

DLNR COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS  
**West Kauaʻi Community Listening Session**  
**Saturday, November 4, 2023, 9a.m. – 12noon**  
**Waimea High School**

**9:00AM Opening Pule and Oli**

**9:05AM Introductions & Meeting Logistics (Facilitator, Deputy Director Laura Kaakua)**

- Mahalo for joining on a Saturday and housekeeping

**9:10AM Welcoming Remarks (DLNR Chair Dawn Chang)**

- Overview of DLNR's mission, purpose of the meeting

**9:15AM DLNR Division's Brief Sharing**

- ***Division of Forestry & Wildlife (DOFAW) – David Smith, Scott Nelson***
  - Within each branch, DOFAW staff are organized into programs that include Forestry and Forest Health, Nā Ala Hele Trails & Access, Native Ecosystems Protection & Management, and Wildlife, which includes recreational hunting.
- ***Division of State Parks – Alan Carpenter, David Tsuchiya***
  - The Hawaiʻi State Park System is composed of 50 parks encompassing approximately 30,000 acres on five major islands. These parks offer a variety of outdoor recreation and heritage opportunities. The park environments range from landscaped grounds with developed facilities to wildland areas with trails and primitive facilities.
  - 50% of State Parks in Hawaiʻi can be found on Kauaʻi which include Ahukini State Recreational Pier, Hāʻena State Park, Kōkeʻe State Park, NāPali Coast State Wilderness Park, Pāʻūlaʻūla State Historic Site, Polihale State Park, Wailua River State Park, Waimea Canyon State Park, and Waimea State Recreational Pier. State Parks has job openings on the east and west sides of the island. CIP projects that State Parks hopes to address include canyon mitigation hazard and paving Kōkeʻe Road.
- ***Land Division – Alison Neustein***
  - The Land Division is responsible for managing State-owned lands in ways that will promote the social, environmental and economic well-being of Hawaiʻi's people and for ensuring that these lands are used in accordance with the goals, policies and plans of the State. Lands that are not set aside for use by other government agencies come within the direct purview of the division. These lands are made available to the public through leases, licenses, grants of easement, rights-of-entry, month-to-month tenancies or kept as open space area.
- ***State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) – Dr. Alan Downer, David Buckley***
  - SHPD is comprised of three branches, Architecture, Archaeology, and History & Culture, and together they collectively strive to preserve and protect Hawaiʻi's historic identity. In Hawaiʻi, looking back is an integral part of going forward. SHPD is a part of ensuring that Hawaiʻi's treasured past is here for future generations to appreciate and learn from.
  - SHPD provides administrative support to the island burial counsels, which are Governor appointed and affirmed by the Senate.

- ***Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands (OCCL) – Michael Cain***
  - OCCL is the primary regulatory agency for land uses in the State Land Use Conservation District. Our main duties include reviewing applications for land uses and making recommendations to the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and in developing enforcement cases against alleged violations of Conservation District Rules.
  - The majority of our work in recent years, both on the permitting and on the enforcement side, relates to the impacts of coastal erosion. We've worked on permits for sand nourishment, on coastal restoration work, and with the Department of Transportation on projects to protect the roads and highways. We've also worked with practitioners on loko i'a restoration permits. Enforcement activities have been primarily focuses on unauthorized shoreline construction and on maintaining lateral access on the shorelines.
- ***Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) – Deputy Director Kaleo Manuel, Ayron Strauch***
  - The Commission on Water Resource Management (Commission) administers the State Water Code, which was created by the 1987 Hawai'i State Legislature. The Commission's mission is to protect and manage the waters of the State of Hawai'i for present and future generations.
  - There are a total of seven members on the Commission. Two are ex-officio (by virtue of office) members and five are appointed by the Governor from lists submitted by a nominating committee, subject to confirmation by the Senate.
  - CWRM has 9 streamflow standards on Kaua'i. CWRM monitors 24 streams on Kaua'i and 100 streams overall across the State. There are no permanent CWRM staff based on Kaua'i. CWRM's lead hydrologist travels to Kaua'i weekly.
- ***Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) – David Sakoda, Mckenna Allen***
  - The mission of the Division of Aquatic Resources is to work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve and restore the state's unique aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations.
  - DAR has 8 staff members on Kaua'i who provide outreach, education, and monitoring. DAR monitors the Hā'ena community-based subsistence fishing area. DAR also monitors two freshwater areas on Kaua'i which include Kōke'e and the drought water monitoring program.
- ***Division of Boating & Ocean Recreation (DOBOR) – Meghan Statts, Jeremiah Aguilera***
  - The Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR) manages all of the State's small boat harbors and ramps, the boating safety program, the vessel registration and titling program as well as overseeing the recreational and commercial ocean water activities and conflicts from the high-water mark out 3 miles which are all just a part of our 13 mandates required by law. Our mission is to preserve Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources while ensuring public access to State Ocean waters and enhancing the ocean experience.
  - DOBOR's current Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) on Kaua'i include the Kikiaola Small Boat Harbor (SBH) new boat ramp and sand bypassing project, and Kukui'ula SBH bulkhead fender repairs. DOBOR's future projects that require funding allocations from the legislature include Waika'ea SBH boat ramp site improvements requiring \$4M in CIP funds, Kikiaola SBH loading dock wharf repair requiring \$400k for design and permitting and \$4M in funds, and Nawiliwili SBH new pier 400 floating deck which requires \$4M in CIP funds.

