawaiian rights and sovereignty assumes power. The Department of the Interior rescinds Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 43 Part 50, eliminating the formal government-to-government relationship between the Native Hawaiian community and the federal government. The Supreme Court strikes down as unconstitutional Kamehameha Schools' (KS) Native Hawaiian admissions preference. The proportion of Native Hawaiian students enrolled at KS schools drops. These decisions lead to organized protests across the islands, disrupting civil society. A number of counties explore renewable energy projects. Community groups organize against the proposed developments, opposing new infrastructure projects in certain areas. Legal challenges and project delays lead to abandonment of most renewable energy initiatives across the state, slowing the transition to clean energy. Water shortages across Hawai'i increase in severity, and the Board of Water Supply declares a state of emergency. Tourism continues its post-COVID-19 rebound, and 2025 sees a record number of visitors to Hawai'i.

By **2030**, the median price of a single family home in Hawai'i reaches \$2 million. Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) families make up 60% of the households in the state. Native Hawaiian and multi-generational families move to the continental U.S. in large numbers, as wealthy continental transplants and foreign nationals immigrate to Hawai'i. Hawaiian-born residents comprise 45% of the population. Sixty percent of Native Hawaiians live outside of Hawai'i. The Thirty Meter Telescope lease on Mauna Kea is approved. The Mauna Kea protest movement regains momentum, and nine hundred protestors, including kupuna, students, and non-Hawaiian allies, are arrested. Increasing proportions of wealthy tourists and immigrants lead to further investment in high-end real estate, tourism, and recreation businesses. Multinational corporations and investment firms invest in more projects in the state, and the market share of small Hawaiian owned businesses drops. Political polarization, challenging economic conditions and social unrest surrounding Native Hawaiian rights and sovereignty lead to large scale civil unrest. The National Guard is deployed in Honolulu in response to the protest movement. China's military presence in the Pacific increases. People living in Hawai'i see one another as belonging to distinct communities whose interests are in opposition with one another.



In **2035**, China invades Taiwan. The US military activity in Hawai'i increases, as armed conflict in the Pacific grows in frequency and scale. Native Hawaiian values are less visible in day-to-day business and leisure, and the traditional Hawaiian culture is generally practiced in exclusively Native Hawaiian spaces. Native Hawaiians organize into a new political party centered on preserving state and federal rights granted to Hawaiians meeting the minimum blood quantum threshold. Non-native residents far exceed the Hawaiian population and the new party's political influence is minimal. The cost of running the state government exceeds the tax base, and the State of Hawai'i defaults on its debt. The state's credit rating is downgraded, exacerbating the financial strain on the state government. ALICE families make up 65% of households in the state.

In **2040**, Hawaiian born residents make up 25% of Hawai'i's population. The average length of Hawaiian residency is 10 years. Wealthy immigrants have displaced low-income Native Hawaiian and multi-generational families to such a degree that ALICE families make up 55% of households in the state. The largest remaining Hawaiian owned company is acquired by a multinational corporation. Over 70% of Hawai'i's population is employed by companies or organizations headquartered outside of the state. Global trends away from cultural tourism mean Hawai'i is marketed primarily as a tropical beach destination, with few offerings centered around Native Hawaiian culture and history. Hawai'i imports 92% of its food. Political pressure and funding cuts result in Hawaiian language programs being cut from schools across the state.

By **2050**, Hawai'i has the highest concentration of wealth of the U.S., with more of the wealthiest 1% of the nation's families claiming primary residency in the state than any other. A severe water shortage is compounded by contamination in previously reliable aquifers. Wealthy communities ship in drinking water. Low and middle income households are subject to stringent water rationing. The Hawaiian language is considered critically endangered. Nine percent of Hawai'i's population is Native Hawaiian, and 80% are born outside of Hawai'i.

In *'Iwa*, displacement of much of Hawai'i's population and the dilution of traditional Hawaiian culture lead to a future where people living in Hawai'i do not feel a meaningful connection to each other or to the land, and *Hawai'i's soul is lost*.

