

Fishing and Access Restrictions in Nearshore Marine Waters of the Main Hawaiian Islands

Within the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI), the state of Hawai'i has established 34 Marine Managed Areas (MMAs) which limit fishing activities in nearshore marine waters (i.e. marine waters adjacent to shorelines):

- 11 **Marine Life Conservation Districts** (MLCDs are areas designed to conserve and replenish marine life);
- 20 **Fisheries Management Areas** (areas designed to resolve conflicts among users, including fishers); and
- 3 **other reserve areas**: 'Ahihi-Kina'u Natural Area Reserve (NAR); Kaho'olawe Island Reserve; and Coconut Island Hawai'i Marine Laboratory Refuge (HMLR)

In addition, members of the public have limited or no access to the shoreline and nearshore waters within federally-established military or security areas on O'ahu and Kaua'i (Pearl Harbor, Kāne'ohe Bay Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, Barking Sands Pacific Missile Range Facility, & Honolulu Reef Runway) or in the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Fishing or access is also restricted at a number of other small areas such as boat slips, and the Kuhio Beach swimming zone. Furthermore, since March 2007, use of lay gillnets has been prohibited in 3 zones on O'ahu, 7 zones on Hawai'i Island, and all of Maui Island.

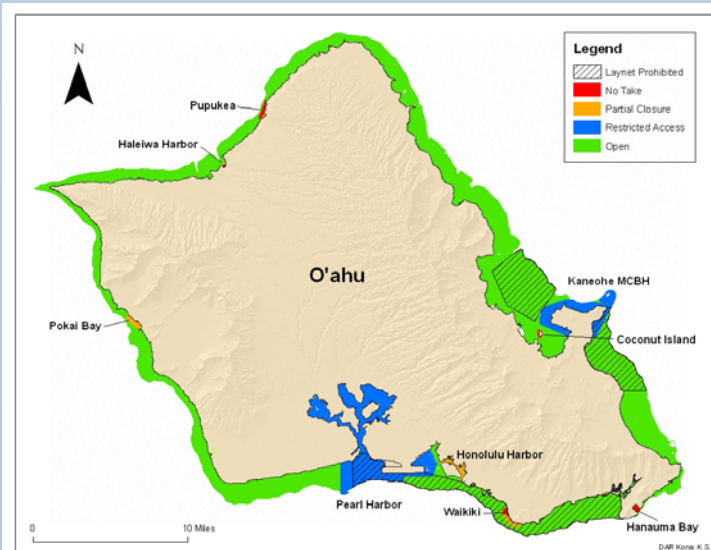
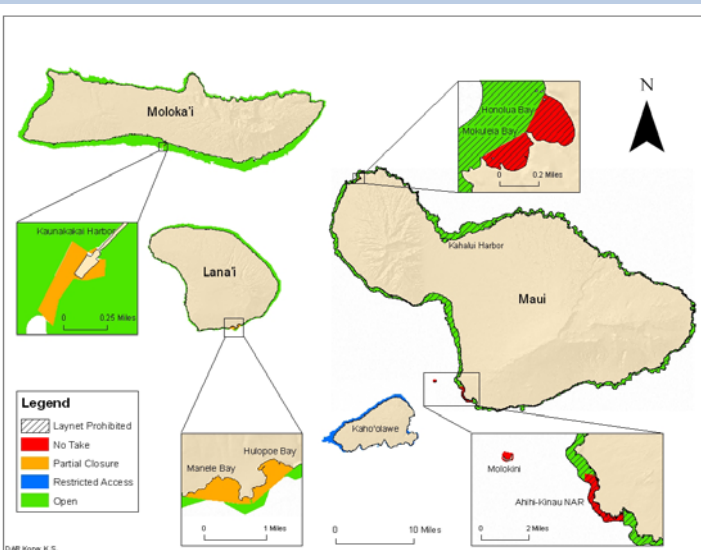
While there are a substantial number of restricted-access or restricted-fishing areas in the MHI, the majority of MMAs are relatively small (e.g. MLCDs range in size from 35 to 305 acres) and most of the regulated areas allow some or several forms of fishing within their boundaries. Some types of fishing are even permitted within 6 of the 11 MLCDs. Therefore, the great majority of MHI nearshore marine waters are open to the public for most common recreational fishing gears (see Table ↓, calculations based on 0-60 ft deep habitat):

