

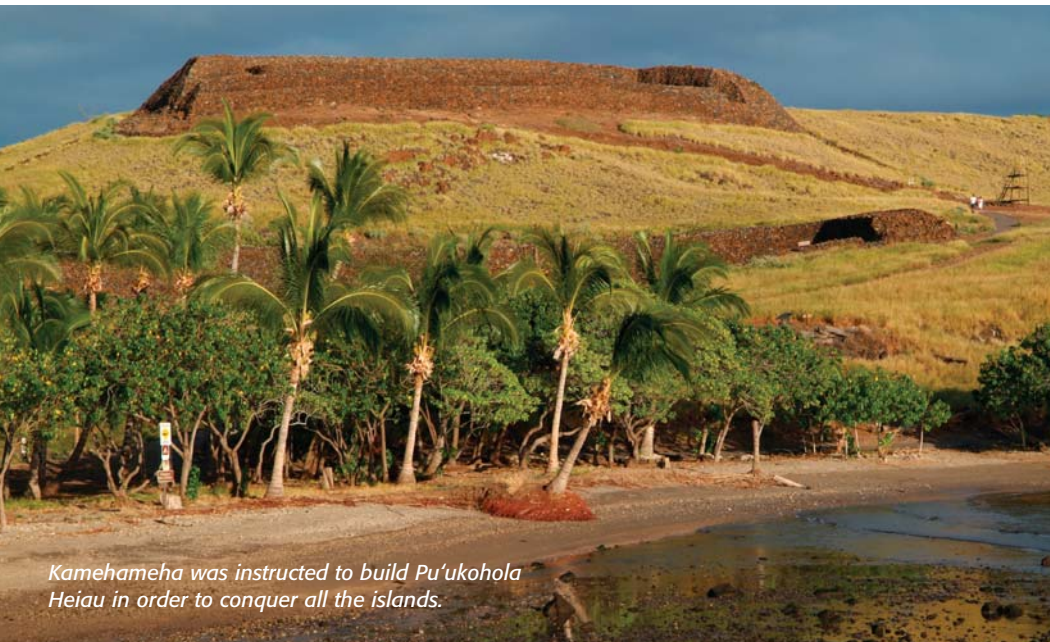
inch of all of them, including their branches (and we can cough up the dust-balls to prove it). The result? We can say with complete confidence that all of these roads are utterly wretched and lead to absolute squat. The entire coastline in this area is rocky and mostly unprotected. There are *no* beaches. It's pretty but not beautiful, and the land is harsh and unforgiving. (The real beauty of this area is underwater, with lots of extensive coral formations and ultra-clean water.) The only people who bother to make their way to the coast along this stretch are shoreline fishermen or hopeful whale watchers. So don't bother unless you have *way* too much time on your hands. The only exception is **Crystal Cove** near the 5 mile marker. The SCUBA is outstanding and fairly easy to access. (See SCUBA in ACTIVITIES.) Some local shoreline fishermen have driven pole holders into the lava in this area to practice shoreline fishing. I'm sure they won't mind if you borrow them. Otherwise, kiss off this area. It'll make you thirsty just *looking* at it.

## KAWAIHAE

The tiny port town of Kawaihae has a few places to eat and shop and is the launching area for some fishing and SCUBA operations. Otherwise, there's not much to see. There's an ice cream place on the back side of Kawaihae Center that has fairly good ice cream. **Café Pesto** is your best bet for food.

This is the driest part of the state, with annual rainfall averaging less than 10 inches. (Contrast that with 240 inches on the slopes northwest of Hilo.)

At the junction of Highways 19 and 270 is the impressive **Pu'ukohola Heiau**. (Entry is free and a very impressive visitor center is open 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.) Check out their incredible weapons display. This massive structure was built by King Kamehameha in 1790–91. He had sent his wife's grandmother to visit a kahuna on Kaua'i to ask how he could conquer Hawai'i. The kahuna said that if he built a fabulous heiau (temple) at Kawaihae and dedicated it to his war god, he would prevail. Thousands of "volunteers" worked



Kamehameha was instructed to build Pu'ukohola Heiau in order to conquer all the islands.



Note: From this area (clouds permitting) you can see four of the Big Island's five volcano mountains. Looking away from the ocean, from left to right, they are Kohala, Mauna Kea, Mauna Loa and Hualalai. The most massive, Mauna Loa, seems the least impressive from this perspective. Offshore, Haleakala on Maui is often seen.