

MACZAC Hotspots 5/10/2019

Submitted by Bob Nishimoto of East Hawaii Island:

1. Hawaii Tribune Herald article about closure of Big Island Dairy. Issues with effluent overflow into Ookala streams
2. Article I wrote for the local paper, Hamakua Times, published in 2018, pointing out the effect of not only nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorous) but more critically, pharmaceutical chemicals and estrogen on feminization of stream and nearshore fishes.
3. Community activism (Kupali O'okala, Councilperson Valerie Poindexter) voiced their concerns (downwind odors, settling tank overflow), resulting in Dairy closing and paying a fine. Similar situation on Kauai

Submitted by Nick Palumbo of Lanai:

From: **Robin Kaye** <rkayelny@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, May 2, 2019 at 10:24 AM

Subject: Manele Small Boat Harbor

To: Robin Kaye <rkayelny@gmail.com>

ASK THE GOVERNOR TO VETO HB1032 which puts Manele state small boat harbor up for private lease!

On Tuesday we learned that a Governor's bill that would have allowed DLNR to lease any of Hawaii's small boat harbors to private individuals and/or businesses was hijacked: in a last-minute move in conference committee – with no notice to Lanaians – HB1032 targets the leasing of only Manele small boat harbor. (Click here to read final form of the bill: https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2019/bills/HB1032_CD1_.htm)

The bill allows Manele harbor lands to be leased in their entirety by “public auction, request for proposals or direct negotiation for private development, management and operation.” Given that the only testimony from Lana'i in support of this bill came from Pulama Lana'i, we may see that Pulama will be the only entity asking for the lease.

If you find this secretive, last-minute process to be offensive and don't want your harbor to be leased to and “developed” and “managed” by a private entity, you can submit comments to the Governor on his webpage. He specifically asks for comments on legislation that has been passed to him for signing or for veto. It's very easy to comment: <https://governor.hawaii.gov/contact-us/comments-on-legislation/>

Below are some suggested comments. Please feel free to borrow from them, but please don't copy verbatim, we all know that the more personal your comments, the better:

“I am a Lana'i resident, and I respectfully ask you to please **VETO** HB1032 CD1. This bill would take our State's Manele Small Boat Harbor and lease it to a private business or individual. Lana'i residents never had any say in this bill; the idea of targeting our Manele Small Boat Harbor was never brought before our community, and in fact was inserted in an otherwise generic harbor-leasing bill without any input from Lana'i residents. It should never have been allowed to become law without input from the daily users of this much-needed, much-used, much-valued public facility.”

“Please VETO HB1032. It completely changed from what you originally proposed and now targets only one small boat harbor: Manele. This was done at the last minute, with no notice or input from residents or harbor users. HB1032 is now a private interest bill and should not be approved.”

--

Robin Kaye
P.O. Box 631313
Lana'i City, HI 96763
808-559-6124 (m)
rkayelny@gmail.com

Hawaii

Tribune Herald



Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Proudly serving Hilo and the Big Island since 1923

75 cents

Heavy rainfall leads to another stormwater discharge at dairy

By **STEPHANIE SALMONS**
Hawaii Tribune-Herald

Because of heavy rainfall during the past week, Ookala-based Big Island Dairy on Monday again discharged stormwater collected in its wastewater lagoons.

The dairy on Monday notified the state Department of Health about the discharge, said DOH spokeswoman Anna Koethe.

While the discharge was

done in controlled release, similar to those previously conducted by the dairy, the amount of wastewater mixed with the stormwater is “substantially less, given the nearly complete reduction of cows in confinement,” she said.

The public was advised to stay out of Kaohaoha Gulch during the discharge.

Big Island Dairy owners in November said they would



See **DISCHARGE** Page A7

Big Island Dairy is pictured in this undated courtesy photo.

DISCHARGE

From the front page

discontinue dairy and milk processing operations at the facility, which has been owned by Steve and Derek Whitesides since 2011 and is located on land leased from the state.

The latest discharge comes after the dairy and the DOH entered into an agreement as Big Island Dairy's operations draw to a close. The agreement, signed at the end of March, was completed to address numerous discharges of wastewater containing manure from the dairy into state waters during the past two years that were documented by DOH.

Under the agreement, Big Island Dairy's owners are required to terminate dairy operations, remove all cows from confinement on the site, clean and remove the existing wastewater system and pay \$79,000 by June, either as an administrative penalty or to fund an environmentally beneficial project in the area.

