

# Marine and Coastal Zone Advocacy Council (MACZAC) / Ke Kahu O Na Kumu Wai

## MINUTES

Friday, May 10, 2024: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Hybrid format: Zoom and in person at the OPSD Conference Room

OPSD Conference Room  
State Office Tower, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
235 S. Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**[Link to the electronic video recording of the meeting:](https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/czm/maczac/meeting_recordings/20240510_MACZAC_Mtg.mp4)**

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## ATTENDANCE

- **Members present (10):** Donna Brown, Rich Brunner, Taryn Dizon, Phil Fernandez, Robert “Bob” Nishimoto, La’akea Poepoe, Will Sankey, Scott Sullivan, Kimbal Thompson, Sylvia Yanagisako
- **Members absent (1):** Denver Coon
- **Office of Planning and Sustainable Development/Coastal Zone Management (OPSD/CZM) staff present (10):** Mary Alice Evans (OPSD), Debra Mendes, Rachel Beasley, Sarah Chang, Joshua Hekekoa, Kristi Kimura, McKenzie Lim, Sofia Luczak, Lisa Webster, Yuki Terada
- **Others present (10):** Dave Anning (Integral Consulting), Dawn Hegger-Nordblom, Kahana Sunset, Oliver Lau (SSFM), Lauren Long (NOAA), Clare Mamura (HIGICC and Pacific Geospatial Services), Nancy McPherson (DHHL), Justine Nihipali (NOAA), Hal Nordblom, David Revell (Integral Consulting)

## DISTRIBUTED MATERIAL

- MACZAC meeting agenda for May 10, 2024
- Draft minutes from February 27, 2024 MACZAC Meeting
- CZM Report to MACZAC (May 10, 2024)

### **I. Call to Order**

MACZAC Chair Phil Fernandez called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m., welcomed everyone, and introduced Dr. Sylvia Yanagisako as the new West Hawai’i representative.

### **II. Approval of February 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

MACZAC Member Scott Sullivan moved to approve the minutes, MACZAC Member La’a Poepoe and MACZAC Vice-Chair Donna Brown seconded, and with no objection, the minutes were approved as circulated.

### III. Welcome from OPSD Director

OPSD Director Mary Alice Evans welcomed everyone and announced Yuki Terada's resignation as MACZAC Coordinator at the end of May 2024.

### IV. Hawai'i CZM Acting Program Manager's Report:

#### National Initiatives

#### CZM Habitat Protection and Restoration Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

The CZM Program has the privilege of administering IIJA funds that 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.

Funding awards for the FY23-24 federal funding opportunity were announced by NOAA on April 22, 2024. The County of Kaua'i Planning Department received full funding to support a **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 Dept 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 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. Intended benefits include improved habitat for native flora and fauna due to a restored elevated dune system, a marine flooding buffer, enhanced public access, and increased beach health.

MACZAC Member Taryn Dizon expressed appreciation for the collaboration with the Planning Department of Kaua'i County and the promising project progress, highlighting the remarkable State-County partnership. Chair Fernandez expressed gratitude for her support on this project.

#### Hawai'i CZM Program

#### Ocean Resources Management Plan

#### **Focus Area I: Development & Coastal Hazards**

#### Regional Shoreline Management Strategy:

Ms. Dizon expressed concerns about the Kekaha Boat Harbor on Kaua'i, reconstructed about 20 years ago, possibly due to Hurricane Iniki's impact on regional shoreline disruption. She noted potential impacts on marine habitats due to changes in breathability, possibly due to compaction of rocks during harbor reconstruction, resulting in unhealthy habitats and a decline in marine life. She also shared issues with a sand

project where sand intended for the west side of the harbor covered fishing grounds and reef areas and led to habitat loss.

CZM Project Analyst Sarah Chang highlighted CZM's use of the Kekaha Harbor example during planning consultations, emphasizing its broader impact beyond the harbor itself. She suggested a more holistic perspective for future decisions and improved shoreline management to prevent similar issues.

