



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 14, 2020

PARTICIPATE IN “IMAGINE A DAY WITHOUT WATER” NEXT WEEK

(Honolulu) - Imagine a Day Without Water (Oct. 21) is a day to pause and reflect on the many ways that water and water systems impact our lives and communities, and to commit to ensuring a sustainable water future for generations to come. This year, our country faced an enormous public health crisis from the coronavirus pandemic. This crisis demonstrated the critical role that water, and wastewater systems play in our communities, protecting public health, safeguarding the environment, and making a healthy economy possible.

Every day, many people in Hawai'i don't give a second thought about where their drinking water comes from or how it is delivered to the kitchen faucet, garden hose or washing machine. Safe, clean drinking water is so important in our lives, but many of us take this for granted. “Imagine a day without water from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed,” DLNR Chairperson Suzanne Case said, “no water to brush your teeth or take a shower. No water to brew your morning cup of coffee. No water at work to wash your hands or flush the toilet – that would be an inconvenient day!”

A day without water is also a public health and safety crisis. Without water for cleaning, washing, and sanitizing – health care workers, first responders, and front-line workers would not be able to effectively do their jobs. Much of Hawai'i's water infrastructure is aging and in need of repair or replacement. Sea level rise is also threatening and compromising existing infrastructure. Without investment, water and wastewater systems will continue to deteriorate, leading to serious consequences for public health and the economy.

While water infrastructure is important, protecting Hawai'i's only source of freshwater is just as important. Maintaining healthy native forests and watersheds and ensuring the sustainability of our aquifers and streams will enable our public water systems to continue to provide life giving water to our residents across the State. “We must make

sure that we protect our streams and ground water so that future generations may enjoy and benefit from this most precious of natural resources,” explained Commission on Water Resource Management Deputy, Kaleo Manuel, “ola i ka wai, water is life.”

“Our native forests and healthy watersheds not only ensure a robust and resilient water supply, but they also provide critical habitat to endemic species, promote biological diversity, and offer beautiful recreational space,” continued Case. “That’s why we protect and nurture our forested watersheds.” Imagine a Day Without Water is an opportunity to share why water is important to you, your business, your community. Please take a few moments to share your thoughts on why you value and cherish water in your lives with a loved one, friend, or associate.

Please tune in to a Facebook Live One Water Forum on October 21, 2020 at 12:00 noon. Panelists from State and County government will talk about how all water is connected in Hawai’i and what this means for managing our precious water resources into the future. Panelists will answer questions from the public:

<https://www.facebook.com/HawaiiDLNR/>

For more information on Imagine a Day Without Water please visit:

<https://imagineadaywithoutwater.org/>.

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RESOURCES

(Images/video courtesy: DLNR)

HD video: Forests For Life: The Water Experts <https://vimeo.com/309576882>

Photographs-Forests for Life: The Water Experts:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/tape6f92z77z0kc/AADEZC_F2HHobncoeF6GZx9Za?dl=0

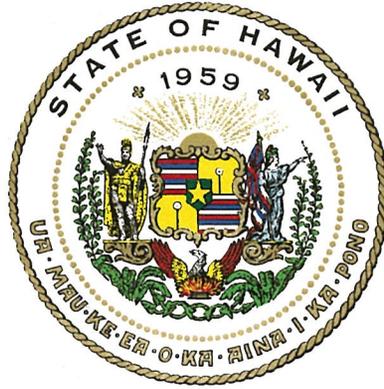
Attached: Governor David Y. Ige’s Proclamation

Attached photo: Credit Shibby Stylee

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Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Islands, the most isolated population center on earth, are solely reliant on precipitation to meet drinking water and all other freshwater needs; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources works to protect Hawai'i's precious water resources and forested watersheds; and

WHEREAS, access to safe drinking water and responsible, sustainable water management are critical to public and environmental health in our communities and imperative to a recovering and growing economy throughout the State of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Health works with public water systems to ensure that safe drinking water is delivered reliably to residents and that wastewater is disposed of properly to protect public health and the environment; and

WHEREAS, over 130 regulated public water systems deliver clean and reliable drinking water to nearly 100 percent of residents, businesses, and industries across the State of Hawai'i, amounting to approximately 220 million gallons of water each day; and

WHEREAS, Hawai'i is facing an uncertain climate future, and the best available information indicates Hawai'i will experience a drier climate that threatens our natural water supplies and existing water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, addressing the critical water infrastructure needs in our urban and rural communities has and will continue to be a fundamental and foremost need in our state and counties; and

WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu, County of Maui, and County of Kaua'i have joined in this year's campaign to promote the value and importance of water and wastewater treatment, the associated infrastructure, and our water-gathering native forests;

THEREFORE I, DAVID Y. IGE, Governor of the **State of Hawai'i**, do hereby proclaim October 21, 2020 as the day for residents of the State of Hawai'i to

"IMAGINE A DAY WITHOUT WATER"

and ask them to join me in recognizing the importance of protecting our fresh water—the precious lifeblood of our islands—and the need for maintaining the critical infrastructure that allow our residents to enjoy reliable and clean water service at the turn of the tap.

Done at the State Capitol in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this twenty-fifth day of September 2020.


DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i