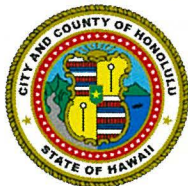


**DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11TH FLOOR
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
Phone: (808) 768-8480 • Fax: (808) 768-4567
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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



HAKU MILLES, P.E.
DIRECTOR DESIGNATE

BRYAN GALLAGHER, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Ms. Mary Alice Evans, OPSD Director
State of Hawaii
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Environmental Review Program
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 702
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Preparation Notice (EISPN)
For the Proposed Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project;
Island of Oahu, Honolulu District;
Multiple Tax Map Keys (TMK) in Zone 2,
Sections 3-4 and Sections 6-9**

Dear Ms. Evans:

Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343, the City and County of Honolulu has determined that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is required for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project, located in the Honolulu District of the Island of Oahu (multiple tax map keys [TMKs] within Zone 2, Sections 3-4 and Sections 6-9. With this letter, the City and County of Honolulu hereby transmits a Supplemental EIS Preparation Notice (EISPN) for the project.

We request the EISPN be published in the next available issue of *The Environmental Notice*, thereby initiating a thirty-day public comment period during which the public may submit comments to the City and County of Honolulu.

If there are any questions, please contact me at 808-768-8480.

Sincerely,


Bryan Gallagher
Haku Milles, P.E., LEED AP
Acting Director

From: webmaster@hawaii.gov
To: [DBEDT OPSD Environmental Review Program](#)
Subject: New online submission for The Environmental Notice
Date: Friday, March 24, 2023 5:13:51 PM

Action Name

Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project

Type of Document/Determination

Environmental impact statement preparation notice (EISPN)

HRS §343-5(a) Trigger(s)

- (1) Propose the use of state or county lands or the use of state or county funds
- (5) Propose any use within the Waikīkī area of O‘ahu

Judicial district

Honolulu, O‘ahu

Tax Map Key(s) (TMK(s))

Various TMKs in Zone 2, Sections 3-4 and Sections 6-9

Action type

Agency

Other required permits and approvals

National Environmental / Hawaii Policy Act (NEPA/HEPA) compliance; Clean Water Act §404 compliance; Department of Health §401 Water Quality Certification; National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit; Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §343 compliance; HRS §6E Historic Preservation review; HAR 11-200, 13-275; National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) §106 compliance; Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) compliance; Conservation District Use Permit, Stream Channel Alteration Permit; Special Management Area (SMA) permit; Waikiki Special District permit; Community Noise Permit; Grading and Building Permits; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) compliance; Request for Use of State Lands

Proposing/determining agency

City and County of Honolulu - Department of Design and Construction

Agency contact name

Haku Milles

Agency contact email (for info about the action)

Dominic.Milles@Honolulu.gov

Email address or URL for receiving comments

alawai@honolulu.gov

Agency contact phone

(808) 768-8480

Agency address

650 South King St, 11th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
United States
[Map It](#)

Public Scoping Meeting information

<https://www.honolulu.gov/alawai/contact.html> online

Accepting authority

Mayor - City and County of Honolulu

Accepting authority contact name

Rick Blangiardi

Accepting authority contact email or URL

alawai@honolulu.gov

Accepting authority contact phone

(808) 768-4141

Accepting authority address

530 South King St. Rm 300
Honolulu, HI 96813
United States
[Map It](#)

Was this submittal prepared by a consultant?

No

Action summary

The City and County of Honolulu and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are preparing a General Reevaluation Report / Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (GRR/SEIS) to reevaluate the effects potential rainfall and flood events may have on the Ala Wai Watershed on Oahu, Hawaii. This project includes re-evaluations of ways to improve public health and safety, and opportunities that can reduce economic damages.

The original Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study was completed in 2017 and resulted in a recommendation that was subsequently authorized for construction under Section 1401 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (Authorized Project). The purpose of the GRR/SEIS is to reevaluate the Authorized Project and either confirm original recommendations or provide new or modified Authorized Project recommendations.

