

## **(1) "Stranded sampan crushing coral in Kaneohe Bay"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 09, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121109\\_\\_Stranded\\_sampan\\_crushing\\_coral\\_in\\_Kaneohe\\_Bay.html](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121109__Stranded_sampan_crushing_coral_in_Kaneohe_Bay.html)]

A vessel aground in Kaneohe Bay has already done considerable damage to a portion of the barrier reef about a half-mile from shore, according to officials with the conservation group the Nature Conservancy.

"It's some of the nicer coral in the bay," said Jason Durnin, the group's project manager in Kaneohe. "There's a lot of damage already. Probably over 100 coral heads have been smashed. ... There's one area that's just turned to rubble."

Durnin and other members of the conservancy, who are working to preserve live coral from algae damage, passed by the area where the vessel was aground Thursday afternoon. State officials said the reef area is used to conduct marine tours.

The 40-foot wooden sampan Boom Boom went aground at about midnight Tuesday, authorities said. Durnin said the vessel is about half a mile seaward of Heeia Pier and a quarter- to half-mile south of the Ahu o Laka sandbar.

The state Department of Land and Natural Resources has given the owner of the vessel until 10 a.m. today to remove the Boom Boom. Department spokeswoman Deborah Ward said the owner has told state officials that he doesn't have insurance or the financial means to remove the vessel. Ward said state officials are obtaining bids from salvage companies for removal of the craft.

Boom Boom was sold by the owner of Boom Boom Sportfishing LLC about 18 months ago, the former owner said.

State officials said they're still working out a tangle of owners involved in buying and selling the vessel.

State officials also have given the owner of a 36-foot boat aground on rocks in Waianae until 11 a.m. today to remove his vessel.

Ward said the boat owner has contacted a marine salvaging company. State officials said that vessel went aground sometime Monday.

## **(2) "Adrift"**

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[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121211\\_\\_Adrift.html?id=182935211](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121211__Adrift.html?id=182935211)]

The University of Hawaii submersible program, already hit by federal budget cuts, is trying to line up research and commercial dives next year to keep the 32-year-old program afloat but has no contracts yet, officials said.

The Pisces IV and V are the only U.S. deep-diving science submersibles in the Pacific. "We can certainly see that (financial brick) wall coming," said Sandy Shor, associate dean for research in the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology. "We are looking hard to find other projects."

To that end, UH's Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory is reactivating a 50-foot submersible barge to launch and retrieve the Pisces IV and V, and is looking for a 70- to 100-foot support vessel to tow the barge, known as the LRT-30a.

The undersea research lab is expecting to lose the use of its main support ship, the 223-foot UH research vessel Ka'imikai-o-Kanaloa, beginning next month.

The ship, operated by the UH Marine Center, likely will be working on a separate project to service National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration buoys around the Pacific, officials said.

Asked about the outlook to get research and commercial dive contracts in 2013, Terry Kerby, the undersea research lab's director of facilities and submersible operations, said, "Right now we don't have anything, but we haven't given up hope."

He added, "There's been a lot of drive to save these subs because they are a unique capability, and there's still a chance that there could be other (financial) support. We haven't given up on that. The good thing that we have is the university actually wants to support the operation and keep it going."

UH owns the Pisces IV, while NOAA owns the Pisces V and the submersible barge, but NOAA is expected to turn over the Pisces V and barge to the university, officials said.

NOAA, which funded the bulk of the undersea research lab's efforts, zeroed out funding in fiscal 2013 for the National Undersea Research program, which includes the Hawaii lab.

The Hawaii program saw its NOAA funding drop to \$1.4 million from \$2.9 million for fiscal 2012, officials said.

Past dives have yielded the discovery that some deep-sea corals up to 10,000 years old are some of the oldest living organisms on the planet, according to the undersea lab.

The lab and its submersibles have been part of the long-term study of Loihi, the submarine volcano southeast of Hawaii island, documenting the growth of a new Hawaiian island.

A U.S. Senate spending committee proposed devoting \$4 million in 2013 to "consolidate" undersea operations in Hawaii and Mississippi, but no appropriations bill has yet been adopted.

"It's a big challenge," Shor said. "It's a couple million dollars a year to really support this (the submersible program) the way it needs to be supported. Certainly a million and change. And it's difficult." With that uncertainty, and the expected loss of the Ka'imikai-o-Kanaloa, or KOK, the undersea lab is reactivating the submersible barge for use with a smaller support vessel yet to be identified.

Kerby said the barge, which hasn't been used for 16 years, can be towed by Navy, Coast Guard or other vessels.

A crew of three divers sinks the barge to a depth of 60 feet to launch and retrieve the submersibles.

"What that does, is if there is no funding coming from NOAA and we don't have any science groups out there that can get funding to afford (a ship like the KOK), we still have an option to do science dives with the submersible with the LRT," said Kerby, the chief submersible pilot.

Most of the daily cost for submersible use is in the use of the KOK, he said. The cost for use of the submersibles and KOK is about \$35,000 to \$40,000 daily, which is a bargain basement price for the sub industry, Kerby said.

Use of the Navy-owned Alvin deep-diving sub, which is in Massachusetts, costs about \$55,000 a day with its support ship, Kerby said. The Japanese Shinkai is probably double that cost, he said.

With UH needed to help finance a new support vessel, the cost would have to be a fraction of that paid for the KOK, Kerby said.

"We've been pounding the docks, our own crew, trying to find a vessel that is suitable," Kerby said.

The Army paid about \$3 million for recent dives about 10 miles southeast of Pearl Harbor looking for chemical weapons dumped during and after World War II.

UH submersibles tested water, sediment and marine life near mustard agent bombs. The results are due in 2015.

The funds went to the undersea lab and daily ship costs, officials said.

Shor said the Army work "helped fill in some (funding) gaps, but we would need almost a dozen projects like that annually to really support the (submersible) project if we didn't have the base of support (from NOAA)."

UH officials are hoping the undersea research lab people can take on other work within the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, he said.

### **(3) “Time lists isle company's fish-raising project among top inventions”**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 06, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121106\\_\\_Time\\_lists\\_isle\\_companys\\_fishraising\\_project\\_among\\_top\\_investors](http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121106__Time_lists_isle_companys_fishraising_project_among_top_investors)]

An ocean-drifting fish-raising prototype from a Hawaii company was named one of the best inventions of 2012 by Time Magazine.

The so-called Velella Project by Kampachi Farms raised 10,000 pounds of kampachi, also known as kahala or almaco jack, in a 30-square-meter cage tethered to a sailing ship for seven months to test whether fish cages with self-feeding mechanisms and GPS tracking could drift freely on a circular ocean current three to 75 miles off Hawaii island.

The project was among 50 inventions on Time's list. □ Inventions ranged from a \$40 home HIV test to the \$2.5 billion Mars rover Curiosity.

Kampachi Farms, formerly known as Kona Blue Water Farms, said its Velella project helps advance mariculture, or ocean aquaculture.

The present mariculture industry model uses relatively stationary near-shore cages often criticized by environmental groups as detrimental to ecosystems because fish waste and uneaten food are concentrated in one area.

Neil Anthony Sims, co-CEO of Kampachi Farms, said last year before the trial that the test represented a major step toward growing more fish in a more environmentally responsible manner. "The whole world could benefit from this," he said at the time.

Kampachi Farms reported that fish in the Velella project were healthier and grew twice as fast as expected.

The Velella project cost an estimated \$750,000 and received major funding from the Illinois Soybean Association. Other partners included the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, Lockheed-Martin, the International Copper Association and Ocean Farm Technologies.

### **(4) “Climate-change scientists predict sea to rise 1 foot by 2050”**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 10, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121210\\_\\_Climate\\_change\\_scientists\\_predict\\_sea\\_to\\_rise\\_1\\_foot\\_by\\_2050](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121210__Climate_change_scientists_predict_sea_to_rise_1_foot_by_2050).]

Scientists are predicting the ocean could rise by as much as a foot in the Hawaiian Islands by 2050 and that droughts may become more frequent on leeward sides of the islands.

By 2050, warmer temperatures will also contribute to the annual bleaching of coral reefs and a reduction in mosquito-free habitat for endangered Hawaii birds.

The predictions are contained in a report resulting from the collaboration of more than 100 scientists, which was prepared in advance of a public forum from 9 a.m. to noon today at the Hawai'i Imin International Conference Center in Hono-lulu.

The report, "Climate Change and Pacific Islands: Indicators and Impacts," partially supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, assesses climate change in Hawaii and other Pacific islands.

Contributing scientist John Marra said sea levels will rise globally as much as 2 feet by the end of the century.

By comparison, sea levels rose by about half a foot in the last century, said Marra, NOAA climate services director for the Pacific islands.

The impact of rising ocean levels will particularly be felt on the northern shores and in places susceptible to flooding and erosion.

"Over time, extreme events are going to be more frequent, lasting longer," he said. "That will have a cumulative impact."

The scientists' predictions are based in part on looking at past records along with developing climate models for ocean warming and the melting of polar ice, among others.

In Hawaii the impacts will be felt in business and recreational areas.

For example, Marra said, places such as the low-lying commercial Mapunapuna area on Oahu will flood more regularly, and ponding will be more regular at Kapiolani Park, because rainwater won't have as much depth to percolate before reaching the groundwater level.

