

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI
WATER AND INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE

July 5, 2019

Committee
Report No. _____

Honorable Chair and Members
of the County Council
County of Maui
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Water and Infrastructure Committee, having met on June 3, 2019, makes reference to County Communication 19-209, from the Director of Water Supply, transmitting the Department's Monthly Source Reports and Groundwater Use Reports for the month ending April 2019.

The Director explained there are two reports related to the Department's groundwater pumping:

1. The Monthly Source Reports for the islands of Maui and Molokai, prepared by the Department's Plant Operations group; and
2. The Groundwater Use Reports for the islands of Maui and Molokai, prepared by the Department's Water Resources and Planning group.

For each of the Department's wells, the Monthly Source Reports show the monthly groundwater pumpage volumes for the prior 12 months, as well as the 12-month totals.

The Groundwater Use Reports list each aquifer and the respective sustainable yield, in million gallons per day. Within each aquifer, the report lists the Department's wells, if any; the 12-month total pumpage for each well; and the corresponding sustainable yield percentage. This percentage is based on the daily 12-month moving average. The contribution of each well is totaled to show the percentage of sustainable yield pumped from each aquifer.

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Your Committee voiced concerns about the data showing that more than 100 percent of the sustainable yield is being pumped out of the Kahului Aquifer System. The Director said this is an anomaly, and the State of Hawaii Commission on Water Resource Management (“CWRM”) is aware of it. The high level of pumping is acceptable because years of sugar cane irrigation have resulted in a significant amount of artificial recharge, which increased the amount of water safely available for pumping. The Director said the elevated groundwater recharge could persist for up to 20 years.

Your Committee inquired how the Department manages the sustainable yield for each aquifer, and whether available supplies will be able to support future water demand from housing growth. The Director said the Department works to distribute pumping to meet demand and works with CWRM to manage each aquifer, as needed. Further, the Director said the Department closely monitors chloride levels, which are a key indicator of aquifer health.

Your Committee voted 7-0 to recommend filing of the communication. Committee Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Paltin, and members Hokama, Kama, Molina, Rawlins-Fernandez, and Sinenci voted “aye.”

Your Water and Infrastructure Committee RECOMMENDS that County Communication 19-209 be FILED.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of the Council.



ALICE L. LEE, Chair