#### Act 178, SLH 2021 – Sea Level Rise and State Facilities:

Chair Fernandez expressed concerns about the lack of explicit language in the RFP for Act 178 regarding its transferability to county facilities. Ms. Chang noted that there are ongoing efforts to coordinate with county agencies but acknowledged the need for alignment of their approaches with those of the State. Chair Fernandez emphasized the importance of effective communication with the public, suggesting development of a model that the county agencies can easily adapt, and a framework to avoid confusion and ensure consistency for the public.

#### **Focus Area III: Marine Ecosystems**

##### Hawaiian Estuaries Viewer:

Chair Fernandez noted that fishermen in East Hawai'i Island are concerned that the DAR Holomua Marine Initiative should consider estuaries as critical habitats for many species of fish. He emphasized that estuaries serve as crucial indicators of environmental change, highlighting the need for further research and information gathering to raise awareness.

MACZAC Member Bob Nishimoto emphasized the challenges in engaging communities and understanding coastal hazards in the unique areas along the cliffs of East Hawai'i Island. He suggested utilizing estuaries to engage communities to understand the life cycle of coastal resources as an alternative approach amid the difficulty in comprehending sea level rise (SLR).

Dr. Yanagisako emphasized the importance of engaging communities about estuaries, even if they don't directly observe coastal problems. She referenced a recent hearing on Waikoloa stream restoration, noting community interest among taro farmers and others in Waipi'o Valley who are aware of upstream impacts on downstream areas, highlighting this as a significant way to raise awareness across the island, connecting from mauka to makai.

Ms. Dizon highlighted the urgent need for stream management on Kaua'i due to frequent flooding and narrowing streams caused by debris and a lack of upkeep. Stream maintenance is critically important to prevent overgrowth and future flooding. Chair Fernandez noted that MACZAC would discuss this issue in a future meeting.

#### **V. Discussion: Effective Communication Strategies for Informing Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change Impacts**

***Mary Alice Evans, OPSD Director, Co-Chair of the Hawai'i Climate Commission***

Director Evans gave an overview of her role as the Co-Chair of the State Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. She spoke about Leah Laramée's role as the State Climate Change Coordinator. The commission was created in 2014 and updated and amended in 2017 in State Law. Its' membership is broad and includes all four counties and a number of State agencies who have a vested interest or ability to improve Hawai'i's adaptation and mitigation efforts in response to climate change. With respect to public engagement, when we see an event in Hawai'i that has a climate change element that makes things worse, the Commission has an opportunity to provide clarity on why it's important that Hawai'i, especially with all of its shorelines, figures out how to protect our natural resources, our communities, and our people going forward. Climate change will be impacting us for centuries, whether through gradual changes or through severe and sudden impacts from events such as more frequent and intense storms, droughts, or fires. Every member of the Commission is thinking about what their agency's kuleana is to help address, in a protective way, Hawai'i's communities and natural resources. The commission holds four meetings a year and partners with the University of Hawai'i on an annual conference that focuses on involving youth in building awareness of the challenges that climate change poses. That partnership is an annual way to build awareness, especially amongst future generations. The Commission itself might not be the best way to reach the public but MACZAC is a more appropriate opportunity to reach out. CZM is doing a lot of work that can help communities choose their best adaptation options moving forward. Communities have choices and they have agency, it is our job to provide those options.

Chair Fernandez noted that the reason that Director Evans was asked to speak is because the public engagement PIG decided that before they move forward, they need to know what the State is doing. Phase I of the PIG's strategy is to understand the state of things, and because the Climate Change Commission is a major player, they wanted to understand what role the Commission plays and how it fits into public engagement.

Director Evans noted that each county has either a Climate Change Commission or a Climate Change Coordinator. Therefore, it's not just the State that is looking at how to mitigate and adapt for protection. It's not just one entity working on this, it is a partnership, similar to CZM.

Chair Fernandez acknowledged Director Evans' point and stated that the Public Engagement PIG realized that an effective outreach strategy cannot only be implemented by OPSD, but will need to be executed by multiple agencies, and that it will need to be coordinated, using the same vocabulary and providing consistent choices and alternatives to the public so that the public is not hearing different things from different agencies.

