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Haleakalā Highway:

Bringing the World to Maui

DAWN E. DUENSING

HALEAKALĀ HIGHWAY WITHIN HALEAKALĀ NATIONAL PARK IS A SCENIC, TWO-LANE road completed in 1935 to provide automobile access to Haleakalā Crater on the Hawaiian Island of Maui (Figure 1).¹ A massive dormant volcano, Haleakalā rises 10,023 feet (3,055 metres) from the Pacific Ocean on one of the most isolated archipelagos on earth.² Its summit crater is a 3,000-foot-deep depression, 22 miles in circumference. Within the crater are cinder cones as high as 1,000 feet, which are dwarfed by the sheer immensity of this great pit. The crater is memorable for its dramatic panoramas, highlighted with vivid colours that vary from ochre to lavender to gold. Traversing stark, almost treeless country, the road blends effortlessly with the surrounding landscape. On a clear day, the drive to the summit provides sweeping views of central Maui, the West Maui mountains, the Pacific Ocean and other Hawaiian Islands. Quite frequently, clouds envelop the slopes near the middle elevations of Haleakalā. One of the most striking experiences along Haleakalā Highway is the sensation of being above the clouds — a perspective most people only experience from the windows of an airplane.

What little history has been written on Hawai'i tourism focuses on the romance of steamer travel and exotic images in the early 1900s or emphasises jet travel, resorts and sunny beaches as the means of developing mass tourism in the 1960s.³ Writers have considered Hawai'i's most dramatic transportation accomplishments, primarily sea and rail transport.⁴ The greatest impacts, however, are on the ground, where local communities benefit directly from roads, which promote commerce and increase mobility and communication. In the Hawaiian Islands, early-20th-century roads had another far-reaching

¹ Diacritical marks reflect current usage. They do not appear in historical place names and titles where such marks were not originally used. I am very grateful to Brij Lal, Paul D'Arcy, Douglas Craig, Vicki Luker, Jean Kennedy and Mark Waterson. The initial research for this paper was conducted in 1999 for the Historic American Engineering Record, a division of the National Park Service. I thank NPS historian Timothy Davis, PhD, for his guidance and for encouraging my interest in historic roads.

² For the rest of this paper, I use US measures. One foot=0.3048 metre; one mile=1.6 kilometres.

³ See Don Hibbard, *Designing Paradise: the allure of the Hawaiian resort* (New York 2006); John Connell and Chris Gibson, "No passport necessary": music, record covers and vicarious tourism in post-war Hawai'i, *Journal of Pacific History*, 43:1 (2008), 51–75.

⁴ Although not scholarly, transportation histories include Mifflin Thomas, *Schooner from Windward* (Honolulu 1983); J.C. Condé, *Narrow Gauge in a Kingdom: the Hawaiian Railroad Company, 1878–1897* (Railhead Publications 1985); John B. Hungerford, *Hawaiian Railroads: a memoir of the common carriers of the fiftieth state* (California [1963]).

FIGURE 1: This map of Maui indicates the routes to Haleakalā Crater. Hawaii National Park became two separate park units in 1961, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on Hawai'i and Haleakalā National Park on Maui. The inset map reflects the parks' current boundaries. Cartographic Services, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University.

benefit, as they made scenic attractions easily accessible, thus paving the way for the expansion of the tourist industry.

This paper examines the debate that led to the construction of Haleakalā Highway, which was built to 'bring the world to Maui'. The history of Haleakalā Highway demonstrates that Hawai'i's leaders publicly and aggressively advocated scenic roads as commercial enterprises to help establish tourism as the islands' third industry after sugar and pineapple. The road was built as a result of a persistent local initiative consisting primarily of Maui's *haole* elite (white businessmen and landholders), which took advantage of the wider

national resources of the US government. To achieve their goal, ‘Mauians’⁵ effectively facilitated cooperation between local, territorial and federal bureaucracies, while also capitalising on the expertise of the US National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Public Roads (BPR). This interagency cooperation combined the landscape preservation ethic of the NPS with the BPR’s highest technical standards to design a modern road that seamlessly blended with the natural environment.⁶ Developing Haleakalā Highway was part of a spirited competition between the islands of Hawai‘i and Maui which saw both islands in a race to attract tourists. Now a cultural resource, the thoroughfare continues to reflect the landscape principles and engineering standards of the NPS and BPR.

The historiography of roads and public infrastructure in the Pacific is limited. A search of the libraries with Pacific collections found no academic titles on this topic in the discipline of history. Bob McKillop considered the subject in an unpublished paper, ‘Lifeline: a short history of the Highlands Highway [PNG]’.⁷ Scholars in economics, environmental studies, and geography have also examined Papua New Guinea roads, sometimes including sections with ‘historical background’.⁸ Geographer Margaret Chung wrote a master’s thesis, ‘Structural change and population mobility: the impact of a road in rural Fiji’.⁹ Government departments have published overviews of road history for PNG and New Zealand.¹⁰ The greatest potential for the topic of roads as history appears to be New Zealand, where library catalogues demonstrate that country’s wealth of public histories, including some narratives of roads and the people who built them.¹¹ Many of these titles appear to be self-published or supported by local councils and/or historical societies.

While scholars have accorded great attention to Pacific Islanders’ seafaring traditions, their land-based travel is also worthy of consideration. Numerous archaeological sites, including *heiau* (temples), petroglyphs, quarries and burial sites testify that Haleakalā was a vital destination for ancient Hawaiians.¹² Maui had a well-built and engineered road system that was probably the most

⁵ ‘Mauians’ refers to Maui residents, a term used by contemporary inhabitants; it does not refer to native Hawaiians.

⁶ For US National Park Service landscape ideals, see Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design: landscape architecture and the National Park Service* (Lincoln, Nebraska 1998) and Linda Flint McClelland, *Building the National Parks: historic landscape design and construction* (Baltimore, Maryland 1998). Bruce E. Seely discusses the BPR in *Building the American Highway System: engineers as policy makers* (Philadelphia 1987).

⁷ Bob McKillop, ‘Lifeline: a short history of the Highlands Highway’, unpublished paper [2005].

⁸ See S. Hoverman, *Hiratan Highway: social and economic impacts* (Clayton, Victoria 1981); W.H. Williams, *A Survey of the Development of Communications in Papua and New Guinea* (Port Moresby 1979); Roger Southern, *Road Transport in the New Guinea Highlands* ([Port Moresby] 1973).

⁹ Margaret Chung, ‘Structural change and population mobility: the impact of a road in rural Fiji’, MA thesis, University of Hawaii at Manoa (Honolulu 1987).

¹⁰ See PNG Department of Information, *Linking the Territory: the vital role of roads in developing Papua and New Guinea* (Port Moresby 1970); Ministry of Transport, *From Bullock Track to Motorway* ([Wellington, NZ] 1975).

