



# STATUS OF THE HAWAI'I WATER PLAN FRAMEWORK UPDATE

PRESENTATION TO THE COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
BY THE CWRM PLANNING BRANCH

FEBRUARY 18, 2025

# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- What is the Statewide Framework for Updating the Hawai'i Water Plan?
- Why are we updating the Framework?
- What is our vision for the new Framework?
- Proposed changes to the Framework
- Next steps



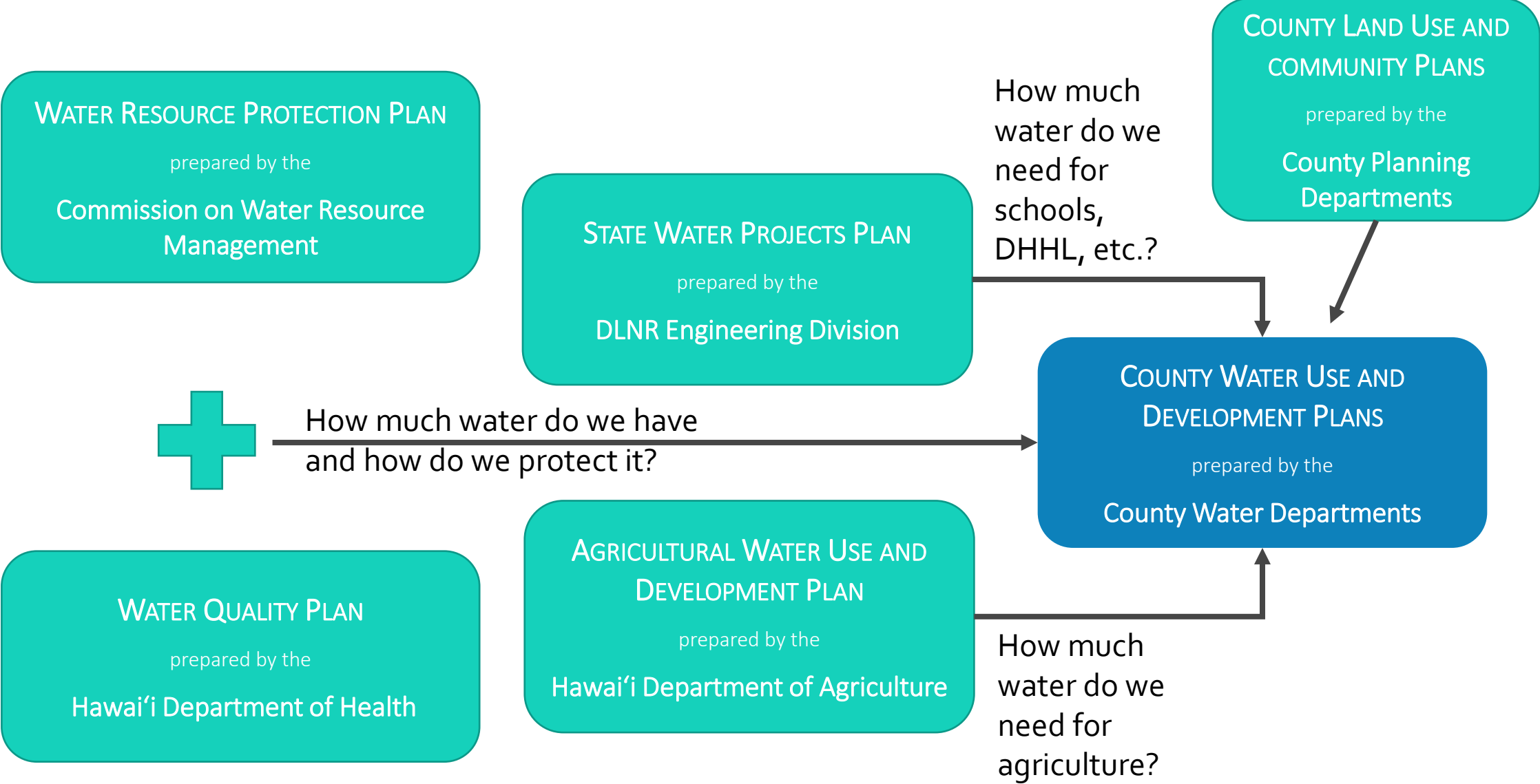
# THE WATER CODE and the HAWAI'I WATER PLAN

There is a need for a [program of comprehensive water resources planning](#) to address the problems of supply and conservation of water. The [Hawai'i water plan](#), with such future amendments, supplements, and additions as may be necessary, [is accepted as the guide for developing and implementing this policy](#).