He said the impact on tourism will be the loss of beach, and that while beach replenishment in Waikiki might work for now, it may not be the answer in the future.

"If it gets high enough, it might not work," he said. □ Scientists predict annual rainfall will decrease across the state overall. □ Victoria Keener, an East-West Center research fellow and lead editor for the Pacific Islands Regional Climate

Assessment, said trends show a decrease in frequency of high-intensity rain and an increase in the frequency of droughts and dry days.

"The leeward side of most of the Hawaiian Islands is projected to have an increase in drought risk," she said.

She said some tops of mountains such as on Kauai and windward Maui are predicted to have decreasing occurrence of droughts.

Keener said the state has a potential advantage in establishing policies to deal with climate change and decreasing rainfall because it has a state water commission with the responsibility to sustainably manage Hawaii's water resources.

"I think Hawaii has a good chance to be a leader in the field of proactive climate change adaptation," she said.

Keener said businesses can also avoid potential damage by being proactive.

For instance, the vice president of PVT Land Co., which operates a landfill, heard about a predicted increase in above-average rainfall on Oahu from weather forecasters and decided to take steps to make improvements that would affect the diversion and capacity to hold storm water on the company's property, she said.

The improvements were put to the test when the Nana-kuli area, where the company is located, received 10 inches of rain from a single storm in 2011.

Other landfills were forced to close down. □ "Due to their good use of a climate forecast, PVT Land Co. was open for business the next day," Keener said.

## **(5) "Coast Guard investigates false distress calls"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: LAST UPDATED: 09:23 p.m. HST, Nov 09, 2012*

[<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/178308841.html?id=178308841>]

The Coast Guard is asking for help in finding the source of recent false distress radio calls that appear to contain a child's voice.

The Coast Guard said the calls have been occurring mainly in the east end of Oahu.

The most recent was 4 p.m. Tuesday when Coast Guard watchstanders in the Sector Honolulu Command Center received a call of a child's voice saying, "Hello, hello, hello, hello. Mayday, mayday."

"The voice sounded very similar, if not identical, to the voice heard on other recent radio calls that were eventually suspended as probable hoaxes after no source of distress could be located," the Coast Guard news release said.

On one audio recording released by the Coast Guard, a man's voice could be heard repeating, "Mayday, mayday, mayday," then a young child repeating the phrase.

The Coast Guard launched a helicopter crew to investigate Tuesday's call, but no indications of distress were found.

"This may not occur to the hoax caller, but people could die as a result of prank calls," said

Commander Steve Wheeler, Sector Honolulu's Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator.

The Coast Guard treats every call as an actual distress case, so if its boats or aircraft are responding to fake calls, another mariner in real distress may not get the timely assistance they need.

A false distress is a felony, and penalties include prison time, criminal fines, civil fines and reimbursement to the Coast Guard.

Mariners are urged to remove or lock up radios to prevent fraudulent calls from occurring, and to report suspected hoax callers to the Coast Guard's tip line at 1-800-264-5980.

## **(6) "Flooding hassles in Hauula have hui 'looking at litigation"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 17, 2012*

By Sarah Zoellick / [szoellick@staradvertiser.com](mailto:szoellick@staradvertiser.com)

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121217\\_\\_Flooding\\_hassles\\_in\\_Hauula\\_have\\_hui\\_looking\\_at\\_litigation.html?](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121217__Flooding_hassles_in_Hauula_have_hui_looking_at_litigation.html?)]

Some coastal residents of Hauula are increasingly fed up with chronic flooding trouble they say has been made worse by a drainage pipe valve installed by the city.

"At this point, if we don't get a resolution, we're looking at litigation," said Amy Madsen, president of the Hauula Beach Homes Association of Apartment Owners.

Madsen said nearby Kalua-nui Stream routinely floods into yards and homes along Poki-wai Place and surrounding streets during heavy rain because sand builds up and blocks the flow to the ocean. Residents themselves have had to dig an opening under the Kamehameha Highway bridge over the stream to let water out, or the Hono-lulu Fire Department comes and blasts the sand out with a hose, she said.

On Nov. 28 the city installed a "duckbill valve" onto the mouth of a pipe that runs under the bridge as a way to keep sand from backing up into the pipe.

But Madsen said the valve is causing more problems.

The duckbill valve is designed to open when water is flowing through the pipe but remain closed when it isn't, in order to keep sand from entering and backing up the pipe.

Madsen said it's difficult for water to exit the valve because it is often blocked by sand, and that its thick rubberlike material is too strong for a trickle of water to pass through. And with ocean water no longer entering the pipe and mixing with the stream, she said, the stream is turning putrid and killing fish.

There has also been an increased presence of a filmy white and brown substance.

"Honestly, it's kind of always been this way, but it's gotten worse with the duckbill," said Madsen, suggesting that the substance could possibly be fecal matter because the community runs on cesspools and is not connected to the city's sewer system.

Verna Ulii, 45, said she has lived in the community her whole life, and as a kid used to swim in the stream, which was clean.

"We used to have a lot of fish here," she said. "We used to go fishing every day."

Madsen said she is also bothered that the city did not consult community members before installing the valve.

Until now, Madsen said, the state has been relatively helpful when it comes to flooding.

"They've actually dug us out a few times," she said. "But now (that) the duckbill is in, the state is using it as an excuse not to help us (because the city installed it)."

A few years ago, Madsen said, she and a some other residents explored the area upstream to find out where the water was coming from and discovered a "sharp 90-degree turn" directing the stream toward Kailua, followed by another 90 degree turn guiding it toward the ocean. She said it appears the stream was rerouted many decades ago to accommodate the Sacred Falls State Park parking lot. The park has been closed to visitors since 1999, when a rockfall killed eight hikers and wounded several others.

When Madsen presented the state recently with a study conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers about five years ago that concluded the configuration of the stream is unnatural, she said state Sen. Clayton Hee responded by setting aside \$1 million for an upcoming project that will install earthen berms around the first bend to help prevent flooding in her community.

"This whole infrastructure needs to be looked at," she said. "I guarantee if that stream went from mountain to ocean, we wouldn't see the amount of flooding we've seen."

The state Department of Land and Natural Resources installed concrete barriers around the first bend in December 2007 at a cost of \$32,000 in an attempt to prevent water from spilling over and running off into the Poki-wai Place community.

Madsen said the barriers were of little help and are now overgrown. She plans to meet with DLNR during a hearing at the state Capitol this week to be briefed about the current plan to install the earthen berms.

## **(7) "Hawaii fishery offers model for sustainable management"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 02, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/20121102\\_Hawaii\\_fishery\\_offers\\_model\\_for\\_sustainable\\_management.html?id=17693](http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/20121102_Hawaii_fishery_offers_model_for_sustainable_management.html?id=17693)]

There are many different opinions about what is meant by "sustainable fishery."

The simplest is that properly conducted fishing would not disturb the balance of nature, and a certain amount of sustainable yield could be extracted regularly and predictably. Many consider this to be a rather naive view of the balance of nature that assumes that nature is in a balance that is constant over time if left undisturbed.

In reality there are natural fluctuations of species at all levels in any food chain due to environmental variables.

Another widely accepted opinion allows for natural fluctuations but acknowledges that overfishing might be sustainable but would be economically foolish even if the stock can rebuild within a generation.

A third view maintains that a mixed-species fishery that rotated and possibly depleted individual stocks would be sustainable as long as the ecosystem did not change its intrinsic structure. This definition would allow fishing practices that lead to the reduction and possible extinction of some members of the ecosystem.

None of these is completely satisfactory.

The Hawaii Seafood Council defines sustainable seafood as a renewable ocean resource that is harvested in a way that the catch can be continued year after year without jeopardizing or compromising the future of the fish population or the marine ecosystem on which it depends.

This is a generalization that is derivative of a more precise, comprehensive and technical definition of fishery sustainability used by fishery scientists and managers.

Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is the maximum average amount of fish that can be harvested from a population on a continuing basis.

Overfishing occurs when the amount of fish harvested is greater than the level that produces MSY. A fish population is overfished when it falls substantially below the level needed to produce MSY. Optimum yield is a precautionary operating target that managers set below MSY to ensure that the limits on harvest rate are not exceeded and the fish population size does not fall below that needed for MSY.

Hawaii open-ocean longline fisheries for tuna, swordfish and other associated fish species are rigorously managed among the best in the world as a result of cooperation between NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and the Hawaii Seafood Council. They are a model for sustainable fisheries management as mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

The Hawaii fishery scored 94 percent compliance with the detailed provisions of the United Nations' Food and

Agriculture Organization Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted in 1995. The U.N.

food organization is the forum through which the world's nations agreed to international norms for food production. Hawaii's fishery remains one of the few fisheries in the world to have been assessed comprehensively against this global standard, which demonstrates how this fishery operates responsibly and is managed for sustainability.

Considering that Hawaii eats a higher percentage of seafood than any other state and imports a majority of its fish, these are good reasons to buy and eat local fish.

———□ On the Net: »[www.hawaii-seafood.org/Sustainability](http://www.hawaii-seafood.org/Sustainability)  
»[www.fpir.noaa.gov/SFD/SFD\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/SFD/SFD_index.html)

———□ Richard Brill is a professor of science at Honolulu Community College. Email questions and comments to [brill@hawaii.edu](mailto:brill@hawaii.edu).

