

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

MINUTES

Wednesday, April 9, 2025: 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Hybrid format: Zoom and in-person at the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center Multipurpose Room

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center
Multipurpose Room
726 S Kihei Rd.
Kihei, HI 96753

Link to the electronic video recording of the meeting:

files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/czm/maczac/meeting_recordings/20250409_MACZAC_Mtg.mp4

ATTENDANCE

- **Members present (9):** Rich Brunner, Denver Coon, Taryn Dizon, Donna Brown Will Sankey, Scott Sullivan, Sylvia Yanagisako, Kimbal Thompson, Robert (Bob) Nishimoto
- **Members absent (1):** Phil Fernandez
- **Office of Planning and Sustainable Development/Coastal Zone Management (OPSD/CZM) staff present (11):** Debra Mendes, Chris Liu, Josh Hekeia, Rachel Beasley, Sarah Chang, Mary Lou Kobayashi, Shichao Li, Kristi Kimura, Lisa Webster, McKenzie Lim, Ciera McQuaid
- **Others present (5):** Taylor Kaili McKenzie (O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council), Kylie Wager Cruz (member of the public), Nancy McPherson (DHHL), KB Chun (member of the public), Tova Callender (DLNR-DAR)

DISTRIBUTED MATERIAL

- MACZAC meeting agenda for April 9, 2025
- Draft minutes from January 10, 2025
- Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Report to MACZAC (April 9, 2025)

I. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Donna Brown called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm and facilitated round-table introductions.

II. Approval of January 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as circulated.

III. Welcome from OPSD-CZM Manager

OPSD-CZM Manager Chris Liu welcomed everyone and thanked the Maui County Planners for hosting site visits for CZM staff and Maui MACZAC members.

IV. CZM Program Report including funding, focus areas, and project updates

Hawai'i CZM Program

The CZM Program has been drafting a new five-year strategy, the 2026-2030 NOAA 309 Assessment & Strategy, for three enhancement areas that include coastal hazards, wetlands, and ocean resources.

CZM Project Analyst Sarah Chang shared the proposed coastal hazards enhancement area strategy, which is a continuation of the coastal hazards strategy from the current five-year strategy. For the upcoming five-year period, the CZM Program's focus is to continue to build upon the regional shoreline management initiative. Specifically, the program will be looking at developing a framework to support agencies in working together and coordinating efforts around regional shoreline adaptation planning. The coastal hazards strategy and governance framework will work in conjunction with the Pili Na Moku project funded by the NOAA Climate Resilience Challenge that was awarded to UH Sea Grant in 2024. The program will be working within three moku across the State to implement and pilot regional shoreline management.

CZM Project Analyst Lisa Webster shared the proposed Wetlands strategy. Through conversations with partner agencies including the Department of Health and the Commission on Water Resource Management, CZM staff determined that there is a need for updated Statewide wetlands maps. The Wetlands strategy will consider expanding the recent Maui County Wetlands Mapping Project methodology Statewide. Once the updated wetlands maps are completed, county planners will be better able to incorporate wetlands locations into their decision-making processes to protect these vulnerable areas.

CZM Project Analyst Ciera McQuaid shared the proposed Ocean Resources strategy. This strategy will take a full watershed approach to enhance marine ecosystem health. The CZM Program is focused on mauka to makai or ridge to reef actions that support improved ecosystem health. A first action of this strategy is to map the locations of existing efforts throughout each watershed, to include projects of non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and other organizations working on watershed management or restoration. The CZM Program also plans to collaborate with DOH to obtain 309 funds for watershed partnerships with approved watershed management plans.

National Initiatives

Several CZM staff conducted a site visit with the Coral Reef Alliance to see the projects funded by the 2022-2023 BIL funding in Olowalu, Maui. Staff were able to see first-hand how the sediment runoff from the streams were affecting the corals. Work is also being

conducted at Kipuka Olowalu Reserve to remove invasive species and out planting native plants to reduce sediment runoff from the stream.

