

From: [Pamela Fujii](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dennis and Pamela Fujii Testimony Support of
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:14:27 AM

Aloha Chairperson Dawn Chang,

My name is Dennis H. Fujii and my wife is Pamela Lota Fujii. We have lived in the ahupuaa of Kuli'ou'ou for 42 years and are volunteers with the Ewa Limu Project, Limu Hui, Waimānalo Limu Hui, Hana Limu Festival, Lāna'i Limu Restoration, Paepae o He'eia, Keiki O Ka Aina, Hui Malama O Ke Kai, the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center, Hui Maka'ainana o Makana, Alakoko Loko i'a and Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo KUA).

As volunteers for these community organizations we have been privileged to hana (work) to restore our fishponds, native limu and nearshore habitats to ensure that traditional and cultural practices are sustained for future generations.

We are writing in support of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center's proposed project to restore the groundwater flow, the wai, from the mauka side of Kalaniana'ole Hwy to Kalauha'iha'i Fishpond (a.k.a Lucas Spring) and the makai side of the highway via a 6-inch pipe to run under Kalaniana'ole Hwy. This water flowed naturally prior to the widening of the highway in the early 1990's and the construction project cut-off the flow causing the near complete depletion of this wai to Kalauha'iha'i and the surrounding area of Maunalua Bay. This severe loss of fresh wai has had an adverse impact on Kalauha'iha'i and the natural resources in Maunalua and consequently an adverse impact on our customary Native Hawaiian cultural practices.

Our Kumu Uncle Henry Chang Wo used to say: "We watch that first raindrop that hits the island. We follow the raindrop all the way to the ocean, we don't let that raindrop get dirty. Because when that mountain water and that ocean water meet, when they come together that's when the ocean hānau, that's when the ocean gives birth. Our fishes depend on that, the estuary, they all need that water from the mountain. If it was only the ocean itself, too salty, she make (dies) and that is what is happening now." Our Kumu Uncle Henry taught us that water is life. Water is sacred to all living things.

We believe the restoration of the wai from mauka to makai, to Kalauha'iha'i, is necessary to reverse the adverse impacts our environment has endured over the last 35 years and will restore the health of Kalauha'iha'i and Maunalua, leading to the replenishment of our resources and the revitalization of our cultural practices.

Kevin Chang of Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo KUA) said "Uncle Henry was one of those people described in that Greek saying: "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in." He was a cultivator of people who loved Hawaii and had a vision and desire to care for it. He would be proud to know that through the networks he helped weave, people from remote rural communities throughout Hawaii are finding each other and are realizing they are not alone. They in turn take what they thought were private dreams and turn them into common public visions. When they meet they talk about the regrowth of Hawaii nei." We continue Uncle Henry's work in the communities we serve.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration of our testimony.

Dennis H. Fujii and Pamela Lota Fujii



December 6, 2023

ATTN: Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources
Board of Land and Natural Resources
1151 Punchbowl Street, Boardroom
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Submitted via Email: BLNR.testimony@hawaii.gov

SUBJECT: Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo's (KUA) Support for Agenda Item L-2 Regarding Job No. J40CO30A, Kalauhaihai (Lucas Spring) Fishpond Restoration, Phase 3, in Niu Valley, O'ahu, Hawai'i, TMK (1) 3-7-002: 018, 077 and (1) 3-7-011; BLNR Meeting Dec. 7-8, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

Aloha pumehana kākou:

Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo ([KUA](#)) submits this letter in **strong support** of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Engineering's request for authorization of Agenda Item L-2.

"Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation. Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

KUA works to increase our communities' resiliency, adaptation, and transformation through community-based biocultural (natural and cultural) resource management, currently supporting three major networks of: (1) almost 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as **'āina momona** – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.

One cherished and long time member of Hui Mālama Loko I'a is the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center. They are the long time kupa'āina of Maunalua, kia'i (protectors) for the land at Kalauha'iha'i (Lucas Spring) Loko I'a, capturing first-hand



accounts of kūpuna, ensuring safe community access, and stewarding the site for over 10 years. It has been their mission to educate, restore, and protect the estuary at Kalauha'īha'ī and to revive the connection and natural flow of wai (water) into the ocean that was cut off by construction projects in the 1990s. Their restoration work is critical to the life cycle of the ecology and the many native species of the area. It is also critical, as recent water developments have shown, that the 'āina and its ecosystems need their fair share of wai the way nature provided and intended.

A primary function of KUA includes support for the development of an 'auwai, or a system of resources, tools, bridges, relationships, and networks that cultivate and elevate our communities' efforts to greater levels of collective impact in the care of our biocultural resources. Allowing partnerships with community leaders and our state to flourish benefits not only the intent and purpose of our Constitution, but also uplifts future generations of responsible Hawai'i stewards. **Please approve this request for Agenda Item L-2 and the kia'i of Kalauha'īha'ī Loko I'a.**

Pūpūkahi i holomua e ho'okanaka!

Let us all unite to better the human condition!

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide our testimony.

'O ke aloha 'āina no nā kau ā kau,

Kevin K.J. Chang
Executive Director

Olan Leimomi Fisher
Kua'āina Advocate