¹¹ See Harold J. Anderson, *Men of the Milford Road* (Invercargill, NZ 1985); Ivan D. Taylor, *The Road to the West Coast: a history of the road over Arthur’s Pass* (Palmerston North, NZ 2005).

¹² Will Kyselka and Ray Lanterman, *Maui, How It Came to Be* (Honolulu 1980), 133.

comprehensive network in Hawai'i. The *alaloa* (long road) was six to eight feet wide and paved with lava in some areas. It completely encircled the island by the early 1500s and featured important links in the crater.¹³ Further testimony regarding Haleakalā's traditional significance is also found in its rich lore. Haleakalā translates from the Hawaiian as 'house [used] by the sun'. Legend relates that the demigod Maui lassooed the sun, slowed it down, and thereby lengthened the day, which allowed his mother Hina to dry her *kapa* (barkcloth).¹⁴

The construction of Haleakalā Highway prompts questions about Hawaiian attitudes towards the project, their involvement, and its impact on their lives. By the time the road was proposed, Haleakalā lands were already owned by *haole* ranchers. It is not clear how Hawaiians continued to travel to or use the culturally significant summit. The historical record appears to be non-existent on Hawaiians and the construction of this road. National Park Service and Territorial documents are silent on the issue. Hawaii National Park (HNP) superintendents' reports give no indication of any problems relating to Haleakalā Highway, even though they described disputes with residents on the island of Hawai'i, who protested land acquisitions needed for a road near Kalapana during the 1940s.¹⁵ If Hawaiians played a role in this project, Maui's strongly Republican and *haole* newspaper apparently had little comment on the matter. It is almost certain that Hawaiians were employed on this work-relief programme, but labour records do not exist for this public works project. Other road projects had greater Hawaiian participation, for instance, Maui's Hāna Highway, which was the 'pet project' of Board of Supervisors Chairman Sam Kalama, with portions built by contractors Johnny Wilson and Moses Akiona.¹⁶ An examination of Hawaiian-language newspapers might yield information on the relationship between Hawaiians and the construction of the Haleakalā Highway. While other road-building projects in the Pacific generated opposition, this does not appear to have been the case on Maui.¹⁷ In recent decades, Hawaiians have mobilised to protect Haleakalā's sacred landscapes, especially in relation to astronomical facilities on the summit. Sadly, research on Haleakalā Highway's history has demonstrated that Hawaiians were relegated to the role of cultural window dressing. As was often the case, *haole* relied on Hawaiians to lend

¹³ E.S. Craighill Handy and Elizabeth Green Handy, *Native Planters in Old Hawaii: their life, lore, and environment* (Honolulu 1972), 489; Elspeth P. Sterling, comp., *Sites of Maui* (Honolulu 1998), 263–5.

¹⁴ Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert and Esther T. Mookini, *Place Names of Hawaii* (Honolulu 1974 [2nd ed., rev. and enl.]), 36.

¹⁵ The Kalapana issues were not settled until 1960 as noted in Dawn Duensing, 'Hawaii Volcano National Park Roads', unpublished manuscript (Washington DC 1999), 73–4. See also Dawn Duensing, 'Haleakala National Park Roads', unpublished manuscript (Washington DC 1999). Hawai'i was a US territory from annexation in 1898 until statehood in 1959.

¹⁶ Dawn E. Duensing, 'The Hāna Belt Road: paving the way for tourism', *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 41 (2007), 119–48.

¹⁷ The Germans forced Pohnpeians to work on road projects, while interfering in Pohnpei's political custom and the chiefly tribute system, all of which figured in the 1910 Sokehs Rebellion as noted by Jocelyn Linnekin, 'New political orders', in Donald Denoon et al., *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders* (Cambridge 1997), 214–15.

‘authenticity’ to their activities, for example, by having *hula* dancers and *lei* (floral wreaths) at the highway’s opening festivities.

Journeys to the House of the Sun before 1935

The striking scenery and romantic allure of Hawai‘i’s volcanoes have long attracted visitors. In 1828, three American missionaries stationed in Hawai‘i, Richard Green, Lorrin Andrews and William Richards, were most likely the first non-Hawaiians to record their journey up Haleakalā. ‘Natives’ told the missionaries that the way was long, but that the ascent was easy. After an early start from an undetermined location, they reached the summit about 5 pm. Although tired, the missionaries reported that they felt ‘richly repaid for the toil of the day, by the grandeur and beauty of the scene’. Elaborating on their experience, they continued:

The clouds ... were far below us; so that we saw the *upper side* of them, while the reflection of the sun painting their verge with varied tints, made them appear like enchantment. We gazed on them with admiration, and longed for the pencil of Raphael, to give perpetuity to a prospect, which awakened in our bosoms unutterable emotions.¹⁸

After reaching the summit, the party descended about a mile and spent the night beside the precipice. The wind reminded them of a cold November night in New England as the temperature dropped from 77°F (25°C) to 43°F (6°C). They returned to the summit the next morning to ‘contemplate the beauties of the rising sun’,¹⁹ setting a precedent for what would become Haleakalā’s premier attraction. Being ‘above the clouds’ was clearly an amazing encounter during an age when travellers were restricted to ground transportation. The cold temperatures of high elevations were also unusual in tropical Polynesia.

Tourists on Maui were rare until the late 1800s. Robert Elwes, who visited Maui in 1849, provides what is probably one of the earliest tourist accounts of a journey to Haleakalā Crater. Upon the recommendation of Kamehameha III’s physician, a ‘well-informed’ Englishman, Elwes made the return trip from Lahaina, Maui, in four days, travelling via Makawao, situated on Haleakalā’s slopes about 1,500 feet above sea level. Elwes and his American guide, a sugar grower, started about noon, intending to spend the night in a cave along the way. When they reached the 8,000-foot elevation, the summit weather was clear, so they decided to continue their journey. Elwes provided little description of the trail, but noted it was a hard climb near the summit. At the crater’s edge, he recalled, ‘I never shall forget the view which then presented itself, and feel that it is quite impossible to describe such an extraordinary scene’. Nevertheless, Elwes portrayed the details of the immense crater, being awed at the range of colours highlighted by the sunlight, the snow-capped summits on the island of Hawai‘i, and of course, the clouds below. They slept in a cave, the next morning

¹⁸ *The Missionary Herald*, 25 (1829), 247–248.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 248.

awaking to a bitter cold, which prompted them to descend as quickly as possible.²⁰

Isabella Bird ascended Haleakalā in 1873, noting that the volcano was the object that attracted 'strangers' to Maui and suggesting that the 'grand spectacle' of the summit sunrise had by then become an established activity. The 'road' had been improved, but remained primitive. She observed, 'The road soon degenerated into a wood road, then a bridle track, then into a mere trail ascending all the way'. Her journey was uncomfortable as she suffered from excruciating cold, with soaked clothing that was 'scarcely bearable'. When Bird dismounted her horse, she complained of difficult uphill walking. Despite this, she enjoyed the incredible fog, clouds and light, while also noticing the remarkable oddities of Maui's mountain weather, where it could rain on one side of the road and be 'quite fine' on the other.²¹