## **VI. Guest Presentation: HDOT Highways' Climate Adaptation Efforts** ***Genevieve Sullivan, Planner, Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT)***

Guest speaker Genevieve Sullivan spoke to HDOT's Climate Adaptation Efforts. She spoke about the HDOT Resilience Policy, Vulnerability Assessments, the Climate

Adaptation Action Plan, State and Federal Resilience Resources, Climate Insights for Infrastructure Platform, Resilience pilot projects: short- and medium-term solutions, and the status of the Honoapi'ilani project.

HDOT's Highway Resilience Policy shows commitment by leadership in incorporating resilience into all projects and throughout the organization. This policy states that incorporating resilience is a part of everybody's job and that this is a cross-functional discipline and considerations towards resilience must be part of the project delivery process. HDOT is actively incorporating this policy throughout its divisions.

In August of 2019 HDOT worked with UH to produce the Statewide Coastal Highway Program Report. This shoreline study looked at 300 discreet shoreline segments across the State and prioritized them using a ranking system called CRESI, the Coastal Road Erosion Susceptibility Index. It is a scientific methodology that looks at the state of the road and all of the multiple ocean hazards. Through this report, HDOT was able to identify the top 10 most vulnerable sites. Building on this report, HDOT Highways Division produced the Hawai'i Highways Climate Adaptation Action Plan: Strategies for a More Resilient Future in 2021. This report identifies locations along the State's highways that are exposed to climate hazards. In this report HDOT expanded their exposure assessment to nine climate hazards, (rockfall and landslide, sea level rise, annual high wave flooding, coastal erosion, storm surge, tsunami, wildfire, and lava flow) and included recommendations to incorporate resilience measures into their programs and policies. The plan looks internally to determine what policies and processes to consider and update. This included internal cross-division recommendations and considerations and future projections. It includes NOAA and USGS data, as well as values from the Hawai'i Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report (2017). One vulnerability study included in the report is the climate stressor exposure study. The State highway network was the focus of the study, and of the total 564 miles, 58% is considered to be vulnerable to one or more of the 9 climate stressors. Ms. Sullivan's presentation included a table that showed the breakdown of how many miles of State highway network are impacted by which stressors. The plan also has an accompanying web map viewer. It contains the preliminary identification of the highway hazards to the highway network. Ms. Sullivan pointed to the State of Hawai'i 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan as a document that HDOT references often, because in order to access the new Federal Protect funds, there is a requirement is that DOTs and MPOs have a resilience improvement plan, which must include all the hazards identified in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. This allows DOTs to lessen their federal match requirements from 20% down to 10%. This is to show the importance of cross-sector information sharing. Ms. Sullivan showcased other federal resources including "Coastal Risk Reduction and Resilience: Using the Full Array of Measures" (US Army Corps of Engineers), "Building Community Resilience with Nature-Based Solutions: A Guide for Local Communities" (FEMA), "Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Framework: Third Edition" (Federal Highway Administration), "Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Highway Resilience: An Implementation Guide" (US DOT), and

“Highways in the Coastal Environment: Assessing Extreme Events” (US DOT: Federal Highway Administration).

Ms. Sullivan spoke about HDOT’s web-based viewer, the Climate Insights for Infrastructure Platform: <https://Climate-resilience.hidot.hawaii.gov>. HDOT also partnered with Google to create a more user-friendly viewer of the highways and the climate hazards that threaten them. The platform identifies HDOT projects that are occurring across the islands. The objective is to allow the public and other agencies to see what HDOT is working on and to share information.

Ms. Sullivan next shared HDOT’s Resiliency Opportunity Project Checklist. This is a tool for project managers to spur considerations as projects progress. Ms. Sullivan went back to the viewer and showed a snapshot of the Hau’ula area, and how vulnerable it is to coastal hazards, and went into the shoreline projects that are happening there. She provided an overview of the different emergency-, short-, medium-, and long-term solutions that are happening on the very vulnerable coastal road in that area. She showed some pictures of emergency repairs that have been happening in Hau’ula, going from cinderblocks, to rocks, to big bags. The bags have been repaired by boulders, a solution that is intended to last 3-5 years. The crew did skip a portion of the highway because they ran out of materials, but that work will be resuming in November after procurement processes are completed. Another long-standing issue is the Ka’a’awa area. Ms. Sullivan provided an overview of the mid-term project happening at Ka’a’awa Beach Park and showed sketches of the revetment. There was a final Environmental Assessment (EA) that was published in the summer of 2022. The project is pending environmental clearances. It will cost around \$5 million but has received \$3 million in Protect Grant Formula funds. Another project in that area is the Ka’a’awa Elementary Student Project which includes HDOT working with the elementary school to plant native plants in the area that mitigate erosion and provide community awareness in the form of erosion education and project updates. Another mid-term project that is moving forward is the Kualoa, Ka’a’awa, Punalu’u, and Hau’ula (KKPH) project. This project will explore revetment solutions and other solutions for all of the locations, for about 3 miles of coastal highway. This project is listed in The Environmental Notice and is currently out for public comments. One of the alternatives includes rock revetment as a 25-year solution, though the EA includes other solutions as options. Ms. Sullivan showed slides of proposed project sites in each of the areas.