### **(8) “Heavier junk from tsunami expected to litter isle shores”**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 04, 2012*

By Gary T. Kubota

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121204\\_Heavier\\_junk\\_from\\_tsunami\\_expected\\_to\\_litter\\_isle\\_shores.html?](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121204_Heavier_junk_from_tsunami_expected_to_litter_isle_shores.html?)]

Debris from the March 11, 2011, Japan tsunami is reaching a different stage in its drift across the Pacific, with heavier and larger objects contributing to coastal garbage patches in Hawaii, University of Hawaii researchers said.

"It's hard to tell, but it's going to be heavier debris than earlier this year," researcher Niko-lai Maxi-menko said. "We do not have good information about what is in the water."

Carey Morishige, a federal marine debris coordinator, said the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration anticipates that through the winter, seasonal changes in North Pacific winds and

currents will cause more flotsam to wash ashore on the West Coast.

Based on reports from mariners, Maxi-menko said, the heavier debris found in the ocean includes docks, overturned boats and wooden logs that are lower in the water and driven more by currents than wind.

In Hawaii, Kamilo Beach on the southeast coast of Hawaii island likely will get more than its share. Ocean garbage seems to collect there from many areas.

UH researcher Henry Carson found a Japanese refrigerator there Oct. 27.

Hawaii Wildlife Fund official Megan Lamson said about 15 to 20 tons of marine debris are removed annually from a 10-mile stretch of coastline that includes Kamilo Beach.

About half of the items are fishing nets, and the other half miscellaneous plastic items, including small pieces of plastic in patches a foot deep, officials said.

Maximenko said some of the tsunami debris is headed west, while other debris will end up in a vortex in the Pacific garbage patch between Hawaii and California.

Researchers said studies are being conducted about the impact of plastics consumed by fish and birds in the ocean. Carson said many plastic materials have bite marks from marine animals.

He said the consequences of animals consuming plastics that carry toxins could be serious, although studies aren't completed.

"That's one of the big worries," he said. □ Lamson said she hopes the public will understand the importance of recycling and reducing the use of plastics. "We live on an island," she said. "It's a vulnerable place."

### **(9) "Hilo's famed waterfall runs dry"**

Hawaii News Now - KGMB and KHNL Updated: Dec 04, 2012 10:03 AM

By Rich Meiers – email

[<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/20251716/hilos-famed-waterfall-runs-dry?clienttyp...>  
12/4/2012]

HILO, BIG ISLAND (HawaiiNewsNow) - An unusual sight on the Big Island, one of the most famous waterfalls in the world has dried up.

At Rainbow Falls in Hilo tourists and locals alike, usually witness the deafening sound of the 80-foot waterfall as it rushes into a large pool below. The falls is usually 100 feet in width.

Hilo resident Paul Miyasaki says it is the first time in recent memory that the famous falls has run dry. Miyasaki took video of the waterless fall.

Rainbow Falls is renowned for the rainbow formed from its mist.

A recent National Weather Service report stated that below average rainfall on The Big Island has so far not produced significant impacts over the windward sections of the island "though this will change if rainfall fails to increase soon."

Nearly all of the gauges on the Big Island reported below average totals for the month October with many at less than 40 percent of average.

Most of the gages on the Big Island had below average rainfall totals for 2012 through the end of October. Year-to-date totals for a majority of the leeward gages remained at less than 50 percent of average.

### **(10) "Japan donates \$5M for tsunami debris cleanup"**

StarAdvertiser.com *LAST UPDATED: 11:26 a.m. HST, Nov 30, 2012*

[<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/181595571.html?id=181595571>]



*The blue plastic bin fished out of the water off Windward Oahu on Wednesday has been confirmed as debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami.*

TOKYO » Japan is providing \$5 million to the U.S. to help with collection and disposal of marine debris from its 2011 tsunami disaster.

The Foreign Ministry announced the donation to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration today. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda informed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of the plan during a meeting in September on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

A huge tsunami triggered by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake on March 11, 2011 off Japan's northeastern coast killed or left missing more than 18,000 people and washed millions of tons of debris into the sea.

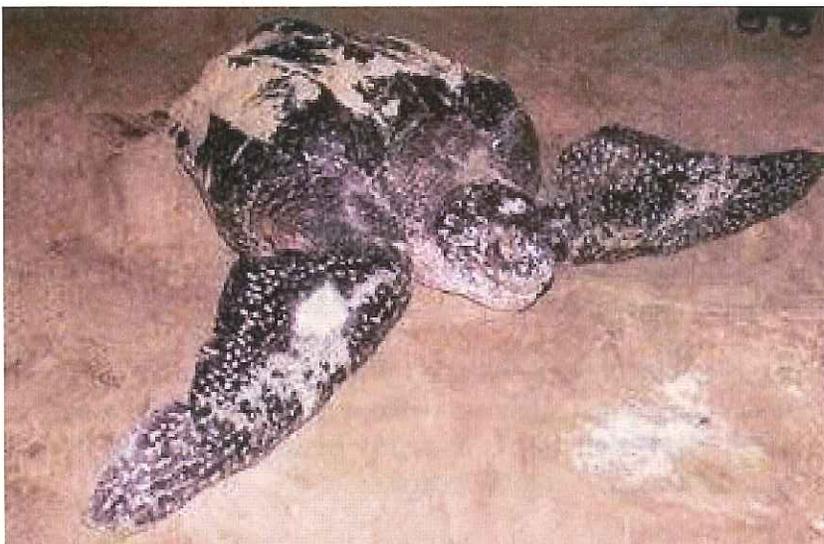
NOAA has said it expects some of the debris to wash up on U.S. shores in the next several years. Japan's donation will help fund its monitoring, removal and processing.

About 70 percent of the tsunami debris is said to have sunk, but a few items have been confirmed as having floated across the Pacific, including a large plastic bin used to transport seafood that landed in Hawaii, a fishing dock found on the Oregon coast, buoys and other flotsam and jetsam.

### **(10) “Lawsuit filed over endangered sea turtles”**

StarAdvertiser.com *LAST UPDATED: 01:10 p.m. HST, Nov 02, 2012*

[<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/177037511.html?id=177037511>]



*Associated Press / 2000A new study has found that leatherback sea turtles forage and migrate in a large swath of the Pacific Ocean, from California to Indonesia. The study has encouraged partnerships among nations to help protect the endangered species.*

Two conservation groups filed a lawsuit today challenging a new federal rule that nearly doubles limits on how many endangered sea turtles Hawaii's longline swordfish fishery can accidentally hook before being shut down.

The lawsuit alleges that the National Marine Fisheries Service failed to comply with the Endangered Species Act when it used an inadequate biological opinion that substantially increased the number of endangered sea turtles that can be incidentally caught.

The conservation groups accuse the National Marine Fisheries Service of rolling back protections that capped the number of sea turtles that could be caught at 17 endangered loggerheads and 16 endangered leatherbacks.

Under the new rule issued in October and going into effect Monday, 34 loggerhead and 26 leatherback turtles can be incidentally caught before the fishery would be forced to shut down.

"They are both on a trajectory to go extinct eventually, and being caught in fisheries is well-known to be a major cause," said lawyer Paul Achitoff with Earthjustice, the law firm that filed the lawsuit in Honolulu federal court on behalf of Turtle Island Restoration Network and the Center for Biological Diversity.

The fishery experienced mandatory shutdowns in 2006 and 2011.

Wende Goo, spokeswoman for NOAA Fisheries, Pacific Islands Region, said the agency had not yet received the lawsuit but planned to review it.

The agency has about two months to respond, Achitoff said.

When the shallow-set longline fishery spreads out 60-miles of fishing line, with as many as 1,000 baited hooks attached and gear suspended near the surface of the water, it results in untold numbers of sea turtles, dolphins and seabirds being killed, said Todd Steiner, Turtle Island Restoration Network's executive

Miyoko Sakashita, the Center for Biological Diversity's oceans director, said sea turtles will soon be extinct unless they are protected from drowning in fishing gear.

"It's tragic that these large commercial fisheries are killing animals by the thousands for the sake of a few profitable swordfish," she said in a statement.

The lawsuit also challenges a permit issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August that allows longliners to catch Laysan and Black-footed albatross without requiring measures that could lessen the number of birds killed. The permit allows up to 191 Black-footed albatross and 430 Laysan albatrosses to be incidentally caught over three years.

Achitoff said if fishing line was dispensed from the sides of the longliners instead of off the back it could result in far fewer seabird deaths. With side-setting of line, by the time the baited hooks reach the back of boats where seabirds have access to them, they have sunk low enough in the water to be out of reach, he said.

"We want the fisheries to be required to use the best available technology to minimize the catching of these birds," he said.

## **(12) "Maui wildlife refuge allows water birds to thrive"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 25, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/travelpremium/20121125\\_\\_Maui\\_wildlife\\_refuge\\_allows\\_water\\_birds\\_to\\_thrive.html?id=18](http://www.staradvertiser.com/travelpremium/20121125__Maui_wildlife_refuge_allows_water_birds_to_thrive.html?id=18)]

By Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi

When Glynnis Nakai says Maui's Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge is for the birds, she means it in a good way.

