



**Ha'ikū
Community
Association**

Ha'ikū Community Association
PO Box 1036
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May 12, 2022

Re: CWRM Agenda item #2, Maui County Water Use and Development Plan

TESTIMONY

Aloha Chairperson Case and the CWRM:

The Water Committee of the Haiku Community Association (HCA) has spent considerable time reviewing the Maui County Water Use and Development Plan (WUDP) Draft of 2019 and its various additions and changes.

We also sponsored an online community talk story in 2020 about the WUDP, since no community meetings about the Plan were held in our Ha'iku community during the five year period, 2016-2021 while the plan was being drafted and under public review. At that forum we heard over and over again that the plan was too long and confusing for the average citizen to understand.

We respectfully ask the Commission to consider the following requests from our impacted community:

1. PLEASE FIND A WAY TO PRODUCE AN EDITED VERSION OF THIS PLAN

We note that Hawaii County and Kauai County both appear to have hired professional consultants to put together their WUDP's. The Hawaii County Plan was updated in 2010 and again in 2017. It is 102 pages long, plus a few appendices. Our Maui Plan is over 1200 pages long. The Maui WUDP Executive summary is 144 pages. We join the many citizens who have suggested that the Water Commission should take this plan, contract with a good consultant and have them prepare an edited version that is more concise and substitutes current information for the outdated data found in the Maui plan.

2. PLEASE HAVE THE PLAN RESPECT OUR PA'IA -HA'IKU COMMUNITY PLAN WATER POLICIES

The 1996 Pa'ia- Ha'iku Community Plan identified formulation of sound water policy as one of the major challenges facing the area.

“ The development of new ground water sources in Ha `iku to service the Central Maui area of Wailuku-Kahului and Kihei-Makena raises a concern over the allocation of water resources to these other regions if and when the present and future needs of the Pa `ia-Ha `iku area are not met. ” Plan at p. 11

While twenty-five years have passed, this challenge remains. For twenty years or more there has been no simple process for residents of Ha'iku to secure a County water meter. Ha'iku 's once abundant streams are still regularly drained dry by four levels of Plantation era diversion ditches. In short, Hai'ku residents' access to a reliable water supply for any construction, farming or traditional and customary practice is very limited, and has been for decades.

Because of this indisputable fact, our Pa'ia-Ha'iku Community Plan includes this clear water policy:

“Ensure adequate supply of groundwater to residents of the region before water is transported to other regions of the island.”

This is a sensible, reasonable policy for a region where there is no access to new public water sources. The wording of this policy needs to be included in the Maui WUDP tin Section 15 , where water strategies for the Ko'olau Sector are discussed. Ha'iku aquifer is one of the four aquifers in the Ko'olau Sector. Two of these aquifers are covered by the Pa'ia-Ha'iku Community Plan. The other two are part of the Hana community plan. The Hana community plan has exactly the same water policy, word for word. Both plans were legally adopted by the Maui County Council in the 1990's and retain the force of law. Community Plan policies are based on substantial community input. Community Plan policies should be used to help guide the WUDP's regional policies, yet inclusion of the Pa'ia-Ha'iku Community Plan language was resisted by our Department of Water Supply.

3. PLEASE HAVE THE PLAN INCLUDE REALISTIC DATA ON FUTURE WATER DEMANDS

A number of citizens from various regions gave factual input on the WUDP that was not incorporated into it. They reported that the water needs for rural communities, kalo farmers and other small farmers was underestimated, while the projected water needs for new resorts, luxury area housing developments and industrial scale agriculture was overestimated. Areas like the Ha'iku community were estimated to have a very limited water demand, even though the area is historically very productive crop land and there is resurgent interest in farming operations.

The same skewed database was true for the water demand projections for non-urban water uses in West Maui and central Maui (Na Wai 'Eha.) Current, very precise data is available from Maui's single largest agricultural user, Mahi Pono (currently farming 5,000 acres) in the form of quarterly reports given to the State Land Board, yet this data is not used in the WUDP and grossly inflated figures are used instead. This plan needs a second look at demand numbers.

Rainfall is obviously a critical factor as the aquifer ultimately can only recharge from rainfall, and there is considerable evidence that Ha'iku rainfall has diminished substantially as climate change has reached the Islands. Most of the Ha'iku streams and water sources have neither been well mapped, nor their flows quantified. The inter relationship between surface and ground water is theorized, but not truly known. Water needs of native Hawaiians in the Ha'iku area for traditional agriculture, fishing, and gathering have never been researched or determined. Current and projected local domestic water needs have not been determined with reliable demographic data.

The WUDP does not provide any alternative plan for supplying future water to south or central Maui if the capacity of Ha'iku aquifer proves to be insufficient. It all but assumes in 30 or more descriptions in various chapters of the WUDP document that, after tests and studies are done, there will be ample evidence to move forward with a large well field in the Ha'iku Aquifer to supply south and central Maui's future needs.

The WUDP lists Ha'iku well water development costs of \$3.71/1000 gallons (from a 2013 analyses Maui Department of Water Supply commissioned) to emphasize that it is the most cost-effective future strategy. There is no explanation of how these costs were derived and the 2013 publicly funded study is not posted on the County DWS website- leaving citizens in the dark and doubtful about how the future well costs were projected?

Did cost estimates include funds to compensate any of the scores of Ha'iku families who depend upon their own wells or natural springs, if those water sources are diminished or dry up after large scale groundwater pumping from the new wells? Was there funding included to undertake restoration of Ha'iku's stream flows? Was any consideration given to loss of underground flows that support traditional fishing and gathering along Ha'iku's shoreline? These are all important questions for our community. What is the real cost per 1000 gallons for the proposed wells?

