



Source: Hawai'i Association of Watershed Partnerships

Meet Our October Presenter

MP #3

Watershed and Native Ecosystem Protection in Hawai'i

Katie Ersbak is a Watershed Planner with the State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DLNR-DOFAW). She has B.A. in Urban Studies and Planning from the University of California, San Diego and a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Katie began her career at DLNR in 2011 when she worked for the Commission on Water Resource Management. Her experience working on water rights issues helped set the stage for a position with DOFAW where she currently coordinates statewide protection efforts for Hawai'i's native forests and watersheds working closely with groups like the Watershed Partnerships. As the head of DOFAW's Watershed Partnerships Program, Katie provides funding to support the partnerships in their efforts to control ungulates, stop the spread of invasive weeds, build fences and engage with decision makers. She currently serves on several committees and advisory groups including the Hawai'i Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee, the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death Working Group, the West Maui Ridge2Reef FAST, and is an ex-officio member of the Hawai'i Association of Watershed Partnerships.



Watershed health is key to long-term resiliency in both the built and natural environments. Our mauka native forests provide clean water to people and industry, influence our climate, afford recreational opportunities, reduce erosion and sedimentation impacts on nearshore waters, store carbon, enhance cultural connections, and provide habitat for native species.

Our October presenter will address the value of watershed management, highlight threats to forested ecosystems, and identify how partners can support ongoing initiatives, including the Governor's [30x30 Plan](#) for Watershed Protection '30% (253,000 acres) of priority watersheds protected by 2030'.

MP #3 GOALS

- A. Increase the amount of protected watershed priority areas based on climatic conditions (elevation and moisture zones) and land use cover types that provide higher recharge and fog capture as stated in the "Rain Follows the Forest Plan" (2011)
- B. Improve coastal and stream water quality

Questions?

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