- §174C-2(b) HRS

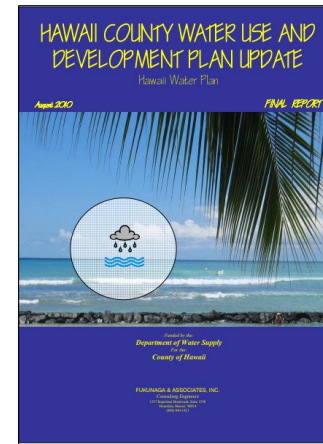
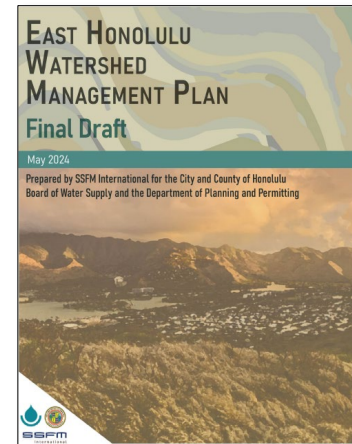
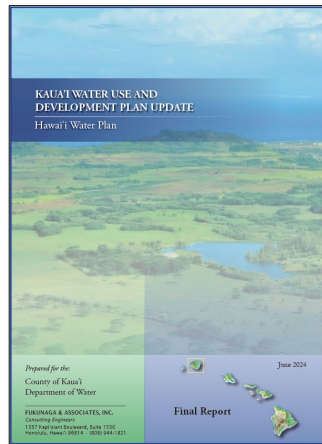
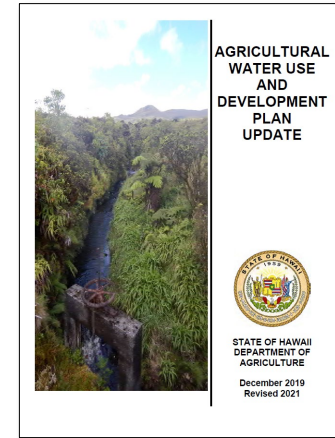
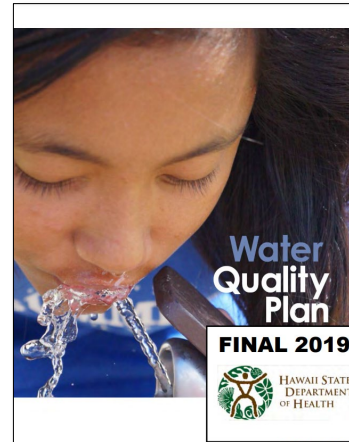
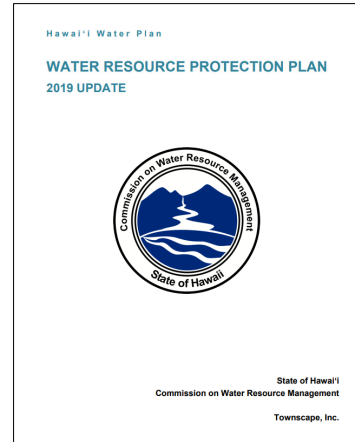
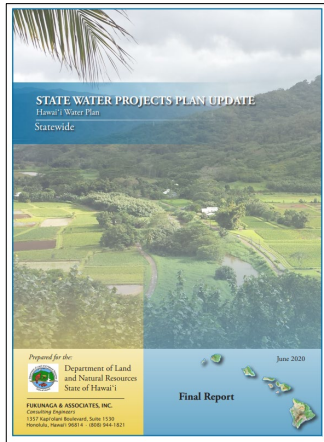


# THE HAWAI'I WATER PLAN





# THE HAWAI'I WATER PLAN



Do these plans provide sufficient guidance for the proper management of Hawai'i's fresh water resources?