The WUDP should plan for what happens if costs of developing 8 million gals a day of groundwater from the Ha'iku Aquifer are too steep for the amount of clean useable water available. There is no plan if independent studies show there would be serious impacts to the aquifer, streams, fresh water marine discharges and native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices from new wells pumping millions of gallons of water each day. The WUDP should include a well-articulated alternative strategy to develop needed water resources.

4. PLEASE HAVE THE WUDP INCLUDE CONCRETE POLICIES ABOUT WATER EQUITY

It is repeatedly pointed out that south Maui currently depends upon the ground waters of the 'Iao aquifer and streams of Na Wai 'Eha as its only potable water supply. Ten of the 20 largest Maui County DWS water users are south Maui resorts or condos. Witnesses pointed out that while homeowners in Na Wai 'Eha were told not to water lawns and to generally conserve water, large users in south Maui were permitted to use water from the 'Iao aquifer to turn a desert landscape into a lush tropical oasis with no restrictions.

The current WUDP has set very low water conservation goals: the basic 8% reduction suggested by the statewide Water Initiative. Earlier versions of the WUDP (2009) done by a consultant suggested aiming for at least 15% reduction over 20 years. Fifty percent or more of potable water used in the Maui's drier areas is utilized for non-potable purposes such as landscape irrigation. With the uncertainties of long term weather patterns, a 2035 plan like the WUDP should be embracing strategies for far greater substitution of non-potable water sources for areas where large amounts of good clean drinking water is being wasted to irrigate real estate.

The WUDP also does not disclose any of the social injustice implications of plans like the Ha'iku well field, namely that Maui County owns no land where the wells or connecting pipe transmission lines can be constructed. The County already has an agreement with major landowner Alexander and Baldwin/ Mahi Pono that trades corporate land for Ha'iku well sites and transmission easements in return for an appropriate "share" of the water produced.

In practical terms, this means that undeveloped A&B/ Mahi Pono lands will have a guaranteed water source, while others wait in line. This is especially poignant in the Ha'iku aquifer region, where over 300 landowners have waited for a meter on the "Upcountry meter list" for over two decades. Those Ha'iku land owners not lucky enough to be among the 1,500 names on the "list" (which was "closed" in 2013) have no means of even requesting a county water meter.

Our Conclusion:

The WUDP, in sections 14.8 and 15.8, makes assumptions and plans for diverting Ha'iku aquifer water to meet projected future water demands in central and south Maui that we believe are based on out-of-date and inadequate information- both on the central/south Maui water demands and the Ha'iku aquifer's unknown water capacity. In particular, the Ha'iku aquifer and the Ko'olau Aquifer Sector are woefully lacking in reliable data on rainfall trends, recharge, stream flow studies, groundwater discharge to marine fishery areas and the extent of sewage and chemical contamination in the area's groundwater.

Our observation is that Maui County Department of Water Supply (MDWS) is hardly an independent, unbiased party to make science-based assessments of the capacity of our various water resources. The Department is under ongoing political pressure to find water for continuous development. We believe that the Maui WUDP needs to be edited for length,

clarity and accuracy by professional consultants who routinely prepare such plans and include updated, accurate information on water demands and potential water availability

Mahalo for your time, thoughtfulness, and commitment,

/S/ Philip Lowenthal, Chair

HCA Water Committee:

Lucienne de Naie

Charla Konohia

Philip Lowenthal

Lafayette Young

Scott Werden

5/16/22

Aloha Chairperson Suzanne Case, Deputy Director Kaleo Manuel, and members of the Commission on Water Resource Management,

My name is Tara Apo, I am a Maui resident and a student of Sustainable Science Management and the UH Maui college. I am writing to ask you to take some of the following into consideration in your future decisions about the Maui Island Water Use and Development Plan.

I would like to ask that the Commission take more time to work on the the MWUDP. The plan is inaccessible to community members because it is hard to understand and the charts and tables are confusing. This plan needs to be presented in a format the Maui community can understand, so we are able to review and contribute comments about how we intend to manage our water resources. Please bring in a professional to edit and refine the plan, as all the other counties in the state are employing consultants to create their plans.

It also seems that water is allocated generously large scale agriculture, large resorts, and luxury developments, as it has been in the past. These sectors are already our largest water users by far, and we need to take a closer look at how these organizations are using water and how much water they actually need. As an island, we need to have a strong focus on water efficiency and conservation, and our largest water users need to be held accountable to more responsible standards of water conservation and management.

I also strongly believe we need to have a better plan for South/Central Maui's future water supply than drilling new wells in Hā'iku. There is virtually no information about the aquifer in this area and what impacts extracting heavily from it would have on water availability, nearby streams, and East Maui communities. We need to have a better understanding of this water source before we rely on it for such heavy future water demand.

Water is our most precious resource, and climate change and population pressures instill an urgent need for us to manage this resource wisely. We must give the utmost diligence to creating plans for the future of our island's water supply. If it takes more time and energy to make sure we are being good

stewards and ensuring the sustainability, security, and resilience of our island's population and natural resources, than we should allocate more time. Our freshwater supply is finite, and we cannot afford to mismanage this vital resource.

Again, I ask that you bring in a professional consult to make this plan more accessible to the Maui community, and that you take into consideration the concerns I have mentioned.

Thank you very much for your time and the opportunity to testify, and for the important work you do.

Mahalo nui,
Tara Apo