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DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY
COUNTY OF MAUI
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February 25, 2020

Honorable Michael P. Victorino
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

Michael P. Victorino 2/25/20
Mayor Date

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For Transmittal to:

Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Water, Infrastructure, and Transportation Committee
Maui County Council
200 S. High Street
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

Dear Chair Sugimura,

SUBJECT: Status of Grants Under Department of Water Supply and Benchmarks for Grantee Performance (WIT-13)

Thank you for your February 20, 2020 request for information regarding grants under the Department of Water Supply (DWS) Watershed Protection Grants Program. We provide responses to your questions in the order they are posed:

- 1. In correspondence dated November 18, 2019, you stated to the Water and Infrastructure Committee: "Administration and Overhead costs cannot exceed 15 % of the total grant award amount for each grantee." Does the Department assess whether any administrative payroll costs are included in the Personnel category of the grantee's budgets?**

Requested payroll and fringe benefits include project managers, field crew, outreach coordinators and other program and data assistant positions. A program manager's tasks

"By Water All Things Find Life"

may include developing grant proposals, managing program budgets and report on deliverables. Therefore, it is assumed that a portion of funded payroll is used for internal project administration. Administrative and overhead capped at 15% of the total grant award is intended to provide for the sponsoring grant administrator that handles compliance, accounting and the expertise grant management oversight. It should also provide for administration of payroll and human resource services for the sponsored project.

- 2. Is it accurate to assume most position salaries for grantees are only covered at 35 percent by Department funds? If so, is that percentage set by the Department or the grantee?**

There is no set percentage for what portion of grant project salaries the DWS will cover. The portion funded depends on grantee request, justification for position and deliverables. For example, DWS funds 16% of a forester position payroll as it corresponds to the projected hours needed to meet the deliverables, while DWS funds 80% of a field crew position payroll dedicated to miconia removal.

- 3. Has the Department considered that an apparent hurdle for grantees retaining field workers is the relatively low salaries for those positions, especially when considering frequently harsh working conditions? If so, will the Department be addressing this concern?**

The responsibility to budget for, recruit and retain staff lies with the grant projects. Salaries and fringe for field workers and other grant positions are established by the grantees and grant administrator rates and guidelines. Certain grantees such as The Nature Conservancy do not disclose confidential salary information to DWS and the department has no role dictating other organizations' salary rates.

- 4. Is Tri-Isle Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. still supporting grantees with partnerships and services? If not, is the Department assisting grantees in finding other organizations that can provide similar support?**

Tri-Isle Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. is no longer administering grants funded by DWS. We support grantees wishing to transition to alternative administrators. For example, we recently facilitated Auwahi Forest Restoration Project transition from the University of Hawaii Office of Research Services to a new entity.

- 5. Does the Department have any staff positions dedicated solely to watershed protection and management, or does the County rely entirely on nonprofit organizations to create and fill jobs with that singular focus?**

The Department has staff positions that are partially but not solely dedicated to water conservation and source protection, which includes watershed protection. We rely on the expertise of foresters, ecologists and land managers within both nonprofit organizations

and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife to carry out their primary missions established in watershed management plans.

- 6. Concerning community outreach and grassroots efforts to promote water conservation and education, how many of the organizations the Department works with are previous grantees versus new organizations?**

The outreach by organizations that DWS funds through grant subsidies is focused on watershed protection and restoration rather than water conservation. With regards to “previous grantees versus new organizations”, the organizations funded have not changed significantly with one new grantee since 2014.

- 7. Is the Department working with grassroots groups and smaller, newer nonprofit organizations to expand community outreach efforts to promote water conservation and education?**

The Department’s water conservation program includes incentives and outreach to customers to reduce water use. We collaborate with other agencies and organizations such as the Hawaii Rural Water Association, the Soil and Water Conservation District, Alliance for Water Efficiency and various stakeholder groups such as landscaping professionals and the agricultural community.

We hope you find this information useful. Should further clarification be necessary, please contact me at Ext. 7816.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey T. Pearson, P.E.
Director