In 1875, Henry Whitney, publisher of Honolulu's *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* newspaper, saw enough interest in Hawai'i as a tourist destination to write the first guidebook to the islands. Whitney described Haleakalā as well worth the time and trouble, acclaiming the summit sunrise and sunset as a 'once in a life-time' experience. He recommended hiring a good guide for the narrow, 15-mile horse trail, as the path was good to a point, but then deteriorated into a jumble of confusing cattle tracks.²²

Whitney's 1890 guidebook suggested improved options for accessing the crater. A horse journey was offered, but Whitney preferred the easier method of taking the train to Pā'ia, 'then riding over six miles of good carriage road to Makawao, where one could start immediately for the crater if horses were reserved in advance'. A new Haleakalā 'road' (trail) had opened in 1889, which Whitney noted was easily followed even by starlight. This improvement was timely, as Whitney mentioned that a tourist had complained that the expedition involved the longest four miles in Hawai'i because the road was 'continually washed away by mountain torrents', the air was thin, and the solitude had 'a greater pressure to the square inch than any barometer can measure'. Notwithstanding, Whitney endorsed the arduous adventure, emphasising that travellers were rewarded with a view of 'the most stupendous of nature's works'. He advised tourists to bring a letter of introduction to H.P. Baldwin so that he would let them use his 'charming Olinda retreat', which featured a comfortable house and good pasturage. Overnighing at Olinda was also counselled as a way to acclimatise before climbing to higher altitudes. Although Whitney's 1890 guide suggested a 2 am start time to allow horses to travel slowly but still reach the summit by sunrise, his 1895 book recommended a late afternoon arrival to witness sunset. This plan had the advantage of 'making the ascent in the

²⁰ Robert Elwes, *A Sketcher's Tour Round the World* (London 1854), 211–17.

²¹ Isabella Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago: six months among the palm groves, coral reefs, and volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands* (London 1886), 223–4.

²² Henry M. Whitney, *The Hawaiian Guide Book* (Rutland, VT 1875), 44–5.

most comfortable manner, escaping an unseasonable ride in the raw and chilling fog'.²³

With Haleakalā established as Maui's premier attraction, a rest-house was built near the crater's edge in 1894. C.H. Dickey, a Haleakalā enthusiast during 'the old days' when visitors slept in caves, started a subscription campaign, seeking \$5.00 contributions from individuals throughout Maui. Baldwin, one of Maui's most prominent sugar plantation owners, furnished labourers to construct the building. Each Monday before daybreak, workers walked 20–25 miles to the construction site, worked all week and returned home on Saturday. They often laboured in blinding, bitterly cold rain and were housed in rude shelters that provided little protection from the elements. The building was finished in two months, but damaged in a storm several years later. Mauians (Maui residents) were not discouraged, and Worth Aiken of Olinda, a Haleakalā aficionado who first climbed the volcano in 1891, collected funds to re-roof and improve the rest house. About 1901, Aiken organised Haleakalā's first visitor services, offering horseback expeditions to the summit and into the crater from his Olinda residence, Idlewilde.²⁴

Wanted: a Road to the Summit

During the early 1900s, Mauians' demands for better roads were not limited to Haleakalā. Maui's economy depended on agriculture, namely sugar and pineapple. The most 'serious need' was to finish the 'belt' (around-the-island) road, which would open land for development. Civic and political leaders also insisted that it was imperative to foster new industries, and considered scenic roads as commercial enterprises essential to build a third industry, tourism.

Evidence demonstrates that Hawai'i's *haole* elite played a key role in manufacturing demand for a Haleakalā road rather than responding to visitors' expectations for improved access. The first written suggestion for a road to attract sightseers to Haleakalā was probably a letter and editorial in the *Maui News* in 1912. Alexander Hume Ford was a well-to-do journalist who moved to Honolulu in 1907 and founded the *Mid Pacific Magazine* in 1911. He tirelessly promoted Hawai'i and the Pacific. In a lengthy letter to the *Maui News*, Ford extolled the virtues of Haleakalā, opining that there was 'no earthly reason' why a road should not be built to transport tourists 'in a jiffy from the steamer wharf to the edge of the earth's greatest extinct crater, the rim of which is just two miles above the smiling ocean'. He foreshadowed, or perhaps even instigated, the islands' competition for tourists by praising Maui's primary attraction over those of the island of Hawai'i. Ford noted that Kilauea volcano on Hawai'i was frequently inactive, which disappointed tourists. He asserted, however, that the 'wondrous beauties of Haleakala' at sunrise were always available, providing Maui with 'the greatest possible tourist asset in the world'. Ford explained how

²³ Henry M. Whitney, comp. and ed., *The Tourists' Guide Through the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu 1890), 79–81; Henry M. Whitney, ed., *The Tourists' Guide Through the Hawaiian Islands* (2nd edn, Honolulu 1895), 109.

²⁴ 'Haleakala Souvenir Edition', supplement to *Maui News* (Wailuku, Hawaii 1935), 9.

it was a shame that only eight miles of road kept travellers from what he claimed was 'the most wonderful scene from God[']s great picture book'. His big dreams included a hotel on the crater rim and a road into the crater itself. An editorial heartily endorsed Ford's letter, claiming that construction was feasible and 'would open to popular tourist travel the most wonderful sight in the Pacific'. The writer predicted that word of a comfortable automobile road to Haleakalā Crater would spread worldwide. The subsequent rush of tourists would tax Maui's hotel accommodation to the limit, which was presumably a favourable development.

While Ford's enthusiasm was admirable, he was prone to exaggeration and somewhat insensitive. Haleakalā was not 'always available', but disappointed visitors when the weather was poor. He praised Maui's fine roads, but chided Mauians for building 'necessary' roads that no one used. Recognising that a Haleakalā road was a luxury, Ford audaciously justified it because 'everyone owns an auto' and it would 'put Hawaii on the [tourist] map'. With a population around 31,550, there were only 354 licensed automobiles on Maui in 1913. Most Maui residents were plantation labourers who could not afford autos. Even so, Ford believed it 'unreasonable that Haleakala was neglected for a few mere necessary roads that someone would build anyway', such as the belt road around West Maui.²⁵

Several months later, another article emulated Ford's tone and enthusiasm. A 'well-known' writer, apparently from the US mainland, claimed that the trip to Haleakalā was not difficult, but the mere mention of 'horseback' deterred most tourists from making the journey. She emphasised that an auto road would encourage those who had previously avoided travel to the crater, as well as first-time tourists from the US mainland, to come to Maui to see this one attraction.²⁶

The appeal for a road resurfaced in 1914 when a *Maui News* editorial complained that Haleakalā attracted relatively few sightseers. The newspaper pointed out that Kilauea volcano on the island of Hawai'i received many more visitors because it was accessible by road and Haleakalā was not. The paper surmised:

The average tourist is past middle age, and the most of them are men and women who have spent their lives in soft occupations within great cities. Many of them are invalids or semi-invalids. Not one in fifty is physically able to stand the shaking up of a ride for eight exceedingly rough miles; or sleeping on the ground among the fleas and filth of the 'rest-house' at the summit of our mountain.²⁷

Despite these perceived problems, tourists enjoyed Haleakalā, apparently oblivious to the substandard road. A possibly biased 1911 article by Aiken, who still owned his guide service, advertised Maui as a 'tourist's mecca', with Haleakalā 'easily accessible'. In 1913, George Thayer embarked on a three-day

²⁵ Alexander Hume Ford, 'Advocates big road project', *Maui News*, 24 August 1912, 2; 'Road to Haleakala', *Maui News*, 24 August 1912, 3; *Hawaiian Annual* (Honolulu 1914), 203. Writers often mislabelled Haleakalā as extinct, not dormant.