"It was established in 1992 to protect the endangered aeo (Hawaiian stilt) and alae keokeo (Hawaiian coot) and their wetland habitat," said Nakai, who has served as the refuge's manager for 14 12 years. "December through April is the most exciting time of the year for visitors because it's when we host as many as 30 species of water birds."

Along with the aeo and alae keokeo, 18 other species live at the Kealia Pond NWR year-round. Joining them during the winter are migratory waterfowl and shorebirds from as far away as Alaska, Canada and Asia.

"The number of visiting species varies from year to year, but it's usually between 12 and 15," Nakai said. "They show up at different times throughout winter, and rare species can be seen on any given day. You could come three days in a row and see different birds each time. That's what makes the refuge's population so interesting right now."

When Nakai was growing up, her family's outings revolved around hiking, fishing and other outdoor activities. That interest led her to a bachelor's degree in zoology, a master's degree in wildlife biology and management, and a career that she says has many more rewards than just a paycheck.

The Kealia Pond NWR lies along Maui's south-central shore at the base of two watersheds — one originating in Hale-akala and the other in the West Maui Mountains. Water is channeled to its six ponds via two streams from Hale-akala and three from the West Maui Mountains.

During Hawaii's rainy months, typically December through March, Kealia Pond, the main pond, can expand from 200 to 450 acres, with its deepest sections averaging 3 feet. Water levels begin to recede in March; from late summer through fall they can drop to around 8 inches.

The alae keokeo builds its nests among "emergent vegetation," plants that grow in the water, so it breeds during the winter when levels are high. When levels are low, usually from April through July, the aeo nests and lays its eggs on the exposed bottoms of the ponds.

"We carefully monitor water levels all year, making changes when needed to provide appropriate resting, foraging and nesting habitats for the birds," Nakai said. "Between August and December, when levels are at their lowest, we often need to pump water from brackish wells into the ponds so algae and aquatic invertebrates — the birds' primary food sources — can thrive."

According to Nakai, although the ponds look dry right now, this is a great time to see birds because they are numerous and easily visible, especially at the Kanui-manu Ponds. From 1970 to 1995 these five man-made ponds were used to raise catfish.

In 2005 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the Kealia Pond NWR, restored them as habitats for water birds. Visitors are welcome to stroll along the levees separating the ponds, being careful not to disturb any of the feathered residents.

The refuge's new administration building opened nearby in February. Staff offices occupy half of the 7,500-square-foot facility; the other half is a visitor center.

"There are 12 national wildlife refuges in Hawaii; Kealia Pond is the only one that has a visitor center," Nakai said. "Construction of the building followed LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) criteria, including photovoltaic panels, sensors that adjust lighting in rooms based on how much ambient light is present, and landscaping that incorporates native Hawaiian plants that don't require much water."

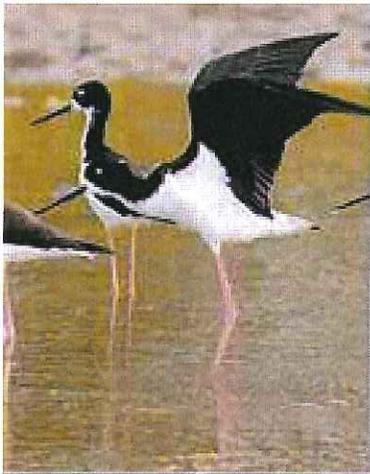
Visitors can explore the center's exhibit hall at their leisure (staff and volunteers are on hand to answer questions). Interactive displays encourage them to open drawers, lift covers off bowls and peer through microscopes to learn about the aeo and alae keokeo, the Hale-akala and West

Maui Mountain watersheds, wetland restoration, aquatic invertebrates, invasive plants and animals, and more.

"Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge is a treasure — one of the few natural wetlands remaining in Hawaii," Nakai said. "My staff and I often get muddy and stay out in the sun for long hours, pulling weeds to restore habitat and monitoring the wetlands for the birds we are here to protect. But we know our work is important for them and for the people who come here as curious observers and leave as their champions."

#### DID YOU KNOW?

>> "Aeo," shown below, means "one standing tall," which is apropos for this stilt whose legs take up half of its 16-inch height.



COURTESY TOM DOVE

>> To draw predators away from its chicks, the aeo becomes an actor, pretending it has a broken wing.

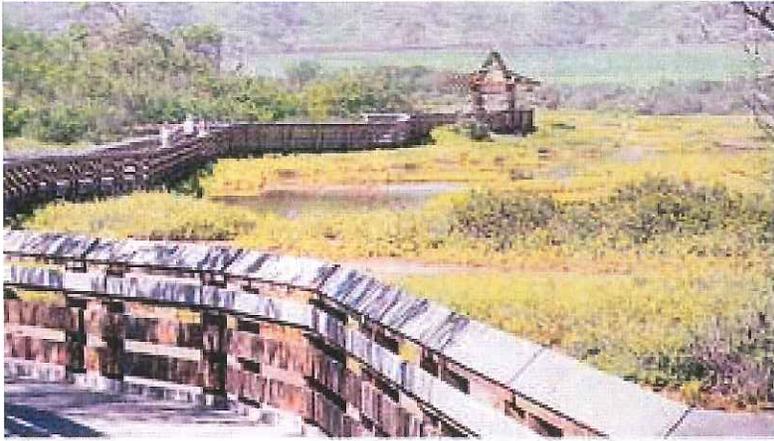
>> The aeo's eggs and chicks are speckled with brown spots that are great camouflage because they blend in with the soil. As soon as the chicks hatch and dry off, they are able to walk and feed on their own.

>> The alae keokeo has large feet, which keep its body cool and serve as paddles when it's swimming and diving for food and as weapons against other coots entering its territory.

>> Each year, the kolea (Pacific golden plover), a migratory shorebird, flies 3,000 miles nonstop from Alaska's Seward Peninsula to winter at the Kealia Pond National Wildlife

Refuge. □ IF YOU GO...

KEALIA POND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



COURTESY U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

>> Kealia Coastal Boardwalk: North Kihei Road between Kihei and Maalaea Harbor, Maui. Opened in September 2009 and pictured above, this is a 2,200-foot elevated walkway into the refuge's coastal flats. Seventeen interpretive panels describe the wetlands' importance as a habitat for endangered and migratory birds. Hours are 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

>> Visitor center: Three miles north of the boardwalk; turn at Mile Marker 6 on Moku?lele Highway. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays.

>> Admission to both sites: Free

>> Phone: 875-1582

>> Email: [glynnis\\_nakai@fws.gov](mailto:glynnis_nakai@fws.gov)

>> Website: [www.fws.gov/kealiapond](http://www.fws.gov/kealiapond) Notes: The best time for bird-watching is in the morning, when the sun and wind are not as strong. Shaded areas in the refuge are limited, so wear a hat, sunglasses, cool clothing and a liberal

dose of sunscreen. Bring bottled water.

Both the boardwalk and the Kanuimanu Ponds' levees can accommodate wheelchairs (be aware the levees are a bit bumpy). The refuge welcomes volunteers to assist with on- and off-site programs, including wildlife monitoring, environmental education, maintenance projects, wetland and coastal dune restoration, and greeting the public in the visitor center. Call for more information.

### **(13) "New aquarium fish rules draw criticism"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 24, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121124\\_New\\_aquarium\\_fish\\_rules\\_draw\\_criticism.html?id=180667761](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121124_New_aquarium_fish_rules_draw_criticism.html?id=180667761)]

Some environmental groups are concerned that effects on the sea have not been studied By Gary T. Kubota



*<br />star-advertiser / 2010<br />Proposed state rules would allow a person with a commercial aquarium fish permit to take a daily bag limit of no more than 100 yellow tangs, which*

*Earthjustice associate attorney Caro-line Ishida contends would allow people to take tens of thousands of yellow tangs a year.<br />*

Environmental groups are criticizing proposed state rules to regulate the collection of ocean aquarium fish on Oahu.

"These rules aren't based on good science," Earthjustice associate attorney Caro-line Ishida said. "What we want to see is what basis they have for making these rules and looking at good science."

A public hearing on the draft rules by the state Department of Land and Natural Resources is scheduled for 6 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Wai-malu Elementary School cafeteria.

The hearing follows a lawsuit filed in October seeking to force the department to study the effects of aquarium fish collection before issuing more permits.

No date has been set for the court hearing. □Ishida said that under the proposed rules, there is no limit on the number of permits for aquarium fish collection.

She said the rules do not cover ocean invertebrates and would also allow a person to take tens of thousands of yellow tang a year.

Coral Fish Hawaii owner Randy Fernley, who is in favor of the rules, said there is no shortage of aquarium fish based on prior scientific assessments.

Fernley said the science available does not back up the rhetoric of environmental groups.

Under the proposed rules, a person with a commercial aquarium fish permit would be able to take a daily bag limit of no more than 100 yellow tangs, 75 kole, 50 Potter's angels, 50 naso tangs, 25 moorish idols and 10 Achilles tangs.

The draft rules would limit the length of mesh nets to no more than 60 feet long and would also limit the collection of bandit angelfish that are longer than 5.5 inches to not more than two daily.

The proposed rules would impose misdemeanor penalties of up to 30 days in jail and a \$500 fine to violators. Any civil fines are up to \$1,000 per violation and \$1,000 per specimen.