Attached documents (signed agency letter & EA/EIS)

- [Draft-EISPN_2023-03-24.pdf](#)
- [EISPN-Submittal-Letter_15MAR20231.PDF](#)

Action location map

- [Action-Location-Map1.zip](#)

Authorized individual

Haku Milles

Authorization

- The above named authorized individual hereby certifies that he/she has the authority to make this submission.

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Preparation Notice (EISPN)

Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project

Honolulu, Hawaii

This document has been prepared pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343 and Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) Title 11 Chapter 200

Submitted by:

City and County of Honolulu
Department of Design and Construction

Prepared by:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Pittsburgh District

March 2023

Project Summary

Project Name	Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project
Study Authority	Section 209 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (Public Law 87-874)
Project Sponsors	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers City and County of Honolulu, Department of Design and Construction
Actions Triggering Environmental Review Under HRS Chapter 343	Use of State and/or County lands or funds; Use within the Waikiki area of Oahu
Type of Document	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Preparation Notice (EISPN)
Proposing Agency ¹	City and County of Honolulu, Department of Design and Construction
Accepting Authority	Mayor – City and County of Honolulu
Proposed Action	Implementation of various flood reduction measures within the Ala Wai watershed
Tax Map Key	Various TMKs in Zone 2, Sections 3-4 and Sections 6-9
Project Summary	<p>The City and County of Honolulu and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are conducting a General Reevaluation Report/Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (GRR/SEIS) to evaluate the opportunities to reduce the risk to life, safety, and economic damages from flooding throughout the Ala Wai Watershed in Oahu, Hawaii. The Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project was authorized under Section 209 of the Flood Control Act of 1962. The study was completed in 2017 and resulted in a recommendation that was subsequently authorized for construction under Section 1401 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (Authorized Project). The purpose of the GRR/SEIS is to reevaluate the Authorized Project and either confirm the Authorized Project or make a new recommendation that will include modifications to the Authorized Project.</p> <p>The objective of the project is to reduce riverine flood hazards to property and life safety in the Ala Wai watershed. In response to identified flood-related problems and opportunities, a variety of measures were identified. These measures were combined into a range of alternatives, which are currently being evaluated through an iterative screening and reformulation process, which will result in the identification of a Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP). In addition to the No Action alternative, other potential alternatives that are being evaluated for their reduction in flood damages include a combination of the following components: Makiki District Park</p>

	<p>detention basin, Manoa Valley District Park detention basin, Ala Wai Golf Course detention basin, Kaimuki High School berm/floodwall, Kanaha floodwall, Woodlawn Drive floodwall, Koali Road floodwall, and Ala Wai Canal floodwall. Given the potential public controversy surrounding the project, it has been determined that a Supplemental EIS will be required. The Supplemental EIS will describe the Tentatively Selected Plan (proposed action) and the range of reasonable alternatives, and will address the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the human, natural, and cultural environment; mitigation measures that avoid or minimize the potential adverse effects will also be identified. Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343, a Supplemental EIS Preparation Notice (EISPN) has been prepared to inform interested parties of the project, and to seek input on issues or resources of concern that should be addressed in the Supplemental EIS.</p>
Determination	<p>Given the potential public controversy surrounding the project, it has been determined that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required. Pursuant to HRS §343-5, it has been determined at the outset that a Supplemental EIS is required for the project. The Supplemental EIS will also jointly serve to comply with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).</p>
Anticipated Permit Requirements	<p>Clean Water Act §404 compliance; National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance; Endangered Species Act (ESA) §7 compliance; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) compliance; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Act compliance; Marine Mammal Protection Act compliance; Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) compliance; National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) §106 compliance; Request for Use of State Lands; Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §343 compliance; Department of Health §401 Water Quality Certification; National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit; Stream Channel Alteration Permit; HRS §6E Historic Preservation review; Special Management Area (SMA) permit; Waikiki Special District permit; Community Noise Permit; Grading and Building Permits.</p>

Notes:

¹ City and County of Honolulu (Department of Design and Construction) is the proposing agency for the purposes of compliance with HRS Chapter 343.

This Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Preparation Notice (EISPN) has been prepared in accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343 and Title 11, Chapter 200 of the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR). Act 172, enacted by the Governor on June 27, 2012, allows an agency to determine that an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required, thereby choosing to not prepare an environmental assessment (EA) and instead proceeding directly to preparation of an EIS, beginning with an EIS Preparation Notice (EISPN) as provided by the rules. HAR 11-200-11.2 states that if the proposing agency determined that a proposed action may have a significant effect, it shall issue a notice of determination, which shall be an EISPN; the notice of determination shall indicate in a concise manner: (1) identification of applicant or proposing agency; (2) identification of accepting authority; (3) brief description of proposed action; (4) determination; (5) reasons supporting determination; and (6) name, address, and phone number of contact person for further information.

Section 1401 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-270) authorized construction of the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project, as described in the Chief's Report, ([https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/Civil%20Works%20Sponsor%20Letters/Tab%201%20Chiefs%20Report%20Ala%20Wa%20Chiefs%20Report%20SIGNED%20\(003\).pdf?ver=2018-09-14-171850-833](https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/Civil%20Works%20Sponsor%20Letters/Tab%201%20Chiefs%20Report%20Ala%20Wa%20Chiefs%20Report%20SIGNED%20(003).pdf?ver=2018-09-14-171850-833)), dated December 21, 2017, and the *Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study, Oahu, Hawaii, Feasibility Study with Integrated Environmental Impact Statement*, dated May 2017. The record of decision (ROD) was signed on September 18, 2018, initiating the next phase of the study, Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED). During PED an Engineering Documentation Report (EDR) was released in 2020 and provided the technical basis for modifications necessary to the Authorized Project. Subsequent analysis found that the modifications in the 2020 EDR were not cost effective and lacked the economic justification necessary for continued federal involvement. Acknowledging the need to reduce the risk to life safety and economic damages from flooding throughout the Ala Wai Watershed in Oahu, Hawaii, the City and County of Honolulu along with USACE is currently reevaluating the previously completed Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study in a General Reevaluation Report, using current planning criteria and policies. Since the GRR is reevaluating alternatives and could result in a new recommendation, HRS Chapter 343 (HEPA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study will be updated in a Supplemental EIS.

The intent of this EISPN is to inform interested parties of the project, and to seek agency and public input on issues or resources of concern. Input received as a result of the EISPN, in combination with other input received to date, will be considered as part of the development of the Supplemental EIS. The Supplemental EIS will present the proposed action (and the range of reasonable alternatives) and will address the potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the natural and human environment; mitigation measures that avoid or minimize the potential adverse effects of

the project will also be identified. In addition to fulfilling requirements for compliance with HRS Chapter 343, the Supplemental EIS will also jointly serve to comply with NEPA.¹

Comments on this EISPN may be submitted during a 30-day public comment period (March 8, 2023 – April 8, 2023); comments must be postmarked by April 8, 2023, in order to be considered as part of preparation of the Supplemental EIS. Please submit comments to the following addresses:

City and County of Honolulu
Department of Design and Construction
650 S. King Street, 11th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
Attention: Haku Milles
Dominic.Milles@honolulu.gov

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Honolulu District
230 Otake St.
Fort Shafter, HI 96858-5440
Attention: POH-PPC, Ala Wai
alawai@honolulu.gov

For further information on the project, please contact Shawna Herleth-King at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), (312) 846-5407 or Shawna.S.Herleth-King@usace.army.mil.

¹ A Notice of Intent (NOI) for the project was published in the Federal Register on February 22, 2023 (FR 88:35 (10880-10881)).

Introduction

At the request of the City and County of Honolulu, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is conducting a General Reevaluation Report for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study (hereafter referred to as “the project”). The project is being investigated under the authority of Section 209 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (Public Law 87-874). Section 209 is a general authority that authorizes surveys in harbors and rivers in Hawaii “with a view to determining the advisability of improvements in the interest of navigation, flood control, hydroelectric power development, water supply, and other beneficial water uses, and related land resources.”

