RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

JOHN STUFFLEBEAN, P.E.
Director

JAMES A. LANDGRAF
Deputy Director

DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAI'I 96793
http://www.mauicounty.gov/water

March 31, 2026

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

Mayor 4-6-26 Date

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Tamara Paltin, Chair
Disaster Recovery, International Affairs,
and Planning Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Paltin:

SUBJECT: **MAUI'S LONG-TERM RECOVERY OPERATIONS** (DRIP-9(4))

Thank you for your letter dated March 24, 2026, regarding the above-agenda item. Please find Department of Water Supply's response below:

One of our absolute foundational principles during the fire recovery was to ensure that any area that could have possibly been impacted by water from the fire zone was included in the unsafe water advisory area and thereafter tested and proven clear before the unsafe water advisory was amended. Specific to this situation, it was hydraulically impossible for water from the fire zone to flow into the Mahinahina system.

Regarding the water system infrastructure, Honokowai Tank, which is fed treated water by the Mahinahina Water Treatment Facility, is at a higher elevation than both Wahikuli Tank and Lahaina Tank on the south side. Therefore, in a typical operational scenario, Honokowai Tank has enough elevation to serve the Lahaina system by gravity.

At the time of the 2023 Maui wildfires, the Lahaina system depressurized due to water use and discharge from leaks. Therefore, if there was any movement of water between systems, it would have been from north to south, from Honokowai Tank to the south side, and not the opposite way around. As it is in normal operational scenarios, but even more so since the Lahaina system lost pressure, as water typically flows from areas of higher pressure to areas of lower pressure, the flow of compromised water from the affected area north through the interconnection was prevented during the wildfire.

If you require additional information, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

JOHN STUFFLEBEAN, P.E.
Director

JS:JM:lkk

DRIP Committee

From: Estrelita B. Dahilig <Estrelita.B.Dahilig@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2026 3:41 PM
To: DRIP Committee; Tamara A. Paltin; John Stufflebean; James A. Landgraf; Linda K. Kimura
Cc: Josiah K. Nishita; Erin A. Wade; Cynthia E. Sasada; Didi A. Hamai; Kelii P. Nahooikaika
Subject: TRANSMITTAL: MAUI'S LONG -TERM RECOVERY OPERATIONS (DRIP-9 (4))
Attachments: MT#11447.DRIP.Chair.Paltin.Tamara.pdf

Aloha,

Please see attached transmittal dated March 31, 2026, from Director of Department of Water Supply John Stufflebean, P.E. regarding the above subject matter.
Thank you and have a great day!

Mahalo,
Lita

Lita B. Dahilig
Secretary

County of Maui
Office of the Mayor
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estrelita.b.dahilig@co.maui.hi.us