

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
Engineering Division  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 22, 2016

Board of Land and Natural Resources  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii

KAUAI

REQUEST ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONS) FOR THE PROPOSED MANA DRAG RACE STRIP ELECTRICAL AND LIGHTING UPGRADES, MANA, KAUAI, HAWAII

BACKGROUND:

The Kauai Raceway Park is home to a National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) sanctioned quarter mile race track on land under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. The facility – one of only two NHRA sanctioned race tracks in the State – is operated by the Garden Isle Racing Association (GIRA). GIRA is a non-profit corporation which runs monthly events at the Kauai Raceway Park, promoting safe motorsports and responsible street driving.

GIRA hosts monthly events at the park from March to November of each calendar year. During the months from March through September, events are run during the evening; the preferred time for drag race events is in the evening because heat can adversely affect car performance. This time period is outside of the peak seabird fallout period (September 15 to December 15). Lighting during evening events is currently provided by a mixture of street-light style poles and portable lights. Power to the facility is provided by portable generators.

The project proposes the installation of specialized stadium-style, downcasted light poles that will project the lights downward and mauka. This will improve the visibility and safety along the racetrack while providing mitigation measures to protected animals. The project will also reduce reliance on temporary lighting and portable generators.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:

The project is located in the Mana area on the southwest shore of Kauai. The Kauai Raceway Park – which includes an existing drag race strip, bleacher seating, control building, parking, pit areas, and other associated facilities – is located on a portion of Tax Map Key (TMK) parcels (4)1-2-002:036 & 040, which are owned by the State of Hawaii and operated by the Garden Isle Racing Association (GIRA) under Revocable Permit No. S-7805. The facility occupies the makai portions of parcels 036 and 040, while agricultural uses occupy the mauka areas of the parcels.

**ITEM L-1**

The facility is accessed via a gravel-paved road located on TMK parcel (4)1-2-002:009, which is owned by the State and operated by the Kauai County, Department of Public Works as part of the Kekaha Landfill. The access road is utilized by both the Kekaha Landfill and the Kauai Raceway Park. The access road occupies an approximately 2-acre portion of parcel 009.

The project is located approximately 1 mile northwest of Kekaha on the makai side of Kaumualii Highway (State Route 50). The project site is bordered by the Kekaha Landfill to the northwest, agricultural land uses to the northeast, a shrimp farm to the southeast, and the beach and Pacific Ocean to the Southwest.

The project involves installation of numerous stadium-style light poles. Because of the proximity of the project site to the shoreline, downcast lighting and facing the lights mauka are proposed to mitigate possible adverse effects to the local seabird population. The project will include electrical provisions for installation of a LED scoreboard; an underground electrical connection for the scoreboard will be installed at approximately the quarter-mile point of the race track. The scoreboard itself may be purchased as part of the project, however, will be installed by others at a later date.

In order to provide power to the proposed lighting and scoreboard, overhead electrical lines will be extended from the existing KIUC system on Kaumualii Highway to the project site. The project proposes installation of approximately 0.8 miles of new overhead electrical lines, strung on utility poles installed at a maximum spacing of 200 ft. It is anticipated that 26 utility poles will be installed by the KIUC. The new overhead lines will extend from Kaumualii Highway down the facility access road to the entrance of the Kauai Raceway Park, turn east to run parallel to the drag strip, and finally cross to the makai side of the drag race strip at approximately the halfway point of the track. Our discussions with USFWS and DoFAW regarding mitigation measures to seabird strikes, has resulted in construction of the overhead lines lower than the top of the nearby ironwood trees. Because the treeline is readily visible, it will cause seabirds to fly above the overhead electrical lines and should minimize the chances of bird strikes. From the final overhead utility pole, electrical lines will be run in an underground conduit parallel to the drag race strip. The underground conduit will stretch from the start of the drag race strip to the shoreline setback line. The proposed light poles and scoreboard will draw power from this underground electrical conduit.