#### **(14) "Superfund Designation Sought For Northwestern Hawaiian Islands"**

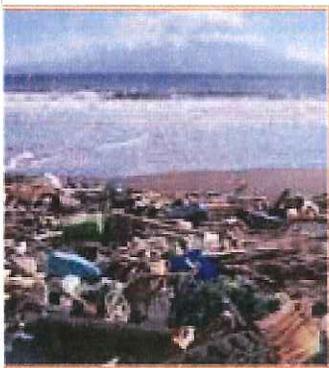
By Sophie Cocke 12/11/2012

[<http://www.civilbeat.com/articles/2012/12/11/17872-superfund-designation-sought-for-northwestern-hawaiian-islands/>]

□ Could the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands become another Love Canal?

The Center for Biological Diversity, a mainland conservation group, has taken the unusual step of pushing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to designate the Northwestern Hawaiian islands and parts of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch as a Superfund cleanup site.

"We think that plastic pollution is an increasing threat to our nation's wildlife and particularly the wildlife in the northwest Hawaiian islands where you would hope, as a marine monument, it would have extra protections," said Emily Jeffers, an attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity.



NOAA

She said 267 species have been documented to have been affected by plastics, through entanglements or ingestion.

"It's a problem that's getting worse and worse as we use more disposable plastic," Jeffers said.

The environmental group filed a petition with the EPA on Tuesday to review the areas as Superfund sites. The federal designation was initiated in 1970 as a way to prioritize cleanup efforts of hazardous waste sites that could be harming people or local ecosystems.

The designation would be the first for plastic marine debris, said Jeffers.

Dean Higuchi, a spokesman for the EPA in Hawaii, said that the agency was currently reviewing the petition so he couldn't comment on the specifics of the request.

"It's not really common for people to make petitions like this and so we are trying to figure out the next steps," he said.

William Aila, head of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, the state agency which shares jurisdiction with the federal government over the area, hadn't seen the petition yet. He applauded efforts to increase money for cleanup but said he wouldn't want federal designation to trump the strict permitting process for the area.

There are hundreds of sites throughout the U.S. listed as Superfund sites, perhaps the most famous being Love Canal, a housing development in upstate New York that was built atop a dumping ground for dangerous chemicals.

In Hawaii, there are four Superfund sites on Oahu, including the Pearl Harbor Naval Complex, which is contaminated with metals and chemicals, and Del Monte's old pineapple plantation in central Oahu where chemicals from fumigants used in the 1940s were found to be contaminating groundwater, according to the EPA.

While the Northwestern Hawaiian islands and a portion of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch would be the first Superfund sites based on marine debris, there are other waterways that have been given the designation. Off the coast of Los Angeles, the Palos Verdes Shelf is listed as a Superfund site because of the existence of large deposits of toxic chemicals. The Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, a cesspool of chemical contaminants, is also listed.

### Could Superfund Designation Help?

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, also known as the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, was given national protection in 2006. The chain of islands is scattered across 1,200 miles of the Pacific Ocean.

But increasing amounts of plastic debris and abandoned fishing gear are taking a toll on the marine environment.

In the remote island chain, 98 percent of Albatross chicks have been found to have shards of plastic in their stomachs, according to one report from the University of Southern California. Researchers have found dozens of monk seals entangled in derelict fishing gear. And the mounds of plastic debris washing up on beaches is only expected to increase.

Jeffers said that the EPA could pay to clean up the reefs and shorelines. Currently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, has been doing some mitigation in the region. NOAA estimates that 52 tons of debris accumulates in the islands every year.

However, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a massive depository of plastics roughly the size of Texas floating in the Pacific Ocean, is more complicated. The EPA would only have jurisdiction in federal waters, which extend 200 miles off shore.

Jeffers said that the Center for Biological Diversity believes that part of the Patch, even though a small one, is in U.S. waters. But finding that spot could be elusive because the huge swath of debris is constantly being moved by currents.

“It’s a moving target. It’s hard to pin down,” said Jeffers. Being labeled as a Superfund site could increase money available for cleanup operations. But what the Center for Biological Diversity wants is to also stop plastics from getting into the ocean in the first place.

Many of the plastics entering the oceans are believed to come from land-based sources such as runoff and people not disposing of their garbage properly, as well as cargo falling off ships or being dumped overboard, according to NOAA.

Jeffers said that the first step to combatting the problem is better identifying the sources, which is one of the reasons the Center for Biological Diversity brought the petition.”

“I think the idea would be for the EPA to get a handle on where it comes from so it never enters the marine environment in the first place,” she said.

“I think this might not solve the problem, but I think it’s a good first step to making sure the dangers are addressed.”

### **(15) “Officials checking on possible tsunami dock in Washington”**

StarAdvertiser.com *LAST UPDATED: 06:04 p.m. HST, Dec 20, 2012*

[<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/184369831.html?id=184369831>]



state Marine Debris Task Force.

SEATTLE >> A dock that apparently was ripped away from Japanese waters by a tsunami and drifted for more than a year and a half across 5,000 miles of the Pacific washed ashore on one of the most remote beaches on the west coast of the United States.

It was spotted Tuesday by the Coast Guard on the Olympic Peninsula. Tsunami debris experts didn't try to reach it by ground until Thursday because of stormy weather and treacherous terrain, said David Workman, spokesman for the

It's a four- or five-mile walk from the nearest road on little-used trails crossing streams running full from a drenching December storm.

Removing the dock or just scraping it clean of potential invasive species of marine life "is going to be a real challenge to find the right solution," Workman said.

Officials aren't disclosing the exact location of the dock to keep people away because of safety concerns.

"It's a very precarious location to get to, especially in these conditions," Workman said. "At high tide there's no beach and you've got a bluff."

The beach is between La Push and the Hoh River on the northwest tip of Washington. The nearest town is Forks — of "Twilight" book and movie fame. It's about 100 miles west of Seattle.

It's along 70 miles of wilderness beaches protected by the Olympic National Park. The waters are in the 3,200 square-mile Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

The tsunami debris task force, made up of federal, state and tribal agencies, wants to secure the dock until they decide how to deal with it, Workman said. Officials are concerned about non-native plants or animals that hitched a ride.

They also need to confirm its Japanese origin.

It's believed to be similar to the 165-ton concrete and steel dock that washed ashore in June near Newport, Ore. Looking like a railroad boxcar, it was 66 feet long, 19 feet wide and 7 feet high. A plaque identified it as one of four owned by Aomori Prefecture that broke loose from the port of Misawa during the March 2011 tsunami. The docks were used for loading fish onto trucks. Another one turned up several weeks later on an island south of Misawa.

Volunteers scraped off 2 tons of seaweed and creatures that were clinging to the Newport dock. Among them were four species — a seaweed, a sea star, a mussel and a shore crab — that are native to Japan and have established themselves as invasive species elsewhere, said Caren Braby, manager of marine resources for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Officials won't know for a couple years whether any of them escaped to get a foothold in Oregon, she said.

The scrapings were buried above the high water line. The dock was sterilized with torches, then cut up and removed last summer.

The Olympic dock could get the same treatment to head off a non-native plant or animal taking hold, said state Fish and Wildlife Department spokesman Bruce Botka.

"Our folks are looking at everything at the front end to avoid having a much bigger problem later," he said.

Sen. Maria Cantwell's office said the Olympic dock was confirmed as tsunami debris from a photo taken by a fisherman and analyzed by a researcher working under a RAPID National Science Foundation grant to track debris. Cantwell is pushing federal legislation seeking \$20 million for tsunami debris removal.

While the dock is likely of Japanese origin, Workman said officials will follow the protocol established by the United States and Japan to reach a definitive conclusion.

As of Dec. 13, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had received 1,432 debris reports, of which 17 have been confirmed as tsunami origin.

## **(16) "On Niihau, nothingness is everything"**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 09, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/travelpremium/20121209\\_\\_On\\_Niihau\\_nothingness\\_is\\_everything.html?id=182709081](http://www.staradvertiser.com/travelpremium/20121209__On_Niihau_nothingness_is_everything.html?id=182709081)]

The clouds cleared and Niihau's cliffs burst into view as we hovered over the nearly 4,000-foot-deep Kaulakahi Channel looking for whales. A red light on the helicopter's control panel flashed and beeped, only adding to my excitement for exploring the not entirely "forbidden island."

Niihau's reputation as a place for residents only is slightly misleading. Contrary to popular belief, Niihau's pristine waters, beaches and interior can be enjoyed by outsiders wanting to relax on empty beaches and snorkel in waters bursting with sea life.

### **NIIHAU HELICOPTERS AND NIIHAU SAFARIS**

» Tours: Half-day excursions are \$385 per person with a minimum of five per tour. Group, special tours and charter rates also are available.

» Phone: 877-441-3500 » Email: [niihauisland@hawaiian.net](mailto:niihauisland@hawaiian.net) » Website: [www.niihau.us](http://www.niihau.us) » Cheryl Tsutsumi's 'Hawaii's Backyard' column will return Dec. 16.

My "forbidden island" adventure began as a seven-seat helicopter lifted off the ground at Kauai's Port Allen Airport just weeks after I learned that Niihau Helicopters offers tours of the island. Along with the island, the small company is owned by the Robinson family and shuttles visitors to the island about twice monthly.

