

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Onishi, Dennis M
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 4:18 PM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M.; Atta, Morris; Nakamura, Gayle M
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] saving the Kohala Agricultural Ditch, letter attached

Good afternoon Chair Phyllis and Deputy Chair Morris,

I will reach out to Gayle this coming Friday.

Thank you,

Fresh

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From: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 3:49:21 PM
To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] saving the Kohala Agricultural Ditch, letter attached

Aloha Fresh,

Mahalo for reaching out to HDOA with the concerns from farmers and ranchers. When you return to the office, please contact Gayle Nakamura to schedule the MS Teams meeting. We are both available through December 22, 2021.

Happy Holidays,

Phyllis

Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser
Chairperson
Hawaii Department of Agriculture
1428 S. King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
(808)973-9550
(808)973-9613 FAX
Email: [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov



From: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 9:10 AM

To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] saving the Kohala Agricultural Ditch, letter attached

Good morning Chair Phyllis and Deputy Chair Morris,

I got another email from another farmer in Kohala.

Please let me know if you will be available to do a Microsoft Team with the farmers and ranchers.

Thank you,

Fresh

From: Jeff Allen <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 8:56 AM

To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] saving the Kohala Agricultural Ditch, letter attached

We are Katharine Clark & Jeff Allen, Bamboo Farm & Sanctuary in Hawi, a 32-acre farm.

We've invested approximately \$150,000 in our Kohala Ditch Water pipeline that we installed in 2000 connected to the 30" Kahea lateral via Hawi Ag. and Energy. We have purchased Ditch Water continuously since then, until the Ditch went down this year.

We grow nursery plants, soil stabilizing ground covers, and make organic fertilizer for wholesale sale and graze 100 head of sheep. We've planted thousands of forestry trees and renewable bamboo (carbon capture) and have been working with the NRCS on wildlife habitat for over a decade.

We cannot afford to use county water for irrigation, nor does county water supply sufficient pressure or flow so most of our plantings and wildlife habitat is now very vulnerable to the drought periods.

During the 2006 earthquake, it took two years and \$6 million to get the ditch restored. The money came from the County of Hawai'i, State Civil Defense, Kamehameha Schools, and AT&T, among several others (including members of the community).

We are again asking for your help.

For over a hundred years, the Kohala Ditch water has been part of the agricultural lifeline of Kohala. Since the closing of the sugar plantations in the 1970s, this water system has provided ample water to over fifty users located on the fourteen mile stretch from Pololū to Māhukona. These users involve large and small enterprises, many of which utilize environmentally sustainable farming methods, empower community resilience, and have been assets during the pandemic in terms of food security.

With historical evidence of the ditch water's potential, along with the state's desire to increase agriculture production enabling food self-reliance, the retooling of the ditch for agricultural growth cannot be overstated.

The Ditch isn't just an artifact, but one of Kohala's most enduring legacies critical to the future of sustainable diversified agriculture, while providing affordable water to accomplish it. We need to keep our lifeline alive for the present and future generations.

We need your support.

Thank you!
Katharine Clark & Jeff Allen
Bamboo Farm & Sanctuary

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 9:10 AM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
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We need your support.

Thank you!

Katharine Clark & Jeff Allen

Bamboo Farm & Sanctuary

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 9:10 AM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
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Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye [REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 10:44 AM
To: Ige, David Y
Cc: Case, Suzanne D; [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov; Chang, Carty S; Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis; Atta, Morris
Subject: North Kohala Water Well Improvements B&F Release Request Letter
Attachments: North Kohala Water Well Improvements B&F Release Request Letter.pdf

Aloha Governor Ige,

Please see the attached letter requesting the release of monies from B&F regarding North Kohala Water Well Improvements.

Mahalo,
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Hilo, Hāmākua, Kohala, Waimea, Waikoloa, Kona
415 S. Beretania St. Room 210
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
P: (808) 586-7335



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

December 15, 2021

To: The Honorable, Governor David Y. Ige

From: Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Senate District 4, Hilo, Hāmākua, Kohala, Waimea, Waikoloa, Kona
Chair, Committee on Water and Land

Re: Release of Funds for Water Well Improvements, North Kohala, Hawaii Island

Dear Governor Ige,

I am respectfully requesting the release of \$2,500,000 in general obligation bonds to be released from the Department of Budget and Finance in order to allow DLNR to advertise bids for the construction of well improvements to provide water for agricultural use in North Kohala, Hawaii.

