

# Ala Wai Watershed Project

## Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting

DATE: November 7, 2008

ATTENDEES: Cindy Barger, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Derek Chow, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Debbie Solis, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Stephen Stello, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Carty Chang, DLNR  
Dennis Imada, DLNR  
Dudley Kubo, NRCS  
Sharon Sawdey, NRCS  
Randall Wakumoto, City and County of Honolulu, ENV  
Marin Fukagawa, City and County of Honolulu, DPP  
Brian Hunter, Department of Health, Clean Water Branch  
Rick Stercho, State Civil Defense  
Jimmy Lagunero, UH Manoa  
Tom Heinrich, for Sen. Brian Taniguchi  
John Gollner, for Councilman Duke Bainum  
Karen Ah Mai, for Rep. Calvin Say  
Sherri Hiraoka, Townscape  
Gene Dashiell, Environmental Planning Services  
Joanne Hiramatsu, Oceanit  
Paul Luersen, CH2M HILL  
Lisa Kettley, CH2M HILL

### 1. Overview of Agenda

Cindy provided an overview of the agenda:

1. Update on FEMA/DLNR Mitigation Project
2. Ala Wai Watershed Project
  - a. Summary of EIS Scoping Meeting
  - b. Overview of Feasibility Report/EIS Process
  - c. Desired Outcomes of Process
  - d. Overview of Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Team (TAT) Meetings

### 2. Status of FEMA/DLNR Mitigation Project

Dennis stated that the design documents are expected to be complete in the spring. FEMA is currently trying to determine whether the project qualifies for an Environmental Assessment (EA), or if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. He stated that

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FEMA is currently leaning towards preparation of an EIS. Also, a meeting will be held in the near future to discuss whether the project will proceed as a stand-alone project, or whether it will be included as part of the larger Ala Wai Watershed Project.

Tom asked how long the FEMA funds will be available. Rick stated that his understanding is that the funds are available until at least the end of 2011, and that there is no immediate need to update the milestones as there is currently no concern over losing the funds.

### **3. Status of Manoa Watershed Project**

Dudley explained that the Manoa Watershed Project is winding down, and NRCS is working with Oceanit and USACE to finalize and package the technical reports. Once finalized, the technical reports will be made available to the public. The documents will likely be posted on the NRCS website, along with a link to the new Ala Wai Watershed Project website, which should be completed within a few weeks.

Dudley also stated that a Notice of Withdrawal to publish an EIS for the Manoa Watershed Project was published in the Federal Register in late October, following the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the Ala Wai Watershed Project. NRCS has also signed a cooperative agreement with USACE, and is now formally a cooperating agency for the Ala Wai Watershed Project.

### **4. Summary of Scoping Meeting for Ala Wai Watershed Project**

Sherri explained that the turnout of the October 2008 scoping meeting was lower than for the 2004 meeting, but that a variety of good comments were still received. She stated that the comments generally included the following issues:

- Concern about maintenance of the channels and associated infrastructure
- Opportunities for public involvement in the planning process
- Private ownership of the streams, and the rights and responsibilities of those owners
- Economic and environmental impacts of proposed measures
- Implementation of projects in the near-term

Sherri stated that the meeting minutes are currently being approved by USACE, then will be distributed to the public.

Tom stated that the issue of private ownership was further discussed at the Manoa neighborhood board meeting, and it is of major concern to many residents. Jimmy provided the group with a copy of *The Homeowners Handbook to Prepare for Natural Disasters* (available from SeaGrant), and explained this could be a good tool for communicating rights and responsibilities to private land owners along the stream.

Dudley and Derek discussed the value of an interagency effort to determine the permitting process for landowners who wanted to implement measures in the stream, separate from the project. Derek explained that there are some concerns associated with this type of effort, but that it would be worthwhile to undertake.

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Karen stated that at a recent Makiki neighborhood board meeting, concerns were voiced regarding the potential for flooding near the Punahou Cliffs apartments, at the intersection of Wilder and Makiki.

Cindy stated that she was asked to attend the Waikiki neighborhood board meeting next week. She plans to attend and will present the information used for the public scoping meeting.

## 5. Overview of Feasibility Report/EIS Process

Cindy explained to the group that a chartering meeting was held last week for the project delivery team (PDT). The general objective of the chartering meeting was to discuss and reach a consensus on the goals and objectives, and the path forward for the project.

Paul described the current tasks in CH2M HILL's contract, for which the final product will be the Feasibility Scoping Meeting Report. Cindy provided an overview of the USACE process, which includes four major milestones: (1) the Feasibility Scoping Meeting Report, (2) the Alternatives Formulation Briefing Package, (3) the Draft Feasibility Report/EIS, and (4) the Final Feasibility Report/EIS. She explained that the purpose of the first two deliverables is to obtain input from USACE headquarters, and the information contained in these documents would become the contents of the Draft Feasibility Report/EIS.

Jimmy asked about the specific objectives of the project. Cindy presented an overview of the objectives, and explained that they were refined during the chartering meeting. The group asked if the statement of the objectives could be made available for public use. Cindy stated that once the wording has been polished, she would like to provide them to a larger group of stakeholders for input. In addition to the statement of objectives, Karen asked that the maps showing the area of potential flooding be provided for public use (preferably in a printable format). Cindy stated that these documents, as well as the scoping meeting presentation will be placed on the website, once it is complete.