For \$385 anyone with a desire to experience the unknown can visit. Because the company requires a minimum of five guests to make the flight, it's helpful to reserve a spot well before you plan to go so they can group visitors together. A simple lunch of meat or vegetarian deli sandwiches and drinks are provided, but bring additional snacks and water, especially if you plan to disappear down the coast for a while.

As a shell collector intrigued by the idea of a raw and hardly changed island, I'd dreamed for years of exploring Niihau's beaches. While camping at Kauai's Poli-hale, I had looked at Niihau across the channel and speculated what life on an island protected from development, crowds and pavement must be like.

Niihau's single village, Puu-wai, is home to 120 residents fluent in Hawaiian. The village consists of a church, homes and a solar-powered K-12 school. No stores, restaurants, cars, cellphone service or crowds make it a true escape from the rest of the world.

Bought by ancestors of the current owners in 1864, Niihau was offered to them by a reluctant King Kamehameha V, who had urged them to buy swampy beach land on Oahu instead. Seeing no value in the Oahu property, the family bought Niihau for the equivalent of roughly \$10,000 today. The unappealing Oahu property would later become Waikiki. Environmentalist Keith Robinson is part-owner of the island and, other than his tour guests, allows only those invited by a resident to visit, hence the name the "Forbidden Island."

Measuring just 17 miles long, Niihau holds a surprising number of hidden treasures: Hawaii's first- and second-largest lakes; the state's best sunrise shell beach; several epic surf breaks, including one that is said to rival Jaws on Maui when it breaks at 40 feet; unique animals; reef shark breeding grounds; and, of course, Niihau's famous shells.

During an hour-long air tour of the island, we took in stunning views of the landscape along with close-up looks at several pods of dolphins, sheep and horses. The elusive tall-horned oryx, a species of antelope introduced by the owners, put on a brief show below in the tall grass.

These unique animals — hybrid sheep, wild eland aoudads also known as barbary sheep and wild boars — set the stage for the other Niihau tour: a hunting safari. In keeping with Robinson's environmental consciousness, hunting on Niihau began in the mid-1990s to control damage to the island's fragile environment from growing populations of non-native animals. Hunters of all ages are invited to spend a day testing their skills in free-chase hunting. Guns are provided and shipped ahead of time.

The island's single red dirt road, dubbed the "Niihau Highway," weaves through the lush vibrant green grass blanketing the island, the result of a wet winter, says our pilot. Niihau's usual arid environment is inhospitable to tropical flowers, which is why Niihauans use shells to make their famous lei.

After a quick aerial peek at Puu-wai, we touched down on a flat black lava rock landing pad on a northern beach. Nearby a curly-horned ram and a monk seal formed an odd couple sunbathing together on the white sand. A lone pavilion provided the only shade from here to the village, and

looking across the ocean to Kauai's west coast, I was finally on the inside looking out.

Once on land, guests have options. Visitors can explore as much as Niihau as possible by meandering along the beach for hours as I did, wandering through boating debris of buoys, netting and a seemingly endless rainbow of glass bottles. Or, guests can relax on the sand with views of Lehua island and explore the underwater world.

Between the old marine debris and thick layer of shells, Niihau is a beachcomber's dream. Abnormally large colorful cowrie, cone and puka shells, shiny opihi, pieces of sunrise shells and parts of coveted glass buoys decorate the pale sand. For dedicated shell hunters, the winter months are the best time for a Niihau visit, when large surf washes an abundance of treasures ashore.

Numerous tide pools provide calm places to swim while holding piles of shells within their walls, and the shell line remains mostly undisturbed while those on other Hawaiian islands disappear within hours of being formed. Instead of crowds of sunbathers to avoid, on Niihau you'll need to keep an eye out for monk seals relaxing everywhere.

After hours of searching for the unknown, it was time for snorkeling with a monk seal who stayed at arm's length from me for a half-hour. Basic snorkel gear is a must when visiting Niihau. The thriving underwater world offers a view of sea life that is becoming increasingly harder to find on other islands.

But the allure of Niihau isn't about finding ornate shells or surfing the perfect waves; it's about going back in time to an undeveloped island free of highways, big buildings, traffic and modern-day stressors. Niihau tours are sustainable tourism at its finest — residents are undisturbed, fishing is off-limits, the shell beaches used for lei collections aren't accessible and there's no development to accommodate visitors.

Spending a few hours on Niihau is an easy and fun adventure for out-of-state visitors and locals. The experience induces feelings of peace and solitude that remain long after the shores of Niihau are left behind.

### **(17) “Plan boosts Hawaii isle geothermal”**

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 10, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110\\_\\_Plan\\_boosts\\_Hawaii\\_isle\\_geothermal.html?id=178289801](http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110__Plan_boosts_Hawaii_isle_geothermal.html?id=178289801)]

By Alan Yonan Jr.

The electric utility on Hawaii island published Friday the first draft of a plan to add 50 megawatts of geothermal power to the island's electric grid.

Hawaii Electric Light Co. will seek public comment on the draft to help guide renewable energy developers as they prepare their bids to supply geothermal power to HELCO. A final draft of the

document is scheduled to be completed by January, and selection of the winning bidder or bidders is expected by July or August.

An existing 38-megawatt geothermal plant on Hawaii island already accounts for about 20 percent of the island's peak electrical load. An additional 50 megawatts would push the amount of geothermal generation to nearly 50 percent of peak load.

"This project combines our efforts to increase renewable resources on our island with a commitment to reduce costs for consumers," HELCO President Jay Ignaccio said.

HELCO customers pay among the highest electricity rates in the state.

HELCO plans to conduct a technical conference webi-nar next month to allow prospective bidders to ask questions and provide comments on the draft document, known as a request for proposals, or RFP.

The contracted price HELCO will pay developers for the geothermal energy will not be linked to the cost of oil, as is the case with many of the other renewable energy projects on Hawaii island.

"This is incredibly important for ratepayers on the Big Island," said Lt. Gov. Brian Schatz. "This will help stabilize prices. What people on the Big Island need is clean, affordable energy, and that's the purpose of this RFP."

One of the keys to making the plan work is engaging the community, he added. "We are working hard to have it done right, respecting the environment and the culture," Schatz said.

Bringing another 50 megawatts of geothermal power online will pave the way for the eventual retirement of fossil fuel-burning electrical generators on Hawaii island, he said.

More than 40 percent of the electricity consumed on Hawaii island is generated from renewable resources, the highest percentage of any island in the state. Besides geothermal, Hawaii island has hydroelectric, wind and distributed solar power generation.

## **(18) "A Brave New World: How Apps Are Changing Planning"**

4 September 2012 - 4:00pm

[<http://www.planetizen.com/node/58314>]

Author: Brittany Kubinski Jennifer Evans-Cowley

Mobile applications (apps) are gaining in popularity as tools for increasing participation in local governance and planning, and are opening up new possibilities for planners to tap into the wisdom of the crowd. Brittany Kubinski and Jennifer Evans-Cowley have surveyed a cross-section of planners to understand their app use habits, and have developed an extensive list of the most effective mobile apps for planners.

Mobile apps are paving the way for planners to interact in real time with the public and receive more feedback than had previously been imagined. They can be used to collect and share data with the public, and make information readily available for eager developers to enhance and build on. This era of open data and crowdsourcing is an exciting time for planners who are beginning to take advantage of the power of mobile apps to improve planning projects and help make communities more sustainable and efficient.

From July 11 to July 26, 2012 we set out to survey planners on their use of mobile apps in the planning profession to better understand how such tools are being adopted. We also asked planners what types of mobile apps they would like to see developed in the future, and what mobile apps they are currently working on developing.

We heard from a total of 108 planners from across the United States. The majority of respondents (55%) are located in the Midwest, and about 20% and 14% in the Northeast/Atlantic and Pacific regions, respectively. Most respondents work in the public sector and 42% have been working in the planning profession for 10-20 years. Of the planners surveyed, 96% either own a smartphone or plan to purchase one in the future. Planners who responded that they own a smartphone were asked about various types of apps that they might use and the frequency of their use. Results are shown in the matrix below.

From the survey we found the most commonly used apps by planners in their daily lives are social media apps, like Twitter and Facebook. Note-taking apps are also popular for daily use; and apps like Photoshop, PowerPoint and Prezi, that are used for productivity and for giving presentations, are typically used on a monthly basis.

In the survey we also sought to understand how planners are using smartphones and mobile apps at work. Seventy eight percent of those surveyed use their smartphone for work purposes, while 40 percent are using tablets at work.

One of the primary goals of our survey was to identify apps that planners are currently using to support their work. We asked planners whether or not their organization has created an app or discussed creating an app. 15 percent responded that their organization has or is creating an app, and 37 percent responded that their organization is discussing creating an app in the future. We asked planners to give specifics on the apps they are using for planning. The table below lists the apps planners reported using, along with a description of the app's purpose.

Apps Named

Accela 311

Description

Accela Mobile 311 is a native iPhone app that enables residents, visitors and other members of the public to take an active role in their community by requesting services from or reporting incidents to their local agency. The app ties directly into an agency's Accela Automation system to ensure that incoming information will be tracked and assigned to the appropriate departments, so that the item will be addressed in the most efficient and effective manner. Accela Mobile 311

is available directly from Accela, and is designed to enhance the public's interaction with their local agency for a range of issues including: service requests, requests for information, reporting on the condition of public works assets, code enforcement cases, and more.

