

From: [Ryan Chang](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item D-8 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:00:08 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

I also urge the board to reject the proposal to allow the Chair to increase this cap without giving the board or the public any notice, much less a chance to review and comment. As the board knows, we have been experiencing unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions, and yet there are current proposals to grow more thirsty citrus trees in Central Maui than East Maui's streams may be able to handle. Increasing stream diversions during a time when our streams may be seeing less water than ever before may have significant impacts on the public's many interests in our public trust water resources. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

Finally, I urge the board to mandate as a condition of this permit that A&B and Mahi Pono fix their diversion infrastructure and to use lined reservoirs, so that we can finally stop the waste of millions of gallons of water per day. Again, our drought conditions only emphasize the preciousness of our water resources, and such massive amounts of water waste can no longer be tolerated. The use of lined reservoirs in particular will allow Mahi Pono to grow much more food using much less water from East Maui's streams, and provide a much more stable amount of available water during potential water shortages and to fight fires.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ryan Chang

From: [Diane Choy Fujimura](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:40:44 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Mahalo to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day. A&B has shown that it does not respect the Maui wai as a precious resource, one that must be used for appropriate needs and not be wasted on a daily basis. A&B has been previously allotted far too much water, and has demonstrated during the Maui wildfires that they are opportunistic and seized the catastrophe to obtain even more water!

The board must reject the proposal to allow the Chair to increase this cap without giving the board or the public any notice, much less a chance to review and comment. Increasing the cap as a unilateral decision by the Chair is irresponsible, and may lead to another fiasco like the removal of Kaleo Manuel during the Maui wildfires. Any decision to increase the cap must be made by the full Board. As the board knows, we have been experiencing unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions, and yet there are current proposals to grow more thirsty citrus trees in Central Maui than East Maui's streams may be able to handle. Increasing stream diversions during a time when our streams may be seeing less water than ever before may have significant impacts on the public's many interests in our public trust water resources. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. Please do what's pono.

Sincerely,
Diane Choy Fujimura

Ola i ka wai

From: [Cheryl Hendrickson](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda item D-8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:12:33 AM

Aloha-

Mahalo to the board to cap East Maui streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

Please reject the proposal to allow the Chair the sole decretionary power to increase this cap at will without board or public review.

This important topic needs a system of checks and balances to allow review of any changes to the cap. In this climate of false information, public review and due diligence is of paramount importance for oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

Our unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions demand a mandate that A&B, Mahi Pono and any other large scale diverters repair their diversion infrastructure. Line the reservoirs to stop the waste of millions of gallons of water per day.

Many mahalos,

Cheryl Hendrickson
Haiku, Maui resident

From: [Olan Leimomi Fisher](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments for Agenda Item D-8 BLNR 12/7-12/8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:15:56 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am submitting this testimony in my personal capacity as a concerned Hawai'i resident and Native Hawaiian. Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

I also urge the board to reject the proposal to allow the Chair to increase this cap without giving the board or the public any notice, much less a chance to review and comment. As the board knows, we have been experiencing unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions, and yet there are current proposals to grow more thirsty citrus trees in Central Maui than East Maui's streams may be able to handle. Increasing stream diversions during a time when our streams may be seeing less water than ever before may have significant impacts on the public's many interests in our public trust water resources. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

Finally, I urge the board to mandate as a condition of this permit that A&B and Mahi Pono fix their diversion infrastructure and to use lined reservoirs, so that we can finally stop the waste of millions of gallons of water per day. Again, our drought conditions only emphasize the preciousness of our water resources, and such massive amounts of water waste can no longer be tolerated. The use of lined reservoirs in particular will allow Mahi Pono to grow much more food using much less water from East Maui's streams, and provide a much more stable amount of available water during potential water shortages and to fight fires.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Aloha nui,

Olan

Olan Leimomi Morgan Fisher

"Kama 'ia ke aloha 'āina ā pa'a i loko."

From: [Diane Ware](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] December 7-8 Agenda item D8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:49:24 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully,

Diane Ware
808-967-8642
P. O. Box 698
99-7815 Kapoha
Volcano HI 96785

From: [John ODA](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] East Maui streams
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:46:46 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
John Oda

From: [Carolyn Eaton](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed reduction in water diversion from East Maui streams to Alexander and Baldwin
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:11:56 AM

I am in favor of the new limit on Alexander and Baldwin's allotment of Maui stream water of 27.4 million gallons per day.

I oppose and new Board authority to act without public input, behind closed doors.