"While the discharging is not part of the closing procedure, as previously stated, infrequent discharges resulting from periods of prolonged wet weather

may be required until the wastewater lagoons are removed as required by the DOH issued (agreement)," Koethe said.

The dairy is required to report discharges, and additional penalties could be levied.

According to Koethe, the DOH will first review all facts before determining whether an additional penalty will be demanded.

"It's mind-boggling that the Department of Health is continuing to allow them to operate in the face of the unlimited number of discharges that continue to happen," said Ookala homeowner Charlene Nishida.

"This is further proof that Ookala is not the place for this scale of an operation for a dairy."

Residents of Ookala have long complained about releases of manure-laden water from the dairy into nearby gulches that run through or next to the community.

Most recently, an estimated 2 million gallons of wastewater mixed with stormwater were discharged from the dairy's wastewater lagoons in February. Spills, discharges and overflows from the

lagoons were also reported in April, May, August and December last year.

"It's just a thorn that doesn't go away," said Ookala resident Genard Frazier. "We've been fighting this for a long time."

By the end of March, Koethe said the dairy had 125 mature cows and 86 young cows in confinement, but by today it was expected to have any remaining cows out of confinement and in pasture. At its peak, the dairy had more than 1,800 cows in confinement.

Email Stephanie Salmons at ssalmons@hawaii-tribune-herald.com.

What Else Is In the Manure?

A front page article in the Sunday (April 14, 2018) Hawaii Tribune-Herald (HTH) reported on the recent manure spill into Alaialoa Gulch. The stream winds through residential O'okala, then cascades onto the boulder beach, before finally entering the ocean. The source of this pollution is the Big Island Dairy, located *ma uka* of the village, and has raised the ire of the community due to the "stink".

The Big Island Dairy is considered an industrial dairy, specifically a **CAFO** (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation), which is the first of its kind on the island. This is not a typical dairy farm, as we know it in Hawaii, with grazing cows out in the field. Instead, it is a high intensity operation where cows are on a continuous cycle of feeding and milking. One of the long standing concerns in livestock agriculture is animal waste and its effects on contamination to streams and oceans, specifically in regard to nutrient pollution such as nitrogen and phosphorus. The photograph in the HTH article shows the stream with brown-stained water, probably caused by excess sediments plus a brown algae bloom caused by high nutrients in the water.

CAFO operations present greater risks to water quality, not only from an increase in volume of animal waste, but, also due to the presence of contaminants, such as antibiotics and veterinary pharmaceuticals. These chemicals have been found to cause both environmental and public health threats to neighboring residents and wildlife. Further, dairy CAFO produce a significant concentration of estrogen hormones, which can persist for months or even years in the environment. Just as human mothers undergo increased estrogen levels to enable breastfeeding, lactating cows generate estrogenic hormones which are then excreted in their waste. Recent studies on the US mainland have demonstrated estrogen is present in high levels around CAFOs which can cause severely reduced reproductive function of many stream fishes. The catastrophic result is the feminization of fish, where males take on female features and are even producing eggs. *Auwe, no more na kane.*

Imagine this hormone effecting our native stream *o'o'pu*, *opae* and *hihiwai*. Also, what about the *'opihi* and *wana* we eat? The *moi* and *aholehole* we fish for? The most immediate devastation would be for the contaminants to

alter the stream odor which guides returning *young 'o'opu (hinana)* to their stream. This impact is no different from cliff slides, like those along *Hilo Paliku*, which totally obliterate and change the *'opihi* boulder habitat, so the young will never settle. Again, another piece of our native, natural resources in Hamakua is lost forever.

Current environmental and health laws are inadequate to address this new threat of industrialized dairy operations. Government speaks of sustainability, but individual agencies are usually underfunded and, consequently, tend to be reactive and sometimes defensive. Think about the numerous contentious community meetings in O'okala.

Our rural communities have no option but to stand up for better government oversight and demand monitoring of this threat to our *aina* and our public health. Ku'pali O'okala has stepped up to the challenge and I encourage all those living along *Hilo Paliku* to become engaged in guiding the future of our Hamakua.

The guiding principle of the draft **2018 Hamakua Community Development Plan** is "What is good for the land, is good for the people". What Big Island Dairy did was "Harmful to the land, and harmful to the people". Fix it.