The world views Hawai'i as a tropical playground, and the nature of the economy is extractive, built around using the land, culture, and people in Hawai'i to drive economic profits.



Nēnē

The Hawaiian goose - birds that are known to fly in pairs



In **Nēnē**, Native Hawaiians seek and receive Federal acknowledgement as Indian Tribes and establish a government-to-government relationship with the United States. The new Hawaiian government manages land according to traditional values, and the reconnection to 'āina (land) and sovereignty over traditional lands serves as a means of healing for tribal citizens. The term "Hawaiian" is defined as a person holding citizenship in the tribal government. Native Hawaiians in this scenario feel reconnected to land, and a subsistence economy emerges on Hawaiian tribal lands. The disparity in land management practices on non-native and tribally managed lands presents a stark contrast in outcomes, and the world sees Hawai'i as a case study in competing worldviews and land management systems. The subsistence economy and traditional stewardship are in tension with the capitalist system still present on non-tribal lands. **Nēnē** enshrines existing tensions between the Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian communities in new structures, and in this scenario, **Hawai'i's soul is split in two.**

Following the **2022** general election, the Senate, House of Representatives, and key governorships in the U.S. are controlled by office holders with little interest in supporting or promoting indigenous rights and welfare.

By **2025**, the Supreme Court strikes down as unconstitutional Kamehameha Schools' (KS) Native Hawaiian admissions preference. The loss of KS status and perceived hostility to Hawaiian rights at the federal level leads a majority within the Native Hawaiian community to support seeking federal recognition. Hawaiian leaders organize to draft governing documents for a new Hawaiian government. The State of Hawai'i mandates the instruction of Hawaiian language and culture for all students.

In **2030**, the proposed governing structure is ratified by the Native Hawaiian community, and the new Hawaiian tribal government holds its first leadership elections. The State of Hawai'i acknowledges the new governing body. State agencies are encouraged to consult with the new tribal government. Consultation is not mandated, and most state agencies do not engage meaningfully. The Native Hawaiian community is discontented with the level of engagement from the state. The tribal government seeks and receives Federal acknowledgement as an Indian Tribe from the United States government. Misinformation leads to large portions of the non-native Hawaiian community expressing concern that the new Hawaiian tribal government may receive federal dollars that had formerly been allocated to the state.

In **2035**, increasing national and global acknowledgement of indigenous rights increases pressure on the State of Hawai'i to engage meaningfully with the new Hawaiian tribal government. State agencies are mandated to include meaningful consultation with the tribal government in land management decisions. Some state lands are transferred to the new government. Private landowners protest the land transfers and enter into litigation over land claims and other jurisdictional issues. Ali'i Trust's and Kamehameha Schools' land and assets are transferred to the new government. As part of the negotiation for Federal acknowledgement, blood quantum is abandoned as a qualifier of "Hawaiianness." The Hawaiian government holds authority to determine and manage citizenship status of its tribal members. Non-Native Hawaiians are permitted to apply for citizenship. Some Native Hawaiians disapprove of extending citizenship to non-indigenous residents. In all schools in the tribal education system, instruction is delivered in both English and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. On tribal lands, the new government restricts development opportunities to tribally owned enterprises. Land management on tribal lands is aligned with traditional cultural practices. Native Hawaiian-owned natural resource remediation, agriculture, and tourism companies begin operating on Hawaiian



lands. The state of Hawai'i has fewer Native Hawaiians running for public office than at any point in the prior 35 years, as many opt to run for positions within the new tribal government.