²⁶ 'Maui boosted by Mrs. Yates', *Maui News*, 9 November 1912, 3.

²⁷ 'Makawao news item', *Maui News*, 14 January 1911, 2; 'Our neglected assets', *Maui News*, 6 June 1914, 4.

horseback trip around East Maui, including Haleakalā. Even though he had not been in the saddle for nearly 50 years, he delighted in the adventure, claiming it ended too quickly and that ‘the old trick of riding a trotting horse came back as if but yesterday’. Three motorcyclists attempted to ride to the crater in 1915. When one of their machines broke down, they walked five miles to Olinda, spent the night in an unattended house, and the next morning walked eight miles to the summit in 7.5 hours. They ignored the ‘physical discomforts’ of their exhausting trek, claiming that, of all the world’s scenic wonders, ‘Sunrise on Haleakala should rank first and foremost’.²⁸

Haleakalā enthusiasts began considering how the road might be built. Financing a scenic road seemed a questionable undertaking with Maui’s government preoccupied with improving farm-to-market roads and completing the belt road. Early discussions demonstrate that the matter began as a local issue, with boosters working to secure the support of both the county and territorial governments. In 1912, an engineer estimated that \$300,000 was needed to build a drive to the summit, through the crater, and down to the opposite coast.²⁹ Maui Sheriff Clem Crowell pointed out that convicts built the road to Kilauea and could build the Haleakalā road. ‘It isn’t the fastest way to get work done’, according to the *Maui News*, ‘but it is undoubtedly the cheapest, and is just as satisfactory in the end’.³⁰ The Chamber of Commerce considered strategies and approved Crowell’s recommendation to use territorial prisoners, then pressed the Maui County Board of Supervisors to appraise the matter. At Aiken’s insistence, a committee was organised to promote the road issue.³¹ Several months later Territorial Superintendent of Public Works Charles Forbes deduced that 60 prisoners could construct 12 miles of road for \$100,000 and strongly recommended that the territory ‘render all possible assistance’.³² Governor Lucius Pinkham accepted Forbes’ advice, emphasising that the scenic road was a tourist attraction worthy of territorial support. In 1915, however, the governor decided that surveying the route was ‘premature’ and a ‘practical’ road to the summit too expensive. He advised the Maui Chamber of Commerce to pursue the matter locally.³³ Other correspondence in Pinkham’s files indicated his frugality was due to worsening economic conditions during World War I.

These discussions nevertheless prompted excitement, and possible routes were suggested as early as 1915. Despite the well-established Olinda trail, Kula, situated on Haleakalā’s leeward (dry) slopes, eventually became the preferred byway. Kula had more agreeable weather than Olinda, which was subject to frequent heavy rain. Furthermore, a road already reached to Kula’s 4,000-foot

²⁸ Joseph B. Stickney, ‘Motorcycling on Maui’, *Mid Pacific Magazine*, 9 (1915), 443; Worth O. Aiken, ‘Maui, the tourist’s Mecca’, *Mid Pacific Magazine*, 12 (1916), 373; George B. Thayer, ‘Tramping through a volcano’, *Mid Pacific Magazine*, 5 (1913), 239.

²⁹ ‘Haleakala Road’, *Maui News*, 31 August 1912, 2.

³⁰ ‘Our neglected assets’, *Maui News*, 6 June 1914, 4; ‘Help for Haleakala Road’, *Maui News*, 4 July 1914, 2.

³¹ ‘Chamber of Commerce considers Haleakala’, *Maui News*, 11 July 1914, 1.

³² Charles R. Forbes, ‘Report on trip to Maui’, 16 October 1914, Honolulu, Archives of Hawai‘i, hereinafter AH, Governors’ Records.

³³ Pinkham letter to A.C. Wheeler, 2 December 1915, AH, Governors’ Records.

elevation, providing a fair start to the summit.³⁴ The Olinda trail was not completely forgotten. In 1917, an automobile was driven over it, coming to within three miles of the summit. This time an engineer determined that a road might cost only \$50,000. Ford jumped at this opportunity, labelling Maui a 'motorists' paradise' and urging the Chamber of Commerce to endorse the Olinda route.³⁵

W.O. Smith of the Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company added another element to the debate in 1920 after Mauians complained about steamer service. Smith told them that if they wanted improvements, they should build a road to their 'unrivaled' attraction, Haleakalā. He emphasised that the steamship company responded to the law of supply and demand. As such, it established its profitable Hawai'i Island route because people wanted to go to the volcano, knowing that they could comfortably travel to it on a good auto road from the port of Hilo. Smith encouraged Mauians to create demand for their island by building a Haleakalā road to attract visitors, thereby providing the steamship company with an incentive to improve service. He predicted that a summit road, although expensive, would pay for itself through increased tourism revenues. He also listed financing options: local, territorial and federal governments.³⁶ Smith was unique in that he suggested the road would benefit not just tourists, but also residents. Furthermore, his astute assessment was based on experience. Steamship companies had long operated all-inclusive tours from Honolulu to the volcano. In 1885, Wilder's Steamship Company even built Keauhou landing and a 14-mile bridle path to connect the landing to Kilauea. Touted as a great improvement over other routes, Wilder's advertised its thoroughfare as a 'fairly good road' that was less than half the distance of other routes. The road from Hilo to the volcano was modernised for carriage travel in 1894, consequently the Inter-Island Steamship Company, the new owner of the Keauhou road, considered upgrading its path for carriages, which was a difficult and expensive proposition. The road and landing were abandoned as obsolete in 1897,³⁷ thus confirming the role that good roads played in conveying tourists to scenic attractions. Port statistics *may* reinforce Smith's assertion of Kilauea's acclaim, as passenger numbers for Hilo were often two to three times the number of Maui passengers from 1915 to 1920. Freight volume in terms of relative population did not reflect such variability, suggesting that the higher percentage of travellers may indeed have been visiting Kilauea. It is difficult to ascertain Kilauea's popularity over Haleakalā, as passenger numbers do not distinguish between residents and tourists.³⁸

In 1923, steamer company representatives iterated that Maui would not prosper from tourism until there was a good road to Haleakalā. They insisted

³⁴ 'Haleakala road may be by way of Kula', *Maui News*, 14 August 1915, 1; 'Territorial survey of Haleakala road', *Maui News*, 5 November 1915, 1.