Accela Analytics is an app that lets government professionals easily access and analyze the Accela automation enterprise data behind their operations. The app's dashboard highlights trends and activity, such as permits, licenses, code enforcement cases and more. Preparing for a big meeting? Graphs display activity over various time periods. Planning future resources? Use charts and maps to understand workloads, permit volumes and staff deployments. You can even create watch lists to track specific records. Accela Analytics is the right tool for today's smart government executive.

American City & County analyzes and concisely explains important issues facing cities, counties and states. Get the latest information on government trends, policy alternatives, best practices, case studies and a broad scope of local and state government news. In this app, users can access up-to-the-minute news on everything from streamlining government operations with the latest technology to repairing crumbling infrastructure. Topics include state and local government policy, politics, management, finance, environment, economic development and technology – all the vital information government officials need to deliver public services in the most cost-efficient and effective manner.

The American Planning Association app allows users to keep up with the world of planning through daily planning news. Users can view their customized schedules for the National Planning Conference and check open positions for jobs listed online. Users can search the APA member directory for friends and colleagues and track and record AICP CM eligible educational events in a personal log of earned CM credits.

With ArcGIS you can tap on the map or use your current location to discover information about what you see. You can query the map, search and find interesting information, measure distances and areas of interest and share maps with others.

Dropbox is a free service that lets you bring all your photos, docs, and videos anywhere. Any file you save to your Dropbox is accessible from all your computers, iPhone, iPad and even the Dropbox website.

ES File Explorer is an app for Android that allows users to manage their files and apps, compress and decompress ZIP files, view different file formats and access their home PC via WIFI.

ESRI Business Analyst provides key demographic and market facts about any location in the U.S. ESRI BAO provides information about what types of people live in an area, how an area compares to another area and if it is a good fit for business professionals looking to evaluate a site.

Evernote is an easy-to-use, free app that helps you remember everything across all of the devices you use. Stay organized, save your ideas and improve productivity. Evernote lets you take notes, capture photos, create to-do lists, record voice reminders--and makes these notes completely

searchable, whether you are at home, at work, or on the go.

The FEMA app contains preparedness information for different types of disasters and an interactive checklist for emergency kits, a section to plan emergency meeting locations, information on how to stay safe and recover after a disaster and a map with FEMA disaster recovery center locations.

GoodReader is a PDF reader with advanced reading and annotating capabilities.

With GoogleEarth you can view all of the same 3D imagery, terrain and buildings available in the desktop version, you can search for cities, places and businesses around the world with Google local search, view layers of geographic information including roads, borders, Panoramio photos and more.

Google maps allows you to search for local businesses and get driving, transit or walking directions.

The LinkedIn app gives users on-the-go access to their professional network. Users can find and connect to other professionals, get the latest updates and share their status directly from their mobile device.

Loopnet is a collection of apps that provide real estate information for commercial and residential properties. With Loopnet users can search real estate listings,

Note Everything is an app where users can create text, voice and paint notes. The notes can be organized into folders and Android users can create shortcuts to notes on a home page, send notes and more.

Noteshelf allows users to jot down notes directly on their iPad with effortlessly flowing handwriting and different books to organize notes.

Adobe Photoshop Express allows users to edit photos on the go with a variety of one-touch effects and artistic filters.

Readers can take Planetizen's daily news summaries, job listings, and feature stories wherever they are. Interchange, Planetizen's blog featuring an exchange of ideas from prominent thinkers and practitioners in the field, can also be read from the App.

The Prezi viewer allows users the view and present their Prezis anywhere. Users can revise and adjust presentations on the go.

There are currently over 1,300 markers located across the state that recognize Ohio's cultural history. The Ohio Historical Markers identify, commemorate and honor the important people, places and events that have contributed to the state's rich history. The Ohio Historical Markers Program, administered by the Ohio Historical Society, is a vital educational tool, informing residents and visitors about significant aspects of Ohio's past.

Sitewise provides you with your location's demographics, giving you the information you need to site a use and understand the neighborhood. Sitewise creates a demographic report that describes the people around your current location, for a circular drive-time or neighborhood area with population by age, educational attainment, households, children, transportation to work, employment household income and housing owned versus rented.

Tasks apps allow users to be productive, remember their tasks and accomplish their goals from their mobile device.

The Twitter app provides instant updates from friends, industry experts, celebrities and more. Users can search for breaking news, trending topics and browse interests and suggested users.

Walkscore calculates the walkability of any location and shows you a map of nearby restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores, etc. Walkscore also helps users find apartments and rentals and lets users search by commute time or whether a location is near public transit.

With Zoner users can calculate the maximum buildable floor area for their property in seconds. Users just enter the zoning values and Zoner calculates the City zoning code.

We also asked organizations if they are currently developing apps. One respondent mentioned that they are working on app for mapping broadly, while another is working on developing an app that will allow for the use of GIS mapping to support economic development.

Mobile apps have the potential to enhance planning efforts and make it easier for planners to communicate with the public, share ideas, and engage. Not only is it necessary for planners to be knowledgeable of what apps are currently available and how they can be used, but it is also advantageous for developers to know what planners need and what they would like to see in the future. Planners know best what they need in a mobile app, and developers can take a cue from this.

We heard responses from planners in the survey that they would like mobile apps to provide census data, locations of healthy food stores, real time traffic monitoring, and APA awarded site locations. They also want to use apps to collect field data, engage with the public, and disseminate information.

The future of mobile apps is bright. Perhaps soon we will see some of these ideas become a reality, but for now planners can take advantage of a number of interesting mobile apps that can support their planning work.

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## (19) "Plans for natatorium favor creation of a beach"

StarAdvertiser.com *POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 21, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/hawaii/news/20121221\\_\\_Plans\\_for\\_natatorium\\_favor\\_creation\\_of\\_a\\_beach\\_.html?id=1](http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/hawaii/news/20121221__Plans_for_natatorium_favor_creation_of_a_beach_.html?id=1)]

By Gordon Y.K. Pang / B.J. Reyes



Gov. Neil Abercrombie is including \$2 million in his construction budget for improvements to the Waikiki War Memorial Natatorium, but indicated Thursday he may be rethinking the idea of refurbishing it as a beach volleyball venue.

"What the \$2 million represents ... is a marker," Abercrombie said at a news conference on the state budget.

"We know we're going to have to spend some money, regardless of what happens," he said. "Right now it looks as if removal of the pool itself is a likely outcome. So we'll try to come to a determination as quickly as we can and then work with the city and the mayor to come to a mutual agreement on what to do, not just about the pool and everything, but the whole area, and then do it."

Abercrombie said he intends to speak to Mayor-elect Kirk Caldwell, who takes office Jan. 2, as well as the City Council to come up with a game plan to "rehabilitate the area."

Caldwell said in a statement, "I look forward to working with Gov. Abercrombie and the City Council to address the deteriorating conditions of the Natatorium, yet respecting those who served during World War I."

The natatorium was built as a monument to World War I veterans. It opened in 1927 but has been closed since 1979.

"The natatorium simply can't go on the way it is," Abercrombie said, referring to its dilapidated condition. "It's almost immoral."

In recent months the governor had indicated a preference for turning the grounds into a beach volleyball facility. On Thursday he reiterated that preference but said such a plan may not be possible.

"The engineering alone, because of the soil, in the water right there, it may prove impossible," he said.

Instead, he said, the ultimate solution "will probably end up with an attempt to create a beach, if the ocean cooperates."

As for reconstructing the pool, "it probably would be so prohibitive as to be impossible to achieve," he said, adding that it will be removed "in all likelihood."

Any money appropriated would go toward "a down payment on whatever needs to be done in order to resolve the situation once and for all."

Abercrombie's comments were received happily by Jim Bickerton, an attorney for the Kai-mana Beach Coalition, which has fought for creation of a public beach instead of a full restoration of the pool.

## **(20) "Sick Kauai coral tied to puffers"**

StarAdvertiser.com *LAST UPDATED: 10:34 a.m. HST, Nov 28, 2012*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121128\\_ILL\\_Kauai\\_coral\\_tied\\_to\\_puffers.html?id=181136061](http://www.staradvertiser.com/newspremium/20121128_ILL_Kauai_coral_tied_to_puffers.html?id=181136061)]

Lesions will be collected from blowfish in an effort to help sick Garden Isle reefs By Rosemarie Bernardo

Marine experts will collect samples off Kauai's North Shore today to determine whether one of the state's major coral disease outbreaks in recent years is related to lesions being found on Hawaiian puffer fish.

Thierry Work, wildlife specialist for the National Wildlife Health Center of the U.S. Geological Survey's Hono-lulu field office, and Greta Aeby, assistant researcher at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology of the University of Hawaii, will collect samples at Anini, Kauai, from the Hawaiian white-spotted toby fish, or *Canthigaster jactator*.

It will be their second trip to Anini in recent months to evaluate the rate of the quick-spreading cyanobacterial disease that is killing coral off Anini, Makua and Hana-lei on Kauai's North Shore.

