

February 6, 2026

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.
- **Puapua‘a Iki Habitat Restoration Project.** This project will restore 11.5 acres of coastal land by restoring native ecosystems, preserving historic and cultural sites, and strengthening community resilience against climate impacts such as erosion, flooding, and sea level rise at Puapua‘a Iki in Kona on Hawai‘i Island. The County of Hawai‘i’s Office of Sustainability, Climate, Equity, and Resilience will be leading the work in collaboration with the County’s Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission program.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

The Hawai‘i CZM Program received non-competitive funding from NOAA to use for capacity building around the state. Request for Quotations were posted to solicit capacity building projects, and nine different projects around the State were selected for funding. Projects are currently ongoing. A fourth Request for Quotation was recently posted in January to solicit more projects, and two more projects were selected for funding.

II. CZM Programmatic Updates

MACZAC Representative Vacancies

- There are currently two (2) vacancies on the MACZAC, with one opening each for Kaua‘i and Moloka‘i. 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.

One O‘ahu vacancy has been filled with the addition of Jim Nicolow. Welcome, Jim!

- The representative from East Hawai‘i and one O‘ahu representative have agreed to stay on the MACZAC until new members are recruited for their seats.

CZM Staffing

- There is currently one (1) CZM staff vacancy. A Program Specialist IV position is in recruitment.
- Two new staff are joining the CZM Program in February. They will be filling a Project Analyst position and Planner position respectively.

Section 309 Assessment and Strategy

CZM submitted the final FY2026-2030 NOAA Section 309 Assessment and Strategy to NOAA on September 30, 2025. Final approval from NOAA was received on December 09, 2025. Link to the final document:

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/czm/resource/CZM_Sec_309_Assessment_and_Strategy_FINAL_2026.pdf

County Implementation of Chapter 205A

CZM staff conducted an annual site visit to the island of Kaua‘i relating to CZM priorities and county implementation on January 26 and 27, 2026.

Other CZM Initiatives

CZM executed an agreement with NOAA OCM National Ocean Service for the Hawai‘i Beach Inventory Database and Viewer. OPSD-CZM has accepted the work plan from NOAA OCM contractor, Dewberry Engineering, Inc., and started bi-weekly meetings with Dewberry on September 12, 2025, and since then received monthly reports. Through synthesizing and organizing beach information and spatial data from different sources into a geospatial platform, this statewide beach database will enable users to access and view available beach data and information through a centralized online site. This beach inventory database project will design and establish an interactive and searchable online geospatial platform and demonstrate the database’s capabilities with one beach each from the islands of Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i and O‘ahu. CZM Staff contact is Shichao Li.

III. 2020 Ocean Resources Management Plan Implementation

2025 ORMP Evaluation & Refresh

CZM finalized the 2025 ORMP Evaluation & Refresh, which serves as a progress report that marks the midway point of the ten-year ORMP Implementation Phase. Staff compiled information gathered from partner outreach to create a comprehensive project inventory and provided recommendations to inform the ORMP Network implementation strategy for 2025-2030. The deliverables included a report and accompanying StoryMap that can be found on the CZM Program’s website. 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 and Ciera McQuaid.
 - Pilot Projects (Pili Nā Moku): CZM has formed a Project Team and is nearing completion of contracting with a Statewide Facilitator and Regional Facilitators for the Wai‘anae and Mā‘alaea moku. As part of Phase 1 of the project, the Project Team will conduct community participatory mapping workshops. Workshop planning and participant recruitment are expected to continue through April 2026, with workshops anticipated to occur between May and July 2026. CZM is also in discussion with organizations on Moloka‘i to scope plans for Phase 2 of the project within the Kona moku. Project funding goes through 2029.
- **Act 178, SLH 2021 – Sea Level Rise and State Facilities:** CZM completed the contract with ICF Incorporated, LLC to develop a standardized process for assessing state facility vulnerability to sea level rise. The final SLR Vulnerability Assessment Tool, User Guidance and Adaptation Planning resources are available to State agencies via a Sharepoint site. CZM plans to re-engage with agencies in the next few months to follow-up on implementation of the new resources. CZM Staff contact is Sarah Chang.
- **FY23 Project of Special Merit – Integrating CZM and DHHL:** CZM and the project team are in the process of reviewing the recommendations report and associated implementation roadmap. The recommendations report includes a range of options from status quo to the creation of a new CZM Program. The project team is recommending a potential strategy for DHHL to internally review projects on Hawaiian Homelands for consistency with HRS Ch. 205A. Anticipated project end date is March 31, 2026. CZM Staff contact is Sarah Chang.

Focus Area II: Land-Based Pollution

- **Watershed Coordination Map:** CZM is developing a GIS map of organizations and agencies across the islands working on watershed-based restoration activities. The purpose of this map is to visualize mauka-makai stewardship efforts and to strengthen coordination amongst groups. CZM has been conducting outreach and collecting spatial data and descriptive information from participating organizations. Drafted content has been sent back to organizations for their review and final approval. The map is anticipated to be publicly available in February 2026, with ongoing data collection and updated continuing thereafter. This project is a part of a 5-year Ocean Resources Enhancement Area strategy under the CZM’s Section 309 Assessment and Strategy with NOAA. Staff Contact is Ciera McQuaid.

Focus Area III: Marine Ecosystems

- **Community-Based Monitoring Program:** The Kōkua CBM Phase II no cost extension contract concluded at the end of December 2025. Key accomplishments included completion of a case study documenting framework development and early implementation, development of draft evaluation metrics and interview tools, and initiation of focused interviews with kāko‘o organizations. Support for community implementation transitioned to a permanent Department of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) Biologist position, supplemented by a DAR Sea Grant Fellow, ensuring continuity beyond the project period. The updated Co-Management Framework outlines pathways to incorporate community-

collected data and integrate the Kōkua Monitoring Framework into marine managed area planning. Staff contact is Ciera McQuaid.

- **Hawaiian Estuaries Viewer:** CZM is collaborating with DAR to develop the statewide Hawaiian 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 to complete development of the data layers. The original contract to support this project ended August 31, 2025, and a new contract to work with Esri staff was finalized October 29, 2025, to design and develop the Viewer, with the Viewer development completed December 31, 2025. Estuaries data is being reviewed by CZM and DAR staff, and it is anticipated that the Viewer will be released in March 2026. CZM Staff contact is Lisa Webster.

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