- ***Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) – Chief Jason Redulla & Christopher Gandeza***
  - The Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) effectively upholds the laws that serve to protect, conserve and manage Hawai‘i’s unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of visitors and the people of Hawai‘i nei.
  - On Kaua‘i, DOCARE has 13 officers and 2 clerical staff. The division recently filled 3 new staff positions and have hired 3 additional officers who are training to become conservation and resource officers on Kaua‘i.
- ***Engineering Division – Edwin Matsuda***
  - Engineering Division provides engineering services and technical assistance to other departmental divisions and State agencies to implement capital improvement or repair and maintenance projects and administer programs for water and land development, mineral resources development, and prevention of natural disasters (i.e., administering the Dam Safety and National Flood Insurance Programs)
  - An inventory of Kaua‘i dams and reservoirs can be found [here](#)
- ***Communications – Dan Dennison***
  - The Communications Team disseminates information about DLNR’s programs, accomplishments, goals, and the department’s mandate to protect the special natural and cultural heritage of Hawai‘i.
- ***Bureau of Conveyances did not have representatives present but Deputy Laura Ka‘akua provided a brief overview of the Division.***
  - Provide Kaua‘i residents and businesses online access to all recorded documents back to 1976 for research and downloading for a fee.

## **10:00AM Community Listening & Questions**

- ***General Meeting Logistical Feedback*** – DLNR should have adequate audio and visual equipment for a community meeting, continue partnering with community organizations, and be truthful, do no harm, and keep their word.
- ***Fire Mitigation on DLNR Lands*** – questions regarding fires that disturb people, including homesteaders and those living on lands near agriculture.
  - The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is working to enhance the statewide fire management program, through efforts that include fire break maintenance, resilient landscaping, and equipment modernization, with support from the legislature.
- ***Water Ditch Concerns & Slower Flows*** – questions on the water tunnel by Kōloa in Po‘ipū and the lack of water flows that impact the fishponds and lo‘i in the area.
  - CWRM is addressing dam safety concerns in Waikomo. Lāwa‘i used to receive overflow through a series of reservoirs. However, little range of flows do not allow water flow to divert from the various flows, all the water stays in the stream. There is less water historically flowing through. CWRM is open to following up and learning more about this stream area.
- ***Impacts to Coral Reefs on Kaua‘i*** – questions regarding nearshore water impacts, water pollution, and enforcing sunscreen citations.
  - The Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) recognizes the various impacts to nearshore water including water quality and run off, climate change, invasive species, and unsustainable

fishing practices. DAR is partnering with the Department of Health (DOH) and UH Research to increase water quality studies and monitoring to understand the impacts to the coral reefs.