In **2040**, the Hawaiian tribal government pursues additional land claims with the state and federal government. Dissatisfaction with the initial slate of tribal officials results in a contentious tribal election cycle. Some communities feel underrepresented in the tribal government. A subsistence economy takes hold on tribal lands, with 50% of tribal households participating in traditional agriculture or food harvest practices. The tribal government brings lawsuits against private landowners and the state to expand and protect ecological and agricultural habitat on tribal lands. Eighty percent of Native Hawaiians are registered tribal citizens, and 60% of tribal citizens live on tribal lands. Indigenous communities from across the Pacific rim look to the Hawaiian experience as a model for securing indigenous rights. The tribal government leads an initiative to create a forum for indigenous Pacific Islanders to engage with governments as a single block. Economic activity on tribal lands is exempt from State of Hawai'i taxation. A political movement develops in Hawai'i to no longer recognize tribal citizens as constituents of the state legislature, and legislation is introduced that removes funding from public works infrastructure that supports tribal communities. The state rescinds the Hawaiian language mandate for all students.

In **2050**, the Hawaiian community celebrates twenty years of self-governance. Two decades of traditional management on tribal lands results in healthier ecosystems relative to non-tribal lands, and greater access to traditional foods, with 80% of tribal families participating in traditional agriculture or harvest practices. Some tribal citizens are dissatisfied with the perceived slow pace of development on tribal lands. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i is widely spoken, as a generation of students has received primary education in Hawaiian language. Connection to land and language strengthens aloha in the Hawaiian community and on tribal lands. Many non-native Hawaiians feel excluded from Hawaiian culture and lands, and Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian cultures are isolated from one another.

There is tension in *Nēnē* - between two governments, two economic systems, two worldviews. This tension is rooted in conflicting value systems existing side by side, and *Hawai'i's soul splits in two.*

The new Hawaiian government manages land according to traditional values, and the reconnection to 'āina and sovereignty over traditional lands serves as a means of healing for tribal citizens.

About The Art



Nēnē

Nēnē fly in pairs. The art features two groups of eight birds flying parallel to each other. The number eight is indicative of the number of islands in the Hawaiian chain.



Manu 'Ohe Kāpala

Bamboo stamping is an original Native Hawaiian art form and aesthetic. Bamboo stalks were traditionally incised with a shark tooth, featuring angled iconic shapes, inspired by the surroundings and elemental phenomenon.

Each incised design represents the manu (bird).

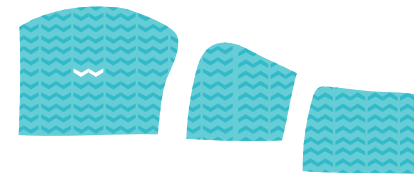
Manu o Kū

The white tern - Native Hawaiian birds that thrive in both ocean and urban environments



In *Manu o Kū*, the structures of Hawai'i's governing system do not change, and traditional Hawaiian values are increasingly embraced and embodied by leaders in business, politics, and civil society. A widespread embrace of "aloha 'āina," or reciprocity between people and land, shifts the focus of economic activity toward a regenerative model that enriches land, people, culture, and the world comes to see Hawai'i as a model of sustainability. *Manu o Kū* sees access to power, influence, and opportunity being driven by those inside Hawai'i. This widespread adoption of Native Hawaiian values fundamentally shifts how people and institutions in Hawai'i engage with one another, and the term "Hawaiian" grows less fraught. Native Hawaiians retain cultural identity as kanaka, and those who reside in Hawai'i and exhibit aloha spirit are considered Hawaiian, regardless of ethnicity. In *Manu o Kū*, Hawai'i's soul is transformed.

About The Art



Manu o Kū

Traditional bamboo stamps, laid over a map of Waikahalulu (Chinatown) implies a modern construct. Both the map and 'ohe kāpala are traditional inspirations. Variations of blue tones celebrate the diversity of our island community.



Manu 'Ohe Kāpala

Bamboo stamping is an original Native Hawaiian art form and aesthetic. Bamboo stalks were traditionally incised with a shark tooth, featuring angled iconic shapes, inspired by the surroundings and elemental phenomenon.

Each incised design represents the manu (bird).

In **2022**, a Native Hawaiian organization is awarded a high profile three-year tourism management contract by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA). The management of Mauna Kea is transferred to a new governing body, the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA). Both the HTA contract award and the formation of the Mauna Kea authority are met with skepticism from some circles within the Hawai'i business community and government. The U.S. general election is contentious, but state and local elections proceed as expected, with no major shifts to the political order.