**“The iterative update process envisioned by the Commission is underway, but it does not appear to be fully implemented”**

- Water Resources Climate Change Adaptation (2012)

**“The plan lacks accurate data, is non-standardized, and does not serve as a decision-making tool”**

- Management Audit of the Commission on Water Resource Management (1996)

**“The Hawai'i Water Plan has shortcomings”**

- Management Audit of the Commission on Water Resource Management (1996)

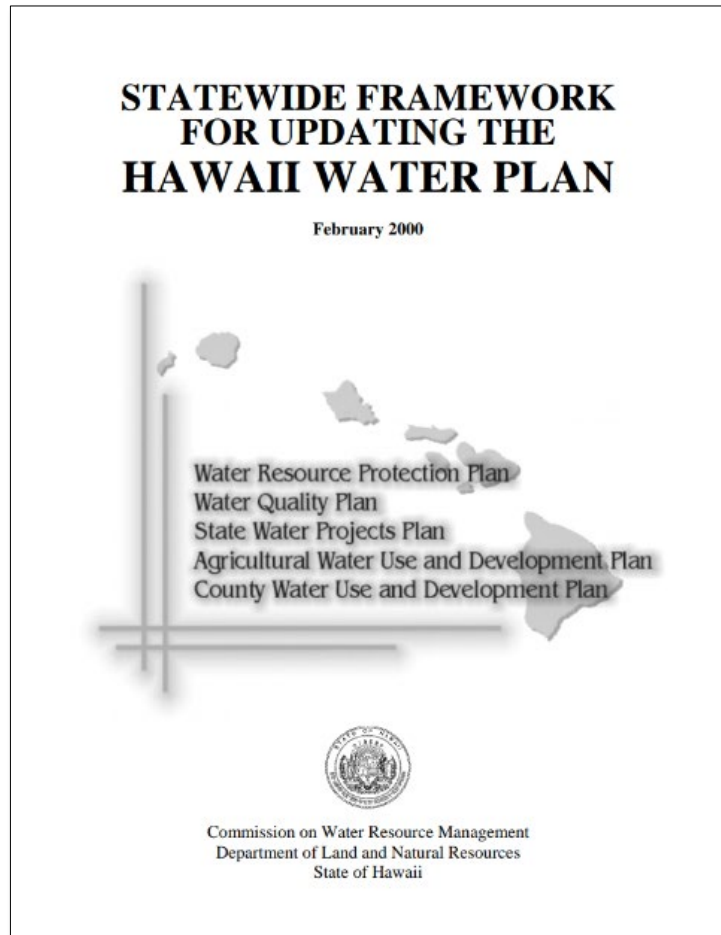
**“The current Hawai'i Water Plan falls short of its intended objectives”**

- Statewide Framework for Updating the Hawaii Water Plan (2000)

**“Additional planning requirements will result in more comprehensive quantification of water uses and needs”**

- Review Commission on the State Water Code (1994)

# WHAT IS THE HAWAI'I WATER PLAN FRAMEWORK?



- “[t]he commission may add to the Hawai‘i water plan any other information, directions, or objectives it feels necessary or desirable for the guidance of the counties in the administration and enforcement of this chapter.” - §174C-31(n) HRS
- Provides additional instructions to help with the preparation and update of the HWP component plans



# WHY ARE WE UPDATING THE FRAMEWORK?

- 25 years since last update
- Create a more user-friendly document
- Hawai'i Water Plan component plans *still* not meeting expectations
- Elevate the importance of the HWP
- Live up to Water Code expectations and fulfill CWRM mandates
  - “Comprehensive” and “integrated” water planning
  - “State has an obligation to protect, control and regulate the use of Hawai'i's water resources for the benefit of its people.”

