

Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on

2024-05-13 1:30 PM

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All Agenda Items A G E N D A ADEPT-1(18) WETLANDS OVERLAY MAP (ADEPT-1(18)) All User Locations

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Guest User	Aloha Council members, My name is Brandi Corpuz and I am a stakeholder/community member and advocate for Kula Kais natural resources. I have been working with Rooted Kekahi Me Ka Aina to protect our wetlands and natural resources of Kula Kai and I have a few questions and concerns about the wetlands overlay that is being created at this time.	Support		05-13-2024 01:38 pm

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I have met with Jackie from the Planning Department and Shahin from Harvey Ecology about these concerns so I want to make sure that you and everyone else is also aware.

The wetlands overlay was created to protect Maui's unique wetlands ecosystem. It is concerning to me that some of the wetlands that we have here in Hawaii are not being recognized. These wetlands are the ones that are underground and can not be seen on land. We know these exist from research of our own but also because Kula Kai still has many wells that exist in our neighborhoods with running water underground.

I do not see these underground waterways mentioned on the wetland overlay. I only see what once was a river with no visible flowing water or rivers that still have flowing waters. I have seen hydrology maps that show these underground waterways and I believe wholeheartedly that they must be recognized in this wetlands overlay.

I believe that they should be called by their Hawaiian names to assure that their cultural and historical wetlands values are recognized and protected. This type of underground waterways are called Punawai. I also believe that truthing must be done on all of these Punawai so that this map is a true representation of our Hawaiian wetlands.

As you may be aware, these underground waterways go from the top of the mountain straight into the ocean. When this type of wetland is functioning properly, the fresh water passes through rocks underground, this water is then cleaned through its journey before it reaches the ocean. Not recognizing these as wetlands, leave these resources unprotected and can cause drought conditions and pollutants to become a detriment to everything below, as we see in the case of the retention basins behind CVS and in our fishponds where the Punawai no longer feed the fishponds below because they have not been protected.

These underground wetlands (Punawai) are one of the main reasons, in my opinion, that we need this wetlands overlay map. These Punawai are unique in all of the US and therefore

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can not and will never be recognized under the Federal guidelines. Please make sure these wetlands are included in this map or else much will be lost rather than gained by this overlay. The buffer zones need to be in place for these Punawai so that developers are not allowed to divert and exploit these resources before they are allowed to reach the ocean. Fishponds need fresh water so Punawai are essential to our ocean and marine life as well.

Our Punawai of the Waipuilani Beach Reserve extends along the top part of our 4 ancient fish ponds on the South Shores of Maui. Although our fishponds are highlighted as a wetland feature in this overlay map, they are not named. I was told that there is controversy about the right names for these ponds so they will not be named? Names are important especially for fish ponds and Hawaiian wetlands.

I believe that sources such as the Historical Society and other Cultural practitioners should have been consulted by the creators of these wetland overlay maps and if that hasn't been done yet then Hawaiian cultural/historical experts should be consulted with now before this draft can be complete. As this is a historical document, with the intent to protect our last remaining wetlands, we need these fishponds and Punawai named and documented on these maps. To ignore these and any other unique Hawaiian wetland feature is doing the opposite of its intent, which is to protect Maui's unique wetlands that are not recognized anywhere else.

We need all of our unique wetlands to be named their proper Hawaiian names so that there is no confusion in the planning department or in future development of these wetlands. This wetlands overlay map is being created to protect Maui's wetlands not just to reiterate the Federal guidelines for wetlands.

Please consider the significance of the Ahupua'a system in Hawaiian culture and in the food system of Hawaii. Wetlands played a key part of the food system and every wetland was important as there were no sprinkler systems that could be used. Its pretty simple really. The water at the top of the

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mountain would come down naturally feeding water to loi terraces. South Maui Terraces would enter into the ocean as fresh water and feed the fish ponds below. It is well documented that fishponds need fresh water and we need to make sure it is shown on these maps.

Please make sure that our Punawai and fishponds are recognized in these maps by naming them, truthing and documenting them all.

Sincerely, Brandi Corpuz ED- Rooted Kekahi Me Ka Aina 808-357-9170

[Guest](#)
[User](#)

I along with my partner David Bruce are the owners of the property at 16 E Waipuilani Rd in Kihei. I would like to comment regarding our single family home that has been unfairly targeted as a wetland and kindly but firmly ask that we be removed from this map as consideration as a "wetland". I have listed below the reasons we have been unfairly targeted and should not be on this map or any wetlands list.

Opp

This property is NOT vacant land. There is a single family home on this lot with a tenant residing there for many years. The only reason this lot has been targeted as a "wetland" is because a few neighbors so adamantly fought against our efforts to build 28 affordable workforce housing units during the entitlement process in 2020-2022 and began calling us a "wetlands" to the county officials. The neighbors simply did not want affordable workforce housing next door to them! Shameful! Their efforts were successful and we were denied permission to build much needed affordable housing in Maui! We received an Army Corp of Engineers report in 2021 that clearly states our property is NOT a wetland. ACE is the authority defining entity. This lot is surrounded by walls on 3 sides. This lot is 100% surrounded by single family homes. NO runoff onto or off-of the site. NO flooding on the site except during HEAVY rains when it floods everywhere. We (the owners) have not been contacted by any consultant and no consultant has been on the property. We have a preliminary approved 4 lot subdivision in hand! This land is zoned for this use and we are working on the conditions

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currently. Our email with Council Member Gabe Johnson's staff and ADEPT Committee in February of this year confirmed that we were to be removed from consideration as wetlands and yet we are still on this map? There is absolutely no reasoning nor rationale to this designation! See the proposed map below and note this property is the ONLY one of the surrounding parcels to be targeted.

This unfortunate targeting of our property on Waipuilani Rd has caused a significant financial burden to us. We should not be penalized even further for simply trying to provide the beginnings of some MUCH needed housing to the people of Maui. Thank you for your understanding.