A portion of the privately owned Kohala Ditch system collapsed and farmers/agricultural users in the Hawi area of Kohala that were using the ditch water now have no source of agricultural water. Because of the loss of the ditch water, many agricultural users had to switch their water source to domestic water from the county's water system which is much more expensive or is cost prohibitive for their continued operation.

Construction of a new exploratory well and follow-on development of the well would delay the availability of agricultural water by several years and be much more expensive, as a feasible location would need to be identified and tested, and additional funding would be required for the development phase (pump installation, connecting pipeline, storage tank, etc.).

An existing unused well has been identified on State Department of Agriculture lands and improvements will be made to the well (pump installation, pump control building, storage tank, access road, and other incidental work) to provide agricultural water for users in the area. The well improvements will be turned over to the Department of Agriculture for operation.

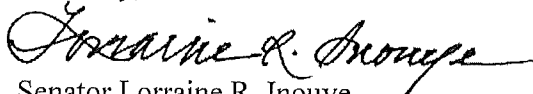
If deferred, the prolonged unavailability of agricultural water and continued use of potable domestic water will be cost prohibitive to agricultural users in the area, resulting in the closure of operations, decreased availability or increased cost of local products, and an increased need for imported products.

December 15, 2021
Page 2 of 2

This request is for the allotment of \$2,500,000 in general obligation bond funds for the construction of well improvements described. Funds for this work are authorized by Act 40, SLH 2019, as amended by Act 6, SLH 2020, Item A-18.3.


The Chief Engineer of the Engineering Division certifies that there are adequate funds currently appropriated for the work described and this project will comply with all applicable codes and land use designations.

Sincerely,


Senator Lorraine R. Inouye

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 12:04 PM
To: Atta, Morris; Kau, Brian K; Saiki, Kirk I
Subject: FW: North Kohala Water Well Improvements B&F Release Request Letter
Attachments: North Kohala Water Well Improvements B&F Release Request Letter.pdf



From: Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye <[REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 10:44 AM
To: Ige, David Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Case, Suzanne D <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov; Chang, Carty S <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: North Kohala Water Well Improvements B&F Release Request Letter

Aloha Governor Ige,

Please see the attached letter requesting the release of monies from B&F regarding North Kohala Water Well Improvements.

Mahalo,
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye

Hilo, Hāmākua, Kohala, Waimea, Waikoloa, Kona

415 S. Beretania St. Room 210

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

P: (808) 586-7335

Kohala Ditch Talking Points

1. Kohala Ditch is privately owned and DOA cannot expend State funds on private entities.
2. DLNR is actively searching for alternative irrigation water sources on State lands.
 - a. DLNR is currently testing and determining the feasibility of developing an existing well on State land.
 - i. The well pumping tests show that the well can sustainably pump approximately 450 gpm.
 - ii. A feasibility study is being completed to determine prospective users of the irrigation water and the cost to pump the water.
 - b. Concurrent to the testing and feasibility study, DLNR is designing the well pumping system.
 - c. If determined to be feasible, the well may be constructed to provide irrigation water to adjacent agricultural lands.
 - d. The well site is located on a DOA lot on the east side of Upolu Airport Road.

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Onishi, Dennis M
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis; Atta, Morris
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M.; Nakamura, Gayle M
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Re: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Good afternoon Chair Phyllis and Deputy Morris,

Please below emails and it seems their Rep and Senator hasn't move forward with this issue. Please see comment about Governor wouldn't support project.

Hi Gayle, can you provide couple days and times which the chair and deputy will be available and I will provide you the names of the farmers and ranchers.

Thank you,

Fr sh



From: David Fuertes <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 11:50 AM
To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Aditi Bhanot <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kathleen Matsuda <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kim Iambrecht <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Richards, Tim <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Seeley, Amy <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Good morning Dennis,

Thanks for the question. I asked Senator Lorraine and Representative Tarnas two months ago if they would support our efforts. Both felt it wasn't in their interest at the time because they said the governor wouldn't support it.

However, Bobby Command sent out an email recently with the Senator and Tarnas CC'd that after their administration received several letters from those in the community they wanted to begin to have meetings to identify funding opportunities and how to move forward. But those meetings haven't been scheduled yet.

Thank you for your help. If you have any questions, please call me.

Aloha,

David

On Tue, Dec 21, 2021 at 9:36 AM Onishi, Dennis M <d[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov> wrote:

Good morning Libby,

No one has responded to me on my questions on Rep and Senator's responses. Can you please follow up before I schedule a meeting with the Chair and Deputy Chair?