Study Purpose

The Ala Wai watershed is comprised of approximately 19 square miles (12,064 acres) on the southeastern side of the island of Oahu in the State of Hawaii (Figure 1).² It includes Makiki, Manoa, and Palolo streams, all of which drain to the Ala Wai Canal, a 2-mile-long, man-made waterway constructed during the 1920s to drain extensive coastal wetlands. This construction and subsequent drainage allowed the development of the Waikiki District.

The study area, which contains more than 160,000 residents, is the most densely populated watershed in Hawaii. The upper portion of the watershed (approximately 7.5 square miles or 40% of the watershed) is zoned as Conservation District, which is intended to protect natural and cultural resources including the island’s aquifer. The remaining approximately 11 square miles of the middle and lower watershed is heavily urbanized, supporting a high density of single-family residences, condominiums, hotels and businesses, as well as approximately 40 public and private schools, including University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH), the largest university in the State. Within this urban footprint, the population density is one of the highest in the nation (Fulton, 2001). In addition to a range of residential, commercial, and institutional development, the watershed includes the Waikiki District, a prime tourist destination that attracts more than 79,000 visitors per day. In large part because of the tourism industry, Waikiki is the primary economic engine for the State, providing 7 percent of the gross domestic product, 7 percent of the civilian jobs in the State, and 9 percent of the State tax revenue (DBEDT, 2013).

It is estimated that the Ala Wai Canal has the capacity to contain about a 20- to 10-percent change (5- to 10-year) flood before overtopping the banks. Overtopping of the Canal has caused flooding in Waikiki multiple times, including during the November 1965, December 1967, and December 2021 storms; and during the passage of Hurricane Iniki in 1992. Upstream areas are also at risk of flooding, as demonstrated by the October 2004 storm in Manoa Valley, which was estimated to have caused over \$85 million in damages to property, including loss of irreplaceable documents stored in

² approximately 16 mi² of the study area drains to the Ala Wai Canal; the remaining 3 mi² drains to the ocean but is included in the study area based on the State of Hawaii’s delineation of watershed unit boundaries.

Hamilton Library at UH (USACE, 2006). Initial modeling efforts indicate that the 1-percent change (100-year) flood would result in damages to more than 3,111 structures throughout the watershed, with approximately \$905 million in property damage alone.

The purpose of the project is to reduce overall flood risk, consistent with the project goals and objectives and within the authorities of the USACE Civil Works program. Specifically, the project objective is to reduce riverine flood hazards to property and life safety in the Ala Wai watershed.

Study Background and History

The USACE, Honolulu District received the authority to conduct the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study under Section 209 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (Public Law 84-874). The feasibility Study's recommended plan consisted of six in-stream debris and detention basins of varying height in the upper reaches of the watershed, one standalone debris catchment structure, three multi-purpose detention basins, floodwalls along the Ala Wai Canal averaging four feet in height and an earthen levee at the perimeter of an adjacent golf course averaging seven feet in height, two pump stations to reduce the threat of interior flooding, and a flood warning system. The feasibility study determined the technical, economic, environmental, and social feasibility of the recommended plan to reduce flood risk within the Ala Wai Canal watershed of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Section 1401 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-270) authorized construction of the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project, as described in the Chief's Report, ([https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/Civil%20Works%20Sponsor%20Letters/Tab%201%20Chiefs%20Report%20Ala%20Wa%20Chiefs%20Report%20SIGNED%20\(003\).pdf?ver=2018-09-14-171850-833](https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/Civil%20Works%20Sponsor%20Letters/Tab%201%20Chiefs%20Report%20Ala%20Wa%20Chiefs%20Report%20SIGNED%20(003).pdf?ver=2018-09-14-171850-833)), dated December 21, 2017, and the *Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study, Oahu, Hawaii, Feasibility Study with Integrated Environmental Impact Statement*, dated May 2017. The record of decision (ROD) was signed on September 18, 2018, initiating the next phase of the study, Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED). In 2020, an Engineering Documentation Report (EDR) provided the technical basis for modifications necessary to the Authorized Project. Subsequent analysis found that the modifications in the 2020 EDR were not cost effective and lacked the economic justification necessary for continued federal involvement. Acknowledging the need to reduce the risk to life safety and economic damages from flooding throughout the Ala Wai Watershed in Oahu, Hawaii, the USACE along with the City and County of Honolulu is currently reevaluating the previously completed Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Study in a General Reevaluation Report (GRR), using current planning criteria and policies. Since the GRR is reevaluating alternatives and could result in a new recommendation, HEPA and NEPA documentation for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Risk Management Project will be updated.