In **2025**, the state of Hawai'i Department of Education adds Hawaiian culture studies to the core curriculum. A new political party is formed with a platform based on the principle of aloha 'āina - building and caring for prosperous lands, waters, and peoples in Hawai'i. The new party is perceived to be a "Hawaiian issues" party, and attracts primarily Native Hawaiian voters. Following a tumultuous 2024 national election, a large scale civic engagement and voter registration drive is launched in Hawai'i, increasing the number of registered voters by 20%. A collection of community, Native Hawaiian, and social service organizations and agencies reaffirm their commitment to collaboration in service of strengthening the well-being of the people of Hawai'i through a 'Treaty of Trust.' The collaboration leans heavily on traditional Hawaiian culture and principles of aloha 'āina. The management of the tourism contract is generally regarded as a success, and the contract with the Native Hawaiian organization is renewed. In line with global trends, eco- and cultural-tourism experiences are increasingly in demand from visitors.

In **2030**, demand for eco- and cultural-tourism services exceeds offerings. The Aloha 'Āina party holds its first two seats in the state legislature. A political movement countering the perceived "Hawaiian issues" party gains favor among some voters. Following the success of the HTA work, Native Hawaiian companies and organizations secure additional high-profile government and private contracts. The Hawai'i National Guard requires Hawaiian culture training for all service members. Treaty of Trust organizations do not all live up to their commitments, but many do. A public relations campaign is launched in response to the elevation of community and ecological well-being in the treaty organizations' priorities.

In **2035**, the number of Native Hawaiians in positions of leadership as executives, board members, and statewide office holders is 200% greater than in 2025. Traditional Hawaiian cultural values are embedded in more organizations across Hawai'i. Some residents of Hawai'i believe the shifts in civic conversation, leadership, and tourism priorities to be part of a broader culture war in the United States, and move away from Hawai'i. The Department of Education mandates proficiency in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i as a basic requirement for high school



A widespread embrace of “aloha ‘āina,” shifts the focus of economic activity toward a regenerative model that enriches land, people, culture...

graduation, and Hawaiian language is added to the core competencies for the K-12 curriculum. Eco- and cultural-tourism models are no longer outliers, and sustainable practices demanded by the tourism industry drive change in other aspects of civil society. Supported by the tourism industry's demand for locally sourced food, local agriculture is incentivized. The Department of Agriculture increases staffing for ag inspections. The Aloha Āina party does not see an increase in seats in the state legislature, as most policy positions around promoting ecological and community health are seen as mainstream.

In **2040**, Native Hawaiian candidates win the governorship, lieutenant governorship, and more seats in the legislature than at any point in the state's history. Widespread fluency in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i leads many businesses to display information in both English and Hawaiian. A Hawaiian firm develops an innovative and cost-effective desalination technique, and the Board of Water Supply retrofits treatment facilities with the technology, alleviating the drinking water crisis. Local agriculture supplies 35% of the food consumed in Hawai‘i. The legislature passes a bill requiring all official state documents to be made available in both English and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. Some segments of the non-indigenous community react negatively to the elevation of Hawaiian language and culture across civil society. Some Native Hawaiians feel the reforms do not adequately redress the historical treatment of Hawai‘i's indigenous people. Aloha ‘āina is evident in development and land management practices. Regulation, market pressures, and public sentiment prioritize sustainable use of resources.

In **2050**, the state of Hawai‘i passes a law recognizing ‘āina's Rights of Nature. This act formalizes the centrality of the lands and water to a thriving Hawai‘i, and acknowledges that Hawai‘i's ecosystems and species have legal rights to exist, thrive and regenerate. A generation of children is coming of age who were raised hearing ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i spoken widely, seeing Native Hawaiians in positions of leadership, and prioritizing the health of the land alongside that of people and economy. Hawaiian culture and values permeate society to such a degree that questions of “Hawaiianess” are less urgent than for prior generations. Native Hawaiians retain a cultural identity as kanaka. People living in Hawai‘i who embrace aloha ‘āina are considered Hawaiian, regardless of ethnic background.

