

July 25, 2025

To: Marine and Coastal Zone Advocacy Council (MACZAC)

From: MACZAC Coordinators
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, Coastal Zone Management (CZM)

Subject: Hawai'i CZM Program Report to MACZAC

I. National Initiatives

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) - Capacity Building for Habitat Protection and Restoration

IIJA funds support the goals and intent of the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. There have been three rounds of IIJA funding opportunities, which are described below. CZM Staff Contact is Kristi Kimura.

- **Resilient Reefs for Maui Nui.** This project, led by The Coral Reef Alliance, is strengthening coral reefs for coastal resilience on Maui and Moloka'i through a combination of habitat restoration, long-term monitoring, community engagement, and capacity building around watershed restoration and coral reef management.
- **Dune Restoration, Community Outreach, and Capacity-Building Project at Hanapēpē Salt Pond.** This project will plan and implement a dune restoration program at Hanapēpē Salt Pond to create an essential buffer against storm surge and sea level rise and will protect the natural resources integral for the traditional Native Hawaiian practice of salt making. The Kaua'i Planning Department will partner with UH Sea Grant and Hui Hana Pa'akai to conduct additional studies to analyze the impacts of sea level rise and groundwater inundation to the Hanapēpē Beach Park and historic salt pans, and to engage with community members and *hana lo'i pa'akai* (Native Hawaiian salt makers) to develop and implement beach and dune restoration plans to mitigate and adapt to sea level rise impacts to preserve the historic and unique salt pans.
- **IIJA Funding – Round 3.** The Hawai'i CZM Program received twelve LOIs and submitted three to NOAA for consideration. Two of the three LOIs were invited back to submit full proposals. Full proposals were due to NOAA on January 9, 2025, and award announcements are pending.

II. CZM Programmatic Updates

MACZAC Representative Vacancies

There are currently three (3) vacancies on the MACZAC, with one opening each for Kaua'i, Moloka'i, and O'ahu. To highlight the vacancies, CZM staff engaged with community partners such as the University of Hawai'i Richardson School of Law Environmental Law networks and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, and prepared materials for social media/web platforms.

Summer Interns

CZM welcomed two interns for the summer of 2025. One intern is from the State Dept. of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) "Hele Imua Internship" program, while another is from the Bowdoin College Career Exploration and Development program.

- Sebastian is aiding in the development of the CZM Program's watershed coordination map. This project collects ArcGIS spatial data to map out watershed stewardship activity across the Hawaiian archipelago. Goals include strengthened communication networks between active

watershed stewarding organizations and improving inter-agency coordination. Alongside their project work Sebastian has been able to engage in meetings with the CZM team as they work on the 2025 ORMP Evaluation & Refresh. Observing the refresh process has been an opportunity to learn how the CZM network integrates stakeholder input into natural resource management strategies.

- Izzy is working on the initial stages of developing a statewide map of wetlands to inform permitting decisions that consider wetland protections. This came up as an emerging issue relating to all three focus areas of the ORMP. Izzy is researching wetland definitions, permitting, and map layers, creating a potential working group, and making a StoryMap of her findings. She is also working in ArcGIS Pro to help create layers of bays and stream mouths for the Hawaiian Estuaries Viewer. Izzy has also been participating in CZM meetings relating to the 2025 ORMP Evaluation & Refresh.

Section 309 Assessment and Strategy

CZM submitted the FY2026-2030 NOAA DRAFT Section 309 Assessment and Strategy to NOAA on April 3, 2025. Public comments were accepted through May 3, 2025. Final approval is anticipated sometime in January of 2026. Link to the draft document:

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/czm/resource/CZM_Sec_309_Assessment_and_Strategy_DRAFT_04-03-25.pdf

County Implementation of Chapter 205A

- CZM provided virtual SMA trainings to the Moloka‘i Planning Commission on June 12, 2025, and to the Maui Planning Commission on June 24, 2025. CZM further provided a virtual SMA and shoreline setback training, by request, to Hawai‘i Real Estate Agents on July 8, 2025.
- Maui County Staff led CZM on site visits across Maui on April 7 and 9, 2025. County Staff shared progress and ongoing challenges with the rebuilding efforts in Lahaina; reconstruction efforts on a storm-damaged shoreline condominium in Kihei; and dune restoration and wetland restoration projects.
- Hawai‘i County Staff led CZM on site visits across Hawai‘i Island from May 5 to 6, 2025. County Staff shared projects that have improved public access to the shoreline, including a project in Hapuna Beach. Other projects highlighted during the visits included restoration of loko i‘a (traditional fishponds).
- Governor Josh Green signed HB 732 CD1 into law, which took effect on May 29, 2025, as Act 125, Session Laws of Hawai‘i (SLH) 2025. Act 125, SLH 2025, amends the CZM Law, HRS Chapter 205A, to increase the valuation threshold between the Special Management Area (SMA) Minor Permit and SMA Use Permit from \$500,000 to \$750,000 with inflation adjustments every five years for a development that is not situated on a shoreline parcel or parcel that is impacted by waves, storm surges, high tide, or shoreline erosion.