Thank you,

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi

From: Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 4:57 PM

To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Cc: Aditi Bhanot <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>; Kim Iambrecht <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Richards, Tim <[REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov>; Seeley, Amy <[REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov>; David Fuertes <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kathleen Matsuda <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Hi Dennis!

I'm going to let David and/or Tim answer, but just wanted to touch base that they are probably running around today.

Thank you so much for reaching out and reading the letters!

Mahalo,

Libby

On Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 4:30 PM Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov> wrote:

Hi Aditi,

I need someone to answer my question in the previous email.

Thank you,

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi

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From: Aditi Bhanot <[REDACTED]@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 12:37:05 PM
To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Kim lambrecht <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Richards, Tim <[REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov>;
Seeley, Amy <[REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov>; Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]>, David Fuentes
<[REDACTED]>, Kathleen Matsuda <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Dear Representative Onishi,

Thank you for your response. We are grateful for your willingness to help.

I am including Councilman Richards as well as some other local community members who have been instrumental in getting this movement off the ground. They have extensive information, which they can provide. Some of these members may also have contacted you regarding this issue.

Collectively, we can solve this problem.

Regards,

Mahalo,

Aditi

From: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 9:35 AM
To: Kim lambrecht <[REDACTED]>, Aditi Bhanot <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Kuwahara, Letisha C.M. <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Good morning Kim and Aditi,

Can you help me with your discussion with Rep. Tarnas and Senator Inouye? It would help me with finding a solution.

Thank you,

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi

From: Kim lambrecht <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, December 13, 2021 4:13 PM
To: Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Mahalo for your response. Yes, we have contacted Representative Tarnas and Senator Inouye. Please keep us updated on your progress.

Gratefully, Kim & Dave Lambrecht

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 13, 2021, at 12:32 PM, Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov> wrote:

Good morning Aditi and Kim,

I wanted to acknowledge that I received your emails and I will be forwarding them to Chair Shimabukuro-Geiser and Deputy Chair Atta of Dept. of Agi to get their feedback or seeing if I can

schedule a meeting with everyone so Chair and Deputy Chair can explain their plans on how to move forward.

Also, have anyone talked to your House Rep Tarnas and Senator Inouye of the district?

Thank you,

Dennis (Fresh) Onishi

Dennis (Fresh) Onishi
Governor's Representative East Hawai'i
Office of the Governor, State of Hawai'i
Phone: 808-974-6262
<http://governor.hawaii.gov>



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From: Aditi Bhanot [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, December 12, 2021 5:55 PM
To: Onishi, Dennis M [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please help fix Kohala Ditch

Dear Representative Onishi,

My name is Aditi Bhargava. I am a resident of Pu'uepa Ranch in Hawi/Kohala.

I am writing to tell you how the absence of ditch water has affected us personally as well as all the 13 homeowners in our association. I take the liberty to also write on their behalf of 13 other lot owners as the President of the Association.

We all have relied heavily on the Kohala ditch water to irrigate our 20-acre land (each lot is 20 acre).

We have cattle, and other plants/crops.

We were in the midst of starting to plant, but just after planting 50 trees, the Kohala ditch broke, and we were told that the water may never come back. We purchased our land in Kohala partly due to availability of Ag water and our future plans to be part of the agriculture community. The county water is available, but to use county water for all the agriculture/ranching-related work, is unsustainable.

As you might be aware, during the 2006 earthquake, it took two years and \$6 million to get the ditch restored. The money came from the County of Hawai'i, State Civil Defense, Kamehameha Schools, and AT&T, among several others (including members of the community).

We are again asking for your help.

For over a hundred years, the Kohala Ditch water has been part of the agricultural lifeline of Kohala. Since the closing of the sugar plantations in the 1970s, this water system has provided around 1.2 million gallons of water daily during dry seasons—and 25,000 during rainy periods—to over fifty users located on the fourteen mile stretch from Pololū to Māhukona. These users involve large and small enterprises, many of which utilize environmentally sustainable farming methods, empower community resilience, and have been assets during the pandemic in terms of food security.

With historical evidence of the ditch water's potential, along with the state's desire to increase agriculture production enabling food self-reliance, the retooling of the ditch for agricultural growth cannot be overstated.

The Ditch isn't just an artifact, but one of Kohala's most enduring legacies critical to the future of sustainable diversified agriculture, while providing affordable water to accomplish it. We need to keep our lifeline alive for the present and future generations. This will also allow us to continue to not only become a model for agriculture in Hawai'i, but the rest of the nation.