– Hawai'i Constitution, Article XI, Section 7



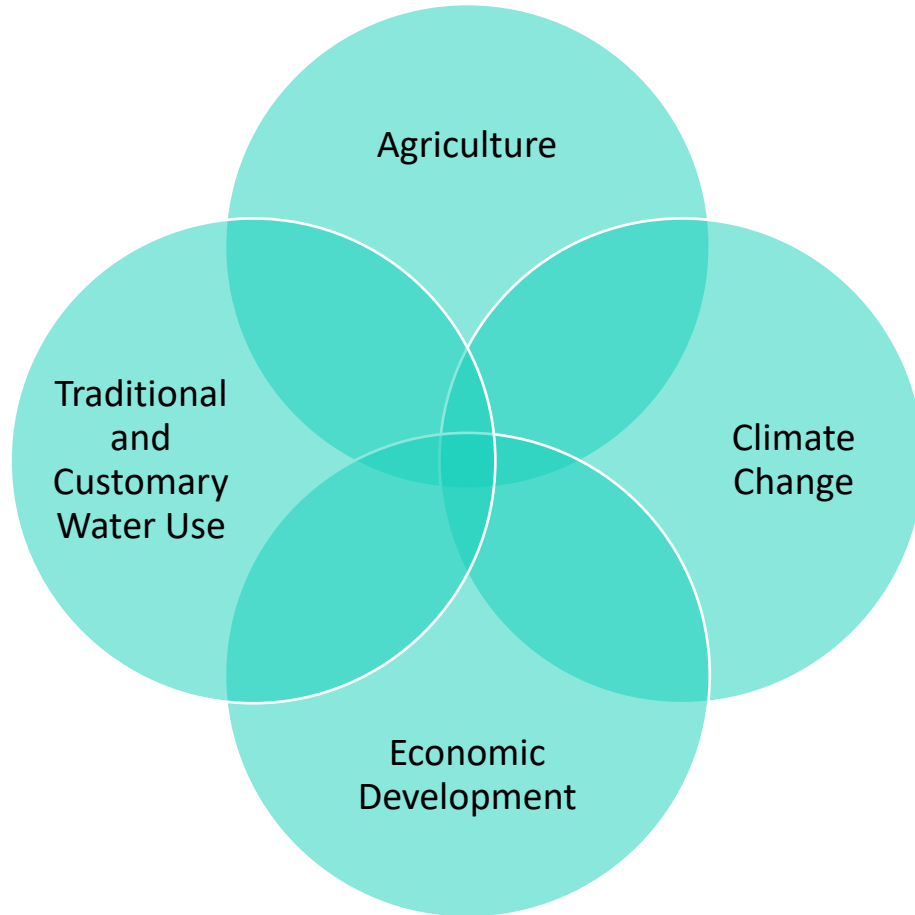
# WHY ARE WE UPDATING THE FRAMEWORK?

- Current Framework does not address:
  - Impacts of climate change on water resources
  - Explicit acknowledgement and accounting of public trust uses
  - Native Hawaiian values and perspectives
  - Interconnectedness of *wai* (“One Water” thinking)
  - Guidance on engagement with community and relevant stakeholder agencies
  - Improving utility of plans for agencies and the public