- ***West Kaua'i Energy Project*** – questions regarding the West Kaua'i Energy Project, water use and long term lease concerns and whether community hearings will be available.
  - Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) is currently under litigation and therefore no approvals have been granted by the state. The Board of Land and Natural Resources (Land Board) has not issued any lease for this project at this time. An Environmental Impact Assessment is a background study and not a permit.
- ***Water Diversion and Water Use Licenses*** – questions on private water access, long term licenses for water use, and machinery being used in streams.
  - The Commission on Water Management (CWRM) would like people to document any machinery sightings either with photos or videos, DOCARE will follow up and investigate. Equipment used in a stream must be approved by CWRM. If work is being done in a nearby stream, the impacted community will be notified prior to the start of the work. CWRM is interested in learning and connecting with community regarding springs and streams that are being cared for and impacted.
- ***Community Concerns and Written Complaints*** – questions on what to do when a complaint, question, or letter has been sent to DLNR without any response.
  - Submit letters to the Chair's Office, the letters will be distributed to the corresponding Division to which the question, concern, or topic relates, and the Chair will ensure responses are provided.
- ***Endangered Bird Protection*** – questions and concerns to protect 'a'o and other endangered birds from lights and wires.
  - DOFAW recognizes that birds are attracted to wires and lights and are working with various light services. DLNR is taking note of the suggestion to be careful of permitting during the new moon phase.
- ***Addressing Agribusiness Development Corporation Lands (ADC)*** – questions and concerns related to the use of synergistic chemicals on ADC lands.
  - DLNR is open to sharing these concerns with the State as ADC lands are not under DLNR's agency or jurisdiction.
- ***Increasing DLNR's Internal Capacity*** – questions on how DLNR will fill vacant positions and create opportunities for keiki to live and work in Hawai'i.
  - DLNR is working to change the minimum working qualifications for DLNR employment such as replacing the required 4-year degree with an 'āina based equivalent so youth have opportunities to live and work in Hawai'i.
  - The Chair acknowledges that partnerships are important for DLNR to continue their work and provide opportunities for various division staff to collaborate and work closely with community volunteers and nonprofit organizations.
- ***Commercial Ocean User Fee Funds*** – questions on how those funds will be utilized and distributed by DLNR, if the fee can be expanded to other commercial users, why the funds move into a general fund after 5 years, and if that can be changed.
  - DAR noted the statute established a special fund to support ocean resource management, restoration, and stewarding of resources. DAR is creating a dashboard for people to track how fees are collected and spent. DAR's goal is to show responsible use of the funds and repeal the sunset date of the 5-year general fund, created by the legislature.

- The State is looking into an impact fee that could be tied to the conservation of other natural resources.
- ***Preventing Overcrowding of State Parks and Beaches*** – questions and concerns for access of State Parks, beaches including Kekaha, and camping that seems to be unavailable for local residents.
  - SHPD is working on addressing the differentiation between camping and access fees. There are policies that we can create to ensure locals have access to these sites and push costs to visitors who are willing to pay.
  - SHPD noted that Polihale access issues need to be addressed to ensure that when one destination is closed, local access is honored and people are not pushed to other places.
- ***Sand Covering in Kekaha*** – questions and concerns regarding the sand project that covered the fishing holes in Kekaha.
  - DOBOR noted that this project was initiated and completed by the Army Corps of Engineers in 2009. At the time DOBOR was not in support of that project.
- ***Controlling Invasive Vegetation*** – questions on how the invasive plant species will be controlled, especially plants that require large amounts of water daily.
  - The Department of Fire is working on prescribed burning methods and are working to get the forest service involved. To reduce fuels, the Department is also engaging in koa planting up in Kōkeʻe.
- ***Fees to Access State Documents*** – whether DLNR can eliminate fees to access public documents, maps, and other official documents on their website.
  - DLNR will circle back with the Bureau of Conveyances to see if there are regulations to make these documents more accessible for the public.

#### ***Additional Community Concerns & Feedback***

- ***Long Term Leases*** – no single entity or private landowner should be granted a long term lease to a public trust, long term leases should be abolished.
- ***Protecting Poʻipū*** – protect turtles that are near Poʻipū as well as protecting the caves and lava tubes from being blown up.
- ***Increase County Enforcement*** – especially in areas where mills and operations are going on, specifically near HPM.
- ***Increasing Access to DLNR Jobs for Students*** – DLNR can consider offering internships or apprenticeships and have a presence at local High School career fairs.
- ***Working with Community Groups on the Ground*** – as some DLNR divisions work closely with community organizations. There is an understanding that there are people on both sides of the fence.

#### **12:00PM Closing**

- Closing Words from Chair Dawn Chang
- DLNR's Commitments from Deputy Kaleo Manuel:
  - Send follow-up meeting notes to legible emails on sign in sheet
  - Post meeting notes and Q&A summary on website
  - As needed follow-up with on-island staff (and if needed DLNR leadership)

#### **12:15PM Meeting PAU**