We need your support, especially in COVID times.

Sincerely,
Aditi Bhargava & Alok Bhanot

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Chang, Carty S
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Masuda, Robert K; Atta, Morris; Saiki, Kirk I
Cc: Case, Suzanne D
Subject: FW: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Bob/Morris/Kirk

This is our response to journalist Libby Leonard regarding misinformation regarding the Upolu Well in North Kohala. Senator Inouye asked if DLNR could respond to ensure we clear up the misinformation in her email. The email thread was longer than what you see below and Botelho and Dutch Hawaiian Dairy and some folks from the county were also copied in Libby's email, so we included all of them in our response.

Just keeping you in the loop

Carty

From: DLNR.CO.Comms <dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 2:23 PM
To: [REDACTED]@gmail.com, [REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov, [REDACTED] M [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov;<[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; Senator Lorraine R. Inouye <[REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Cc: Chang, Carty S <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Aloha Libby,

DLNR through funds appropriated by the Legislature, has contracted consultants to conduct planning and design to seek alternative water sources to serve Agricultural needs in the North Kohala Region. This process started in 2017 as a means to seek other sources of Ag water in lieu of the community having to rely solely on the privately owned Kohala Ditch System. In April 2021, a portion of the Kohala Ditch was damaged by a landslide and unfortunately the owner/operator of the ditch system chose not to repair the damages therefore opting to cease delivery of water to their end users. The Kohala Ditch system served a number of privately owned operations throughout the region and some state lands leased for dairy operations. This unforeseen event to the Kohala ditch system and the operator's decision to stop water delivery, created a sense of urgency to locate alternative water sources.

Shortly after the Kohala Ditch was damaged, USGS offered to transfer to the State one of their wells that is located on State DOA lands currently leased for dairy operations. Although USGS originally intended the well to be used for monitoring purposes when it was drilled in 1990, the diameter and depth are such that it could be converted to a water production well. DLNR is currently working with DOA to determine the feasibility of accepting this well from USGS and DLNR is conducting the necessary due diligence testing of this well. The well cannot be put into production until adequate tests are conducted and all regulatory permits and environmental approvals are completed. DLNR is currently conducting an Environmental Assessment to satisfy HRS Chapter 343 and the Commission on Water Resources Management (CWRM) has to issue a Pump Installation Permit before a permanent pump can be installed in the well.

DLNR's consultant hired Derrick's drilling to completed the first phase of the pump test which is a constant rate test for 96 hours. This test involved utilizing a temporary pump which was removed once the test was completed. The temporary electrical power used for the pump was provided by a generator. The well passed this test and Derricks was paid for their services by our consultant. A second pump test, which is called the "Step Drawdown" test will be performed by Derrick's shortly and they will be paid by our consultant after their services are performed. The "Step drawdown test" is also a temporary test and if successful, is also a requirement to obtain the Pump Installation permit

from CWRM. Construction funds are currently being sought to permanently install a pump and electrical improvements and build a storage tank. If construction funds are secured and if the well is successfully transferred from USGS to DOA and all regulatory approvals are met, we anticipate advertising the construction of the project later this year.

DLNR Communications Office

From: Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 11:20 AM
To: Onishi, Dennis M; [REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov; Command, Robert H
Subject: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Aloha, Dennis, Lorraine, and Bobby,

Bobby already knows this, but I'm a journalist who lives in Kapaau. I was at a committee meeting yesterday about Kohala water issues.

I found several things about the meeting concerning, one of which was the well in Upolu. According to Ed Boteilho who owns the Cloverleaf Dairy, and has been paying upwards of \$20,000 every two months in water bills, said that the state ran a test to see if it wanted to take over this well, which they ran for 96 hours (I believe he said USGS was involved, and Senator Lorraine). And had Derrick's Well Drilling and Pump put in everything including a power source, that ended up pumping 474 gallons a minute for those 96 hours.

After that, he said Derrick's came back and pulled everything out months later citing that they never got paid, thus this resource that could have already been up and running to help farmers and ranchers out in that area was abandoned. Nothing has been done since. He said this was not critical just for himself but for others, and that the people in charge have not come through with any answers. So I wanted to reach out to some of the people in charge.

Ed said the well number was 8-7451-002 and is called Upolu JB and its depth is 632 feet and the water table is at 565 feet.

I'm trying to figure out how this failure occurred, but moreso, how can the funding for this be restored and expedited.

