

Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-02-08 1:30 PM - Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m. Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Time: 02-08-24 13:30

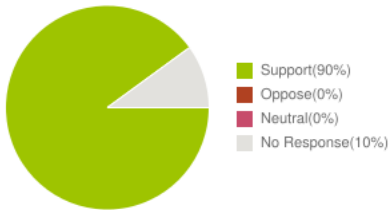
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-02-08 1:30 PM - Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m. Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m.	02-08-24 13:30	4	10	9	0	0

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



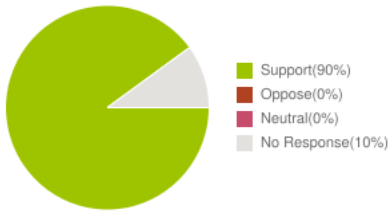
Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public Transportation Committee on 2024-02-08
1:30 PM - Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m.
Recessed to 02/20/2024 at 1:30 p.m.
 02-08-24 13:30

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
ADEPT-1(4) Rule 7(B) OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REVIEW OF WATERSHED PROTECTION GRANTS ADMINISTERED BY DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY (ADEPT-1(4))	1	1	0	0
ADEPT-1(3) Rule 7(B) OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GRANTS ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR (ADEPT-1(3))	9	8	0	0

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

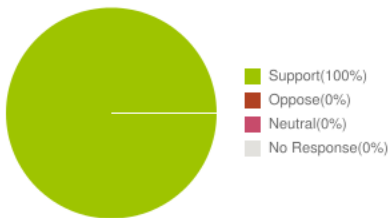
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for ADEPT-1(4) Rule 7(B) OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REVIEW OF WATERSHED PROTECTION GRANTS ADMINISTERED BY DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY (ADEPT-1(4))

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:
 Submitted At: 11:34am 02-07-24

HAWAII AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER

Maui Department of Water Supply Koa and ___hi_a Projects

Over more than a century of socioeconomic transformation, Hawai_i’s watersheds have been heavily degraded

due to increased wildfires, underinvestment in natural resource protection, and invasive species of weeds, mammals, pathogens, and insects. The impacts of ecosystem loss are biological, with >75% of Hawaiian birds and >30% of native plants listed as endangered, and social, with irreplaceable losses to Hawaiian culture due to species extinctions, decreases in groundwater recharge, and increased vulnerability to flooding, fires, and nearshore pollution.

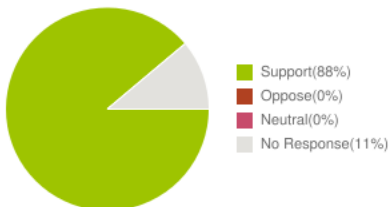
Ecological restoration, planting native trees and understory plants, helps reverse ecosystem degradation by controlling threats to promote natural regeneration and rebuilding native ecosystems. This requires collecting and storing native seeds, developing seed orchards, growing seedlings in nurseries, and transplanting seedlings to restoration sites. Restoring native ecosystems will combat climate change, enhance watershed function, and reduce wildfire risk. However, according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2023), “the insufficient supply of seeds from native plants is a major barrier to ecological restoration... across the US.” This is especially true in Hawai_i, where native seeds are hand collected from wild populations—according to a 2016 Hawai_i Seed Bank Partnership survey, seed availability is a major limiting factor to the diversity of plants used in restoration. Addressing this requires scaling native seed and seedling production, especially keystone forest trees like Koa and __hi_a.

Without disease-resistant koa and __hi_a seed, many Maui landowners will remain unable to efficiently utilize koa in many of their watershed restoration efforts. In response to this, HARC has worked with the Department of Water Supply (DWS) since 2012 to develop a network of sites on Maui to establish wilt resistant koa seed orchards in multiple eco-regions. These are located at Haleakala Ranch, Kula Forest Reserve, and Ulupalakua Ranch, in priority watersheds on the windward and leeward flanks of Haleakala Crater. The investment the DWS has made in native forest tree seed production is now paying dividends. The older koa orchards continue to yield seed crops. Substantial amounts of seed are available of locally adapted, wilt resistant koa seed. With seed inventories building, landscape level restoration projects are now possible, and the ability to respond to natural disasters such as hurricanes and wildfires is greatly improved. Recent DWS support has enabled this program to expand and begin the process of developing __hi_a seed orchards for resistance to the fungal disease Rapid __hi_a Death (ROD).

