

Kāneʻohe Bay Regional Council Meeting

Agenda

September 14, 2023

6:00 PM-8:00 PM

Online or call-in via ZOOM

(Zoom info listed below)

or

In-person at:

Kāneʻohe Atrium Building

46-004 Kawa St., Ste. 104

Kāneʻohe, HI 96744

6:00PM-8:00PM

1. Opening (Non-Action Item)

Brian Neilson – Chairperson, DLNR DAR (non-voting member)

Liko Kaluhiwa - Kāneʻohe Bay recreational boating association (voting member)

Clifford Loo - Kahaluʻu Neighborhood Board Rep (voting member)

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa – Koʻolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

Kristi Kaluhiwa – Koolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

Kim Fuller – DLNR DAR

Kendall Tucker – DLNR DAR

Nick Sinchek – Marine Corps Base Hawaiʻi

Casey Ching – Heʻeia NERR

Josh Hekeka – Office of Planning

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa leads a pule for Lahaina.

2. Meeting ground rules (Non-Action Item)

Quorum is not present to vote on this action item.

3. Approval of September 14, 2023 Agenda (Action Item)

Quorum is not present to vote on this action item.

4. Approval of Council minutes of the June 22, 2023 meetings (Action Item)

Quorum is not present to vote on this action item.

5. Presentation on Invasive Algae Control in Kāneʻohe Bay (Non-Action Item)

Kim Fuller from the DLNR DAR Aquatic Invasive Species team gave a presentation to the council including the following key points.

- Invasive algae management has been a multi-agency effort in Kāneʻohe Bay
- *Kappaphycus/Eucheuma* spp. was introduced in 1974
- The Super Sucker facilitates mechanical removal of invasive algae
- Collector urchins are outplanted on cleared reefs as a form of biocontrol
- Figures show algae removal is better maintained over time with urchins vs. without

- Neilson 2018, shows urchin-populated reefs had lower macroalgal cover than control reefs
- Mitigation funds for restoration of reefs in Kāneʻohe Bay: Replenishment of coral with goal to keep *Kappaphycus/Eucheuma* levels to below 5%, Marker 12 and other reefs
- Urchin hatchery on Sand Island spawns broodstocks to promote settlement
- Produce limu at the facility for feeding
- Outplant urchins on reefs based on need, currently outplanted ~980,000 and 940,000m², 233 acres
- Stopped doing supersucker in 2015, but continued outplanting on 22 treatment reefs and surveying 3 reefs
- Using SNAP survey data, DAR prioritizes reefs for urchin outplanting and publishes results and reports
- Data points are used to understand coral density and invasive algae density to target outplanting
- 18/22 reefs are meeting less than 5% cover, but 4 are over including Reef 23, where *Kappaphycus/Eucheuma* are coming back
- Recent decision to get Super Sucker up and running again, but working to make it functional with precautions to ensure algae is removed and not fragmented. Waiting on barge cleaning and repairs and hoping to operate before 2024
- Will continue to outplant urchins
- Targeting *Kappaphycus/Eucheuma*, but also *Gracilaria*/Gorilla Ogo

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa asked if the limu the urchins eat is the same limu eaten by the community. Kim Fuller explained that urchins eat most of the limu in Kāneʻohe Bay, but that the majority of what is there is invasive. The management strategy is to bring the level of invasive algae down first, then use the urchins to keep it down long enough for coral to grow.

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa shared that in the 70s, there were UH professors who released the invasive algae into Kāneʻohe Bay and that it should have been their responsibility to clean it up. Chair Neilson responded by addressing the unfortunate ecological shift that limu practitioners such as Uncle Jerry Kaluhiwa had to endure watching invasive algae take over. He added that many organizations have stepped up to take responsibility and address the issue, such as TNC, UH, Heʻeia NERR, and many other community partners. Following a big reef fish recruitment in 2013/2014, the algae went down, so the #1 hypothesis is that herbivorous reef fish grazing are important to keeping the algae down to manageable levels. While the invasive algae is coming back a bit, it is not nearly as bad as it was at its peak levels in 2011/2012. The focus is on healthy thriving reefs with herbivorous fish populations. Kendall Tucker added that without urchin outplanting, 100,000 lbs were removed from one reef and completely regrew in 6 months.

Kristi Kaluhiwa suggested outplanting native limu in its place. Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa asked if the urchins are native. Chair Neilson responded that they are the native Hawaʻe Maoli, collector sea urchin.