Ms. Sullivan provided an overview of the Sandsaver Pilot project which will evaluate the effectiveness of “sandsavers” for reduction of erosion rate and increased shoreline stabilization. The Pilot will deploy perforated coastal structures at five locations and will include field monitoring to determine effectiveness. HDOT is considering piloting this in Wailua, Kaua’i. Other adaptive designs they are using include prefab structures with the priority considerations being lower costs and more immediate fixes for facilities in areas impacted by SLR.

Another project that Ms. Sullivan shared is the traditional dry stack wall to protect the coastline, with an example project area in Kualoa. This is more effective in areas that contain a fringing reef.

Ms. Sullivan then showed the small realignment project being proposed for approximately 1,000 ft of the Kamehameha Highway in the vicinity of Laniakea Beach. The realignment would move the highway 90 feet inland to address pedestrian safety, shoreline erosion, congestion, and roadway reliability.

Ms. Sullivan then moved into the larger realignment solution of the retreat of the Honoapi'ilani Highway. The project looks at service reliability, resilience, and safety for roughly 6 miles from Launiupoko to Ukumehame. It is currently in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) phase. Over the past 10 years, this stretch of highway has been repaired three times after storms and high waves. A fourth project is currently in development to address erosion near Olowalu. The previously mentioned 2019 Statewide Coastal Highway Report ranks Honoapi'ilani Highway at Olowalu as the second most vulnerable stretch of highway in the State, and Ukumehame as the thirteenth most vulnerable of the three hundred sites assessed. The 2021 HDOT Climate Adaptation Action Report Exposure Assessments found 3.2-foot sea level rise exposure; vulnerability to hurricane-related storm surges; and hypothetical tsunami scenario susceptibility identified in the project area.

## **VII. Guest Presentation: Analysis of Managed Retreat Strategies in Hawai'i: Policy and Funding Opportunities and Challenges**

***Melissa May, Manager of the Strategic Services Group, SSFM International***

Guest speaker Melissa May of SSFM gave an overview of the project that SSFM is doing for OPSD/CZM regarding Managed Retreat. Ms. May gave an overview of the team conducting the study including GIS and Land Use Advisors on their team, and several subconsultant teams. The subconsultants were retained for work on the following topics: regulatory, legal and policy analysis, traditional ecological knowledge and cultural advising, financial and funding analysis, and coastal management advising. The purpose of the project is to analyze the policy, legal, and financial implications of managed retreat for the State of Hawai'i and recommend strategies and solutions to implement managed retreat as part of the State's overall climate adaptation strategy. This builds on a previous study that OPSD and SSFM worked on to look at the overall feasibility of managed retreat. This project looks further into the legal and financial and policy changes that would be required to implement managed retreat. Ms. May presented the definition of managed retreat as being "an intentional process to shift development away from areas exposed to both chronic and catastrophic coastal hazards [which] can be implemented through a variety of tools and strategies". Ms. May noted that there are many ways to accomplish this other than picking up and moving development; managed retreat can be phased in through regulation, or it can be affected through things like purchasing or land swaps. It can also happen in a post-disaster situation, if there is a plan in place, and the community would like to build back in a more resilient way. Ms. May presented the questions that are framing the project.