Who needs to be involved to get it fixed? Cows are slowly dying, not to mention what you are all already aware as far as those who have lost or have diminished operations. How do we help and make sure the farmers on Hoesa can get access to this now, so they don't lose anymore than they already have? Particularly because the landowner who is putting in a pipeline that many people are hoping provides a solution (and that still needs to be permitted) said multiple times at another meeting that he isn't promising that his water sources will be moved off his property to meet those on the Hawi side of town (part of this involves making sure that none of the water is interfered with that is used by the taro farmers).

Please help.

Mahalo,

Libby Leonard

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 5:11 PM
To: Atta, Morris
Subject: Re: Upolu Well in North Kohala



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From: Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 5:04:23 PM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Interesting how you always seem to be left out of the loop.

Mahalo,
Morris M. Atta
Deputy Director
Office of the Chairperson
Hawaii Department of Agriculture
Phone: (808) 973-9553
Fax: (808) 973-9613
Email: [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov

From: Chang, Carty S <carty.s.chang@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Masuda, Robert K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Case, Suzanne D <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Bob/Morris/Kirk

This is our response to journalist Libby Leonard regarding misinformation regarding the Upolu Well in North Kohala. Senator Inouye asked if DLNR could respond to ensure we clear up the misinformation in her email. The email thread was longer than what you see below and Botelho and Dutch Hawaiian Dairy and some folks from the county were also copied in Libby's email, so we included all of them in our response.

Just keeping you in the loop

Carty

From: DLNR.CO.Comms <dlnr.comms@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 2:23 PM
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]@hawaiicounty.gov; Onishi, Dennis M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Senator Lorraine R. Inouye <[REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov>

Cc: Chang, Carty S [REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>

Subject: FW: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Aloha Libby,

DLNR through funds appropriated by the Legislature, has contracted consultants to conduct planning and design to seek alternative water sources to serve Agricultural needs in the North Kohala Region. This process started in 2017 as a means to seek other sources of Ag water in lieu of the community having to rely solely on the privately owned Kohala Ditch System. In April 2021, a portion of the Kohala Ditch was damaged by a landslide and unfortunately the owner/operator of the ditch system chose not to repair the damages therefore opting to cease delivery of water to their end users. The Kohala Ditch system served a number of privately owned operations throughout the region and some state lands leased for dairy operations. This unforeseen event to the Kohala ditch system and the operator's decision to stop water delivery, created a sense of urgency to locate alternative water sources.

Shortly after the Kohala Ditch was damaged, USGS offered to transfer to the State one of their wells that is located on State DOA lands currently leased for dairy operations. Although USGS originally intended the well to be used for monitoring purposes when it was drilled in 1990, the diameter and depth are such that it could be converted to a water production well. DLNR is currently working with DOA to determine the feasibility of accepting this well from USGS and DLNR is conducting the necessary due diligence testing of this well. The well cannot be put into production until adequate tests are conducted and all regulatory permits and environmental approvals are completed. DLNR is currently conducting an Environmental Assessment to satisfy HRS Chapter 343 and the Commission on Water Resources Management (CWRM) has to issue a Pump Installation Permit before a permanent pump can be installed in the well.

DLNR's consultant hired Derrick's drilling to completed the first phase of the pump test which is a constant rate test for 96 hours. This test involved utilizing a temporary pump which was removed once the test was completed. The temporary electrical power used for the pump was provided by a generator. The well passed this test and Derricks was paid for their services by our consultant. A second pump test, which is called the "Step Drawdown" test will be performed by Derrick's shortly and they will be paid by our consultant after their services are performed. The "Step drawdown test" is also a temporary test and if successful, is also a requirement to obtain the Pump Installation permit from CWRM. Construction funds are currently being sought to permanently install a pump and electrical improvements and build a storage tank. If construction funds are secured and if the well is successfully transferred from USGS to DOA and all regulatory approvals are met, we anticipate advertising the construction of the project later this year.

DLNR Communications Office

From: Libby Leonard [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 11:20 AM
To: Onishi, Dennis M; [REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov; Command, Robert H
Subject: Upolu Well in North Kohala

Aloha, Dennis, Lorraine, and Bobby,

Bobby already knows this, but I'm a journalist who lives in Kapaau. I was at a committee meeting yesterday about Kohala water issues.

