

**From:** [ann Wright](#)  
**To:** [Pomroy, Nadine H](#); [DLNR.CW.DLNR.CWRM](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony from Retired US Army Colonel Ann Wright for CWRM April 15, 2023 meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, April 15, 2023 8:09:18 AM

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April 15, 2023

Aloha Chair and Members of the Water Resources Management Commission,

Thank you for considering these comments regarding the Navy's Informational Briefing on Red Hill.

**This written testimony is for the April 18, 2023 meeting of the Commission on Water Resources submitted via [nadine.h.pomroy@hawaii.gov](mailto:nadine.h.pomroy@hawaii.gov) and [dlnr.cwrn@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlnr.cwrn@hawaii.gov)**

I am retired US Army Colonel Ann Wright. I was also a US diplomat. I have lived on Oahu for 22 years. I have been discussing Red Hill issues with the Oahu Water Protectors, the Shut Down Red Hill Coalition and the Sierra Club-Hawaii.

The following points come from those discussions.

**1. Red Hill should be a CWRM agenda item at each meeting.**

For the last several months the CWRM has either canceled your meeting or relegated the Red Hill agenda item to Executive Session or as a non-action item/informational briefing, which it is today.

As the CWRM is one of the few spaces the public can comment on the shutting down and decommissioning of the entire Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility, I urge CWRM to commit to not canceling any other meetings this year and for each meeting, having Red Hill as an action item once again.

**2. People right now are being potentially poisoned by Navy water, yet no one is warning them.**

Pearl Harbor [water system consumer confidence reports](#) have reported detections of PFOA and PFOS *hundreds of times* above the 2021 EPA interim health advisory limits when they were sampled in 2020 and 2021 (both before and after the latest Red Hill crises), and near or above the recently proposed new enforceable limits for these chemicals.

Families including babies and children, child development centers, businesses all on the Navy's water system need to be notified that they may be exposed to unsafe levels of "forever chemicals" in their drinking water.

Visitors to Hawaii's number one tourist attraction, the Arizona Memorial, need to be warned that drinking water at the Memorial is contaminated.

The fact that the Navy has not taken these steps is unconscionable and the fact that EPA and

the DOH are not forcing them to do so is a failure of the public trust and their very purpose for existing - protecting our environment and our health.

**The CWRM needs to step up where EPA and DOH are failing the public trust.**

**3. The larger environment and the larger community are also at risk.**

In addition to continuous monitoring of the drinking water system, water being discharged from the Pearl Harbor wastewater system and water from Hālawā stream need to be checked for PFAS, given the likely sources of these contaminants (i.e. Red Hill). If the 1,300 gallon PFAS spill was not the first, fishers eating fish from Pu‘uloa, hunters harvesting pigs from the area, and people using water from Hālawā stream for gardening or other purposes need to be informed now about the health risks they have been and are being potentially exposed to.

Until we have confirmation otherwise, the CWRM MUST immediately inform the larger public about the health risks – including cancers, reproductive issues, and serious long term illnesses – that may be associated with the water, soil, and aquatic and terrestrial life in the region surrounding Kapūkakā and the Navy’s other wells.

**4. The Navy needs to come clean so we know the full financial, environmental, and human costs of Navy PFAS use so the broader community can be proactive with assessing and measuring PFAS throughout the archipelago.**

As Honolulu’s Board of Water Supply Ernie Lau demanded - we must have full access to all records for every single AFFF system using PFAS within range of the Navy’s drinking water wells, including an accounting of how much AFFF has been stored and discharged (intentionally and unintentionally) along with how much AFFF remains within these systems.

**As a retired US Army Colonel and a US diplomat, I know that none of this information is in any way relevant to “national security” and must be disclosed FULLY and IMMEDIATELY for the health and lives of the community – including future generations that could be impacted by “forever chemicals” currently in the environment.**

The CWRM must demand that the Navy provide us with this information and if necessary, force them to do so – so that we can respond appropriately to these serious threats to our aquifer and our health, especially as more PFAS contamination is identified.