Maui County now has the capability to plant locally adapted, disease resistant koa, which when reintroduced at a landscape level will directly benefit the long-term sustainability of Maui County’s water supply in high priority watersheds. Native forests are more efficient in water use and more effective than exotic trees in recharging aquifers and help improve water infiltration rates. By developing wilt resistant koa and ROD-resistant __hi_a, restored forests, watersheds, and Hawai_i’s communities will have increased health and resilience.

Agenda Item: eComments for ADEPT-1(3) Rule 7(B) OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GRANTS ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR (ADEPT-1(3))

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:23pm 02-09-24

Aloha mai kakou,

The Maui Ocean Center Education Department is gladly submitting testimony in support of funding marine science public education in Maui County, which is an essential role of the Education & Outreach Liaison with the

Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project. MOC collaborates with the MNSRP regularly to educate our guests about the vital role seabirds play in our terrestrial & marine ecosystems and Hawaiian cultural heritage.

In 2023, the Education & Outreach Liaison - Emily Severson - participated in multiple programs & events at MOC, including our heavily attended Earth Day event, our annual World Oceans Day event, and International Climate Action Day (to name a few). Additionally, MNSRP installed a new educational kiosk that is staffed by the Liaison regularly, making hundreds of meaningful connections each session. Emily is currently collaborating with me on a new exhibit at Maui Ocean Center; "Seabirds of Hawai'i," which is slated for completion in early 2024. Lastly, as an important interface between the general public and the marine science & research community, our MOC marine naturalists benefit from regular trainings provided by Emily and the MNSRP team.

An Education & Outreach Liaison serves as the final & arguably most essential step in the scientific process for any research entity - sharing your findings with others. Without proper education & outreach channels in place to communicate your findings, the acquired knowledge goes largely underutilized & conservation needs go unaddressed. Emily is not only a skilled educator; she shares information that is accessible to our community & our visitors, inspiring grassroots action and awareness.

Perhaps the most poignant example of this indispensable role happened on the day of this hearing. MOC & MNSRP co-hosted "Learn About Lights," a successful educational event and networking forum designed to bring wildlife experts, county officials and wildlife-friendly lighting vendors into the same space to educate decision-makers across Maui's visitor industry about the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance passed in 2023. The event highlighted the importance of impacted marine species to our ocean ecosystems, Maui's natural resources and positive public perception heavily associated with the visitor industry. This demonstrates the Liaison's dedication to support positive change and MNSRP's commitment to resilience in the face of losing financial support.

I respectfully ask Maui County to continue supporting organizations like the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project in their efforts. Maui has the potential to lead the state, and the country, in positive environmental change that has both natural & economic value.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jessica Colla
Director of Education
Maui Ocean Center

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:09pm 02-08-24

Aloha,

Today we share our support for Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project's outreach liaison position. Our organization has worked with the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project on several projects to educate youth on the importance of seabirds and restoring their habitats. MNSRP's education team has participated in our Careers in Conservation series hosting 72 students from 13 Maui schools for two consecutive years. These programs provide students the opportunity to engage with various local organizations and gain practical skills through hands-on experience. MNSRP's station is always a highlight for students, where they can learn about the importance of seabirds and the various threats they face.

During our Marine Science summer program, 10 students spent a day at Kamaole Beach Park III with MNSRP, where they learned about monitoring and protecting seabird colonies. Students had the opportunity to contribute to these efforts by helping paint signs to bring awareness to nesting seabirds in the area. A key component of the summer program was learning about diverse marine science careers. The MNSRP team shared their educational background and experiences in conservation.

One of our Leadership Council students chose to focus her end-of-the-year project during Spring 2023 on the significance of seabirds and the threats they face. MNSRP played a crucial role in mentoring our student and providing them with unique hands-on experiences such as monitoring burrows and banding. We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project and provide our students with valuable

learning experiences.

Mahalo,
Lily Solano
Program Director
Maui Huliau Foundation

Arthur Medeiros

Location:

Submitted At: 11:16am 02-08-24

Aloha pumehana Committee Chair Gabe Johnson, Vice-Chair Shane Sinenci, and other committee members

Hoping you're all doing well.

With the devastating fires on Maui during 2023, we, as a community, have been reminded of the current and ongoing need to restore and rehabilitate degraded lands for the well-being of our watersheds and our way of life. However, to realize recovery of degraded lands, significantly more dedicated funding will be required to support restoration and rehabilitation of watershed lands and coastal areas.