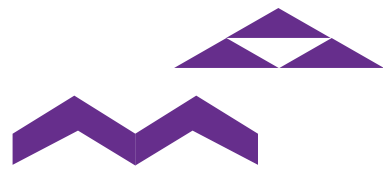
The shifting values and worldviews of the people of Hawai‘i in *Manu o Kū* lead to a renewed connection between people and land, grounded in Hawaiian culture and influenced by the broader community, and *Hawai‘i's soul is transformed*.

‘Ua‘u

The Hawaiian petrel -
birds that guide voyagers
to unknown lands

In 'Ua'u, the ability of the federal government to address meaningful challenges erodes, leading to a shift in regulatory power and governing authority toward the individual states. With a weakened federal government, future political unrest in the United States leads some states to leave the union, and Hawai'i becomes its own sovereign nation. As an independent nation, Hawai'i becomes a political and economic target for existing world powers. The new nation's economic policy is driven by necessity - a young nation doing what it must to meet the needs of its citizens. All citizens of the new nation are considered Hawaiian. 'Ua'u occurs via a major shift in the longstanding international order, and contains the most uncertainty around Hawai'i's future. Hawai'i has less influence on the global stage, but the standing it has is as a sovereign nation, and through this sovereignty citizens find healing and a sense of empowerment. In 'Ua'u, Hawai'i's soul is tested.

About The Art



'Ua'u

At dawn the 'Ua'u return to their homes after searching the ocean all night for food. The sight of these birds in the open sea would be an indicator that land is near. Employing our 'ohe kāpala manu (bird), we explore variations allowing the relief of the stamp to carry as much visual weight as the positive.



Moku 'Ohe Kāpala

Bamboo stamping is an original Native Hawaiian art form and aesthetic. Bamboo stalks were traditionally incised with a shark tooth, featuring angled iconic shapes, inspired by the surroundings and elemental phenomenon.

The iconic wide stance triangle incisions are representative of moku (islands).

In **2022**, the Senate, House of Representatives, and key governorships in the U.S. are controlled by far-right politicians sympathetic to fraudulent narratives surrounding the 2020 presidential election.

In **2025**, a right-wing presidential candidate is sworn in as president, despite losing the popular vote, as the result of political allegiance in key state governments and the U.S. congress. The elections are marred by evidence of mismanagement and corruption, and the legitimacy of the U.S. electoral system is called into question by international observers. Perceived failure of the U.S. democratic system leads to mainstream conversations about the potential dissolution of the union. The federal bureaucracy is purged of career professionals, and federal management of public welfare, regulatory matters, and civil society deteriorates. States exert authority over economic and social policy, with a resulting patchwork of political differences across the states growing starker. The supreme court overturns key long standing precedents, including decisions impacting indigenous rights across the country.

In **2030**, the U.S. government is widely viewed as ineffective. Several states, including Hawai'i, sign a declaration which stops short of declaring independence but asserts their right to self-governance on all social, regulatory, and economic policy. A unifying ideology across Hawai'i emerges - drawing on Hawai'i's unique geographical, cultural, and political history - which elevates the importance of self-reliance and -determination of the people residing in the archipelago. This ideology holds broad appeal, given the state's political disposition in opposition to the right-wing government of the United States. The state government seeks and secures additional fiscal support from wealthy Pacific Rim nations to backfill the loss of dwindling U.S. federal funding. Political tensions run high, and there are isolated incidents of political violence across the state. Many Native Hawaiians living on the continental U.S. return to Hawai'i.

