

A Precious Resource

Water... the lifeline of our islands. It is our most precious resource here in Hawai'i. Water is the driving force of our environment, our economy, and our Hawaiian culture. From our lush rainforests mauka to our vibrant coral reefs makai, water is our lifeline, our connection from the mountains to the ocean, sustaining all life in between.

Hawai'i's surface water is a precious resource that must be protected and carefully managed. Streams provide habitat for fish and wildlife; maintain wetland and estuary ecosystems; contribute to the health of nearshore ocean waters; offer opportunities for recreation and scenic enjoyment; and supply water for drinking, aquaculture, and diversified agriculture.

Streams also play an important role in Hawaiian culture. Native 'o'opu (gobies), hīhīwai (snails), and 'ōpae (prawns) are gathered in streams, while cool, running water is vital to the cultivation of healthy taro.

Help protect Hawai'i's streams and preserve this precious resource for future generations.

Wetland taro, O'ahu.



1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 227, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph: (808) 587-0214 Fax: (808) 587-0219
Toll free from neighboring islands: (ext. is 70214)
Kauai'i 274-3141 ext. Hawaii 974-4000 ext.
Maui 984-2400 ext. Molokai/Lāna'i 1-800-468-4644 ext.
E-mail: dlnr.cwrm@hawaii.gov

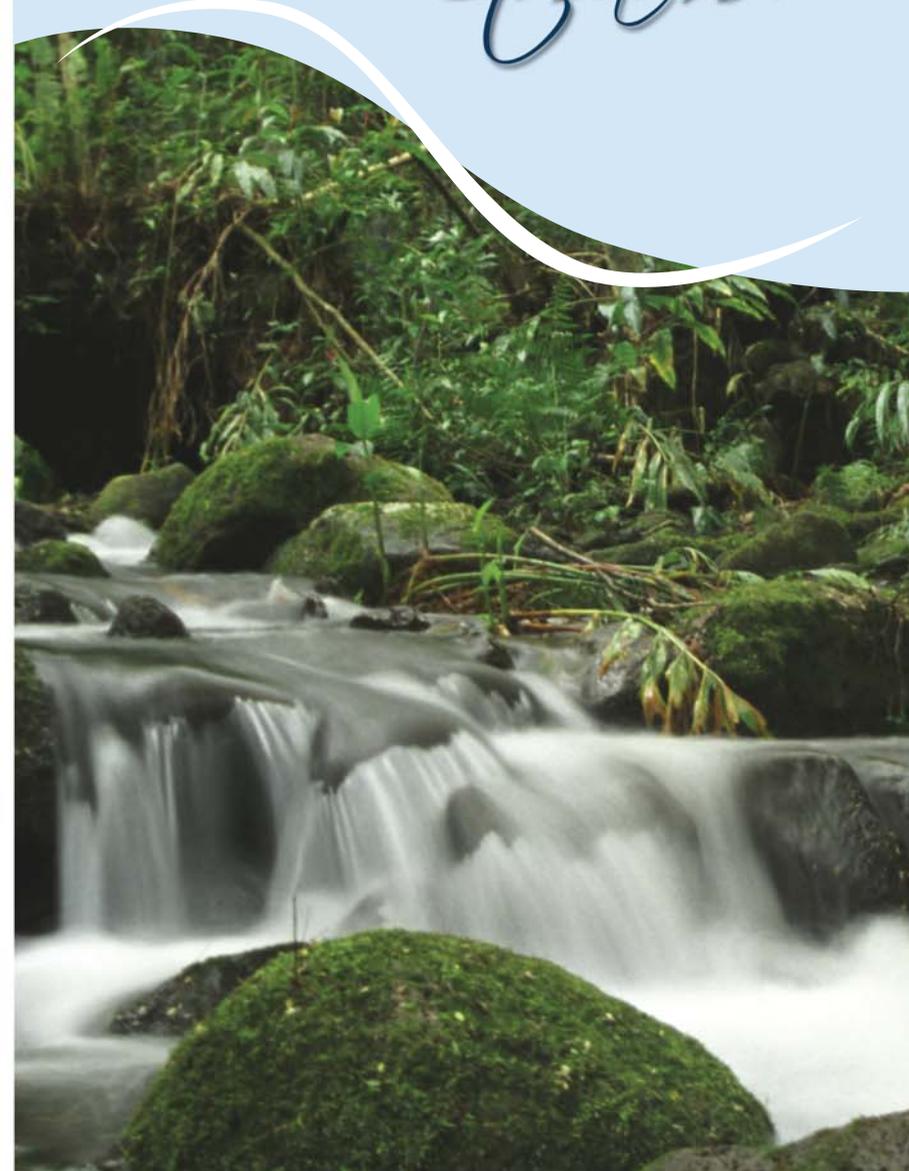
Visit us on the Internet at <http://www.hawaii.gov/dlnr/cwrm>.
Go directly to the Stream Protection and Management Branch
website at <http://www.hawaiistreams.com>.