The mission of the ADEPT committee promoting environmental and economic well-being with forward thinking management of natural capital resources falls right in line with those of the Auwahi Forest Restoration Project (the Auwahi project). The Auwahi project started more than 25 years ago with a fundamental premise: to explore whether degraded watershed lands on leeward Haleakal_ could be restored to functionality.

At the initiation of forest restoration at Auwahi, the widely accepted paradigm was that native forests were slowly being eroded, and once lost, were gone forever – in plain speak, damaged watersheds cannot be repaired or rebuilt.

In the past couple of decades, the relatively small Auwahi project has had a disproportionately large impact Statewide in reversing this paradigm and demonstrating that strategic management of degraded watershed lands can reforest areas in such a way that native species habitats are restored, while also reestablishing hydrological characteristics, reclaiming lost natural capital benefits of aquifer recharge (<https://www.auwahi.org/documentation-of-hydrological-aquifer-function-with-forest-recovery>). At Auwahi, ecological restoration has proceeded to the point where these recovering forest areas gradually regain the structure that increases function, and leads to improved ecosystem resilience to perturbations induced by invasive species and climate shifting.

The Auwahi project consists of six dedicated Auwahi project staff including Program Manager Dr. Arthur Medeiros and Project Coordinator Erica von Allmen, both recognized as Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners (<https://www.ser.org/page/CERPDIRECTORY>), a rigorous ecological restoration training program.

In FY23, the Auwahi project received approximately \$50,000 in funding from Maui County CCRS to establish a native plant production facility specifically focused on plants for restoration and community access to native plants. This operation is well under way, and currently several thousand young native trees and ferns are being grown there as part of watershed restoration efforts.

With community-minded partnership with 'Ulupalakua, the Auwahi project plans to grow the greenhouse operation in coming years to become an important source of native plants to restore watershed forest at Auwahi, within the Honua'ula moku (district), and as supplies allow, distribution to the public for outreach purposes. If it can be done without much extra effort, we feel plant distribution to the public is a very important byproduct of producing tree seedlings for ecological restoration. Refamiliarization of people with these forest elements is important because they were essential culturally and still have a critical role today in securing our island ecologically. As one scientist has said, 'Rediscovery is not enough, it has to be accompanied by re-enchantment.'

At full operation efficacy, we estimate that the Auwahi greenhouse will require approximately \$150K-200K for annual operations. If available, we plan to apply for the maximum award for funds in 2024 and 2025, which based on FY23 CCRS award (\$50K), would represent approximately a fourth or a third of operating costs. Shortfall will

be made up hopefully with other competitive grant awards.

In terms of other County of Maui support, the Auwahi project also receives critical Department of Water funding for volunteer tree plantings, invasive species management, and community educational outreach.

If desirable, ADEPT committee members and staff are welcome to visit restored native forest areas at Auwahi as a potential glimpse into one potential positive outcome of progressive, well considered land management practices.

If we are to continue to have the generous, aesthetic lifestyle that we currently enjoy as Maui residents, it is clear we need to better manage and protect critical lands and near shore marine resources. One primary manifestation of this better land care is the ramping up of restoration and rehabilitation of badly degraded watersheds and native forests, a critical phase of holistic resource management that appears essential for maintaining decent standards of life on highly isolated oceanic islands.

We thank the committee for your work, echo the sentiments in your planning documents, and look forward to any collaboration that forwards our mutual interests and those of the citizens of and visitors to Maui.

Jay Penniman

Location:

Submitted At: 10:34am 02-07-24

I support all of the council's decisions to fund environmental projects. The level of support that the county has been able to provide has provided much needed capacity to address a range of environmental restoration needs. There will always be need for more and to the extent possible, I support increased funding for these projects from mauka to makai and beyond into the vital coral reef habitats that we will be increasingly dependent upon for protecting our islands.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:53pm 02-06-24

Feb 6, 2024

Testimony submitted by Ha'iku Community Association
PO Box 1036, Ha'iku, HI 96708

RE: OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GRANTS
ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR (ADEPT-1(3))