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa added that we should be keeping our native limu intact because it is getting scarce. She reiterated that scientists were not trusted before, because of all the experiments they would use Kāneʻohe Bay for that were harmful.

Chair Neilson shared that at the urchin hatchery on Sand Island, community groups have taken the lead on raising native limu. DAR provides the facilities and tanks, but folks like Uncle Wally Ito manage the tanks that will help to restore native limu back to the reefs. They are working to use this as a management tool for the future.

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa responded that the native limu should grow in the bay as opposed to tanks. Kim Fuller replied that Uncle Wally Ito is providing a seed stock of native ogo to Waikalua Loko I'a and Waimanalo Limu Hui from the Sand Island facility. Limu outplanted in cages have the most success, but that Uncle Wally Ito and Dave Cohen might need to provide more information. Aunty Rocky responded that fishpond salinity is different than other places, such as the open ocean or Kāneʻohe Bay, and limu propagation may work better in the bay itself than in the fishpond.

Kim Fuller shared about DAR collaborating with Hiʻilei Kawelo (Paepae o Heʻeia) to investigate and remove 3 different species of stony corals found in Kāneʻohe Bay that were not recognizable by her or her father. They suspected the corals were planted by an aquarium, because they were all in one place. Pictures of the corals were circulated, but nobody recognized them. A dna sample was collected, sent to a taxonomic expert, and not confirmed as invasive. However, they decided to remove the corals since they were known to be nonnative. The corals were donated to the Waikiki Aquarium. It was a joint removal effort between DAR, Hiʻilei, Heʻeia NERR, Waikiki Aquarium, but the small footprint made it a success story. They were removed, epoxied, and have been monitored since 2020 to ensure there were no fragments. DAR has also replenished rare corals that have been wiped out from bleaching. The Hawaii Coral Restoration Nursery created rapid growth of a *Montipora* species by taking source material, microfragmenting and spreading it onto a coral module, and outplanting it on Moku o Loʻe, reintroducing it with success.

6. Development of Kāneʻohe Bay Regional Council Letterhead (Non-Action Item)
Member Reppun is not present to provide an update.

7. Legislative proposal to amend HRS §200D-2 to have the chairperson of the council be selected by the members on an annual and rotating basis.

Through this agenda item, DAR would continue to set up meetings, post agendas, and public notice, but the Chairperson would be on rotating basis allowing other voting members a chance to chair meetings. This would be a good idea to give community more leadership of KBRC.

Aunty Rocky suggested the legislative session be discussed at the next meeting so KBRC can seek out legislators to reintroduce certain bills again.

Chair Neilson added that KBRC could form a PIG to create a group from KBRC to provide testimony during the legislative session.

8. Announcements (Non-Action Item)

Kristi Kaluhiwa announced that two individuals present are representing MCBH, herself and Nick Sincheck. Nick Sincheck introduced that he will be working with community planning and outreach for the MCBH.

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa asked for a status update regarding OHA representation. Chair Neilson responded that he reached out to OHA to see if they plan to nominate another representative and was informed that they are still trying to find someone to appoint. Sylvia Hussey will still be participating, and there is some talk that she may be able to fill the OHA seat in the interim.

Aunty Rocky added that Joe Pickard is out of state right now.

Casey Ching gave an update on Makai Watch. They recently had an outreach event at He'eia Pier on Saturday, July 8th. DOBOR, DOCARE officers, and DAR outreach staff were present with the Makai Watch volunteers. DOCARE did safety boarding on vessels. They are aiming for an outreach event at He'eia Pier every other month. The DOCARE officers present are assigned to our district. The district now has 1 supervisor and 5 officers, previously only had 1 supervisor and 2 officers before the DOCARE Academy.

Member Loo shared that a piece of property is building a house on Kamehameha Highway and it looks like they are trying to build a retaining wall. The area is part of a heiau, but there are new property owners. The neighborhood board was trying to shut them down. 27083 Kamehameha hwy is the address. Kendall Tucker added that it is the same property that had all the brown water coming down a couple years ago. Member Loo added that they had a crane there last week moving boulders around.

Kirk Deitschman announced that the Gypsy Girl, a sunken boat, is now in the harbor parking lot. DOBOR hired a contractor to pull it out.

9. Adjournment (Action Item)

Next council meeting – Nov 6 or Nov 30