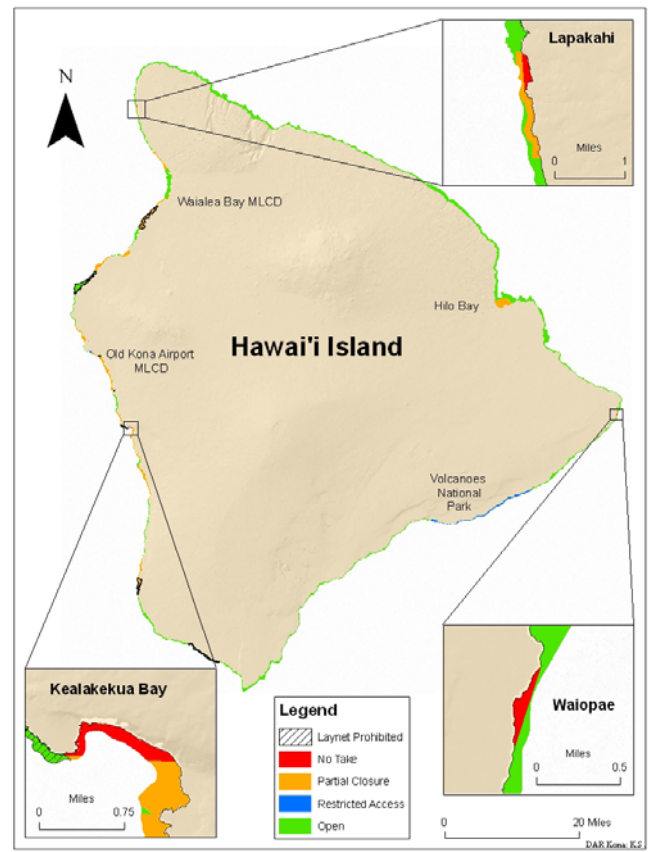
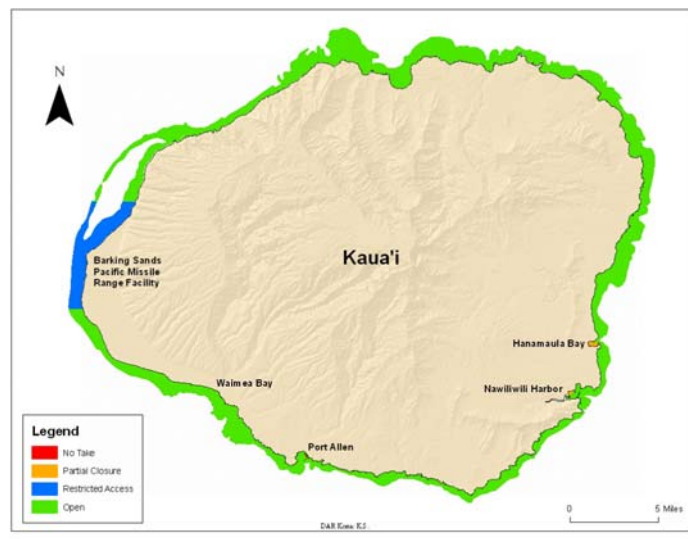
- 94.7% of MHI nearshore waters are open for pole and line fishing, 94.4% for throw-net fishing; and 94.9% are open for spearfishing. Prohibitions on other types of fishing are more extensive: 8.0% of MHI nearshore waters are closed to aquarium-fish collecting, and, since March 2007, 27.5% of nearshore waters have been closed to lay gillnet fishing.
- 95.2% of all MHI nearshore waters are open to some form of fishing, including > 93% of nearshore waters on all of the populated islands.