Which existing policy, legal, and financial tools and strategies require, trigger, support, or point toward retreat? Which work against or limit options for retreat? What are the benefits and tradeoffs of different retreat strategies from legal/financial/policy perspectives? Which retreat strategies are feasible and applicable in the context of Hawai'i, and in what types of scenarios? What changes or actions would be needed to remove policy, legal, and financial barriers in order to support, plan, and implement the most promising retreat strategies in time and over time? What are the applications for managed retreat strategies in the case study sites? Ms. May spoke about the two case study sites that are meant to be illustrative and will be used to apply the recommendations. These are Ke Nui Road, North Shore of O'ahu, and the Kahana Sunset Building in Kahana, Maui. The project approach includes reviewing the existing landscape for managed retreat, recommending amendments and/or new policies and regulations to facilitate managed retreat, recommending promising funding and financing strategies to implement managed retreat, and applying managed retreat solutions to two illustrative case studies. There are a lot of existing tools and SSFM is working to identify the existing opportunities among policies, laws, funding, and financing tools, and land use tools. Ms. May noted that the project is at its midpoint, with the team having conducted interviews, done research, and now moving into vetting recommendations with various stakeholders. The next step will be applying recommendations to the case studies. The final report is expected to be finished by the end of this year. Ms. May gave a preview of the takeaways to date. From an agency standpoint the issues seem to surround jurisdictional issues, there is limited agency capacity, there are inconsistencies in how sea level rise (SLR) and climate adaptation is being addressed at the county level. Additionally, buyouts are an unpopular option and infeasible, and federal funds are only typically available for declared disasters. There are some enforcement considerations and challenges including enforcing agencies still developing their capabilities, and a need for consistent and proactive enforcement to protect sandy beaches. There are many examples of emergency permits being misused and resulting in damage to beaches but there are opportunities to use permit conditions to communicate risk and set additional requirements. There is also an opportunity to align retreat with Hawai'i's public trust doctrine, one of the strongest in the country, and focus on proactive protection/restoration of sandy beaches. Retreat supports public trust rights including public access, traditional and customary rights, beach preservation, and beach restoration. This is well supported by current policy and case law. The State can articulate a clear policy for retreat emphasizing protection and restoration of public trust with focus on sandy beaches. Another finding is that there is not a great perception of risk around coastal properties. There is a lot of conflicting information, people are still purchasing them, people are saying they do not understand the risks. There is a need to increase communications around the risk of shoreline properties and enforcement. There is also an opportunity to align retreat/adaptation with other policy objectives such as housing, short term-rental controls and public access. In addition, there is a need for a planning framework. Managed retreat needs a regional scale approach that can consider shoreline conditions. There is a potential to treat areas with chronic coastal erosion differently than areas with longer term SLR/flooding risks. Ms. May spoke about adaptation pathways as an approach, looking at the impacts over time and how to implement them on a threshold basis, i.e. when SLR reaches 1 foot, then it is time to



implement one adaptation measure, etc. Cultural and historic considerations are needed, and traditional ecological knowledge should be incorporated in adaptation planning. There are also legal concerns about balancing retreat and voluntary options so that takings claims are limited. Ms. May spoke to the county-specific challenges and impacts. Ms. May also spoke about the three types of general scenarios, working/draft form interventions. The first scenario, "Status Quo: Do nothing differently" would effectively lead to unmanaged retreat. People not having clear options and ultimately having to move out of the shoreline as their properties are damaged would probably lead to a lot of clean-up costs for private owners and the State, as well as damage to the public trust resources. The second scenario is a "Beach Forward Policy: Proactive retreat policy/program targeted to eroding sandy beaches, focused on preservation and restoration of public trust resources", and the third scenario is "Proactive Planning: Retreat as part of an overall framework for climate adaptation that includes community-based planning, proactive shoreline management, strengthening regulations, and making development more resilient." Ms. May gave an overview of the project team's recommended framework and their next tasks which will be finalizing the assessments, small group meetings to vet recommendations, applying the recommendations and briefing the ORMP Coordinated Working Group.

Chair Fernandez noted MACZAC's role as a conduit between OPSD and the public indicates this issue as one of concern. He noted that many MACZAC members have been dealing with managed retreat for a long time and that this is an issue central to MACZAC's mission.

Mr. Sullivan commended Ms. May on the presentation, describing it as being comprehensive, interesting, and understandable.