I found several things about the meeting concerning, one of which was the well in Upolu. According to Ed Boteilho who owns the Cloverleaf Dairy, and has been paying upwards of \$20,000 every two months in water bills, said that the state ran a test to see if it wanted to take over this well, which they ran for 96 hours (I believe he said USGS was involved, and

Senator Lorraine). And had Derrick's Well Drilling and Pump put in everything including a power source, that ended up pumping 474 gallons a minute for those 96 hours.

After that, he said Derrick's came back and pulled everything out months later citing that they never got paid, thus this resource that could have already been up and running to help farmers and ranchers out in that area was abandoned. Nothing has been done since. He said this was not critical just for himself but for others, and that the people in charge have not come through with any answers. So I wanted to reach out to some of the people in charge.

Ed said the well number was 8-7451-002 and is called Upolu JB and its depth is 632 feet and the water table is at 565 feet.

I'm trying to figure out how this failure occurred, but moreso, how can the funding for this be restored and expedited.

Who needs to be involved to get it fixed? Cows are slowly dying, not to mention what you are all already aware as far as those who have lost or have diminished operations. How do we help and make sure the farmers on Hoesa can get access to this now, so they don't lose anymore than they already have? Particularly because the landowner who is putting in a pipeline that many people are hoping provides a solution (and that still needs to be permitted) said multiple times at another meeting that he isn't promising that his water sources will be moved off his property to meet those on the Hawi side of town (part of this involves making sure that none of the water is interfered with that is used by the taro farmers).

Please help.

Mahalo,

Libby Leonard

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Saiki, Kirk I
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis; Atta, Morris; Nakamura, Gayle M
Cc: Kau, Brian K; Ferrer, Jan Y; hdoa_info
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

No changes. Thanks.

Kirk Saiki
State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Resource Management Division
1428 S. King Street
Honolulu, HI 96814-2512
Phone: 808-973-9468



Department of Agriculture
STATE OF HAWAII

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From: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 10:13 AM
To: Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; hdoa_info <hdoa.info@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Kirk, do you have any changes to Morris' suggested responses?

Mahalo,

Phyllis

From: Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; hdoa_info <hdoa.info@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Please see my suggested responses below:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now? HDOA, DLNR, & USGS are negotiating the terms of transfer for the well which is anticipated to proceed without significant delay.

2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well? No decision on how the well will be operated and maintained has been made. If any third party operator is selected to manage the well, they will be required to be a legal entity and in compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations. Is there validity to the above stated interest? HDOA has not received any requests from the owners of the Kohala Ditch to operate the well since it is premature, the transfer of ownership has not yet occurred, and the logistics of operating the well has not been determined. In an earlier meeting it was said, there was a text exchange with her about this same thing. This meeting on March 25th, also included Dave Chun from Congressman Kahele's office. It was a meeting where apparently area farmers requested her presence to answer questions directly.

Mahalo,
Morris M. Atta
Deputy to the Chairperson
Hawaii Department of Agriculture
(808) 973-9550
[REDACTED]@Hawaii.gov

From: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:02 AM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; hdoa_info <hdoa.info@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?
Importance: High

Forwarding questions below. Who will respond?

Mahalo!

From: Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 31, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Aloha, Gayle,

My name is Libby Leonard. I'm a journalist based in Kapa'au and have a few questions for Chairperson Shimabukuro-Geiser.

Recently I was at a meeting about water in North Kohala, the second of which, it was implied that the USGS well out near Upolu airport is supposed to be transferred to USDA. It was also implied that USDA would not want to actually manage it, but that according to Councilman Tim Richards, said there was interest in the Kohala Ditch Co-op managing it.

My questions are:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now?

2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well? Is there validity to the above stated interest? In an earlier meeting it was said, there was a text exchange with her about this same thing. This meeting on March 25th, also included Dave Chun from Congressman Kahele's office. It was a meeting where apparently area farmers requested her presence to answer questions directly.

If she could get back to me at her earliest convenience, that would be great. Hope you are both doing well and had a great weekend.

Best,

Libby Leonard



Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Atta, Morris; Nakamura, Gayle M
Cc: Kau, Brian K; Saiki, Kirk I; Ferrer, Jan Y; hdoa_info
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Hi Gayle,

Use Morris' responses:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now? Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), & United States Geological Survey (USGS) are negotiating the terms of transfer for the well which is anticipated to proceed without significant delay.
2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well? No decision on how the well will be operated and maintained has been made. If any third party operator is selected to manage the well, they will be required to be a legal entity and in compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations. Is there validity to the above stated interest? HDOA has not received any requests from the owners of the Kohala Ditch to operate the well since it is premature, the transfer of ownership has not yet occurred, and the logistics of operating the well has not been determined.