# ENVISIONING A NEW FRAMEWORK

Focus Groups  
and Stakeholder Surveys

Values



# WHEN PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WATER WE MUST ASK OURSELVES:



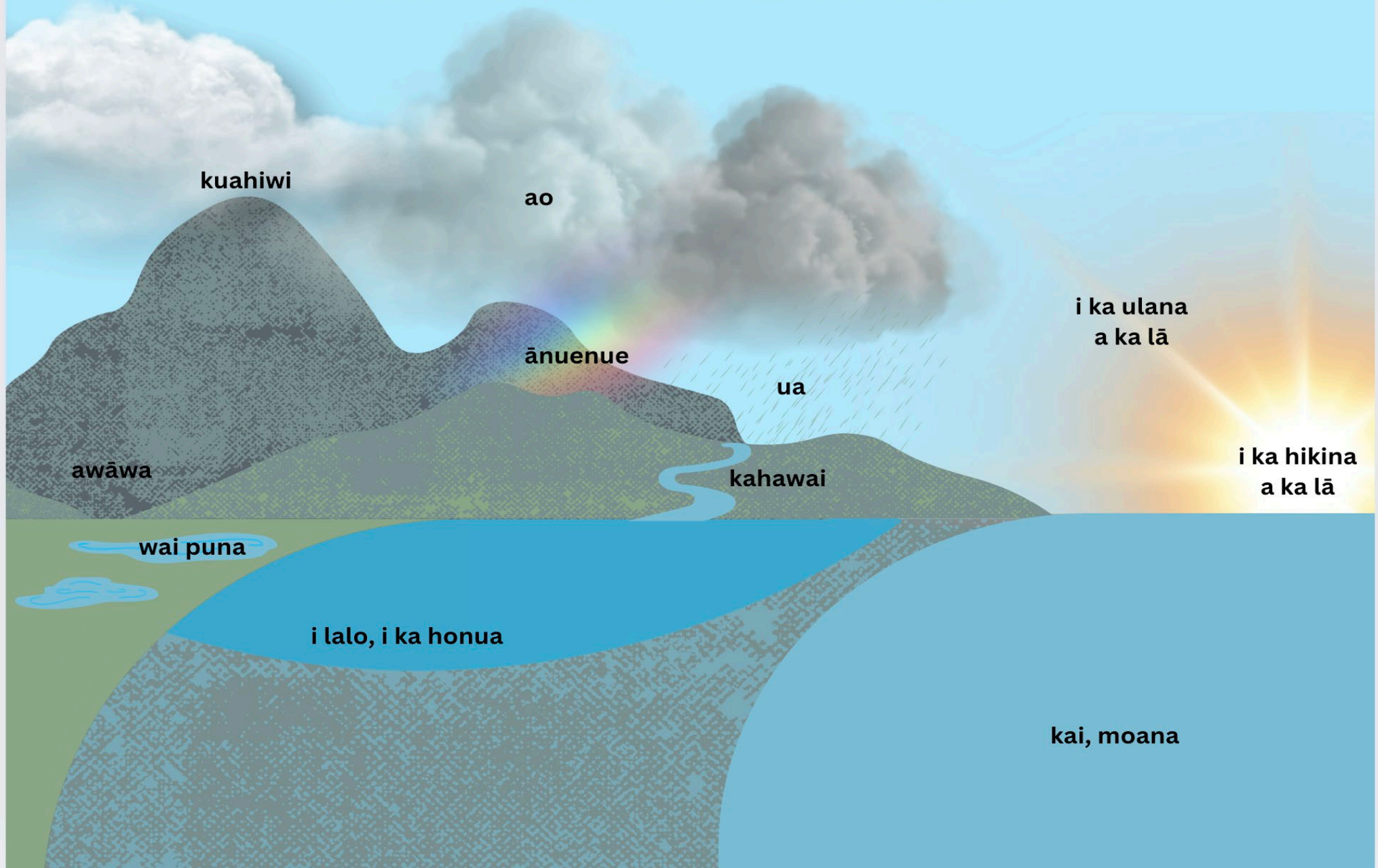
*Aia i hea ka wai a Kāne?*

(Where are the waters of Kāne?)





# Aia i hea ka wai a Kāne?







# PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE FRAMEWORK

- Create an aesthetically appealing document
- Use "*He Mele No Kāne*" and the 5 values to inform updated Framework Objectives
- Hawai'i Water Law 101
- Explain the utility of each plan (why do we need these?)
- Explicit requirements vs. recommendations
- Checklist for plan preparers
- Identify next steps post - Framework adoption (ex: changes to HRS, etc.)



# ADDRESSING THE FRAMEWORK PUKAS

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- Require climate change scenario planning
- Cite and encourage use of publicly available climate change models/tools
- Embed climate change information into the data used by plan preparers (ex: Sustainable Yields)
- Use non-HWP component plans (ex: Drought Plan, Water Reuse Plan, etc.) to inform strategies and climate change mitigation measures

*"Climate adaptation is not yet a fully implemented principle of the water planning process in Hawai'i."*

- Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation in Hawai'i: Adaptive Tools in the Current Law and Policy Framework (2012)