Ms. Dizon thanked Ms. May for the presentation, specifically the jurisdiction infographic, which is helpful for identifying who might be responsible for different issues, especially on Kaua'i where flooding issues are persistent.

Ms. Yanagisako asked Ms. May if the social implications of managed retreat have been considered, for example moving communities with strong ties as opposed to a community that is newer with looser ties. She noted that often, urban planning processes have overlooked the social impacts.

Ms. May noted that there is literature regarding the subject and that there needs to be a planning process that happens that includes the community and that the process has to build on existing community plans. Not every community is going to have the same vision for how these changes should be made. There need to be conversations about displacement within the community.

Ms. Yanagisako pointed to literature that studied Hurricane Katrina post-disaster impacts and found that socially vulnerable communities suffered more. Ms. May noted that Mr. Anning has looked at the socio-economic impacts of managed retreat. Mr. Anning noted that for this project, the scope is a statewide, broad framework, but that

for implementation there is a necessary, community-based approach. Mr. Anning acknowledged that these issues have been drawbacks in other models, including greater fragmentation of communities, leading to people moving from one area to another, potentially more vulnerable area because that is the only place they can afford. Mr. Anning noted that the project team is trying to create a framework with those things in mind, but given that this project will give general recommendations.

Ms. Nihipali asked about the implications of insurance companies pulling out of different states and if there have been any discussions of longer term planning considerations as communities and shoreline properties might have more difficulties obtaining insurance, financing, etc. Mr. Anning noted that to date, most of the instances where community dislocation or inability of people to get financing, or large vacancies, has been due to wildfires or flood insurance. Currently, there is still a willing pool of buyers who either don't need insurance, are willing to take the risk, or are willing to pay the higher premiums. Mr. Anning also noted that in the context of this project, you can't currently get insurance for the risks associated with erosion. If your land ceases to be under your house and the house falls onto the beach, in most instances that is not a covered event. He noted that they have had discussions related to re-insurance and condominium costs with the insurance commissioners. Buildings are no longer able to get renewed building insurance and that has led to a lack of mortgage backers of commercial properties. This issue is happening in parallel to this project but this does impact the market valuations. The decision by insurers to step away, if that becomes widespread, will result in the reduction of property values at a broader scale, but would also, from an economic perspective, make retreat more viable. Ms. May noted that they do not have data on which coastal properties have mortgages, and that it's their understanding that most of the properties they have looked at are second homes and short-term rentals, so it is difficult to say how impacted those owners would be by the availability of insurance.

Chair Fernandez asked about the availability of the slides. Ms. May said they would be available for MACZAC members to review. Chair Fernandez noted that many believe that there isn't incentive for retreat until disaster strikes, and asked how the public mindset might be moved to being more proactive. Ms. May spoke to the importance of community plans, in terms of awareness for how communities are going to change over time, so that communities can help decide and identify priority areas for further adaptation planning. The hope is that adaptation plans would be funded and developed for those vulnerable areas and hopefully lead to a proactive planning approach. Another opportunity is developing a pre-disaster plan so that considerations of what the community would do post-disaster are made ahead of time. Mr. Anning noted that most emphasis is on post-disaster because federal funding is typically focused on post-disaster, but that NOAA and FEMA have been changing in recent months to be more proactive.

**VIII. Report back from MACZAC HCPO (Hawai'i Congress of Planning Officials Conference 2024) Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) meeting, held March 22, 2024**

MACZAC Member Kimbal Thompson reported on the HCPO PIG meeting and that they submitted their session proposal early in April for the HCPO Conference in September 2024. The HCPO Committee is currently in the process of selecting proposals, with an announcement expected later in May. He outlined their proposal as a combination of panel and group discussion, including a short panel on MACZAC's history and achievements, to be followed by a county- or island-based group discussion, and ending with a summary share-out of each group's main concerns, possibly to identify statewide commonality.

Chair Fernandez noted that PIG members would wait for the HCPO Committee's proposal acceptance and decide on additional attendees by the May 31<sup>st</sup> early bird registration deadline. He also noted that MACZAC had hoped to hold a quarterly meeting at the HCPO Conference but was unable to secure available room space, so the meeting would be scheduled separately at another time.

