ISLAND

Molokai

OBJECTIVES

Puu Alii – Kalawao County Highpoint

Kamakou – Molokai Island Highpoint

Kukui on Mauna Loa – 1k Prom

TOWNS - 8

Kuanakakai – south shore, ferry dock, main town

Kaulapuu – center, some services, higher ground

Maunaloa – west end

ARRIVAL

Fly from Oahu or Maui

Ferry from Maui (Lahaina), $68 one way

VEHICLE

Maui Car Rental Discount – Alamo at airport (van pickup at ferry dock in Kaunakakai)

4WD Jeep (in 2013 $431 for 4 days, fuel in Kuanakakai $5.02/gal)

LODGING

Camp high near preserve at Lookout over Waikolu Valley; expect wet & windy

Guest Houses (eg, Hale Malu in Kaulapuu on 470 7m north of Kaunakakai, $45pp)

Hotel Molokai, two miles east of Kuanakakai, $200/night

Condos along southern shore (eg, Molokai Shores 1m east, and Wavecrest 13m east)

DIRECTIONS

\*\* Airport to Kaunakakai – Zero your odometer at airport exit, go right (east) on HI 465 (Airport Loop) to the T intersection at mile 0.8. Turn left (east) on HI 460 (Maunaloa Road). At mile 3.4 pass HI 470 on your left (north) and continue south on HI 460. At mile 4.0 pass the Kamakou Forest Preserve Road on your left (east), which is at the south end Manawainui Bridge at MP 3.75. At mile 4.4 pass the landfill road (at MP 3.0). At mile 5.0 pass a road (at MP 2.5) on your right (west) which goes to the TNC trailer office. At mile 7.4 arrive in Kaunakakai a - - go straight (east) on HI 450, or turn right (south) on HI 460 to the ferry warf (longest in Hawaii), or turn left (north) into town stores (grocery, hardware).

\*\* Kaunakakai to East End – From Kaunakakai go east on HI 450. Pass Molokai Shores at MP 1, Hotel Molokai at MP 2, and One Alii Park after 3.4 miles. Pass Kamalo at MP 10. Pass Wavecrest resort at MP 13, with possible ranch road heading uphill to Kamakou. At MP 25 cross over a one lane bridge and at MP 27.5 reach Halawa, the end of the road and access to Halawa Bay Park and the valley with waterfall.

\*\* Airport to North Shore - Zero your odometer at airport exit, go right (east) on HI 465 (Airport Loop) to the T intersection at mile 0.8. Turn left (east) on HI 460 (Maunaloa Road). At mile 3.4 turn left (north) on HI 470. Zero odometer. At 3.5 pass the coffee plantation in Kaulapuu. At 3.7 pass Molokai Museum. At 4.8 pass the mule barn for guided rides down to Kalaupapa. At 4.9 enter Palauu State Park and end of the road parking lot at 5.2 miles. From here take the short walks to Kalauapapa Lookout and Phallic Rock.

\*\* Kaunakakai to Kamakou Preserve – Zero your odometer in Kaunakakai at intersection of HI 450/460 and proceed west on HI 460, and at mile 3.4 turn right (east) on paved Kamakou Forest Preserve Road (north) which is at the south end of the Manawainui Bridge at MP 3.75. Zero your odometer.

At mile 0.1 pass Homelani Cemetery on your left (north), and pass a gate and a sign for “Maunahui-Makakupaia Trail - 16.8 mile one way.”

At mile 0.2 the pavement ends. The road is rough, rutted, washboarded, and dusty in the dry season, through arid pasture lands.

At mile 5.6 is the Molokai Forest Reserve boundary. Pass through a gate here, and read the nice map at this gate. The road climbs through damp forest.

At mile 5.9 pass the wood carvers house (now closed) and stay right.

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=21.13975,-156.97437&z=15&t=T>

At about mile 7 is a camp used by TNC.

