

Läläkea Ditch History

The Läläkea Stream was used to irrigate sugar plantations in the Hamakua district above Waipiʻo Valley . Hamakua Sugar was one of the last remaining sugar plantations. It had operated over 35,000 acres of cane land in the Hämäkua district of the northeast of Hawaiʻi island. It had become the largest sugar plantation in Hawaiʻi after forming in 1979 from a merger of two plantations. The company had irrigated its sugar using the Lower Hämäkua Ditch system (which had opened in 1910) and the Läläkea Reservoir, built in 1920, which contained water that came from diversions of three streams: Läläkea Stream, Hakalaoa Stream, and a small tributary between the two. Water traveled from these diversions by tunnel to the reservoir.