In **2035**, a climate disaster devastates Hawai'i. The federal government's disaster relief response is slow and ineffectual. Local government, nonprofits, corporations, and community networks provide the bulk of emergency relief support and lead reconstruction. The botched relief effort further contributes to dissatisfaction with the U.S. government. The disaster prompts increased scrutiny of Hawai'i's land management practices, and spurs a shift toward 'āina-based management techniques identified as likely to mitigate the risk of future climate disasters. State and local agencies look to Hawaiians to collaborate on design and administration of new land management policy. The state legislature declares Hawai'i an independent country and formally secedes from the United States. A weakened, resource-constrained federal government has little recourse, as several other states and territories also declare independence. The U.S. military retains its base in Hawai'i. The continued presence of the



military is unpopular among independent Hawaiians, but the new government welcomes it as a bulwark against an expansionist China. Many residents of Hawai'i identifying as U.S. citizens move to the continental U.S., and the population contracts. The country convenes a constitutional convention.

In **2040**, Hawai'i ratifies its new national constitution. Tax revenues lag due to the decreased population, and the new nation borrows heavily from Pacific Rim nations. Hawai'i retains the U.S. dollar as currency, and many residents rely on remittances from family on the continent to meet basic needs. Many Native Hawaiians residing in the continental U.S. move back to Hawai'i to become citizens in the new nation. Foreign investment in commercial properties increases, and tourism begins to rebound following a downturn at independence, with a heavy reliance on visitors from Asia. Native Hawaiians make up 50% of the population and carry outsized political and economic clout relative to pre-independence. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i is increasingly the language of business and government. Removed from the constraints of U.S. policy, blood quantum is no longer the determining factor of Hawaiianess. All citizens of independent Hawai'i are considered Hawaiian, and citizens generally feel solidarity with their compatriots, as the first generation and founders of a new nation. China grows more ambitious in the Pacific, given the diminished U.S. stature on the global stage. Chinese military drills are conducted near Hawai'i. U.S. military deployments to Pearl Harbor increase and Hawaiian public safety and law enforcement issue frequent cyber-security warnings.

In **2050**, the U.S. dollar loses its position as global reserve currency to the Chinese yuan. Hawai'i faces default, with China being its primary lender over the prior 20 years. The government renegotiates debt with China in exchange for favorable trade terms. Chinese investment and tourism increases. Hawai'i forms its own military, and institutes a mandatory conscription for all citizens over the age of 18. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i proficiency is required for military service, and is the language of 40% of business and legal action. Hawaiian citizens perceive their economic and political position in the world to be precarious, even as they see their place in their land, country, and community to be secure.

'Ua'u arises as a result of a shift to the long standing world order. The uncertainty inherent in that shift compels the people of Hawai'i to confront a new set of realities, and *Hawai'i's soul is tested.*

Hawai'i has less influence on the global stage, but the standing it has is as a sovereign nation, and through this sovereignty citizens find healing and a sense of empowerment.

Contributors

The Scenario Team is made up of people who are representative (but not representatives) of a broad cross section of Hawai'i's people and organizations. Individually, they are respected leaders of their own sectors; as a team, they have a range of backgrounds and perspectives (sectoral, ideological, professional, geographical) that enable them together to grasp the emerging system as a whole. Groups represented in the project include Native Hawaiian elders and practitioners; nonprofits, community organizers, and representatives; and system leaders from business, education, tourism, philanthropy, and others.

Because these scenarios represent four different pathways forward, almost every scenario team member disagrees with elements in at least one of the scenarios. As a consequence, this list represents not a consensus on policy recommendations but the people themselves—a group of diverse, committed, and caring professionals who worked together in the hope that these scenarios might encourage a dialogue that will help Hawai'i preserve and sustain its soul.

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HEC serves as a convener and provides backbone support to advance the collaborative work of CEOs and top decision makers from different sectors to help build a more resilient economy and state. Every HEC member is actively engaged and focuses their collective energy and resources where immediate and systemic changes will benefit Hawai'i and the world. Learn more at hec.org



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Possible Futures of Hawai'i's Soul is part of
the Rediscovering Hawai'i's Soul initiative.

Learn more at HawaiiSoul.org.