Description of Proposed Project

The project is undergoing a GRR to (1) redefine the flood problems and risks in the Ala Wai watershed by updating hydrology, physical, biological, and socioeconomic conditions; (2) reevaluate alternatives for reducing flood damages in the area; and (3) reaffirm the Federal interest by recommending a plan that is economically feasible. The results of this study will be presented in the GRR and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. In addition to the No Action alternative, other potential alternatives to reduce flood damages include a combination of the following components: Makiki District Park detention basin, Manoa Valley District Park detention basin, Ala Wai Golf Course detention basin, Kaimuki High School berm/floodwall, Kanaha floodwall, Woodlawn Drive floodwall, Koali Road floodwall, and Ala Wai Canal floodwall.

Determination and Supporting Rationale

Pursuant to HAR §11-200-12, the determination of whether a proposed action would have a significant impact on the environment should be based on an evaluation of the expected consequences of the action, including the overall and cumulative effects, relative to the following significance criteria:

- Involves an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resource;
- Curtails the range of beneficial uses of the environment;
- Conflicts with the state's long-term environmental policies or goals and guidelines as expressed in chapter 344, HRS, and any revisions thereof and amendments thereto, court decisions, or executive orders;
- Substantially affects the economic welfare, social welfare, and cultural practices of the community or State;
- Substantially affects public health;
- Involves substantial secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities;
- Involves a substantial degradation of environmental quality;
- Is individually limited but cumulatively has considerable effect upon the environment or involves a commitment for larger actions;
- Substantially affects a rare, threatened, or endangered species, or its habitat;
- Detrimentally affects air or water quality or ambient noise levels;
- Affects or is likely to suffer damage by being located in an environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, beach, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, fresh water, or coastal waters;
- Substantially affects scenic vistas and viewplanes identified in county or state planes or studies; or,
- Requires substantial energy consumption.

Based on the established significance criteria, the scope and scale of the flood management measures being considered, and input received via scoping and

stakeholder engagement efforts to date, it is anticipated that the proposed action may result in significant impacts to the natural and/or human environment and that the proposed project is likely going to be controversial. Therefore, pursuant to HRS §343-5, it has been determined from the outset that a Supplemental EIS will be required for the project.

The Integrated General Reevaluation Report and Supplemental EIS will report the results of the general reevaluation study, including a detailed description of the Tentatively Selected Plan ([TSP] proposed action), as well as alternatives that were considered through the alternatives screening and formulation process. The potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the natural and human environment will also be addressed; mitigation measures that avoid or minimize the potential adverse effects of the project will also be identified. The following resource categories have been tentatively identified for consideration in the Integrated General Reevaluation Report and Supplemental EIS:

- Climate
- Air Quality
- Land Use
- Seismicity, Geology, and Soils
- Water Resources
- Water Quality
- Hazardous and Toxic Waste
- Biological Resources
- Archaeological, Cultural and Historic Resources
- Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
- Recreational Resources
- Visual Resources
- Noise
- Public Health and Safety
- Transportation and Traffic
- Public Services and Utilities

Figure

Figure 1 Overview of the Ala Wai Watershed