**5. The CWRM must demand DOH update its environmental action levels to protect our people.**

The EPA established interim health advisory guidelines for the two most well-studied PFAS – PFOA and PFOS – yet the DOH’s environmental action levels for these particular “forever chemicals” still remain hundreds of times higher. The EPA has also announced enforceable limits for these chemicals that are the same or below the DOH’s EALs.

The CWRM must demand DOH provide greater protection for the people of Hawai‘i than the EPA, which has failed time and again to protect communities here and across the continent from environmental contaminants – literally resulting in deaths, life-changing illnesses, and

financial ruin.

**6. The CWRM must demand the EPA and DOH stop cutting deals with the Navy behind the public's back.**

Through the 2015 Administrative Order on Consent the EPA and DOH failed us for the better part of a decade by letting the Navy make promises it never fulfilled – and the EPA appears to be doing it again. Shielding the Navy and denying Hawai'i's threatened communities the right to determine what measures will really keep us safe exacerbates the Navy's violations of our 'āina, wai, people, and human dignity – and flies in the face of the White House's supposed commitment to “environmental justice.”

**7. If there was a time for the Water Commission to be bold, it is now.**

There is no precedent for this situation – the fate of our water, and our island, hangs in the balance. This is not a time to be timid. THIS IS A TIME FOR BOLD ACTION. The Water Commission must use all tools at its disposal to their fullest extent.

**8. The Water Commission has a constitutional duty and the legal authority to protect our public trust resources.**

The Hawai'i Supreme Court has found that all agencies – state and county - have broad authority under the constitution to protect the public trust – including and especially public trust water resources. We must demand the CWRM ensure that the Navy acts with true urgency.

**9. A failure to act decisively will send the wrong message and set a precedent that could destabilize water management in an era when we will need it the most.**

The Water Commission's very authority may be undermined by its actions or inactions in the current situation. By letting the Navy continue to delay actual action to remove the existential threat it has created, choose its own deadlines for corrective action, and openly violate the law - even self-incriminating itself in its admission(s) of water overuse - the Water Commission will set a terrible precedent that future violators will inevitably point to, as they seek leniency or exceptions to our water management laws.

**10. The Navy's request for more water is outrageous.**

The Navy has not only poisoned our aquifer, continuously violated its water use permit, and failed to reduce its ongoing waste of public trust water from the Red Hill Shaft (now likely exceeding one billion gallons), but also shows it has no capacity to maintain a drinking water system in compliance with state and federal standards. Giving the Navy more water to waste, mismanage, and/or contaminate in its decrepit water system defies all reason and logic.

For example, the [EPA investigation reports](#) highlight long standing systemic failures that extend beyond the animals and plants that were found in their drinking water tanks. The report also includes the Navy's lack of compliance to the numerous required written procedures and safeguards; the inability of leaders and water system operators to understand how to even

follow safe drinking water laws; and a general culture of negligence and disregard for the importance of drinking water safety.

**11. The Water Commission must defend our dignity.**

For over a year the Navy has obfuscated; lied (per whistleblower allegations); gaslit poisoned families and the larger community; resisted community, legislator and regulator calls for transparency and accountability; and shamelessly violated state and county laws. The ongoing deference to the Navy in spite of all this undermines our very dignity as a community, and as human beings.

**12. This is not the Navy's water, this is our water.**

The Navy refuses to be transparent with the public, despite reassurance to the opposite. It is now time for the Navy to look into downsizing troops and dependent deployment to Hawai'i. Water main breaks and other related issues call into question the public's trust of the navy and if the navy can be good water purveyors.

**13. Emphasize BWS and contamination.**

Not knowing where the toxic jet fuel plume in Honolulu's aquifer is moving is outrageous. Fuel entering "civilian" water lines would cause island-wide chaos and panic. Once the fuel hits the pipes it will be too late for the broader community to mitigate the consequences of contamination.