Carolyn Eaton
1310 Heulu St., #602
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Madolin Wells](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:19:11 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Many thanks to DLNR staff for proposing an amount of water to A&B commensurate with its documented needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

I also urge the board to reject the proposal allowing the Chair to increase this cap without notice or resident input. Increasing climate crises on all fronts make natural resources like water ever more scarce and precious - not to be treated like a commodity, but as the public trust it was meant to be and as the state constitution requires. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

Finally, I urge the board to mandate as a condition of this permit that A&B and Mahi Pono correct their diversion infrastructure and retrofit using lined reservoirs to stop the waste of millions of gallons of water every day. Such massive water waste is unacceptable. The need is urgent for enabling locally grown food, providing for water shortages, and for fighting fires.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Madolin Wells, Kihei

From: [Pete Wilson](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:27:22 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Pete Wilson
13-927 Kahukai Street
Pahoa HI 96778
808-557-8108

From: [Kristina Jenkins](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:09:35 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Kristina Jenkins

From: [nan harter](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 5:50:02 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely, Nancy Harter, resident of Lahaina and survivor of Maui wildfires

From: [Joan and Tomas Heartfield](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:09:59 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

We have lived on Maui since 1970, taught at Maui College, and was the Community Arts Coordinator for the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts. We have lived in the Haiku,Huelo area since 1999 and have seen the water in our streams being diverted so often, leaving no or little water for the taro and other farmers out our way.

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Tomas and Joan Heartfield, Ph.D.
232 Door of Faith Rd
Haiku, HI 96708

"I had the pleasure of experiencing the work of Joan and Tomas Heartfield. Their profound and delightful teachings are, without a doubt, the next step for healing humanity on this planet."

Christiane Northrup. M.D. author of Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom

From: [hbmhenderson](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:25:26 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Michael Henderson

From: [Jana Ireijo](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:40:54 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Jana Ireijo

Artist/Founder
Vanishing Murals
www.vanishingmurals.com
(805) 291-9405

"Let the murals vanish so our environment does not."

From: [Leivallyn Kaupu](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:34:46 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Leivallyn Kaupu

lkaupu@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone
Mahalo,
Leivallyn Kaupu

From: [Arnie Kotler](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:15:09 PM

Dear Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Mahalo,
Arnold Kotler
Kihei, Maui

From: [Martha E. Martin](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:23:38 PM

Aloha DLNR ,

I strongly oppose agenda item D-8.

I was born and raised on Oahu and have lived on Maui for 60 years. On Maui a commercial business, Alexander and Baldwin, has for many years been allowed to have control over east Maui public fresh ground water.

The public fresh groundwater on east Maui should be protected and first use rights given to native Hawaiians, to public use, and to nurture the stream life and native biota. These are public rights.

Item D-8, however, grants complete control over this water to a commercial user. As written , this item is toothless and fails to protect public water.

Please withdraw item D-8 , and write a rule that does regulate the water use and requires first use rights to traditional Hawaiian farmers and maintaining east Maui streams and biota.

Also, please write a rule that requires commercial users to use lined reservoirs and infrastructure, and stop wasting fresh ground water.

Thank you for working to protect the public interest. It is a hard job and the public depends on you to do this.

Mahalo,
Ms. Martha E. Martin
40 Kunihi Lane #226
Kahului, HI 96732 808-868-0300 <mauimartha@gmail.com>

December 5, 2023

From: [Uilani Naipo](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Cc: [U'ilani Naipo](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:08:08 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Mahalo DLNR for proposing to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge you to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
U'ilani Naipo

From: [Greg Puppione](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Agenda Item D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:13:33 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

I also urge the board to reject the proposal to allow the Chair to increase this cap without giving the board or the public any notice, much less a chance to review and comment. As the board knows, we have been experiencing unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions, and yet there are current proposals to grow more thirsty citrus trees in Central Maui than East Maui's streams may be able to handle. Increasing stream diversions during a time when our streams may be seeing less water than ever before may have significant impacts on the public's many interests in our public trust water resources. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

Finally, I urge the board to mandate as a condition of this permit that A&B and Mahi Pono fix their diversion infrastructure and to use lined reservoirs, so that we can finally stop the waste of millions of gallons of water per day. Again, our drought conditions only emphasize the preciousness of our water resources, and such massive amounts of water waste can no longer be tolerated. The use of lined reservoirs in particular will allow Mahi Pono to grow much more food using much less water from East Maui's streams, and provide a much more stable amount of available water during potential water shortages and to fight fires.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Greg Puppione
Honolulu, HI

From: [steini](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item D-8
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:15:01 AM

Aloha,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

regards
Lorenz Steininger

From: [Bobbie Best](#)
To: [DLNR, BLNR Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] testimony for agenda item: D-8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:59:03 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Thank you to DLNR staff for proposing, for the first time ever, to give A&B a reasonable amount of water based on its actual needs and uses. I urge the board to honor the staff's recommendation and approve setting the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons a day.