Aloha ADEPT Committee Chair Johnson; Vice-Chair Sinenci and Committee Members

The Ha'iku Community Association (HCA) appreciates this opportunity to update the committee on the status of our organization's FY 2023-24 Grant to implement a stream water quality monitoring program for four popular recreational streams in the Huelo/ Ha'iku area (Honopou stream ; Ho'olawa stream ("Twin Falls"); Na'ili'ilaha'ele stream ("Bamboo forest";) and Kailua stream. These streams have had regular recreational use for many years and unfortunately, some of them are listed as "must see" spots in local guide books. Understanding the baseline water quality characteristics for these popular streams can help provide information to local and state agencies and nearby landowners for more effective long-term management strategies.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Ha'iku Stream Monitoring Program will help the community, and visitors, know the more about quality of Ha'iku stream water that is used for recreational and traditional purposes. Public interest in general water quality increased after the recent wildfires and this project promises to help increase our knowledge of the effects of human use of natural stream waters. There is also an opportunity to determine if high visitor use of stream areas has any affect on water quality.

PROJECT BUDGET: The project budget includes funding for the two part time program hires as well as testing supplies and lab fees, project insurance and other administrative costs.

TESTING STRATEGY: The project will test for general stream water characteristics such as temperature, pH; salinity, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity with a submerged test meter. Individual samples will be taken to measure inorganic nutrients (phosphates; Nitrates) and pathogens (e.g., enterococcus) and sent to the UH lab for analyses.

TEST RESULTS: The monitoring data will be collected weekly at four stream locations by a field tech (independent contractor). The data and samples that need off island analyses will then be turned over to a Program Manager (independent contractor) who will properly record and submit samples and then collate and analyze the data obtained from the submerged meter tests and the results of samples sent to the UH lab.

TESTING DATA DISTRIBUTION: Data will be posted in a readable form on the HCA website and updates posted on social media and through other local media and public events.

GRANT PROGRESS:

The \$40k County Grant was approved as part of the 2023-24 Budget in June 2024. In late July 2023 a grant proposal was submitted to OED. This proposal included an additional \$12k in matching funds and \$17,000 of in-kind contributions of equipment and volunteer expertise. However, due to various reasons, including the disruptions caused by the Aug 2023 wildfires, the Grant which was originally proposed to begin Sept 1, 2023 was not processed until November 2023. A final signed grant approval was issued on Jan 2, 2024.

The revised grant timeline proposed February 2024 as the month actual stream monitoring activities would commence, after the independent contractors were interviewed and hired to implement the program. We are happy to say that the two independent contractors have been chosen and field work on the project is commencing on February 9th. Maui field staff from State agencies, like Department of Aquatic Resources (DAR) have been briefed on the monitoring project and are excited to incorporate its data with streamflow and stream life studies they are undertaking over the next two years.

No testing results are available yet, due to the delayed start of the grant. HCA is hopeful that the Council will see the potential benefits to public health and sound resource management strategies that this pilot project brings to an East Maui area popular with our residents and visitors alike and includes FY 2024-25 funds of at least \$40k. A slightly larger budget of \$50 k could allow expansion of sampling to additional locations. State agencies have pointed out that a project like this needs a solid two years of data as to achieve meaningful results.

Mahalo for your consideration to support this much needed project.

Lucienne de Naie

President

Ha'iku Community Association

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:22pm 02-06-24

Dear ADEPT Committee Members,

Position: Strongly support Environmental Budget Line items

The environmental threats do not go away or take a pause if our Community does not have the financial resources to do the required protection work. The threats and the damage will only continue to increase; these are generational investments we need to make in and for our Community. Purely transactional calculus will set us back and end up costing more financial resources down the road. Cutting the already minute portion of the total Maui County budget dedicated to this work will not make a material difference in the overall funding needs for the Lahaina fire disaster recovery. Actually the amount dedicated to this sector should be further increased as it is so clearly tied to our resiliency and thus the future of this Community. Let's figure out how to increase the funding, or rather cash flow to Maui County and grow the proverbial pie. We at Maui Ocean Center, are working this year very closely with Maui Nui Seabird Recovery program and Save the Wetlands Hui and support their work and respectfully ask Maui County's continued support not only to their work but also all other Community members, groups and NGO's who are integral part of creating positive solutions and outcomes as it truly take the Village and what better way to demonstrate that public-private partnerships work.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,
Tapani Vuori
General Manager
Maui Ocean Center