Gayle – Just a FYI...I (or Morris) do not recall being ask to attend the March meeting by whoever hosted it.

Mahalo,

Phyllis

From: Atta, Morris <Morris.Atta@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <Phyllis.Shimabukuro-Geiser@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; hdoa_info <hdoa.info@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Please see my suggested responses below:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now? HDOA, DLNR, & USGS are negotiating the terms of transfer for the well which is anticipated to proceed without significant delay.
2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well? No decision on how the well will be operated and maintained has been made. If any third party operator is selected to manage the well, they will be required to be a legal entity and in compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations. Is there validity to the above stated interest? HDOA has not received any requests from the owners of the Kohala Ditch to operate the well since it is premature, the transfer of ownership has not yet occurred, and the logistics of operating the well has not been determined. In an earlier meeting it was said, there was a text exchange with her about this same thing. This meeting on March 25th, also included Dave Chun from Congressman Kahele's office. It was a meeting where apparently area farmers requested her presence to answer questions directly.

Mahalo,
Morris M. Atta
Deputy to the Chairperson
Hawaii Department of Agriculture
(808) 973-9550
[REDACTED]@Hawaii.gov

From: Nakamura, Gayle M <G[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:02 AM
To: Shimabukuro-Geiser, Phyllis <Phyllis[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; Ferrer, Jan Y <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>; hdoa_info <hdoa.info@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?
Importance: High

Forwarding questions below. Who will respond?

Mahalo!

From: Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 31, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Aloha, Gayle,

My name is Libby Leonard. I'm a journalist based in Kapa'au and have a few questions for Chairperson Shimabukuro-Geiser.

Recently I was at a meeting about water in North Kohala, the second of which, it was implied that the USGS well out near Upolu airport is supposed to be transferred to USDA. It was also implied that USDA would not want to actually manage it, but that according to Councilman Tim Richards, said there was interest in the Kohala Ditch Co-op managing it.

My questions are:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now?
2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well? Is there validity to the above stated interest? In an earlier meeting it was said, there was a text exchange with her about this same thing. This meeting on March 25th, also included Dave Chun from Congressman Kahele's office. It was a meeting where apparently area farmers requested her presence to answer questions directly.

If she could get back to me at her earliest convenience, that would be great. Hope you are both doing well and had a great weekend.

Best,

Libby Leonard
[REDACTED]

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Nakamura, Gayle M
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 4:47 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Importance: High

Aloha Libby,

Please see our responses below in blue.

In the future, can you please send your requests through our Public Information Officer, Janelle Saneishi.

Her email is: hdoa.info@hawaii.gov

Thank you!

From: Libby Leonard <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, July 31, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Nakamura, Gayle M <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment about North Kohala well?

Aloha, Gayle,

My name is Libby Leonard. I'm a journalist based in Kapa'au and have a few questions for Chairperson Shimabukuro-Geiser.

Recently I was at a meeting about water in North Kohala, the second of which, it was implied that the USGS well out near Upolu airport is supposed to be transferred to USDA. It was also implied that USDA would not want to actually manage it, but that according to Councilman Tim Richards, said there was interest in the Kohala Ditch Co-op managing it.

My questions are:

1. Where is USDA in the process of transferring it over right now?
Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), & United States Geological Survey (USGS) are negotiating the terms of transfer for the well which is anticipated to proceed without significant delay.
2. Why would USDA want a private Co-op (which is currently not in legal standing) managing the well?
No decision on how the well will be operated and maintained has been made. If any third party operator is selected to manage the well, they will be required to be a legal entity and in compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations.

Is there validity to the above stated interest?


HDOA has not received any requests from the owners of the Kohala Ditch to operate the well since it is premature, the transfer of ownership has not yet occurred, and the logistics of operating the well has not been determined.

In an earlier meeting it was said, there was a text exchange with her about this same thing. This meeting on March 25th, also included Dave Chun from Congressman Kahele's office. It was a meeting where apparently area farmers requested her presence to answer questions directly.

The chair or deputy do not recall being ask to attend the March meeting by whoever hosted it.

If she could get back to me at her earliest convenience, that would be great. Hope you are both doing well and had a great weekend.

Best,

Libby Leonard


Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Wilson, Brooke
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 5:58 PM
To: Salaveria, Luis P; Nasir, Sabrina K
Cc: Hurd, Sharon K; Atta, Morris; Chang, Dawn
Subject: Kohala Ditch

Aloha Luis,

We've had discussions with Senator Richards about support for a CIP project for Kohala Ditch.