³⁵ 'Maui is motorists' paradise says Ford', *Maui News*, 27 April 1917, 1.

³⁶ 'W.O. Smith urges road to Haleakala', *Maui News*, 23 April 1920, 1.

³⁷ 'Keauhou route. Inter-island company considering new volcano road', *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, 16 January 1897; 'New road to Kilauea', *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, 28 January 1897.

³⁸ Robert C. Schmitt, *Historical Statistics of Hawaii* (Honolulu 1977), 12, 455.

that it was difficult to ‘sell Maui’ because tourists demanded easy accessibility; fewer people were willing to climb into a saddle to go sightseeing. An editorial analysed the topic, observing that the proposed road was not widely supported because people viewed it as an unnecessary scenic asset at a time when commercial roads were needed to connect communities and benefit pineapple growers. The writer did not deny the importance of these necessities, but instead argued that the Haleakalā road was also an imperative commercial enterprise, without which Maui could not develop its tourist industry. He asserted that the territorial legislature should pay for the road because attracting tourists would benefit all of Hawai‘i, not just Maui. Four days later, another editorial expanded on the theme, adding that the road would open Haleakalā to residents, most of whom had never visited the crater.³⁹

Becoming a Federal Project

After 1920, a number of factors provided the opportunity for Mauians to get their dream highway to Haleakalā’s summit built with US government funding and expertise. First, HNP was established in 1916 to protect Haleakalā Crater on Maui, and Kilauea and Mauna Loa volcanoes on the island of Hawaii. In addition, the Territory of Hawaii became eligible for federal aid for highways in 1925. Finally, the Great Depression provided work-relief programmes.

In 1920, Horace Albright, Field Assistant to the NPS Director, as a guest of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, visited Haleakalā’s summit. Albright observed, ‘Ultimately a road should be built from Olinda to the summit of Haleakalā, in order that everybody may make the ascent in comfort and enjoy the wonderful effects of sunset and sunrise to be observed from the crater’s rim’. He recommended that the Park Service should ‘keep in mind the advisability of building a road to the rim of the crater and make the necessary surveys for same’.⁴⁰

Hawaii National Park was dedicated in 1921. Active administration, which was based on Hawai‘i Island, started in 1922 when Thomas Boles was appointed the first superintendent. Boles made his initial trip to Maui in 1924, with most of his expenses paid by Haleakalā enthusiasts. He was astonished to read the rest-house guest register and learn that 59 persons had visited the summit during a two-week period. Impressed with this display of interest, he noted that HNP could increase its attendance with comparatively little expense for roads and trails. Boles told the Chamber of Commerce that the road should not be a dream, but an expectation, without which Haleakalā’s magnificent scenery would be wasted.⁴¹ NPS Director Stephen Mather’s annual report to Congress

³⁹ ‘Making Haleakala easy’, *Maui News*, 27 July 1923, 4.

⁴⁰ Horace Albright, Field Assistant to the Director, National Park Service, ‘Annual report’, 1920, 25–6, Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park Library, hereinafter HVNP. Albright later became director of the National Park Service.

⁴¹ Thomas Boles, ‘Superintendent’s monthly report’, July 1924, all superintendents’ reports at HVNP.

asserted that Haleakalā was worthy of additional development, acknowledging that local enthusiasm would contribute greatly to its success. Much of Mather's report, however, focused on the Kilauea section of HNP, convincing Mauians that the prospect of US government funding for Haleakalā was not particularly promising.⁴²

The Maui Chamber of Commerce hosted separate visits for US Congressmen W.C. Cramton and J.A. Taylor in 1925. Touring Haleakalā's summit with the businessmen and Hawai'i Governor Wallace Farrington, Cramton heartily endorsed the proposed road to the crater. He predicted that, within a few years of completion, 20,000 people a year would visit the summit. Cramton seemed confident that money could be secured provided an adequate right-of-way (more than a 'shoestring strip') could be obtained for the proposed road. The congressman urged the businessmen to 'get busy' and secure the necessary land for the road. He was impressed with Maui's 'spirit of cooperation' and encouraged Mauians to continue displaying it. Galvanised by his Maui experience, Cramton returned to the US mainland and presented photographic slideshows promoting Haleakalā.⁴³

The Chamber of Commerce and the *Maui News* kept the Haleakalā project in the spotlight, now referring to it as a 'federal road'. The newspaper featured a Hawaii Tourist Bureau article praising Haleakalā and reminding readers that the only thing missing from the wonderful crater trip was the road, which was needed to provide easy access for all. Yet another editorial persisted in touting the project as a commercial road, 'even if the produce of the soil will not be hauled over it'. Catering to tourists, it emphasised, was just as much a business enterprise as more obvious utilitarian pursuits. Scenic assets not accessible to visitors represented a loss of potential revenue that could be recouped by road development.⁴⁴

Federal interest in the road induced planning. Building the highway involved two separate projects: the thoroughfare within HNP and an 'approach' road to connect the park drive on Haleakalā's upper slopes to an existing route at the 4,000 feet elevation. Boles ordered a survey in 1925, confident that Congress would provide funding and that construction might be completed within three years.⁴⁵ The *Maui News* heralded the announcement as 'one of the best pieces of news that had ever come to Maui', proclaiming the road would be a great step towards enhancing the island's attraction as a tourist destination.⁴⁶

The Haleakalā Highway project followed National Park Service road-building policies, which were formalised in a 1926 memorandum of agreement between the Park Service and the BPR. Interagency cooperation allowed the

⁴² 'Haleakala worthy of consideration by U.S. government', *Maui News*, 13 December 1924, 1.

⁴³ 'Federal road to top of Haleakala favored', *Maui News*, 20 May 1925, 1.

⁴⁴ 'Haleakala road is considered at C. of C. Meet', *Maui News*, 30 May 1925, 1; 'Trail and mountain hikers enthusiastic after Haleakala trip', *Maui News*, 17 June 1925, 2; 'A road to the summit', *Maui News*, 13 June 1925, 4; 'Now or later', *Maui News*, 31 July 1923, 4.

⁴⁵ 'Survey party will work on mountain in about two weeks', *Maui News*, 14 October 1925, 1.

⁴⁶ 'Haleakala road survey to start; engineer comes', *Maui News*, 10 October 1925, 1.