Other CZM Initiatives

- CZM executed an agreement with NOAA OCM National Ocean Service for the Hawai‘i Beach Inventory Database and Viewer. NOAA OCM has received the technical proposal from its vendor Dewberry Engineers, Inc to execute the project contract. As of June 20, 2025, the NOAA OCM’s contracting office started working on executing the award. CZM Staff contact is Shichao Li.

III. 2020 Ocean Resources Management Plan Implementation

CZM is preparing the 2025 ORMP Evaluation & Refresh, which serves as a progress report that marks the midway point of the ten-year ORMP Implementation Phase. Staff are compiling information gathered from partner outreach to create a comprehensive project inventory and provide recommendations to inform the ORMP Network implementation strategy for 2025-2030. CZM Staff contact is McKenzie Lim.

Focus Area I: Development & Coastal Hazards

- **Regional Shoreline Management:** CZM has multiple ongoing projects to support various aspects of this initiative. CZM Staff contacts are Sarah Chang, Lisa Webster, and Ciera McQuaid.
 - Phase 3 (Data Inventory and Preliminary Mapping): Project contractor H.T. Harvey is conducting preliminary mapping to delineate regions and subregions within three selected moku: Pū‘ali Komohana, Maui; Kona, Moloka‘i; and Wai‘anae, O‘ahu. These regional delineation maps will inform pilot projects completed under Pili Nā Moku (see below). The Phase 3 completion date is September 2025.
 - Pilot Projects: CZM is a subawardee on the University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant’s NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Award. This project, Pili Nā Moku, focuses on moku-scale restoration initiatives across the main Hawaiian Islands. As a subawardee, CZM will be working within the three moku listed above (see Phase 3 description) to pilot the regional shoreline delineation methodology and then identify one region per moku to develop a regional-scale adaptation action. CZM has been scoping and preparing to procure services to facilitate a community-based participatory mapping process. Project funding goes through 2029.
- **Act 178, SLH 2021 – Sea Level Rise and State Facilities:** CZM continues to work with ICF Incorporated, LLC to develop a standardized process for assessing state facility vulnerability to sea level rise. A beta version of the SLR Vulnerability Assessment Tool was launched at a multi-agency meeting on May 15, 2025. OPSD and ICF followed up with in-person meetings with key agencies to walk through the beta tool and gather feedback. ICF is making final adjustments to the Vulnerability Assessment and associated User Guide. Anticipated completion of the project is end of September 2025. CZM Staff contact is Sarah Chang.
- **Managed Retreat Analysis:** CZM presented the outcomes of this project at the 2025 Mobility and Resilience Conference at Columbia University in NYC. The report can be found on the HICZMP website. [Office of Planning and Sustainable Development | Research, Analysis and Feasibility of Managed Retreat in Hawai‘i](#). Staff is developing an outreach plan to share the report’s findings. CZM Staff contact is Sarah Chang.
- **FY23 Project of Special Merit – Integrating CZM and DHHL:** CZM and the project team concluded interviews with DHHL staff to understand how and when they most frequently interact with SMA in their work. These interviews informed an assessment report of Current DHHL Practices as related to reviewing activity in the shoreline area. A draft assessment was submitted to CZM for review. The project team is conducting site visits to hot spot areas on each island. The team visited Hawaiian Homelands in Nanakuli on July 14, 2025. The next site visit will be to Anahola on August 5-6, 2025. Anticipated project end date is March 31, 2026. CZM Staff contact is Sarah Chang.

Focus Area II: Land-Based Pollution

- **Expanding the Cesspool Prioritization Tool to include Molokaʻi:** Shuler Hydrologic LLC was selected as the contractor for this project, and the kickoff meeting was held on September 19, 2024. The contractor has recently obtained additional needed data layers and is in the process of updating the original tool's code, but due to a late start date, a no-cost extension request was submitted and approved, with the project anticipated to be completed by August 31, 2025. CZM Staff contact is Lisa Webster.

Focus Area III: Marine Ecosystems

- **Community-Based Monitoring Program:** Building upon the development of the Kōkua Community-Based Monitoring Framework, including the elements of a Monitoring Agreement, training materials, and monitoring protocols, CZM is continuing Phase II of the Kōkua Community-Based Monitoring Framework project under the no-cost extension through the end of 2025. CZM Staff contact is Ciera McQuaid.
 - Phase II continues to provide technical support for community-based monitoring programs through collaborative development of Monitoring Agreements. The focus of the project aligns with the Place-based Management Pillar of DAR's Holomua Marine Initiative whose goal is to identify and develop management strategies in partnership with communities and stakeholders for improved marine resource management. Most recently, the Kōkua group has been conducting limu surveys at the Hāniʻo site outside the Ko Olina Lagoons. Through this project, CZM adds capacity to support the State's path towards effective management of Hawaiʻi's marine ecosystems by supporting DLNR-DAR's ability to collaborate with communities and advance place-based management.
- **Hawaiian Estuaries Viewer:** CZM is collaborating with DAR to develop a statewide estuaries viewer. The project consists of two main tasks: (1) complete the collection of aerial imagery of stream mouths and bays across the main Hawaiian Islands; and (2) create an online map viewer to share estuary locations, attributes, and imagery with both stakeholders and the public. CZM and DAR staff are co-leading this project and meet regularly with the contractor and various stakeholders to develop the data layers and determine the final capabilities and design of the viewer. CZM Staff contact is Lisa Webster.

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