The State of Hawai'i Commission on Water Resource Management is administratively attached to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. For more information about DLNR and what you can do to help protect Hawai'i's natural resources, contact the Public Information Office at (808) 587-0320, or visit the DLNR website at <http://www.hawaii.gov/dlnr/>.

PROTECT

Hawai'i's Streams



Stream Protection in Hawai'i

The Commission on Water Resource Management's Stream Protection and Management (SPAM) Branch is responsible for protecting stream channels from alteration whenever practicable and for managing the sharing of surface water resources. The SPAM Branch accomplishes these objectives through a regulatory permitting system.

Stream Channel Alteration Permit

A Stream Channel Alteration Permit (SCAP) is required for any temporary or permanent activity within the stream bed or banks that may:

- ◆ obstruct, diminish, destroy, modify, or relocate a stream channel;
- ◆ change the direction of the flow of water in a stream channel; or
- ◆ remove any material or structure from a stream channel.

The State Water Code defines a stream as "any river, creek, slough, or natural water course that usually flows in a defined bed or channel." Routine streambed and drainageway maintenance activities and the repair of existing facilities are exempt from SCAP requirements.



Stream channel alteration in Waimalu Stream, O'ahu.



Stream channel alteration in Mānoa Stream, O'ahu.

Stream Diversion Works Permit

A Stream Diversion Works Permit (SDWP) is required for the removal of water from a stream into a channel, ditch, tunnel, pipeline, or other conduit for offstream purposes including, but not limited to, domestic, agricultural, and industrial uses. Construction of a new stream diversion structure or alteration of an existing structure requires an SDWP. Routine maintenance activities are exempt from SDWP requirements.

Request for Determination

If uncertain whether or not a project will require a SCAP or SDWP, it is best to consult the Commission staff and submit a Request for Determination (RFD).

The Commission staff requests that an RFD Form be completed to ensure that staff has adequate information to make a timely and accurate determination on the impacts of the potential project.

Surface Water Use Permits

Designated surface water management areas are subject to special rules to protect the water resources within given hydrologic units. The Commission has administrative control over the withdrawals and diversions of surface water within management areas.

Upon designation of a surface water management area, all surface water users therein are required to obtain a Surface Water Use Permit (SWUP) from the Commission.



Ditch intake on Wailuaiki Stream, Maui.



O'opu nākea, a fresh water fish native to Hawai'i.

In March 2008, the region known as Nā Wai 'Ehā, or "Four Great Waters", comprising Waihe'e River and Waiehu, 'Īao, and Waikapū Streams in central Maui, was the first surface water management area to be designated in Hawai'i.

Instream Flow Standards

Instream flow standards (IFS) are defined as a "quantity or flow of water or depth of water which is required to be present at a specific location in a stream system at certain specified times of the year to protect fishery, wildlife, recreational, aesthetic, scenic, and other beneficial instream uses." Interim IFS have been established statewide, most of which are status

quo based upon the date of adoption. Commission staff are currently working to establish measurable interim IFS statewide.

Applicants for a Stream Diversion Works Permit will likely need to file a Petition to Amend the Interim Instream Flow Standard. It is best to consult with Commission staff to determine if a petition will be required to accompany any SDWP application.

Visit the Commission Website

The forms described here can be downloaded from the Commission website at <http://www.hawaii.gov/dlnr/cwrm>.

In addition, you will find information on the various other county, state, and federal agencies that play a role in helping to protect Hawai'i's streams.