NPS to use the BPR's technical expertise to conduct surveys, determine contract specifications, and manage construction. Park superintendents and NPS landscape architects established the locations and character of roads, ensuring that landscapes were protected. This agreement provided the framework for decades of cooperation on NPS roads throughout the US.⁴⁷

Boles and BPR engineers Frank Kittredge and Frank Wheeler surveyed an Olinda route. Kittredge had extensive experience in building park roads and was considered one of the BPR's best location engineers.⁴⁸ He wanted the road to be a relaxing pleasure drive, so he recommended 'practical' grades of five or six per cent to prevent vehicles from overheating on the way up and brakes from burning out on the way down.⁴⁹ Another important consideration was that the road should follow the contours of the land, so as to tread lightly upon it. While Kittredge's team flagged out the route, Boles independently inspected the crater rim to locate suitable scenic points. The superintendent became 'more and more convinced' that Haleakalā was entitled to early consideration in HNP road projects. 'It is a guaranteed attraction', he observed, 'and is not dependent on the intermittent [*sic*] performance of some one feature like Kilauea'. Boles noted that Kilauea seemed to be less active and realised that HNP should concentrate on other features rather than relying solely on unpredictable volcanic eruptions.⁵⁰

The BPR included Haleakalā Highway in its recommendations for HNP in 1925. The Chamber of Commerce reacted quickly, lobbying the NPS to prioritise construction of Haleakalā Highway over other HNP road projects. The Maui organisation asked for the support of other islands' elected officials and organisations, arguing that there were already roads in the Hawai'i Island section of the national park while Maui had none. The Hilo Chamber of Commerce, on the rival island of Hawai'i, cooperated by advocating for Maui's project, recognising that Hawai'i already had its share of road money. Governor Farrington also expressed his support for the project.⁵¹ Unfortunately for Maui, the survey work was finished, but the NPS did not fund Haleakalā Highway. Instead, Boles continued to focus on the Kilauea and Mauna Loa sections of HNP and directed funds for roads there. The *Maui News* reported that the road would not materialise in the near future, but counselled that Maui residents should not abandon their dream.⁵²

Undeterred, local supporters had other work to accomplish, namely, building the approach road. The timing was fortuitous, as the 1925 NPS survey coincided with the Territory of Hawaii becoming eligible for federal road aid. In order to participate, Hawai'i was required to designate roads for its federal aid road

⁴⁷ Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 98, 174–75.

⁴⁸ McClelland, *Presenting Nature*, 109.

⁴⁹ Frank A. Kittredge, 'Investigation Road Program, Hawaii National Park' (Honolulu 1925), 13–15, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, USA (hereinafter NARA), Record Group 30.

⁵⁰ Boles, 'Superintendent's monthly report', October, November, and December 1925.

⁵¹ 'Speeding up of Haleakala road is to be sought', *Maui News*, 19 December 1925, 1; 'Road plans between Maui and Hawaii is [*sic*] in sight', *Maui News*, 9 January 1926, 1.

⁵² 'National park progress', *Maui News*, 12 February 1927, 3.

system for BPR approval. In addition, the territorial government had to contribute to the cost of road projects. Maui County Engineer A.P. Low recommended that the Haleakalā approach road be included in Hawai'i's system, which it was, thus making the road eligible for federal financing.⁵³

Another setback came in 1927 when the legislature did not appropriate territorial funds for the approach road. *Maui News* editorials scolded legislators for discriminating against Maui in favour of Hawai'i, which again received money for roads. The newspaper repeated its argument that the territory should build Haleakalā Highway, since all the islands would benefit from increased tourism, not just Maui. The legislature funded a survey, which was completed by the territorial engineer in 1928. Maui officials remained optimistic that an appropriation would be approved the following year.⁵⁴ Mauians knew they would have to secure funding, as construction on the drive within the national park could not begin until the approach road was finished.

The legislature finally authorised the territory's share of funding (52%) for the approach road in 1929. E.C. Mellor won the contract and began construction on the 16.6-mile road from Kula to the park boundary in January 1930. Former Maui County Engineer A.P. Low superintended the project, which provided employment for up to 150 men during the early years of the Great Depression. The highway opened in April 1933 and was notable as the first highway in Hawai'i to have super-elevated curves, which the *Maui News* optimistically reported, came 'close to making the highway fool-proof against reckless driving'.⁵⁵

With construction of the approach road under way, the NPS completed a new survey in 1931. NPS Chief Landscape Architect Thomas Vint reviewed the BPR engineer's work and suggested that the road's terminus be changed from the rest house to White Hill, which was nearer Haleakalā's summit. Vint observed that White Hill often had better viewing conditions, since the rest-house views were frequently obscured by clouds.⁵⁶ Landscape Architect John Wosky also inspected the work and rejected the proposed 'dips' into the crater. Wosky's primary objective was to keep the road out of the crater, demonstrating that the BPR and NPS had different approaches to road building. His refusal to accept the survey showed how the 1926 NPS–BPR agreement was supposed to work: the NPS exercised its right to determine the location and character of park roads when scenic concerns and technical considerations came into conflict. It is unclear who decided that the road should not enter the crater, but HNP Landscape Architect

⁵³ 'Superintendent of Public Works report', 1925, 13, AH; 'Bigelow makes Maui highway federal road', *Maui News*, 28 November 1925, 1.

⁵⁴ 'A wrong attitude', 'Delayed, not abandoned', *Maui News*, 7 May 1927, 3.

⁵⁵ 'Superintendent of Public Works report', 1930, 23–24, AH; 'Haleakala road gets official US approval', *Maui News*, 26 April 1933, 1, 3.

⁵⁶ Leavitt, 'Superintendent's monthly report', July 1931; H.L. Handley, 'Report on Haleakala location survey, Hawaii National Park' (Honolulu 1933), 2, NARA, Record Group 30. Thomas Vint had a 40-year career with the NPS. According to historian Ethan Carr, 'No individual influenced Park Service planning process and design details in the late 1920s and 1930s more than Thomas Chalmers Vint'. Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 190.

Merel Sager opined it was desirable to move the road away from the crater rim to prevent the motorist from viewing the crater until arriving at White Hill. In this scenario, the summit view of the crater would be the grand finale of the journey.⁵⁷ With the new provisos of avoiding the crater and having a White Hill terminus, BPR engineer H.L. Handley prepared a survey in 1932, which resulted in an entirely new route.

Building Haleakalā Highway

The federal government appropriated money to construct the road within the park in 1931. Hawaii National Park Superintendent Leavitt, although eager to start, worried that the economic climate threatened the project.⁵⁸ In 1933, with the United States sliding deeper into the Great Depression, Leavitt's concerns were confirmed when the US government ordered that no new construction begin. Since the Haleakalā road had never been contractually obligated, funds were withdrawn.⁵⁹ Leavitt recognised that territorial officials wanted NPS road projects to help alleviate Hawai'i's serious unemployment problem. Hawai'i's delegate to Congress, Lincoln McCandless, introduced a bill for federal funding for the Haleakalā Highway, which was supported by the territorial legislature.⁶⁰ The project was approved and financed as a work-relief programme through the National Recovery Act of 1933.⁶¹ Maui was finally getting the road its residents had dreamed of for more than 30 years.

