

RE: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF AGENDA ITEM L1

Authorize the Chair to Issue, Amend, Manage or Revoke Dam Safety Permit No. P86 for the removal of the Kalihiwai Reservoir (KA-0024) to Kalihiwai Ridge Community Association and others. Authorize the removal of the reservoir from the HRS 179D Inventory of Regulated Dams; and authorize an amendment to the Board's April 28, 2023 Order to allow 12 months from the issuance of the permit to start construction.

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

My name is Dominique Cordy and me, my kāne and two young children are residents of the inundation zone in Kalihiwai Valley. We are grateful for this opportunity to testify in **strong support of your engineering division's recommendation to issue a permit to remove the Kalihiwai Reservoir.**

We live and farm kalo and awa, and are farther in the back of the valley than anyone other residents. Based on outdated flood models we would be the most impacted by any kind of a breach. Living in the valley, we have a home high enough to be safe from normal flooding. What our home would not be safe from, and the only factor that does not make me certain of my children's safety is Kalihiwai Dam, a potential breach, and the knowledge that it almost breached in the past is a source of anxiety, and at risk of being cliché, it does keep us up at night. This is a single decision for you today, but it weighs on our thoughts constantly. Please don't make us wait longer. Please decommission the Dam.

In 2018 the north shore of Kaua'i broke the national record for the most rainfall in a 24-hour period. Kalihiwai valley flooded higher than in living memory. As a result, I worked with several UH professors (Thomas Giambeluc, Mehan Vaughan, Yin-Phan Tsang, and Alison Nugent) on a National Science Foundation Grant to pilot strategies to increase resilience during flood events. Part of that project was to remove hazardous Albizia trees from along the river corridor that threatened down stream homes and the Kalihiwai bridge footings. That project also did baseline studies of Kalihiwai river to identify native riverine species and a hydrology study with some water testing to learn more about changes in the river overtime.

I share this with you because many residents near the Dam enjoy the lake and have argued it is an important habitat for native birds. I would like to share that Kalihiwai Valley and River is an important Cultural and Natural resource and habitat. Studies that were part of the NSF project in 2023-24 found that Kalihiwai is home to multiple native oopu species, as well as healthy populations of hapawai and hihiwai (native freshwater mollusks), our streams' biodiversity and health is amazing and is at risk as long as the dam is not decommissioned. There are many pairs of the Native Hawaiian mud hen, Alae ula, up and down Kalihiwai River from the muliwai at the coast to over 1 mile upstream. My children named the Alae ula who lives near us Pierre, and they celebrated and drew pictures of him when he recently found a mate. In the valley there are also Koloa, the native duck as well as Pueo and Aukuu, the native Heron. All these species are, like my family and the other residents of Kalihiwai Valley living in the inundation zone, under the shadow of the dam.

I also want to share that I work with Nohopapa Hawai'i, we actually conduct Ka Pa'akai Analysis and Cultural Impact Assessments across the pae 'āina, as I know Chair Chang has done in the past as well. I heard that one of the residents of the Association that owns the Dam was asking for a Ka Pa'akai Framework Analysis for Dam remediation. I would like to put on my professional hat and say that is un-necessary. The entire dam system is a plantation system that has diverted water from the Kahili and Kalihiwai stream watersheds. The removal of the dam

would not have a negative impact on Traditional Native Hawaiian practices, rights and resources. In fact, its removal would protect cultural resources and places in the inundation zone, including Native birds, native fish, native freshwater mollusks, at least two old heiau sites, kalo cultivation areas, riverine and nearshore fisheries people rely on for subsistence, as well as the sand bar and numerous named wahi kūpuna (ancestral places). I think perhaps Ka Pa‘akai is being misused here as a stall tactic. Perhaps it’s an honest request, but it is not needed. I humbly ask the Board to weigh the actual intent around the Ka Pa‘akai before requiring it. There has been such a long struggle in the lāhui to have Native Hawaiian rights considered that it would be a shame to see it mis-applied in this context. The non-profit Huliauapa‘a that I also work with the backbone organization of the Kali‘uokapa‘kai Collective; which recently held a [toolkit share series around Ka Pa‘akai](#), our last panel included Hannah Kihalani Springer (Ka‘ūpulehu ‘Ohana, CWRM), Liliane Makaila (DHHL), and Malia Akutagawa (Richardson School of Law), moderated by Jonathan Likeke Scheuer. The toolkit series talk will make it clear that the decommissioning of a plantation dam would be an inappropriate application for a Ka Pa‘akai Framework Analysis.

Mahalo for your time, I’d like to close my testimony by sharing this last bit of information. The hydrologist that worked with us on the NSF project to increase Kalihiwai river resilience also looked at the old dam inundation study, and shared that while the old modeling showed catastrophic flooding potential for where my family lives, it still did *not* take into account high tides, vegetation damming and blockage, high surf, if the river mouth is closed, or if a breach occurs during a flood event; all of which increase flooding and danger to human health and safety. Residents of Kalihiwai Valley, us living in the inundation zone, have patiently waited for decommissioning while hearing all kinds of arguments in favor of “saving native birds” the dam or “saving” agriculture. We have native birds in the inundation zone. We have kalo and awa in the inundation zone, native agriculture. Our health and safety in the valley is not less important than

For over seven years now, valley residents have been waiting for the Kalihiwai Ridge Community Association to decommission its reservoir. As we head into this rainy season I am nervous about the dam, I worry about the safety of my children around the one thing I cannot control, an old plantation dam that was already perilously close to breaching 7 ½ years ago. Please don’t make the residents of Kalihiwai Valley wait any longer. We remember what happened with Kaloko. Please make the choice to decommission the dam, I don’t want anyone to read the names of my children in a newspaper article after some horrible accident we could have all helped prevent.