# ADDRESSING THE FRAMEWORK *PUKAS*

## PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC TRUST

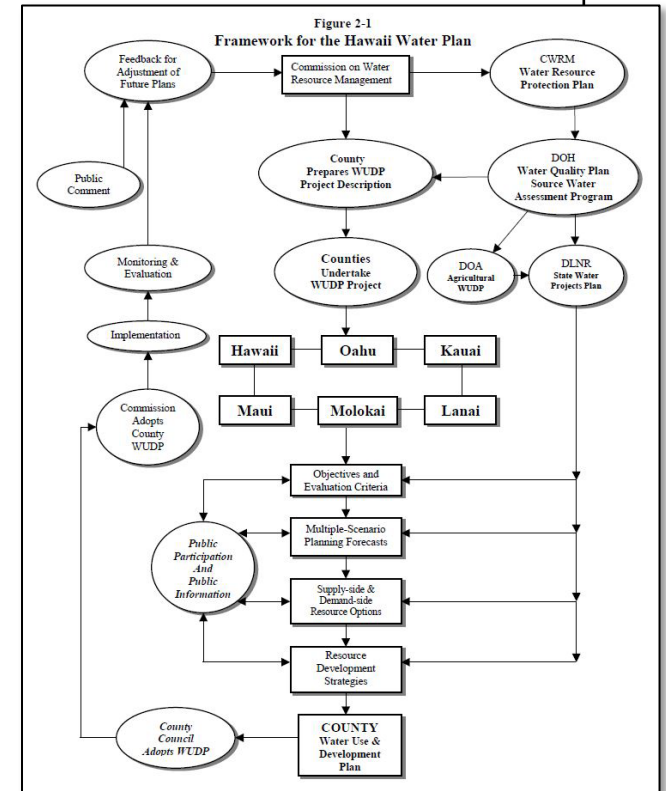
- Chapter on Water Law and water management in Hawai'i
- Account for the water needs of DHHL, Traditional and Customary (T&C) practices, etc.
- T&C inventory to inform Ka Pa`akai – effort led by CWRM?
- Emphasize public trust duties extend beyond CWRM to other agencies



# ADDRESSING THE FRAMEWORK PUKAS

## PLAN INTEGRATION AND TIMELY UPDATES

- Embed “One Water” thinking for agency consultation (esp. water and land use planning)
- Pursue funding to ensure 5-year updates
- Allow for partial plan updates and define update triggers
- Remove barriers to adoption (ex: adopting plans by ordinance)
- Proper sequencing of plan updates
- More “ownership” of process and involvement by CWRM staff to hold plan preparers accountable



# ADDRESSING THE FRAMEWORK *PUKAS*

## RECENT AND RELEVANT DATA

- Re-define what is considered the “best available information”
- Address missing data for private water systems
- Curate list of publicly available data and resources (update annually)
- Make CWRM data more accessible
- Ensure timely updates of HWP component plans



“If you can’t measure it,  
you can’t manage it”

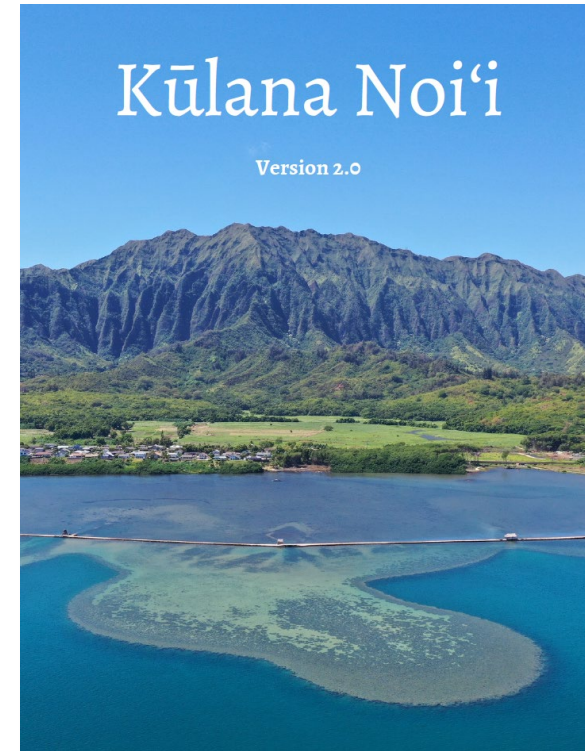




# ADDRESSING THE FRAMEWORK *PUKAS*

## STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Include guidance on public involvement strategy and *Kūlana Noi'i*
- Formation of HWP working groups post-plan adoption
- Create a Hawai'i Water Plan dashboard to track progress on plan implementation
- Future CWRM outreach campaign?