Construction began in late 1933 with work on the 10.6-mile highway expected to be finished in two years at a cost of \$376,000.⁶² The project was complicated by strict NPS policies which protected the landscape. Construction access roads were prohibited in order to minimise negative impacts on the land, meaning that crews and machinery could only work within the road's narrow, 14-foot right of way (Figure 2). In addition, rock quarries had to be out of sight from the road. Although much of the work was completed using heavy equipment, skilled masons fashioned the aesthetic touches required along the road. Drainage features such as culverts and gutters, as well as the project's one bridge, were built or faced with lava-rock masonry which complemented the natural surroundings.⁶³

Haleakalā Highway was completed in 1935. The treeless, open brush country meant that the road and construction scars were quite conspicuous. Sager was proud of his landscape restoration efforts and attached photographs to his final report to show how effectively crews had obliterated the scars (Figures 3a

⁵⁷ Sager, 'Final construction report, Haleakala Highway ... April 16, 1935', 2, 4, HVNP; Handley, 'Report on Haleakala location survey', 2.

⁵⁸ Leavitt, 'Superintendent's monthly report', February 1932.

⁵⁹ Leavitt, 'Superintendent's monthly report', March 1933; Leavitt, 'Memorandum for the press, March 15, 1933', attached to 'Superintendent's monthly report', March 1933.

⁶⁰ Leavitt, 'Superintendent's monthly report', February and July 1933.

⁶¹ Handley, 'Final construction report on the Haleakala Road ... March 30, 1935', 3, HVNP.

⁶² Handley, 'Final construction report', 4; Leavitt, 'Superintendent's monthly report', August 1933.

⁶³ Sager, 'Final construction report', 3–4; Handley, 'Final construction report', 5.

FIGURE 2: A 1934 view of the steam shovel cutting the road's narrow right of way demonstrates the confined area in which construction crews were forced to work in order to minimise negative impacts on the surrounding landscape. Courtesy of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

and 3b). Sager concluded that the section of highway completed within the national park was superior in every way to the approach road built by the Territory of Hawaii. He maintained that the HNP section was outstanding in its general appearance, especially since NPS standards requiring cleanup and elimination of road scars were not common practices in Hawai'i.⁶⁴

Bringing the World to Maui

Mauians had worked for more 30 years to obtain Haleakalā Highway. When the road was finally finished, it was an occasion for celebration. The Maui Chamber of Commerce planned festivities for a year, hiring a full-time publicist and adopting the slogan, 'Bring the World to Maui'.⁶⁵

The road was dedicated on 23 February 1935, which was declared a public holiday in Hawai'i. Newspapers throughout the islands lauded Maui's success in stories and editorials. Articles also appeared in the national media. In honour of the occasion, the *Maui News* published a 116-page 'Haleakala Souvenir Edition', which highlighted the history of the famed volcano and its new road.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, Sager commented, the 'weatherman had no respect for this

⁶⁴ Sager, 'Final construction report', 5–6.

⁶⁵ Edward Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', March 1934.

⁶⁶ 'Haleakala Souvenir Edition'.

FIGURE 3: (a) 'Before' view taken by NPS landscape architect Merel Sager to show the conspicuous scars created by the construction of Haleakalā Highway. (b) Sager's 'after' view demonstrates that the construction scars had been nearly eliminated by covering the rock fills with soil. As a point of comparison, examine the left of centre of both photographs. Photographs courtesy of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

propitious occasion for the weather was miserable at the top with fog completely obscuring a view into the crater'.⁶⁷

According to the official programme, the day's events began at Kahului Harbor, welcoming guests from the inter-island steamer with *lei* and entertainment. A luncheon was enjoyed at the Grand Hotel in Wailuku, after which a motorcade proceeded to the park entrance.⁶⁸ Superintendent Wingate reported that all cars had been given a 'severe brake test' the day before. Unfortunately, the cars were not tested for climbing power and as a result, some stalled on the trip up the mountain.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Sager, 'Final construction report', Appendix, 7.

⁶⁸ 'Souvenir program for the opening of Haleakala Road, Island of Maui, February 23, 1935', HVNP.

⁶⁹ Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', February 1935.

The National Broadcasting Company (NBC) aired a 15-minute radio newscast from the park, which was transmitted over 65 stations throughout the US to an estimated audience of ten million. The programme included a three-minute talk by Wingate, who declared: 'The opening of this highway to Haleakala is a symbol of reward to those men of this territory who had the vision and the will to carry it into effect. It is the symbol of a desire ... to attain to beauty and make that beauty available to all' (Figure 4).⁷⁰

The cutting of a *lei* held across the road by *hula* dancers officially opened Haleakalā Highway. The motorcade began its ascent to the summit, where 1,639 people in 320 cars attended the festivities. A one-hour broadcast by radio station KGU in Honolulu transmitted the summit ceremonies throughout the islands. Superintendent Wingate enthused:

today dreams have come true. There *is* a road — thanks to those men of this Territory who have had both vision and will, and we are very happy. We are happy because now we know that the thrill which we have experienced will no longer be denied to anyone. Sunrise on Haleakala! and sunset — the Broken spectre! — the Silversword! These are for everyone now — and these are yours.⁷¹

Sager maintained that transportation improvements had traditionally been motivated by economic or material reasons. More recently, he claimed, roads were constructed for the sole purpose of making rare natural beauty accessible to the public. He explained the benefits of the new road while also warning of potential problems:

The National Park Service, with its chain of scenic jewels, has been charged with a sacred trust of preservation. It likewise has a duty to provide limited accessibility, but when accessibility comes, preservation is jeopardized. The National Park Service, through its landscape architects, makes critical study of all proposed road projects, for it is easily seen that an excess of development or the absence of careful planning ultimately destroys the very features which the Service is charged to preserve.⁷²

Sager's comments alluded to Haleakalā enthusiasts' calls for construction that would have substantially impacted the landscape. These boosters wanted a road into and through the crater, as well as a spur road to the top of White Hill. The refusal to consider such propositions demonstrated the value of NPS expertise.

Sager continued by highlighting a few NPS road construction principles and benefits:

The Haleakala Highway, within the park, has been made unobtrusive in the landscape by location and methods of construction. Road cuts have been flattened and rock fills have been covered with soil permitting vegetation to quickly return and thus harmonize this man-made construction with its surroundings.⁷³

⁷⁰ Sager, 'Final construction report', 7.

⁷¹ Sager, 'Final construction report', 7; Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', February 1935.

⁷² Merel S. Sager, 'Radio talk for Haleakala road opening', attached to 'Superintendent's monthly report', March 1935.

⁷³ Ibid.

FIGURE 4: The opening ceremonies celebrating Haleakalā Highway in February 1935 were transmitted throughout the US by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and to all islanders by KGU radio of Honolulu. Courtesy of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

He praised the beauties of Haleakalā and emphasised its importance to the National Park Service:

Haleakala Crater with its majestic expanse of colorful cones and precipitous walls has much to offer the observer in a spiritual way. It is akin to the Grand Canyon in its power to emotionally direct man's imagination into a realization of the great forces of nature. Here unfolded before him is the vivid story of not only the creation of a great mountain but of the creation of all the islands as well. Here is a panorama of elusive wild beauty which, thus far, the camera and brush have never caught.

