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April 16, 2025

Ms. Mary Alice Evans
Director
State of Hawai'i
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Environmental Review Program
235 South Beretania Street, Suite 702
Honolulu, HI 96813

**SUBJECT: CHAPTER 343, HAWAII REVISD STATUTES - PRIOR DETERMINATION
DECLARATION
KAHEKILI HIGHWAY SLOPE REPAIR AT VICINITY OF MILEPOST 15
PROJECT
TAX MAP KEYS (TMKS): (2) 3-1-002:004 & 007
KAHAKULOA, MAUI, HAWAII**

Dear Ms. Evans:

This letter serves as a formal notification to the Hawai'i Environmental Review Program that the County of Maui (COM) Department of Public Works (DPW) has determined that no further environmental review is required to comply with Environmental Review Documentation requirements for the implementation of the Proposed Project, as described and outlined below.

The COM DPW respectfully requests the publication of this determination in the upcoming issue of *The Environmental Notice* as required by Section 11-200.1-11 of the Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR).

In accordance with Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), and Section 11-200.1 of the Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR), the subject Prior Determination (Use of prior Finding of No Significant Impact to satisfy Chapter 343, HRS, for the Proposed Project) is outlined below:

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Page 2

Project Background:

The COM DPW issued a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Kahekili Highway Slope Repair at the Vicinity of Mile Post 15 project, which was published in the October 8, 2024, issue of *The Environmental Notice* issued by the Environmental Review Program.

The Final EA described and evaluated the environmental impacts of proposed roadway improvements along a 1,200-foot section of Kahekili Highway, including reconstruction of the right-of-way (ROW) into a 12-foot-wide paved one-lane roadway with one-foot shoulder lanes on both sides of the roadway. Where topographically feasible, pullout spots are proposed to allow vehicles to pass. The project also includes the construction of a concrete soil nail wall along Waihali Gulch-- ranging from approximately three to 15 feet in height-- to stabilize the downward slope. Additional elements include shotcrete backfilling to expand the shoulders, curbing, and a 48-inch barrier to separate the roadway from the constructed wall, providing additional protection to roadway users.

The Final EA concluded with the determination of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), indicating that the project is not expected to result in significant adverse effects on the environment.

Since the publication of the Final EA, project design efforts have been refined in response to community input and concerns, resulting in the inclusion of two additional parcels, TMKS: (2) 3-1-002:004 and 007, that were not previously assessed. These parcels are necessary to accommodate key design elements identified in the Final EA, including the construction of the soil nail wall, road paving and widening, as well as the addition of a turnaround area. The turnaround feature reflects direct feedback from the community and is intended to enhance safety and accessibility by providing a designated space for vehicles to safely reverse direction (see Attachment A).

Project Setting:

The Project Site is located near Mile Post 15 of Kahekili Highway in Kahakuloa, on the island of Maui (See Figure 1), and includes two of the subject TMK parcels.

The surrounding area is characterized by rugged topography, including steep cliffs and valleys, with a mix of vacant Conservation lands and scattered private residences. The Project Area is situated on the south side of Waihali Valley, just north of Kahakuloa Village. The roadway segment runs adjacent to Kahakuloa Bay to the west and borders a private residence to the north.

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KAHAKULOA, MAUI, HAWAII

April 16, 2025

Page 3

The Proposed Action involves approximately 1,650 linear feet of a one-lane roadway that ranges in width from about 8 to 10.5 feet as it descends into Waihali Valley. The existing roadway is bounded by steep rock cuts and embankments abutting the roadway. On the makai (ocean-facing) side, few to no shoulders and steep slopes limit potential for structural expansion. The mauka (mountain-facing) side features high, steeply sloped cut banks, which also constrain widening options.

In 2021, portions of the roadway showed signs of slope instability, including asphalt distress and sections of pavement loss at the edge. Minor sloughing of soil and weathered rock has contributed to further narrowing of the travel way. As a temporary measure, white edge lines and high-profile delineators were installed to guide vehicles away from the affected areas.

Project Description:

As previously noted, the Proposed Project includes the construction of a concrete soil nail wall, roadway paving, widening, and a potential staging area on TMK (2) 3-1-002:007, and the development of a vehicle turnaround area on TMK (2) 3-1-002:004. While these parcels were not originally included in the Final EA, the scope of work planned for them is consistent with the activities described and assessed in the Final EA. These improvements were identified as essential for enhancing roadway safety, stabilizing slopes, and improving traffic operations along this section of Kahekili Highway. Notably, the turnaround area was incorporated in response to community input and is intended to provide a designated, safe space for vehicles to reverse direction, thereby supporting safer and more efficient traffic flow.

Determination:

The Proposed Project involves the construction of a concrete soil nail wall, roadway paving and widening, and the implementation of a vehicle turnaround area, all of which were assessed in the Final EA. Based on the nature and scope of these improvements, the Proposed Project is anticipated to result in direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that are consistent with those identified and analyzed in the previously prepared Final EA.

The COM DPW has determined that the Proposed Project remains aligned with the findings of the previously prepared Final EA and its associated Finding of No Significant Impact. Therefore, pursuant to HRS, Chapter 343, no further environmental review is required, and the project may proceed without further preparation or processing of redundant and/or supplemental environmental review documentation.

