

# POSSIBLE FUTURES OF Hawai‘i’s Soul

Reimagining Hawai‘i and its future is the kuleana of all of us, while remaining grounded in our Native Hawaiian culture and values. Join us on this journey to share these scenarios and implement solutions on what can and must be done - individually and together - for Hawai‘i and its people.

## Scenario Summaries

### ‘Iwa

*Great frigatebirds - 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.**

### 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 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.**

### 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. 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.**

### ‘Ua‘u

*The Hawaiian petrel - birds that guide 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  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>How is Hawai'i governed?</b>                 | 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.                                   |
| <b>How does the world see Hawai'i?</b>          | 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. |
| <b>Who controls access to power?</b>            | 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.               |
| <b>What is the nature of Hawai'i's economy?</b> | 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?"                    |
| <b>How is healing facilitated?</b>              | 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.              |
| <b>Who is considered Hawaiian?</b>              | "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.         |
| <b>What happens to Hawai'i's soul?</b>          | 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.  |



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