Experts say this is the only case of cyanobacterial disease found in Hawaii and the fourth major

coral disease outbreak in the Hawaiian Islands in the past five years. Outbreaks of a coral bacterial infection occurred at Maui in 2009 and at Kaneohe Bay in 2010 and 2011.

Aeby said the state of Hawaii's coral reefs is heading in the direction of the coral reefs in the Florida Keys, where 98 percent of the coral is dead.

It takes about 10 to 15 years for coral to grow.

Work said the bacteria at Kauai's North Shore is eating coral tissue at a fast rate. There's something unique there that's causing it to spread, he added. He and Aeby are trying to find out what is driving the disease's growth. "It's going to be a complicated problem to resolve. It's not going to be easy," Work said.

Of the fast-spreading coral disease on Kauai's North Shore, Aeby said, "It's something to worry about, for sure."

The team's research was prompted by images of the diseased coral that were sent to Work and Aeby this year by marine videographer Terry Lilley of Hana-lei. Lilley could not be reached for comment.

In October, Work and Aeby marked and photographed 15 sites of dying coral at Anini. Marine epoxy, a claylike substance, was applied on the bacteria — which shows up as a thin black band on the coral — to slow its progress, similar to a firebreak. The team will take new photos today to evaluate the rate of coral tissue loss and see whether the epoxy treatment was effective.

Work said they discovered skin discoloration on the toby fish during their initial visit to Anini while they were documenting diseased coral. Parts of their skin have turned black, an abnormality as their normal skin color is olive green or brown with small polka dots, he said. Aeby said the dark spots indicate rotting skin.

Laboratory tests will be conducted on fish samples to help determine whether the coral disease outbreak is affecting marine life.

## **(21) Solar photovoltaic tax credit curtailed**

*POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 10, 2012 StarAdvertiser.com*

[\[http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110\\_\\_Solar\\_photovoltaic\\_tax\\_credit\\_curtailed.html?id=178289901\]](http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110__Solar_photovoltaic_tax_credit_curtailed.html?id=178289901)

By Alan Yonan Jr. □ Hawaii News Now - KGMB and KHNL

The state Department of Taxation issued new rules Friday that will effectively limit the ability of homeowners to claim multiple tax credits for the installation of solar photovoltaic systems.

The "temporary administrative rules" include language defining a photovoltaic system by its output capacity in an attempt to clarify what constitutes an eligible PV system for tax purposes,

department officials said. The rules will be effective for PV systems put in place starting Jan. 1.

Current law allows homeowners to claim an income tax credit of 35 percent for PV systems with a cap of \$5,000 per system. However, because the way solar technology has evolved and tax guidance has been interpreted, many homeowners have installed multiple PV systems on their properties, claiming a state credit for each system and effectively eluding the cap.

Under the new rules, PV systems of any size still will be eligible for the 35 percent credit. But for purposes of the cap, a homeowner will be allowed one credit for each five kilowatts of PV-generating capacity. For example, the tax credit for a home with a five-kilowatt PV system would be capped at \$5,000. The credit for a home with two five-kilowatt systems would be capped at \$10,000.

The Tax Department in 2010 issued guidance on the matter to taxpayers in response to concerns that some PV system owners were having their projects divided into multiple systems to circumvent the cap. The department tried to address the issue by issuing several tax information releases (TIRs) that stated the number of PV systems on a property was determined by the number of independent connections to the main utility meter or circuit breaker.

Despite the guidance, Tax Department officials continued to receive calls and complaints from taxpayers and tax accountants saying the rules were still confusing, according to Fred Pablo, department director.

"The TIRs 2010 didn't do the job," Pablo said. "They allowed an electrical engineer to sign off on matters that could be interpreted as tax avoidance. You should not have an electrical engineer determine what is eligible for a tax credit," he said. "You had one PV installer saying a project was three systems and another saying it was one system. There was no consistency."

Solar industry executives say the new rules will prevent many homeowners from receiving full credit for multiple systems that are installed for valid engineering reasons or because of physical site limitations.

"The rules will result in an average reduction of 50 percent in available credits," said Leslie Cole-Brooks, executive director of the Hawaii Solar Energy Association. "This doesn't help move us toward our clean energy goals. It's a real loss for the homeowner. PV systems will be more expensive by thousands of dollars. That's a big loss right there," she said.

The Blue Planet Foundation, a Hono-lulu-based clean energy advocate, said the rules will have a negative impact on the state's effort to reduce its dependence on petroleum.

"Until now, solar energy installations have been a remarkable bright spot in Hawaii's economy," foundation Executive Director Jeff Miku-lina said in a prepared statement.

"The Blue Planet Foundation believes that the Department of Taxation's proposed rule changes significantly reduce the ability for residents to participate in the benefits of solar energy. The new rules will effectively slash the tax credit in half for the average taxpayer who now chooses to install solar. Homeowners and renters that have yet to adopt solar will have a reduced

incentive to take control of their fossil fuel-based energy bills."

The new rules also set capacity thresholds for multifamily residential properties and commercial properties. For multifamily properties, each system for which a credit is claimed must have an output capacity of at least 360 watts per unit per system. Commercial systems must have an output capacity of at least 1,000 kilowatts for each credit claimed.

The PV credits are part of the state's broader renewable energy tax credit program conceived as an incentive to reduce Hawaii's dependence on fossil fuel. The credits started coming under scrutiny in recent years as the popularity of PV systems resulted in the loss of more tax revenue than expected.

State lawmakers last session considered several bills that would have curtailed the solar tax credit, but they were unable to reach a compromise before the session ended. Lawmakers will likely revisit the issue next year.

## **(22) "Waikiki Landing project advances"**

*POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 10, 2012 StarAdvertiser.com*

[[http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110\\_Waikiki\\_Landing\\_project\\_advances.html?id=178289771](http://www.staradvertiser.com/businesspremium/20121110_Waikiki_Landing_project_advances.html?id=178289771)]

The state's approval of an expanded plan means construction could start next year By Andrew Gomes

A revised plan to redevelop part of the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor in Waikiki was approved by a state board Friday, bringing the \$20 million project closer to fruition three years after it was proposed.

The project known as Waikiki Landing would add two wedding chapels, restaurants, retail stores, office space, a boat repair facility and fuel dock to land largely just Ewa of the Hawaii Prince Hotel.

Japanese-based developer Honey Bee USA Inc. was selected by the state Department of Land and Natural Resources in 2009 to develop the property a little more than an acre in size after the agency issued a request for proposals in 2008.

Honey Bee significantly expanded a previously approved plan and also asked that the Board of Land and Natural Resources exempt it from zoning rules and a special management area use permit.

On Friday the board approved the revised project, exemptions and a land lease.

Keith Kiuchi, a local attorney representing Honey Bee, said the developer aims to begin construction in January and finish in August.

"We're really pleased that it's moving forward," he said. "I think this is going to be a tremendous project for the state. This is the entrance to Waikiki, and it really needs something."

Waikiki Landing represents a rehabilitation plan for a vacant area that was once home to a convenience store, fuel dock and former Ala Wai Marine Ltd. boat repair facility.

Some Ala Wai boaters have criticized the project, arguing that wedding chapels aren't compatible with harbor facilities on state land.

"To be blunt: Wedding chapels are neither needed or wanted here," Les Parsons, a harbor tenant, wrote in a letter commenting on Honey Bee's environmental assessment in 2010. "A truly competent and responsible state boating regulatory agency would never have approved such a nonsensical scheme as has been proffered by a foreign-owned developer."

Honey Bee has said that the wedding chapels and commercial space are needed to subsidize the boat repair and fuel dock operations. "A marine supply store does not have the sufficient 'critical mass' to be profitable, as demonstrated by the failure of Ala Wai Marine," the company said in a response to criticism in its environmental assessment.

DLNR solicited private development as a way to upgrade the area at little state expense and to generate revenue the agency can use for much-needed repairs and maintenance. Honey Bee's lease would generate a minimum of roughly \$30 million for the state over the first 30 years of a 65-year lease.

Honey Bee is headed by Hide-aki Shi-ma-kura, a Kyoto-based developer who races yachts in Hawaii and Japan. The company initially proposed a smaller project costing about \$10 million but later added more space for boat repairs and retailing.

The present plan includes a four-story centerpiece "Boatyard Building" fronting Ala Moana featuring shops, restaurants and office space.

A two-story wharf building will run parallel to the Ala Wai channel and house restaurants.

One wedding chapel will occupy a two-story structure dubbed the "Canoe House."

A second two-story wedding chapel will be in a building designed to look like a ship extending into the harbor along with finger piers and the fuel dock. This building also will include a convenience store and a training facility for the U.S. national flatwater kayak team.

The boat repair yard, 51 parking stalls and two public restrooms (one with showers) are also included in the project.

Initially, DLNR expected Honey Bee to obtain a zoning variance and special management area permit. But the Legislature last year gave the agency's board the power to exempt improvement projects at its harbors from zoning and the special permit.

The city Department of Planning and Permitting acknowledged the exemption

authority. □ DLNR said the uses proposed by Honey Bee are consistent with uses and zoning on adjacent private property.

Bob Finely , chairman of the Waikiki Neighborhood Board, said the revised plans presented at a board meeting in July received generally favorable responses from community members.

Finley said the project will cure what has been a lack of quality amenities at the state's largest recreational harbor. "The harbor needs everything it can get," he said.