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:22pm 02-06-24

Dear ADEPT Committee Members,

Position: Strongly support Environmental Budget Line items

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Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,
Tapani Vuori
General Manager
Maui Ocean Center

Denby Freeland

Location:

Submitted At: 3:57pm 02-06-24

Aloha mai,

I'm writing this letter in support of Emily Severson and her position of Outreach Liaison for Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project. Emily has accompanied our Hawai'i Land Trust education programs at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge many times. Each visit she has been a wonderful element to our day of __ina based education. Her enthusiasm and knowledge of Hawaiian seabirds is a refreshing addition for the Hawai'i Land Trust staff and the students. She assisted with approximately 100 elementary students from Kamehameha Schools Maui Campus in April and May of 2023. As well as 120 seventh grade students from __ao Intermediate in May of 2023. In June, 2023 Emily was a tremendous part of our Ahupua'a Stewards internship program with 16 students. Our interns were able to learn and assist with the habitat restoration of the ua_u kani near Ho_okipa Beach Park. I also accompanied a Learning Endeavors field trip in the fall of 2023 to H_wea Point with Emily.

The information that Emily presents along with the hands-on activities students participate in are incredibly valuable. Thanks to Emily's work our future generations are learning the importance of Hawaiian seabirds to our fragile ecosystems and how we can contribute towards their preservation. In fact, I've had a high school student decide they want to pursue a career in conservation after their time at Ho_okipa with Emily. I've also had students write letters to our County Council in support of Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project's work because they were so inspired by their time with Emily. Emily is a great resource for the community. I look forward to continually working with her in the future.

Mahalo,

Denby Freeland

Director of __ina Education

Hawai'i Land Trust

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:05am 02-04-24

Aloha ADEPT Committee Members

My name is Michael Reyes. I am a Senior Ecologist and Principal at Maui Environmental Consulting.

We are the "conditional language" that Bill 8 proposes to amend for FY24 regarding watershed management planning and implementation under Office of the Mayor - Environmental Protection:

(4) Environmental Protection 1,550,000

(i) Maui Nui Marine Resource Council, Inc. for \$325,000

(ii) Up to \$600,000 must be used for watershed management planning and implementation by Maui Environmental Consulting, Inc. (MEC) or Central Maui Soil and Water Conservation District.]

(iii) Up to \$103,240 must be for the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project.

(iv) Up to \$40,000 must be for the Ha'iku Community Association for two independent contractor positions and lab fees and coordination with the online NRDS database.

In FY23 we successfully developed the Maalaea Bay Watersheds Management Plan, which includes both Waikap_ and Waiakoa Watersheds. This Plan, along with the Pohakea Watershed Plan and the Southwest Maui Watershed Management Plan have been approved by the Hawaii Department of Health and the Environmental Protection Agency. This means that over 100,000-acres in Central and South Maui are now eligible for Federal 319-grant funding.

Approved watershed plans can be accessed at the following link:

<https://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/clean-water-branch-home-page/polluted-runoff-control-program/watershed-plans/>

For FY24 we proposed to move north, to begin watershed planning on the north side of Central Maui, beginning with the Kalialinui Watershed (Kula, Pukalani, Puunene, Kahului).

We also proposed to establish dryland native forest corridors on either side of the new K_lanih_ko_i High School in Kihei. With a successful riparian rehabilitation project established along K__kea Gulch, MEC plans to implement similar projects along K_lanih_ko_i and Waipu_ilani Gulches immediately north and south of the new high school.

The purpose of expanding riparian rehabilitation is to improve water quality within these gulches and the ocean, plant and promote native dryland forest, improve habitats for wildlife, and provide opportunities for high school students and the community to partake in cultural experiences, ecological rehabilitation, community outreach and scientific study. These rehabilitated riparian corridors can serve as a demonstration project that could help address landscape and/or regional nearshore water quality issues in the future.

Working in participation with the County of Maui, (funding partner), Ka_ono_ulu Ranch (landowner), and Haleakal_ Ranch (landowner), MEC was preparing to rehabilitate approximately 18.86 acres along K_lanih_ko_i Gulch and approximately 14.6 acres along Waipu_ilani Gulch.

While we feel these projects are important, and have broad community support, we also understand the County may have other entities and other projects they would like to pursue with this money in FY24. It is not our intention to conduct work that is not supported by the County. We appreciate the opportunities we have been given to serve Maui County through our watershed planning and implementation work thus far.

Thank you