Please add 10M CIP (C or A) to AGR's budget request for Repairs for Kohala Ditch. We will be receiving more information in the coming days but we want to make sure we don't miss this.

This project would repair a broken water irrigation system to supply water to Halaula, Kapa'au and Hawi.

Thank you,
Brooke

Brooke Wilson
Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor
State of Hawaii
415 S. Beretania St., 5th floor
Honolulu, HI 96815

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Saiki, Kirk I
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 10:02 AM
To: Atta, Morris
Subject: FW: Kohala Ditch Repairs CIP Add GM#2

Importance: High

You know anything about this project? This is the first I'm hearing about this.

Kirk Saiki
State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Resource Management Division
1428 S. King Street
Honolulu, HI 96814-2512
Phone: 808-973-9468



Department of Agriculture

STATE OF HAWAII

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From: Takenaka, Warren E <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:15 AM
To: Kau, Brian K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Saiki, Kirk I <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: FW: Kohala Ditch Repairs CIP Add GM#2
Importance: High

You guys have a cost element breakdown?

From: Say, Johnathan <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:12 AM
To: Takenaka, Warren E <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: Kohala Ditch Repairs CIP Add GM#2

Hi Warren,

We have been told to add \$10 million in general funds in FY 24 for CIP for repairs to Kohala Ditch, Hawai'i in the second governor's message. Could you please provide me the most appropriate Prog ID and cost element breakdown of the \$10 million by noon today?

Note: This ditch is privately owned by a Co-op that isn't a non-profit (see below) and we will put language into the project description that this appropriation is in the "public's interest for public health, safety, etc".

<https://kohaladitchcoop.com/about/>

Thank you,

Johnathan Say

Program Budget Analyst

BPPM, Department of Budget and Finance

Email: jsay@hawaii.gov

Direct: 586-1565

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Wilson, Brooke
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 11:34 AM
To: Hurd, Sharon K
Cc: Atta, Morris
Subject: Re: The Kohala Ditch - \$10 M for upgrade

Thanks guys!

Brooke Wilson
Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor
State of Hawaii
415 S. Beretania St., 5th floor
Honolulu, HI 96815

From: Hurd, Sharon K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 11:32:57 AM
To: Wilson, Brooke <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: RE: The Kohala Ditch - \$10 M for upgrade

Brooke,

Will do.

Thank you,
Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture
(808) 973-9550
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/>

From: Wilson, Brooke <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 11:32 AM
To: Hurd, Sharon K <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Atta, Morris <[REDACTED]@hawaii.gov>
Subject: Re: The Kohala Ditch - \$10 M for upgrade

Pls make sure Senator Richards is clear that we support it.

Mahaloi
Brooke Wilson
Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor
State of Hawaii
415 S. Beretania St., 5th floor
Honolulu, HI 96815

From: Hurd, Sharon K <sharon.k.hurd@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 11:30:33 AM
To: Wilson, Brooke <brooke.wilson@hawaii.gov>
Cc: Atta, Morris <morris.atta@hawaii.gov>
Subject: The Kohala Ditch - \$10 M for upgrade

Brooke,

DOA understands this project is a priority for Governor and the project is moving forward. This email is to offer comments from the Agricultural Resource Management Division (ARMD) that is tasked to provide a breakdown of how the \$10 million will be expended.

- The upgrade/repairs will be performed on a privately owned waterway/ditch; this sets precedence for using general funds for private benefit
- ARMD points out that the work to be performed is on a portion of a 20+ mile stretch of the waterway
- There is the likelihood of failures in multiple areas of the waterway due to earthquakes, floods or other natural occurrences due to lack of maintenance of the entire stretch.
- Due to the unreliability of the Kohala Ditch, the construction of a well was approved – this well would be needed when the ditch fails, so should continue despite less urgency to do so.

ARMD staff made these points noting that they are providing the breakdown of how the \$10 million will be expended.

Sharing as an FYI.

Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture
(808) 973-9550
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/>

Ferrer, Jan Y

From: Hurd, Sharon K
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 7:37 PM
To: [REDACTED]@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: Clingan, Marci; Weston Yap; Atta, Morris
Subject: The Kohala Ditch - \$10 M for upgrade

Senator,

A quick email to advise that the Administration is in support of the upgrade to the Kohala Ditch. Will send more information when available.

Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture
(808) 973-9550
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/>