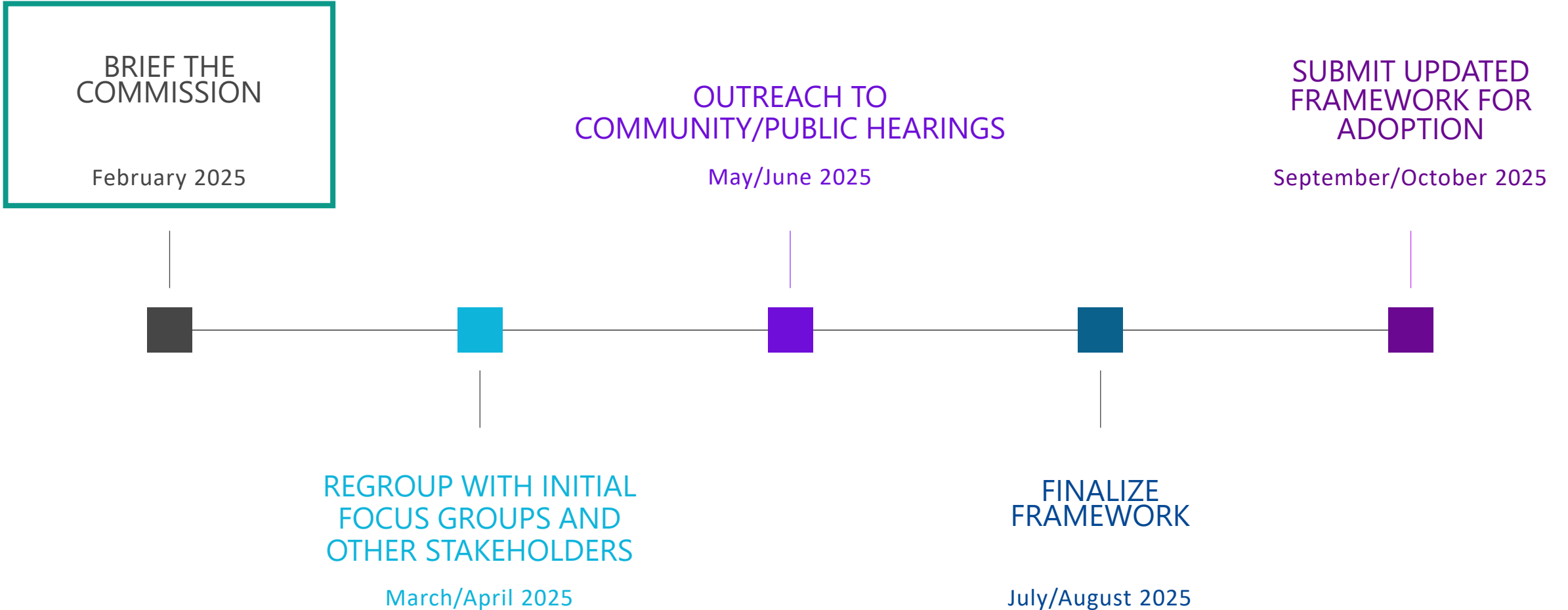


# NEXT STEPS

- Continue to think through amendments/changes to plan requirements
- Hire professional graphic designer
- Re-group with initial focus groups and other stakeholders
- Public hearings
- Formal adoption of Framework update by Water Commission



# NEXT STEPS





A lush tropical forest scene with a river flowing over large, dark rocks. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding greenery. The forest is dense with various types of ferns and other plants. The word "QUESTIONS?" is overlaid in white, serif font in the center of the image.

QUESTIONS?