Remediation must start now. We demand the CWRM get mediation suggestions and questions from subject matter experts immediately.

**I totally support the Sierra Club's testimony and their Suggested Demands for Water Use Permit Conditions**

1. CWRM must demand a comprehensive and quantified accounting of all water uses by the Navy water system, to be provided on a monthly basis, beginning now;
2. CWRM must demand that a plan, be developed and submitted for approval by CWRM quickly and with implementation to begin no later than May 202, to cease the wasting of water from the Red Hill shaft (reportedly 5 million gallons per day), and to put such water to a reasonable beneficial use;
3. This plan must stay in place, unless and until the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility is defueled and decommissioned, our groundwater aquifer is remediated, and the current contamination crisis is deemed resolved with respect to the impacts to our water resources. Until such time:
  - a. No public trust water shall be used for uses by the U.S. Navy not essential to health and safety, including but not limited to landscaping, golf courses, swimming pools, car

washes, or other inappropriate uses;

b. A 24-hour hotline shall be maintained by the Navy to help identify potential water waste and inappropriate uses of water from the Navy's water system, and any water waste complaints shall be addressed promptly; a monthly report of all hotline calls and detailed information regarding the Navy's response to such calls shall be provided to CWRM;

c. All reports and information relating to the contamination status of our groundwater aquifer must be fully disclosed to CWRM **and the public**; and

d. A monthly **public briefing** and question-and-answer session must be held for members of the public to ask questions to and receive answers from leadership from Indo-Pacific Command, Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, NAVFAC, and other agencies tasked with actions necessary to defuel the Red Hill Facility, as well as any residential property managers with management authority over properties served by the Navy's water system.

4. CWRM must expedite the creation of a EPA certified on-island water testing lab.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration of the issues I have raised,

Ann Wright, US Army Colonel (Retired) and former US Diplomat



Honolulu, HI 96826

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Ann Wright  
Dissent: Voices of Conscience  
[www.voicesofconscience.com](http://www.voicesofconscience.com)

## COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Written testimony from: Susan Pcola-Davis Item: C2

DATE: April 18, 2023 TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Meeting ID: 891 2620 4339/ passcode: 945305

Live stream: <https://www.youtube.com/user/dlnrcwrn/>

### To Provide Written Testimony

We encourage interested persons to submit written testimony in advance of the meeting to allow Commissioners time to review. [nadine.h.pomroy@hawaii.gov](mailto:nadine.h.pomroy@hawaii.gov)  
[dlnr.cwrn@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlnr.cwrn@hawaii.gov)

**To provide video/Zoom testimony : Send your request in a timely manner to: @hawaii.gov with your information, email address, and the agenda item you wish to testify on. Once your request has been received, you will receive a confirmation email with pertinent information. nadine.h.pomroy**

## C. NON-ACTION ITEMS / INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS

2. Joint Task Force Red Hill, Navy, and Defense Health Agency Overviews/Updates of Defueling, Site Remediation and Closure, Red Hill Shaft Recovery and Monitoring, and Medical Support to Families

### **1. De-watering**

On Monday, April 17, the joint task force will begin the dewatering process, which is when water is removed from the fuel tanks to prevent corrosion and check the fuel's quality, according to the dashboard.

**Question: How is the fuel quality determined?**

Condensation due to the fuel tanks venting into the atmosphere cause water to sink to the bottom of the tanks. That water needs to be separated from the fuel and removed in order to prevent corrosion.

**Question: How is the water separated from the fuel before it passes through the drain? How much water will be drained? From how many tanks?**

The water is removed by a drain in the tank's bottom, The process is monitored through a site glass.

**Question: What is a site glass? How are you certain that there isn't any fuel released? What are the safeguards in place? Where will that water go? In containers, in the ground?**

The dashboard has dewatering schedule for April 17-21.