Haleakala is truly of national park standard and the National Park Service is proud of its part in making this superb spectacle accessible to all those who will only come and see.⁷⁴

After the summit ceremonies, motorists returned from the mountain to attend a *lū'au* (Hawaiian feast) prepared for 1,500 guests. A public dance ended the day's events, with guests boarding the steamer for Honolulu at midnight.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Sager, 'Final construction report', Appendix, 7; 'Souvenir program'.

Haleakalā Highway's Impact

The popularity of the new road was evident by the end of 1935, when Ranger Peck reported a 455 per cent increase in visitation over one month. Not only did motorists come to view Haleakalā from the newly completed roadway, but 3,500 visitors came to observe the eruption of Mauna Loa on the island of Hawai'i. The HNP superintendent noted that Maui residents were pleased with the road, which provided an opportunity to view botanical wonders they may have never before seen, such as the flowering sandalwoods and silverswords.⁷⁶

In January 1936, an unusually heavy snowstorm lured Mauians to the summit. The first winter the new road was open, a four-day blizzard dumped 15.5 inches of snow above the 8,000-foot elevation and encased the bushes and rocks on White Hill in ice. More than 100 cars came to view the spectacle; the next day 128 cars visited the summit. Peck reported that people went wild over the snow, some seeming to lose all sense of reason. 'Men whom I had formerly known as calm and dignified businessmen, were yelling like Tarzan of the Apes and heaving chunks of ice and snow at each other', he observed. 'I spent the remainder of the day digging and pulling out cars stalled or stuck in the snow which had drifted quite deep against the banks', Peck continued. 'There was real suffering, especially among those in open cars, but they would have stayed on in the blizzard and probably some would have died.' Peck and four maintenance men finally got everyone off the summit and closed the road. The ranger included photos of the spectacular event in his monthly report, noting that it was not preliminary justification for the purchase of a snowplow (Figure 5).⁷⁷

Sydney Clark provided a rare guidebook description of the Haleakalā journey soon after the road opened. He noted that the new thoroughfare was convenient for tourists who only had one day on Maui, as they could motor to 'one of the greatest wonders on earth' in 1.5 hours. The road was also a 'blessing to the old and infirm', who could now visit the 'sublime' spectacle. According to Clark, not everyone was pleased with the new road. Armine von Tempski, a novelist from one of Maui's prominent families, reportedly complained that the road robbed Haleakalā of its adventure. She, along with other 'old-timers', apparently deplored the 'sissy era' of people motoring to the summit in their Buicks or Cadillacs.⁷⁸

The drive for the summit road was the impetus as well as the means for developing the Haleakalā section of HNP. After nearly 20 years as part of a national park, Haleakalā's easy access and new-found popularity allowed a ranger to be assigned to the district and visitor facilities to be built. The original road included scenic observation points and walking trails. 'Sorely needed structures', including comfort stations and an observatory building, were added in 1936. The next year the Civilian Conservation Corps built shelters in the crater. The 'normal' monthly travel statistics for 1936 were 193 cars and

⁷⁶ Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', November 1935, June 1940, June 1941.

⁷⁷ Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', January 1936.

⁷⁸ Sydney A. Clark, *Hawaii* (New York 1939), 232–3.

FIGURE 5: Ranger J.A. Peck's caption for this 1936 photograph exclaimed, 'This is Hawaii!', while noting that Haleakalā's unusually heavy snowfall was not 'preliminary justification for the purchase of a rotary plow'. Courtesy of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

965 visitors. Numbers continued to climb, with 23,668 people visiting Haleakalā during a nine-month period in 1938.⁷⁹ Other scenic overlooks, spur roads and visitor amenities were added over the decades. The road was a major factor in enabling the creation of Haleakalā National Park as a separate unit within the NPS in 1961.

It is difficult to determine how effectively Haleakalā Highway brought 'the world to Maui'. The HNP visitor statistics did not differentiate between residents and tourists, nor do tourism statistics shed light on the matter. The tourist bureau chief noted that visitors still came to Hawai'i despite the Depression, but he was clearly concerned about maintaining the numbers.⁸⁰ Hawai'i tourism was overshadowed by the Great Depression, then World War II. In the long run, scenic roads were essential in establishing tourism on Maui. Today, the island's most popular tourist attractions are Haleakalā Crater and the Hāna Belt Road, which opened in 1926. Both roads were constructed to attract tourists and subsequently helped build an industry which succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of Maui's early promoters. In 2006, more than 2.4 million people visited

⁷⁹ Wingate, 'Superintendent's monthly report', May 1936, July 1936, August 1937, September 1938.

⁸⁰ George Armitage, 'Tourists are still coming', *Hawaiian Annual* (1934), 81–3; Schmitt, *Historical Statistics*, 280.

Maui, and the economy of the island, once agricultural, was primarily dependent on tourism.⁸¹

Haleakalā Highway retains the features that BPR engineers and NPS designers intended and is today considered a cultural resource. The quality of the road, in its engineering and harmony with the landscape, is one of the enduring legacies of NPS–BPR involvement. The project engaged some of the best-known names in the NPS and BPR, from early conceptualisation of the road by Albright to the planning and construction phases, which included Kittredge, Vint and Sager. Federal expertise allowed Mauians to obtain a road of much higher standard than they would have had it been constructed with prison labour and limited local resources. The road still incorporates NPS landscaping ideals developed in the 1920s, reflecting the service's mission to provide visitors with accessibility to natural wonders without diminishing those resources in the process. With more than a 1.4 million visitors a year,⁸² preserving resources has become a challenge, which indicates that the road has, in the end, perhaps been too successful in 'bringing the world to Maui'.

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a new theme in Pacific historiography by examining a case study in the development of public infrastructure in the Hawaiian Islands. The history of Haleakalā Highway on Maui illustrates how a scenic road was planned and built as a commercial enterprise to help develop tourism as a new industry in Hawai'i. It demonstrates how Maui's *haole* elite (white businessmen and landholders) persistently advocated the road over the course of nearly three decades. To facilitate construction, these leaders forged successful partnerships with the Territory of Hawaii and the US government, taking advantage of funding, but also the technical expertise of federal agencies. Building Haleakalā Highway also prompts questions about the attitudes of indigenous Hawaiians towards the project, their involvement, and its impact on their lives. The English-language archive, however, appears to be silent on this issue. Completed in 1935, Haleakalā Highway today is a cultural resource that exhibits the landscape ideals of the US National Park Service and engineering standards of the US Bureau of Public Roads.

⁸¹ *Maui County Data Book* ([Wailuku, Hawai'i] 2006), 185.

⁸² Elizabeth Gordon, Haleakalā National Park, email to author, 10 December 2007.