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KAHAKULOA, MAUI, HAWAII

April 16, 2025

Page 4

Declaration of Determination:

The direct, cumulative, and potential impacts of the Proposed Action have been considered pursuant to Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200.1, HAR. The COM DPW has determined that additional environmental review of the Proposed Project would not be required, as it is both a component of and is substantially similar in use and scale to actions that have been previously processed under a previous FONSI. Moreover, it has also been determined that the Proposed Project is anticipated to have direct, indirect, and cumulative effects similar to those analyzed under previously completed Chapter 343, HRS Environmental Review.

Should there be any questions, please contact our consultant, Ms. Harlee Meyers, at (808) 946-2277 from Wilson Okamoto Corporation or Charlene Shibuya via email at Charlene.S.Shibuya@co.maui.hi.us

Sincerely,



JORDAN MOLINA
Director of Public Works

JM:CSS (ED25-0289)

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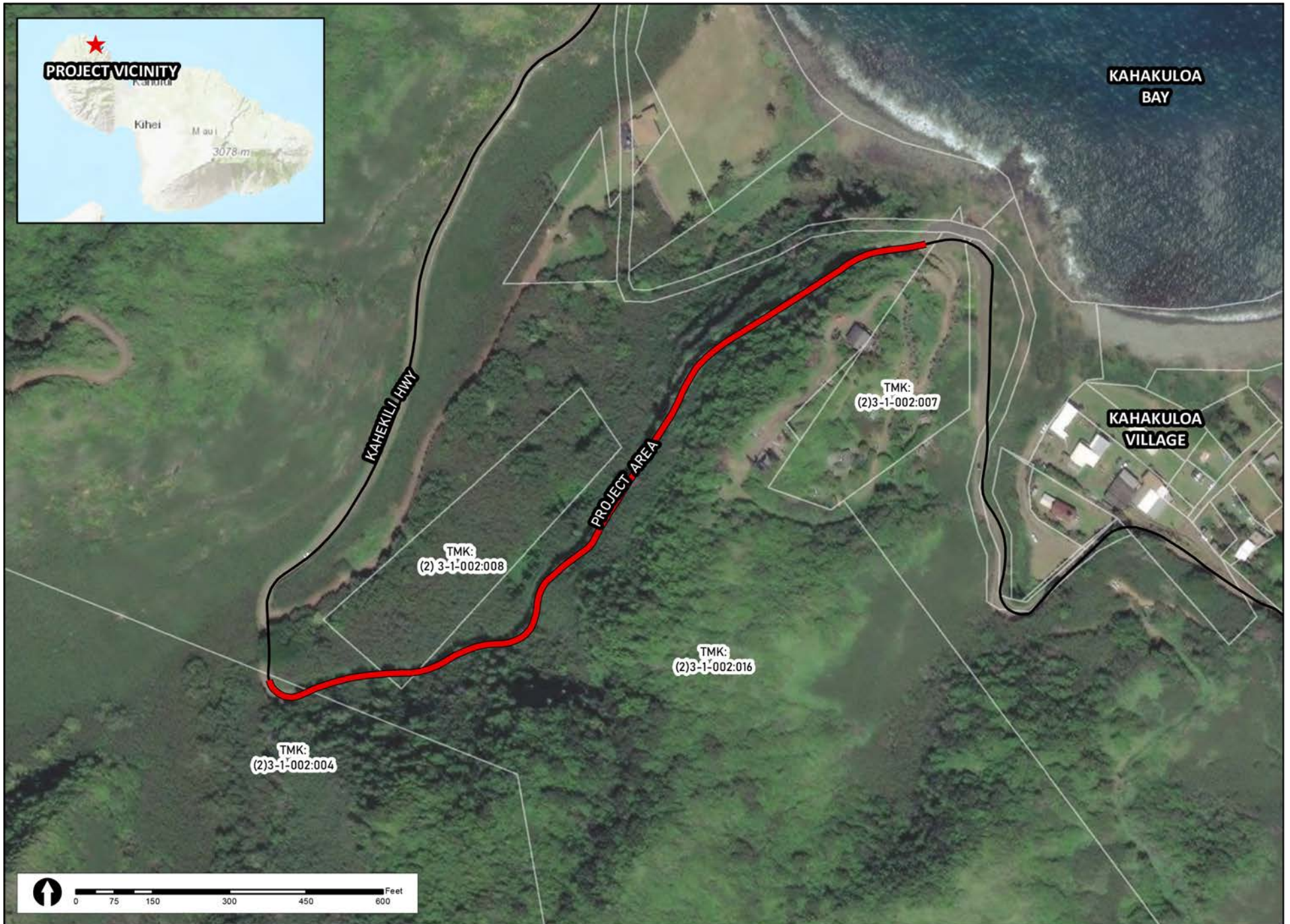
xc: Ty Takeno, Department of Public Works – Engineering Division
Harlee Meyers, Wilson Okamoto Corporation



FIGURE 1- PROJECT LOCATION MAP

Kahekili Highway Slope Repair At Vicinity Of Mile Post 15

Wailuku, Maui, Hawai'i



Source: State OP and ESRI

ATTACHMENT A:

60% PROJECT DESIGN PLANS