At about mile 8.9 there is a sandalwood measuring pit (template for creating boats), surrounded by a nice green-fence.

At mile 9.4 there is a trailhead sign for Kahanui Trail to the left (north), 3.3 miles to lookouts.

At mile 9.8 is a picnic area on the left at the Waikolu Lookout (breathtaking view of Waikolu Valley with waterfalls and glimpse of the ocean). Toilets are here, but no water. The elevations is nearly 3,300’. Parking is available here.

From the lookout, the road is steep and often muddy, although in 2013 there were signs of fresh gravel and graders were smoothing the surface. The road crosses three gulches and the first one is steepest at the switchback crossing at the head of Kaunakakai Gulch.

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=21.12522,-156.91910&z=15&t=T>

At mile 10.0 pass the Kamakou registration box on your right in the forest.

At mile 10.3 pass a small parking area on the left with a trail to Hanalilolilo (4,075’). Immediately descend into the first gulch.

At mile 11.2 pass Makakupaia Trail (road) on signpost, that goes down to the highway. The road turns into Center Ridge Road (signpost), and stay straight.

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=21.11717,-156.91820&z=15&t=T>

At mile 11.3 reach a mud suckhole in the pines, and consider parking here rather than driving the mud.

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=21.11589,-156.91768&z=15&t=T>

The road turns sharply to the left (east) and continues to the trailhead.

At mile 12.6 is a side road (straight) to the trailhead parking lot (the 4WD road goes right). Go 0.1 mile to the signed trailhead of the 1.5 mile Pepeopae Bog Trail boardwalk.

KAMAKOU HIKE

At the signed trailhead, hike east on the 1.5 mile Pepeopae Trail which is a boardwalk consisting of a 6 inch narrow metal grate, which can be underwater in wet season. After a straight stretch in forest, the boardwalk bursts into the open bog. Turn right at a T-intersection of boardwalks and come to a small wood platform on a slight rise. As you proceed keep your balance and don’t sidestep into the muck. The metal grate is slippery. Be watchful for low hanging limbs along the way (they can crack your headlamp if traveling in the dark). Also mind the steps and the steep grade in the boardwalk.

As the trail approaches Pelekunu Overlook, it curves left around a drainage, and follows a wire fence to a metal gate. Leave the boardwalk to your right (south) and follow the fence to the edge of the ridge (steep north-northeast slope). Turn right (south) and follow the ridge edge (steep drop to your left) as you bushwhack through the jungle for 2.5 miles and 1200’ to Kamakou.

After passing over a subpeak half way, watch carefully your GPS, compass, and sun. There are side canyons to the right with blue flagging which appear to be the ridge crest. There are four steep descents/ascents along the ridge to Kamakou which may appear impossibly steep. You will get muddy and need to crawl under limbs. The muck is oil and will not come off your skin with just one shower (and may never come off your daypack).

PUU ALII HIKE

Puu Alii is a 0.9 mile flat bushwhack to the south after the boardwalk ends, and is described elsewhere. The jungle and elevation gain is nothing compared to Kamakou, however, expect mud. Once you leave the boardwalk to the left (north) along the steep ridge, come to a wall of vegetation with a “rabbit hole” opening. Dive into this and follow the jungle path of mud to the fencing on Puu Alii. Let your GPS locate the highpoint for you.

If you park at the lookout, expect the total hike to Puu Alii to be 8.8 miles roundtrip with 2100’ gain. Expect 14 miles with 2600’ for Kamakou.

POST HIKE CELEBRATIONS

- Paddler’s Inn in Kaunakakai, just east of HI 450/460 intersection – outdoor bar, lively

- Hotel Molokai open bar and restaurant along shore at MP 2 on HI 450 (east of Kaunakakai)

BREAKFAST SUGGESTIONS

- Hotel Molokai

- Kaulapuu Cookhouse (just west of coffee plantation in Kaulapuu, 3.5 miles north on HI 470)