I also urge the board to reject the proposal to allow the Chair to increase this cap without giving the board or the public any notice, much less a chance to review and comment. As the board knows, we have been experiencing unprecedented and ongoing drought conditions, and yet there are current proposals to grow more thirsty citrus trees in Central Maui than East Maui's streams may be able to handle. Increasing stream diversions during a time when our streams may be seeing less water than ever before may have significant impacts on the public's many interests in our public trust water resources. The board must not abdicate its kuleana to conduct its own due diligence and independent review, informed by public and expert input, in its oversight of East Maui's public trust resources.

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Mahalo for your consideration of this important matter

Bobbie Best
280 Hauoli
Wailuku
808-242-9119

From: [Sandra brissette](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for D-8 on agenda wednesday
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:52:01 AM

Aloha

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to voice my concerns and providing this testimony. Please approve the request that the water diversion for East Maui streams be set at 27.4 million gallons maximum. And that the Chair or any member cannot override this cap without notice or resident input.

Water is crucial to the islands and with the building of more residential areas the water diversion and waste needs to be reduced. Already our residents are suffering from water allocation or no water at all yet the water is being diverted in the billions to Mahi Pono. I also urge the board to mandate as a condition that A & B and Mahi Pono repair their diversion infrastructures and retrofit using lined reservoirs to stop water waste.

Sandra Brissette

245 Mahie Pl
Kihei

From: [Bruce Uu](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony Item D, #8
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:14:06 PM
Attachments: [mauinuiPicture1-1-1.png](#)

I Support the passage to continue Revocable Permits for Water Use to Alexander & Baldwin and East Maui Irrigation Company, for the reasons stated below.

1. Revocable water permits are vital for upcountry and central Maui until a long term water lease can be issued to provide water for agricultural and domestic purposes.
2. East Maui water is being used as a public benefit, preservation of agriculture for upcountry and Nahiku communities.
3. Approximately 36,000 Upcountry Maui residents are dependent on this water use.
4. To support farming in central Maui, and support food sustainability.

For the above reasons and many more water is vital to our whole community, and upcountry Maui is part of that, this issue is not on them, Yet, they continue to face the consequence, while others seek to put an end to it, without being directly affected by the decisions made by others.

Next time you catch a plane to Maui, please look out the window as you approach central Maui, our agricultural fields are coming back, we must continue to support those who take action, while others point out the problems to our solutions.

With Aloha,
Bruce U'u
Executive Director
Maui Nui Empowered



From: [Benton Pang](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Urgent Testimony on Agenda Item D-8 - Water Allocation for East Maui Streams
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:07:58 PM

Subject: Urgent Testimony on Agenda Item D-8 - Water Allocation for East Maui Streams

Email: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Aloha Chair Chang and esteemed members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Mahalo nui loa to Chair Chang and the dedicated DLNR staff for their groundbreaking proposal, acknowledging the importance of aligning A&B's water allocation with its genuine needs and applications. I extend my sincere gratitude for this progressive step.

I strongly urge the board to wholeheartedly support the staff's recommendation and to approve the establishment of the maximum diversion amount from East Maui's streams at 27.4 million gallons per day.

In the face of unprecedented and persistent drought conditions, it is paramount for the board to exercise caution and prudence in its decision-making process. I respectfully implore the board to reject the proposal granting the Chair unilateral authority to modify the cap without prior notice or an opportunity for public and board review. The potential consequences of increasing stream diversions during these challenging times could profoundly impact the diverse interests tied to our public trust water resources.

The board holds a sacred responsibility, or kuleana, to conduct thorough due diligence and independent reviews, informed by both public and expert input, in overseeing East Maui's public trust resources. This responsibility must not be relinquished, particularly in times of environmental vulnerability.

Additionally, I urge the board to include a crucial condition in the permit, mandating A&B and Mahi Pono to address and enhance their diversion infrastructure. The implementation of lined reservoirs is of utmost importance to curtail the egregious waste of millions of gallons of water daily. In light of our escalating drought conditions, such waste is untenable and demands immediate rectification.

Lined reservoirs, in particular, offer a sustainable solution that not only conserves water but also enables Mahi Pono to cultivate more crops with significantly less water from East Maui's streams. This approach ensures a stable water supply during potential shortages and plays a vital role in firefighting efforts.

Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration of this critical matter.

With sincere regards,

Benton Kealiikiamoku Pang, Ph.D.

From: [john.meier](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written testimony in support of agenda item D8 of BLNR December 7, 2023 meeting
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:49:54 AM

To: Board of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawaii
Re: Written testimony in support of agenda item D8 of BLNR December 7, 2023 meeting

For agenda item D-8, we strongly support the Revokable Permit proposed by the Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

Specifically, we support that the new Revokable Permit is for the diversion of water only and does not include the license areas in the Ko'olau forest reserve that are part of the previous permit.