TABLE 1. Fishing Restrictions in MHI Marine Nearshore Waters

Location	No/negligible fishing or access ¹	Some fishing permitted	% OPEN TO PUBLIC FOR VARIOUS FISHING GEARS ²				
			Lay-Net	Spear	Pole & Line	Throw-Net	Aq Fishing
MHI Total	4.8%	95.2%	72.5%	94.9%	94.7%	94.4%	92.0%
Hawai'i	0.2%	99.8%	85.5%	98.9%	96.7%	96.5%	81.9%
Kaho'olawe	100.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kaua'i	5.9%	94.1%	93.9%	94.1%	94.1%	94.0%	93.9%
Lāna'i	-	100.0%	96.5%	96.5%	100.0%	96.5%	96.5%
Maui	1.7%	99.3%	-	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%
Molokai	-	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%
Molokini	100.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ni'ihau	-	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
O'ahu	6.3%	93.7%	67.0%	93.3%	93.7%	93.3%	93.0%

Notes: (1) no-take portions of MLCDs, plus 'Ahihi-Kina'u NAR & Coconut Island HMLR & Kaho'olawe Island Reserve and military/security no-access areas **(2)** For purposes of above calculations, military and security access areas accessible by permit are considered open to fishing, but Hawai'i Volcanoes NP is considered closed to predominantly shoreline gears: pole & line and throw-net.





MMA and restricted-fishing/access nearshore marine areas of the MHI. Nearshore waters shown on these maps, and used in area calculations, represent marine habitat <60 ft deep. Categories are: **red** for state-managed no-take MMAs (i.e. areas completely closed to all forms of fishing); **orange** for state managed MMAs in which some forms of fishing are prohibited; **blue** for areas where members of the public have limited or no access (federal and security zones, and the Kaho’olawe Island Reserve). Hatched areas are lay gill-net prohibited zones (displayed in 0-60ft range, but note that these zones extend to 3 nautical miles from shore). **Green** areas are not part of the MMA system and have no specific access regulations. Non marine habitats (rivers, streams, canals, lagoons) are not included.

- In total, 0.4% of MHI marine nearshore waters < 60ft deep are in complete no-take MMAs (i.e. state-managed areas in which no fishing of any kind is permitted). An additional 2.7% are in federal/security areas on O’ahu (Pearl Harbor, Honolulu Reef Runway) and Kaua’i (Barking Sands PMRF) which the public can not enter, and which are also therefore effectively no-take areas.
- Another 5.3% of MHI nearshore marine waters are in partial closure MMAs, i.e. state managed areas which limit some fishing or access. The largest parts of these are the West Hawai’i FRA network (2.0% of MHI nearshore waters) and the Kaho’olawe Island Reserve (1.7%).
- The recently established lay gillnet prohibited zones on O’ahu and Maui, and the existing comparable areas on Hawai’i make up a total of 22.9% of all nearshore waters. In the great majority of those zones, all forms of fishing other than lay gillnetting are permitted.

TABLE 2. Marine Managed & Restricted-Access Areas Containing Nearshore Marine Waters (0-60ft deep) in MHI

Area (km ²)	State Regulated Areas			Federal/Security Areas		No spatial management ²	
	No-take MMA ¹	Partial Closure MMA	Lay Gill Net Prohibited Area ²	% Little/No Access	% Restricted Access ³		
MHI Total	1,074.8	0.4%	5.3%	22.9%	2.7%	2.1%	68.7%
Hawai’i	174.7	0.2%	19.0%	8.1%	-	3.1%	72.9%
Kaho’olawe	18.1	-	100.0%	-	-	-	0.0%
Kaua’i	166.6	-	0.4%	-	5.9%	3.8%	90.0%
Lāna’i	32.2	-	3.5%	-	-	-	96.5%
Maui	133.6	1.7%	-	100.0%	-	-	0.0%
Moloka’i	141.7	-	0.1%	-	-	-	99.9%
Molokini	0.3	100.0%	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Ni’ihau	83.3	-	-	-	-	-	100.0%
O’ahu	324.7	0.5%	1.2%	30.4%	5.9%	3.2%	63.3%

Notes (1) No-take portions of MLCDs, plus ‘Ahihi-Kina’u NAR & Coconut Island HMLR. (2) Portions of the O’ahu, Maui, and Big Isle lay-gillnet prohibited zones overlap other pre-existing closed or regulated areas, so totals do not add up to 100% (3) Restricted access areas are the portions of Barking Sands PMRF and Kāne’ohe Bay MCBH which are accessible to members of the public by permit (which requires a background check), and the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park shoreline area in which only native Hawaiians may fish.

For more information, please contact:

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