**By the time of this meeting and if the process started on time, please tell us how Monday went? Were there any curve balls?**

**Dashboard: De-watering link on Dashboard PDF for more info doesn't work.**

**Re-use: Can the Navy accept that the island residents do not want a re-use of this facility?**

**Red Hill Shaft: Will the Navy tell it's customers if and when Red Hill Shaft is being used again for the distribution system?**

**When will the Navy/DoD stop using national security as an excuse for not telling the truth?**

## **2. Red Hill Defueling Plan Supplemental 1B and Supporting Documents (September 28, 2022)**

**Question: When can the public expect to see updates, revisions and/or additions to these documents? Or is a Supplement 1C forthcoming?**

**Including enclosures and tables?**

### **3. Medical Support to Families**

**Until the Navy and Military Healthcare System**

**STOP GASLIGHTING**

**and start actually helping these sick families: nothing will change. They will continue to be ill and get worse. Trying to establish whether their symptoms are Jet Fuel contamination is STONEWALLING THEM!**

**Provide the tests, provide the care, FIRST DO NO HARM!  
This is exasperating! This IS NOT psychological nor is it psychosomatic.**

#### **4. The rest of the story**

**The Navy and DOD still have NOT regained trust. They need to start by telling the truth. What was in the water? What were the additives in JP-5?**

**STOP DRAGGING THIS OUT**



Good morning. My name is Katherine McClanahan and my husband is a full time Air Force Reservist and though in uniform each day, we are considered a civilian family. I lived on Hickam from Aug 2019 until late 2022.

I want to comment on the MEDICAL SUPPORT TO Red Hill FAMILIES or lack there of. Not all families living on the Navy's water lines were military. Thousands of both civilian and military families were exposed and hundreds have left the island and now struggle to receive proper medical care both on island and on the mainland.

What I believe the DOD has done so far has been driven by fear of legal culpability and a defensive medical posture. That posture has caused our families with symptoms to spend tens of thousands of dollars, tied the hands of well intended doctors while family members are physically & medically suffering and struggling in a variety of ways to include financial ruin, medical illness/ailments, and emotional heartache.

\*Toxic Exposures do not sicken everyone but they are real, medically dangerous, and result in both immediate and future illness for some people exposed.

Bottom line: The Navy/DOD has not provided families and civilian doctors the information or medical care necessary to properly address symptoms and illness. Over the last 17 months, the Navy/DOD could have led families through this crisis and changed the narrative if they wanted. But they have proven over and over again in the area of medical care, they have been unwilling or unable.

Last November of 2022, during the Red Hill Tank Advisory meeting, I testified and asked for families and doctors to be provided a concise list of every toxin or chemical expected to have been leaked at Red Hill and any chemicals utilised there that had the potential of causing our symptoms.

\*Not 1 word came back to me from the DOD nor any families I have spoken to.

\*Not 1 word came back regarding Antifreeze as being a chemical of concern- a test result they KNEW OF results by early JANUARY 2022, never mentioning because someone is making the decision to keep families and doctors in the dark.

\*Not 1 word came back from the DOD regarding information families could provide their civilian doctors on the mainland. If not for the Hawaii Dept of Health providing a memo in spring of 2023, a memo driven by families' testifying at the Honolulu Board of Water Supply meeting, not by the DOD, families would still be unable to provide doctors expert information on what chemicals and levels are of potential concern as the cause of ongoing symptoms.

The DOD is repeating the story of Camp Lejeune. Congressional hearings in 2010 titled "Camp Lejeune: Looking Back, Moving Forward" brought experts in to evaluate what went wrong at Camp Lejeune. I suggest you go back and listen to those hours of hearings- I have and they are both frightening and enlightening because the actions that have happened at Red Hill over the last 2 years are history repeating itself.