Please support your engineering division's recommendation and vote today to authorize the Chair to act. Mahalo for your time reading this testimony, I wish my family could have flown to Oahu to be there to testify in person.

Mālama,
Dominique Leu Cordy
Poliahu Wong (11) and
Waihiialo Wong (7)

**Kaaumoana
POB 1205
Kilauea, HI
96754**

November 14, 2025

Testimony Re:

Item L.1. Permit # P86 Kalihiwai Reservoir (KA-0024) TMK: (4) 5-2-022:03

Aloha Chair and Members,

I am a member of the Kalihiwai Ridge Community Association and as such am one of the owners of the land under which this reservoir sits and the TMK referenced above.

I provided previous comment to the Chair on this matter requesting a Ka Paakai o ka Aina analysis be completed. I was told that because of the ACOE permit involved there would also be a Section 106 study done of the site and proposed action and was assured I would be consulted. I have participated in both processes previously and am familiar with the format. I believe a simple "check list" was deemed to suffice in this matter. It does not suffice.

I was not consulted during either the Ka Paakai o ka Aina nor the 106 analyses. I have made the Chair aware of my interest in participating in both.

- My family has generational connections to the land at issue and practices our culture on this land.
- I am very familiar with the specific history and current status of TMK: (4) 5-2-022:03.
- My family has serious concerns about the removal of this reservoir and its importance to the public, environment, and cultural resources of the ahupua'a of Kalihiwai and moku of Koolau

I understand the constraints of this specific matter and that financing of restoration is a challenge. I am also aware that potential solutions to those issues exist and do not think options have been exhausted.

I object to the consideration of this item unless and until I have been able to participate and include the knowledge and experience of our family regarding this cultural resource.

Lastly, the agenda item L.1. describes the location of TMK (4) 5-2-002:03 as "Anahola". The Kalihiwai Reservoir is not in or near Anahola and this agenda is incorrect and therefore flawed.

Mahalo for your consideration of my concerns.

Me ka ha'a ha'a,



Makaala Kaaumoana
6161 Kahiliholo Road
Kalihiwai, Kauai

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

My name is Keana Oliveira, and my `ohana has had a home in the Kalihiwai Valley for generations. It is my grandmother and grandfather's home which has been left to us, the younger generation to malama and upkeep for many generations to come. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of the Engineering Division's recommendation to issue a permit for the removal of the Kalihiwai Reservoir.

My `ohana has been in Kalihiwai Valley for over 100 years, and over that time, we've seen flooding during the winter months become more frequent and severe. Our home and property are directly affected by these events.

For many years, residents of our valley have been waiting for the Kalihiwai Ridge Community Association to move forward with decommissioning the reservoir. In the meantime, we remain anxious especially now, during the wet season as each year the flooding seems to worsen. While our community has been patient, it is clear that the time to act is now. The tragedy at Kaloko still weighs heavily on our minds, and those of us with a home makai of the reservoir feel a real sense of urgency.

I respectfully urge you to support your Engineering Division's recommendation and vote to authorize the Chair to move forward with this important safety measure.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and continued service to our communities.

Sincerely,

Keana Oliveira

`Ohana of Kalihiwai Valley

November 12, 2025

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

My name is Nathaniel Temanu Tin-Wong and I am a resident of Kalihiwai Valley. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of your engineering division's recommendation to issue a permit to remove the Kalihiwai Reservoir.

My 'ohana lives in Kalihiwai Valley. We live farther back in the valley than any other residents, inside what is the most dangerous part of the dam breach inundation zone. I have two young daughters. Me my wahine and our girls live in the last place where kalo was farmed in lo'i, wetland fields in Kalihiwai. For decades kalo has not been cultivated in Kalihiwai, since childhood memories of kūpuna living today. One of our family's goals living back here is to restore lo'i kalo in the 'ili of Hali'i, over one mile up, in the back of Kalihiwai valley. Last year we received a Department of Agriculture microgrant, and this year we received another grant from a local non-profit to support traditional Native Hawaiian agriculture in Kalihiwai Valley. Over the last several years, flooding during the winter has become intense and our home and property are directly affected. Lo'i, are literally wetland agricultural fields and are resilient to flooding. What native farming practices are not resilient to is a dam breach.

For years now, valley residents have been waiting for the Kalihiwai Ridge Community Association to decommission its reservoir. In the meantime, our community is very concerned, especially during the wet season -- which is right now -- as flooding seems to get worse every year. Although we have been very patient, the time is now to finally move forward with decommissioning. We remember what happened with Kaloko and having a family, with two young daughters, living in the worst part of the Kalihiwai Dam inundation zone is scary.

Please support your engineering division's recommendation and vote today to authorize the Chair to act. Please Decommission Kalihiwai Dam and protect the many families in Kalihiwai valley.

Mahalo,

Nathaniel Tin-Wong