The Draft Environmental Assessment has been published by the State of Hawaii, Department of Health, Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) in the July 8, 2015 bulletin and is posted on the OEQC website at [http://oeqc.doh.hawaii.gov/Shared%20Documents/EA\\_and\\_EIS\\_Online\\_Library/Kauai/2010s/2015-07-08-KA-5B-DEA-Mana-Drag-Race-Strip-Upgrades.pdf](http://oeqc.doh.hawaii.gov/Shared%20Documents/EA_and_EIS_Online_Library/Kauai/2010s/2015-07-08-KA-5B-DEA-Mana-Drag-Race-Strip-Upgrades.pdf). Attached for your information is the Final Environmental Assessment.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

<b>Project:</b>	Mana Drag Race Strip Electrical and Lighting Upgrades
<b>Agency:</b>	Department of Land and Natural Resources Engineering Division 151 Punchbowl Street, Room 221 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
<b>Consultant:</b>	The Limtiaco Consulting Group 1622 Kananui Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
<b>Tax Map Key(s):</b>	(4) 1-2-002: 009, 036 & 040
<b>Proposed Action:</b>	Installation of approximately 19 stadium-style light poles along the length of the existing drag race strip and provisions for future installation of an LED scoreboard. Overhead electrical lines will be extended from Kaumualii Highway to the facility to provide power to the proposed improvements. The project includes appurtenant electrical facilities such as transformers and underground electrical conduits.
<b>Land Area:</b>	20 acres
<b>State Land Use District:</b>	Conservation District, Limited Subzone
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	Mana Drag Race Strip
<b>Present Zoning:</b>	Parcel 009 – Conservation Parcel 036 – Agriculture/Conservation Parcel 040 – Conservation
<b>Special Management Area:</b>	Yes
<b>Permits That May be Required:</b>	Conservation District Use Permit (Departmental), County Shoreline Setback Determination, Special Management Area Use Permit, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (Section 402, Clean Water Act).

## FINDINGS AND REASONS SUPPORTING ANTICIPATED DETERMINATION:

Significance criteria evaluation of the proposed project indicates that there will be no significant adverse effects to the environment. In summary, the project will not:

1. Adversely impact natural or cultural resources.
2. Permanently curtail the beneficial uses of the environment.
3. Conflict with the State's long-term environmental policy goals or guidelines.
4. Have adverse effects to the economic or social welfare of the community or state.
5. Have substantial adverse impacts to public health during project construction activities.
6. Have adverse effects to public facilities.
7. Permanently degrade the environmental quality.
8. Commit resources or energy for a larger action. There are also no cumulative effects on ecosystem resources or human communities based on the project's limited scope and scale.
9. Affect any rare, threatened or endangered species or its habitat. Appropriate mitigation measures have been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Division of Forestry and Wildlife.
10. Have detrimental effects to air or water quality or ambient noise levels. As required, any potential impacts to air, water quality, or noise levels will be addressed through the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with State and County regulations.
11. Suffer damage by being located in an environmentally sensitive area, such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, beach, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, freshwater, or coastal waters. The project is located within Flood Zones AE and VE with flood elevations ranging from 8 to 10 feet. As such, the project will comply with National Flood Insurance Program regulations for development within the flood hazard district, as outlined in Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations. A coastal evaluation, completed in April 2015, determined that the proposed improvements are located sufficiently distant from the shoreline such that they will not impact coastal processes. The proposed improvements will be located outside of the County shoreline setback area.
12. Have substantial effects to scenic vistas and view planes identified in county or state plans or studies.
13. Consume a substantial amount of energy.

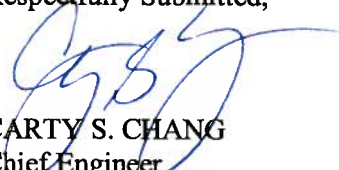
For the reasons above, it is anticipated that the proposed project will not have any significant effect in the context of Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes and Section 11-200-12 of the Hawaii Administrative Rules.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Land and Natural Resources:

1. Accept the Final Environmental Assessment for the proposed Mana Drag Race Strip Electrical and Lighting Upgrades project.
2. Approve the issuance of a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for the proposed project. Based on the review of the Final Environmental Assessment and the comments received during the 30-day period in addition to The Limtiaco Consulting Group's responses, find that the project will not have a significant effect on the environmental and cultural resources of the area.
3. Authorize the Chairperson to publish a FONSI for the proposed project in the Office of Environmental Quality Control's "The Environmental Notice", and approve other terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Chairperson to best serve the interests of the State.

Respectfully Submitted,



CARTY S. CHANG  
Chief Engineer

Approved for Submittal:



SUZANNE D. CASE, Chairperson

Attachment