Karen explained that Jeff Apaka of the Waikiki Community Center has expressed a desire to help organize an effort to get people involved in taking care of the watershed. He is also organizing the annual Ala Wai Challenge. He has offered a table at the event to present information about the Ala Wai Watershed Project. Cindy and Karen decided to coordinate efforts for the Ala Wai Watershed Project and AWWA for this event.

Cindy gave an overview of the public involvement tasks that are currently included in CH2M HILL's contract, but explained that these tasks may be refined over time. She explained that the need for a public involvement technical advisory team (TAT) was identified during the chartering meeting and the first meeting will be called in the near future. The TAT will be focused on identifying the type and frequency of public involvement efforts that should be conducted.

Jimmy asked about the timing of future phases of the project. Cindy stated that the timeline presented at the public scoping meeting was still valid, assuming each of the future tasks is completed on schedule. Paul also presented a draft version of the project schedule.

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## 6. Desired Outcomes of the Process

Cindy presented the list of desired outcomes that was developed during the chartering meeting. Tom suggested an outcome that should be included is the ability of the project to be sustainably managed and maintained over time. He also stated that the desired outcomes, similar to the project objectives, should be made available to the public for input.

Karen expressed the desire for opportunities for public education and training, as it is critical to transfer knowledge from the technical experts to the general public. She also explained the need for these training efforts to be funded, because it is too expensive for non-profit organization to perform. Cindy stated that this issue should be further explored in the public involvement TAT.

Jimmy stated that the team should explore options to incorporate public education into the project, through opportunities such as the local news and school programs. Karen highlighted specific opportunities with Chaminade University and Hawaii Baptist Academy. Cindy stated that it may not be possible to get funding from the current sponsors for public education, and this highlights the need to get other organizations involved in the project.

## 7. Overview of Team Meetings

Cindy described each of the proposed team meetings, including the PDT, stakeholder, sponsor, executive and TAT meetings. She proposed that the stakeholder meetings be moved from monthly to quarterly meetings to allow more time for TAT and other meetings. The group agreed to the change.

Cindy gave an overview of the coordination process, and the relationship between the various meeting groups. Derek stressed that there is no strict USACE coordination process, and the process can be defined by the project team. Tom requested that the graphic showing the coordination process be revised to show the appropriate level of overlap between the meeting groups, and also asked that it include a statement of the USACE's mission and responsibilities. Debbie suggested that a statement or graphic showing the mission and responsibilities of each of the sponsor be developed.

Cindy explained that there are currently four TATs planned (hydrology & hydraulics, water quality, ecosystem restoration, and public involvement), but TATs would be formed, deleted, or combined as the project evolves. She stated that TAT participants would need to agree to stay focused on the specific technical issues addressed by the TAT, and be willing to maintain some level of confidentiality, as the information discussed would be a work in progress.

The following meeting participants agreed to participate in TATs:

- Public Involvement - Sherri, Ed Honda (suggested by Tom), Tom, Jimmy, Karen
- Hydrology & Hydraulics (including sediment transport modeling) - Steve, Dudley, DLNR staff (although they are short-staffed), Sharon, Marvin
- Water Quality - Randall, Gerry, Marvin, Brian
- Ecosystem Restoration - Karen, DLNR (OCCL, DAR, DOFAW), Sharon

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Marvin stated that he is trying to get Kathy Sokugawa involved in the project. Derek stated that he is trying to get the Managing Director involved, and a meeting is being set up with Sen. Inouye's office to discuss this issue. Dudley stated that the Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) should also be engaged, and they could participate on both technical and public involvement issues. Carty explained that DLNR serves as the liaison for UH, and asked for guidance on where to send correspondence to increase exposure and participation. The group decided that he should continue to provide the correspondence to Virginia Hinshaw, but should describe the specific type of input that is requested and list the individuals/ departments the information should be circulated to. Jimmy asked that he be copied on any correspondence so he can follow up with specific individuals.

Jimmy stated that other disciplines and experts should also be considered for involvement in the TATs. He asked if the USACE could send written invitations to the invited participants, so they could be provided to department heads or supervisors. Cindy stated that the USACE could do this if the appropriate names are provided to her.

## 8. Miscellaneous

Jimmy asked if there was a document repository for the project. Cindy explained that most of the documents were inventoried for the 2003 Ala Wai Watershed Analysis, and most of these documents are stored at Carty's office. Cindy also stated that there is a need to determine the status all of the previous or ongoing projects outlined in that analysis.

Jimmy stated that there appears to be a real need to inventory and determine land ownership along the streams. Cindy stated that this currently is not being addressed, but agreed that it is something that will need to be explored.

## 9. Action Items

- Finalize minutes from scoping meeting and circulate to public (Cindy and Sherri)
- Refine statement of objectives and desired outcomes, then circulate to a larger stakeholder group for input (Lisa and Cindy)
- Publish objectives, inundations maps and scoping meeting minutes on webpage (CH2M HILL)
- Plan for presentation of project materials at the Ala Wai Challenge event (Cindy)
- Provide names of potential TAT participants to Cindy (group)
- Send written invitation to potential TAT participants as they are identified (Cindy)
- Develop a statement or graphic showing the mission and responsibilities of each sponsoring agency (Cindy)
- Check status of previous or ongoing projects (CH2M HILL)