Highlights include water experts testifying:

- 1) Drinking water and groundwater TEST RESULT DELAYS prevented experts from intervening on behalf of water users. For Hawaii, the HDOH did not receive groundwater results from May to Dec 2021 until August of 2022.

- 2) The LACK of information provided to medical experts prevented doctors/families from identifying early cancers and diseases, early detection experts testified would have saved lives.
- 3) The LACK of knowledge that the daily chemical/fuel handlers along with water system providers within the DOD had on the negative impacts contaminants have on peoples' health resulted in careless handling and failures to protect the water source and ultimately people's health.

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As I listened to those hearings, I felt like I was reliving the last 2 years since Red Hill. It is time the DOD learn from Camp Lejeune and Hawaii stops another tragedy like the families endured at Camp Lejeune. Someone in the DOD has to step up and lead- in the area of medical care since Red Hill, that has not happened. I believe the future of Oahu and your families' health is at grave risk.

Thank you.

Congressional hearings Camp Lejeune- Transcript

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-111hrg58485/html/CHRG-111hrg58485.htm>

Camp Lejeune Video recording of hearing:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WC6t\\_J8Kd4o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WC6t_J8Kd4o)

To: CWRM 4/18/2023 Testimony on Red Hill

From: Gina Hara, Halawa Valley

- 1) **Okinawa's Aquifer** was destroyed by PFAS (a large amount of AFFF concentrate from an Air Force hanger accident – bbq nearby hanger set off fire fighting foam so that all the rivers had white foam bubbles – all drinking water requires filters and also the Okinawan people cannot use their wells.
- 2) **Remediation** as defined by the Navy or DOD is only – skimming and natural attenuation which **means doing nothing** (google “natural attenuation” and you will see the term is used by the DOD to explain to thousands of communities with contaminated water.
- 3) See: EWG Interactive Map of the **PFAS contamination crisis**: 6/8/22 data shows **2,858 sites** in 50 states and two territories

[https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/pfas\\_contamination/](https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/pfas_contamination/)

CONCLUSION:

- 1) The community needs to be able to participate on equal terms in decision making –
  - a) Meetings are structured for only one way (not two way communication) and has no follow through on points made – each point made needs to be circled back to. This never happens even with the information – again, the example of 2014 – 27,000 gallon spill + Navy experts forecasting large spill in 10 years high chance – nothing happened despite so many meetings.
- 2) Because of the paid structure, regulators are interacting more with the DOD than with the community – This is why the key concern for Ryan Imata (drinking water) – is for the emergency use of water for the bases, vs the contamination of water for the population.
- 3) Clarify why 3 million or 5 million gallons a day is necessary to be pumped – is this to ensure the water that is contaminated is pulled towards the pumping area vs contaminating the entire South shore public water lines? We heard the over-pumping was related to a leak – what happened to that and how much was that leak – was it the difference, or 2 million gallons a day?
- 4) The Navy and DOD thinks they only need to speak to Dept of Health and EPA – Even the EPA asked this year, what is so important about talking to the Board of Water. Even the Navy actually asked this. The BOW and CWRM and should be in the Joint Task Force committee, not just as passively hearing reports from JTC – like the legislators who get to go to update meetings. Other than the BOW, I don't ever remember seeing the legislators or other regulators in the FTAC meetings (every six months) – and the FTAC meetings area so shallow, rushed with so much testimony going on the record and then into outer space, it does not get anything done.
- 5) This is why the defueling might get done because the Joint Task Force is made up of many parts of the DOD (not just the Navy) – however, if there is no Joint Task Force mission incorporating Remediation (real remediation with microorganisms that are indigenous and combined with fuels/toxin eating microbes) – Oahu will be left holding the bag like Kahoolawe. Vapor monitoring and trying to come up with ground modeling (unsuccessful this past decade) have nothing to do with actual remediation which involves removing toxins, decomposing toxins, accounting for the toxins (what came in and what is missing, and what is the end plan for each of the introduced toxins). Thank you.