Dr. Nishimoto, a member of the Hamakua Community Development Plan Action Committee, will ask Hawai'i County if they will cover his registration fee, while Director Evans noted that Planning Commission members might have their fees paid by their county planning departments.

Confirmed to attend: Chair Phil Fernandez, Vice-Chair Donna Brown, Dr. Bob Nishimoto, and Dr. Sylvia Yanagisako.

Possibly attend: Mr. Rich Brunner (possibly a day trip), Ms. Taryn Dizon

Interested in attending: Mr. La'a Poepoe, Mr. Will Sankey

## **IX. Report back from MACZAC Public Engagement PIG meeting, held April 9, 2024**

MACZAC Member Scott Sullivan noted that MACZAC was concerned about the limited dissemination of information to the public regarding State and county agency SLR adaptation strategies and therefore formed the Public Engagement PIG to assist agencies and the public as an advocacy council. While the PIG is in its early stages, plans include monthly meetings to explore effective methodologies for public engagement to inform State and county agencies' adaptation efforts. He suggested collaborating with the CZM Program to enhance public awareness and involvement.

Chair Fernandez noted that the PIG intends to reach out to Ms. Justine Nihipali (NOAA, and former CZM Program Manager) and Ms. Dawn Hegger-Nordblom (former MACZAC member), who have in-depth knowledge about MACZAC's intentions. In response, Ms. Hegger-Nordblom shared that insurance companies are withdrawing from Maui due to the wildfires in August 2023. As a result, people are experiencing increases in their insurance premiums, and some are having their policies canceled because they are not close enough to a fire station.

## **X. Hotspots**

- Maunaloa Bay (O'ahu)

Chair Fernandez noted that Maunalua Bay lacks a fishery resources management plan compared to neighboring bays like Waikīkī and Hanauma Bay, but a plan is underway to turn it into a fishing management area, supported by Mālama Maunalua, a non-profit organization, and involving local fishers. He emphasized the historical issue of disrupted freshwater flow due to the construction of Kalanianaʻole Highway in the 1950s and 1960s, which caused the fishpond at Paikō to fail in production. He highlighted current efforts to install a concrete conduit and restore freshwater flow, including a partnership between DLNR and HDOT with funding support. This collaboration exemplifies multi-agency cooperation and demonstrates progress towards restoring freshwater to Maunalua Bay.

- **Moli'i Fishpond (O'ahu)**

Chair Fernandez discussed efforts to restore the privately owned Moli'i Fishpond at Kualoa Ranch, aiming to make it a model for other fishpond restoration projects, and highlighted the challenge of invasive species, particularly To'au, dominating the fishpond. He emphasized the broader issue of invasive species in Hawai'i and the need for adaptive restoration approaches due to ecosystem changes over the last century. He also noted similar engagement efforts with fishermen at fishponds in He'eia and Hale'iwa, O'ahu.

Mr. Poepoe emphasized that habitat restoration and fishpond maintenance are his group's primary focus, with fish production being a byproduct.

## **XI. Public input on all agenda items**

No public input was provided.

## **XII. New business**

- The next MACZAC meeting was scheduled for Friday, September 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Ms. Dizon emphasized ongoing issues in the Nā Pali Coast area, including the defeat of a bill to regulate commercial permits, which has led to harmful impacts on fisheries due to the prioritization of commercial interests over environmental conservation. Chair Fernandez suggested exploring designated Ocean Recreation Management Areas (ORMAs) as potential tools to regulate commercial activities and address these overtourism issues as hotspots. Ms. Dizon also raised concerns about the use of banned sunscreen in coastal areas. Vice-Chair Donna Brown emphasized the need to prioritize issues directly impacting the coastline and fisheries, such as disruptions to natural habitats, pollution, and human activity affecting fish behavior. Recent scientific research showed that sunscreens are not as harmful to coral reefs as originally thought to be, but the issue is taking a focus away from the core of the problems.
- Dr. Yanagisako pointed out the influence of effective communication strategies on how counties organize to have discussions about their community issues, citing the

absence of neighborhood boards on neighbor islands compared to O'ahu. She highlighted the effectiveness of O'ahu's organized neighborhood boards in conveying ideas and opinions to the State and county agencies.

### **XIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.