This new permit will make it clear that the Ko'olau forest reserve is managed by the Division of Forestry and Wildlife and will allow them to implement their managed public access objectives.

The reason this change is necessary is because of a longstanding conflict between Maui residents who want to use the Ko'olau forest reserve for recreation and cultural practices and EMI which has tried to assert exclusive control over access.

We are residents of Maui. Our hiking group of eight retired seniors hike once a week and deeply appreciates the forest reserve system.

Mahalo,

-John and Melissa Meier, 210 Crestview Rd, Lahaina HI

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2023
9:00 A.M.**

DLNR BOARDROOM AND VIDEO CONFERENCING

ITEM D.8: ISSUANCE OF REVOCABLE PERMIT TO ALEXANDER & BALDWIN, INC. AND EAST MAUI IRRIGATION COMPANY, LLC FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, DIVERSION, AND USE OF SURFACE WATER FOR DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURE, CURRENTLY EXISTING HISTORICAL INDUSTRIAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL USES, RESERVOIR, FIRE PROTECTION, HYDROELECTRIC, AND COUNTY OF MAUI DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY AND KULA AGRICULTURAL PARK PURPOSES ON THE ISLAND OF MAUI; TAX MAP KEYS: (2) 1-1-001:044 AND 050, 1-1-002:002 (POR.), 1-2-004:005 & 007, 2-9-014:001, 005, 011, 012 & 017.

Chairperson Chang and Board Members:

Everyone who grows food is important to Hawaii's goal to become food secure. A reliable allocation of water for food production is vital for a farmer or rancher to scale up – this effort replaces imports, provides fresh, healthy produce for all Hawaii consumers and will result in doubling food production of commodities that are currently imported.

The applicant in this matter is Alexander & Baldwin, LLC (A&B). The Department testimony is concerned with the 41,000 acres of agricultural farm land that Mahi Pono purchased with plans to produce food for local consumption with a strategy to grow what we currently import – citrus (lemon, limes, mandarins, oranges) to supply the DOE that procures 700,000 pounds of imported citrus for school lunches, white/yellow potatoes so as not to compete with the local farmers producing the sweet, purple varieties, and onions. They are implementing this strategy that aligns with the



mandates of Act 151/2019 to double food production by 2030 and Act 175/2021 that established a DOE goal that at least 30% of food served in public schools would be locally sourced by 2030. These laws focus on improving the health of students while supporting local farmers. Mahi Pono has followed their plan and has acres of citrus, potatoes and onions planted. Expansion is the next step.

The DLNR recommendation of 2,500 gallons of water per acre per day (gad), inclusive of system losses, was allocated based on A&B's reported total amount of acreage for diversified agriculture, 9,079 acres as of September 2023. Including system losses has a wild card impact on a farming operation as the farmer does not control what happens from the source of the meter to the point the water crosses the property line, a risk the farmer may not be able to manage without a meter to measure how much water is being provided for agriculture. Water use models at the farm level should account for wind, sun, crops, and drought in determining how much water is enough water for food production.

The HDOA's Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan Update (AWUDP 2021), in Chapter 6 Agricultural Water Demand, distinguishes agricultural "water demand", as defined by the Agricultural Resource Management Division (ARMD) - HDOA, as the quantity of water supplied to farms from ditches. In comparison, the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) applies the term "water duty" which is the quantity of irrigation water required for a crop to mature. The AWUDP 2021 notes that neither "water duty" or "water demand" values can be used to set diversion allowances due to the variables of crop selection, pest-control strategies, post-harvest requirements which is separate from the amount of water that reached the crop. These variables that impact how much water an agricultural operation requires, are further discussed in Chapter 7 Factors Affecting Agricultural Water Demand, which includes results of a survey by crop type, comparing the data from the 2004 AWUDP and the 2014 Farm Survey Results. Dry land taro in the 2004 AWUDP gad was 4,000 – 8,000 compared to the 2014 Farm Survey which reported an average 10,631 gad. Vegetables in the 2004 AWUDP data showed 4,050 – 6,700 gad compared to the 2014 Farm Survey average gad of 3,923.

This data is presented to request the BLNR consider amending the current recommendation as Mahi Pono expands food production to crops that may require a higher allocation of gad. Without this accommodation, expanding to other crops that are imported, that require more water will be hindered, which is an obstacle to profitability. To quote Richard Ha, Hamakua Springs Hawaii agriculture guru, "The farmer make money, farmer going farm. Farmer no make money, farmer not going farm." And Dean Okimoto, former President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau, stated, "Farming is a business". Both Richard and Dean no longer farm. Please consider the challenges of producing food for Hawaii so we can be food secure and provide for flexibility in the allocation for Mahi Pono, so they can farm forever, producing food for Hawaii.