Another project funded by NOAA's BIL funding is the Dune Restoration, Community Outreach, and Capacity Building at the Hanapēpē Salt Ponds. This project focuses on working with local salt makers on dune restoration to prevent sea level rise from harming and affecting the salt ponds. CZM Manager, Chris Liu, and Kristi Kimura were able to join the first community kick-off meeting for this project in February 2025.

Several MACZAC members, including Taryn Dizon on Kaua'i and Sylvia Yanagisako on West Hawai'i Island, expressed concerns over sediment issues on their respective islands especially up mauka. Ms. Dizon noted that feral ungulates such as goats cause major issues in the upper watershed areas through overgrazing of vegetation, with erosion and run-off impacts being most obvious during rain events.

MACAZC member Sylvia Yanagisako voiced concerns over federal funding cuts to CZM Program projects such as the Pili Na Moku initiative. CZM Program Manager Chris Liu stated that while there is still some uncertainty at the federal level, these funds are considered obligated and staff are continuing work as normal, while still preparing for potential interruptions.

Several MACZAC members volunteered to give comments on the CZM Program's Draft Section 309 Assessment & Strategy for 2026-2030. Comments are due May 3, 2025, and the MACZAC Coordinators will provide members with instruction via email on how to access the draft document.

Link to full CZM Report to MACZAC: [czm_report_to_maczac_2025-04-09.pdf](#)

V. MACZAC Chair and Vice Chair Elections

Current Chair and Vice-Chair, Phil Fernandez and Donna Brown, have terms expiring on June 30, 2025. Members Scott Sullivan and Sylvia Yanagisako have volunteered to take over Chair and Vice-Chair roles respectively, beginning July 1, 2025.

Member Rich Brunner motioned to approve, and Denver Coon seconded the motion. The motion was passed as proposed.

VI. Discussion & Decision-Making: Hawai'i Congress of Planning Officials (HCPO) Conference Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) Formation

OPSD is hosting the upcoming 2025 HCPO Conference for which MACZAC members have been invited to submit a session proposal. The 2024 proposal was not approved, however that proposal will act as a starting point for a new session proposal.

Member Sylvia Yanagisako suggested that the proposal focus more on public engagement on sea level rise. She suggested it would be helpful to get information from State and county planners on their concerns over the general public's perception of sea level rise. Additionally, the session could invite Ketty Loeb from the University of Hawai'i's Institute for Sustainability and Resilience to speak on her results from the several surveys she conducted on State and county elected officials and civil servants.

Member Taryn Dizon suggested to specifically ask the CZM county planners to join the session.

Members Scott Sullivan, Sylvia Yanagisako (Chair of the HCPO PIG), Rich Brunner, Taryn Dizon, and Will Sankey will participate in the permitted interaction group.

The HCPO Permitted Interaction Group was formed and approved as circulated and will sunset August 29, 2025.

VII. Hotspots

- **Lahaina Harbor**

Denver Coon, MACZAC member, shared that the Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DLNR-DOBOR) is planning to present a reopening timeline to Maui County's Mayor in the coming weeks. The tentative goal is to reopen most of the area by June. The road to access the harbor is still being repaired, and there is work being done on other supportive infrastructure in the area. DLNR-DOBOR is also checking the status of the sewer line to the harbor and working to hire consultants to rebuild the harbor's restrooms.

Once DLNR-DOBOR has a tentative timeline, a meeting will be held with harbor users. Recreational and commercial users of the harbor will then be able to see how the harbor can be utilized while construction is taking place.

- **Ka'anapali Ocean Recreation Permits**

Mr. Coon also reported on the ongoing uncertainty surrounding commercial boat operations at Kā'anapali Beach due to a court ruling and lawsuit from 2017. The court has given DLNR until September 17, 2025, to do an exemption termination. Ka'anapali operators are able to operate right now and renew permits. A possible solution they are considering is an EA extension for all permits under HRS 200, Ocean Recreation and Coastal Areas Programs.

VIII. New business

The next MACZAC meeting is scheduled for July 25, 2025. Time and location are to be determined.

Member Rich Brunner suggested a letter of support from MACZAC urging HDOT-Highways to update their 2021 Climate Adaptation Action Plan.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.