

Kauai Water Use & Development Plan Update
First Series of Public Meetings
October 27, 2015
Kalaheo Neighborhood Center
5PM to 6:15 PM

ATTENDANCE:

KDOW: Kirk Saiki (Manager and Chief Engineer), Edward Doi (Head of Water Resources & Planning Division, WR&P), Joel Bautista (WR&P), Kim Tamaoka (Public Relations, PR), Jonell Kaohelaulii (PR), Andrea Suzuki (Deputy County Attorney)
Fukunaga & Associates, Inc. (Consultant): Lynn Malinger, Amanda Tanaka, Amanda Kimi
Resolutions Hawaii (Facilitator): Dee Dee Letts

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this series of five (5) public meetings is to present the information that will be covered in the update, the sources for this information, how it will be presented, as well as any information that is available regarding the status of the resource on the Island. There will be a second series of public information meetings in about a year that will present all of the data gathered.

The intent of this series of meetings is to create an understanding of the purpose and intent of the Kauai Water Use & Development Plan Update and the context within which it is being developed. This series is to give the community an opportunity to express any concerns or voice any questions they may have about the process to be used to create the update. This will allow the consultant and the Department of Water to factor these into the planning process as the data is being collected and analyzed.

The meeting started with a presentation by Fukunaga & Associates. This presentation is posted on KauaiWater.org. There is a one page handout from the meetings that is also posted on the same website.

DISCUSSION:

These notes reflect the questions and concerns voiced by attendees at the Kalaheo meeting. (Q = question; A = answer; C = comment.)

1) Q: Are all the wells metered?

A: Data for all wells is required to be reported to the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM). However, not all [private] well owners report to CWRM. All Department of Water wells are metered and report to CWRM.

2) Q: What are reclaimed water systems?

A: Reclaimed water systems are systems that distribute recycled water for irrigation after it has been treated at wastewater treatment plants.

- 3) Q: In the past, population projections have been inaccurate. How are you addressing this?
A: The population projections from a technical study for the Planning Department's General Plan Update are being used. The growth rate is approximately 1-2%, which is reasonable compared to historical growth rates.
- 4) Q: It seems that there is more than enough water to meet the demands. Is that true? Has global warming been taken into account? For example, it used to rain a lot here but it doesn't any more.
A: Climate change does need to be considered and monitored.
- 5) Q: Is there a possibility of salt water intrusion and the water lens being pierced? Who monitors this?
A: Everyone must be careful. Public and private well owners are supposed to report chlorides to CWRM. DOW monitors their own wells and reports to CWRM.
- 6) Q: Is there technology that shows the rate at which aquifers are being recharged? Has the aquifer capacity diminished or stayed the same? Is there historical data for the aquifers?
A: CWRM is responsible for studying the aquifers and analyzing/updating recharge rates. There are observation wells that are used to study the aquifers.
- 7) Q: Is the water quality monitored for the wells?
A: Water from wells used for drinking water must meet the Safe Drinking Water Standards.
- 8) Q: The Sustainable Yield numbers are from the 2008 Water Resource Protection Plan (WRPP). Will the updated numbers be used in the KWUDP?
A: Yes, when they become available.
- 9) Q: Will both public and private water systems be looked at?
A: Yes.
- 10) Q: Do we have a policy for allocating water? Who gets the water if we end up using more than the Sustainable Yield (SY)?
A: No one owns the water. Uses that have equal priority were identified by the Hawaii Supreme Court. There are 4 Public Trust Purposes: Maintenance of water in its natural state; Domestic Use; Traditional and Customary Rights; Department of Hawaiian Home Lands reservations. Also, CWRM has a process for designating Water Management Areas. [Upon designation, applicants for water use permits in designated Water Management Areas are required to show that they meet the 7 statutory conditions for obtaining a water use permit under HRS 174C-49(a).]

- 11) C: A discussion on the process for designating Water Management Areas would be helpful.
- 12) Q: Are private water systems/wells not required to report their pumpage?
A: They are required to report their pumpage to CWRM but if private entities don't disclose their information, we cannot get the information.
- 13) Q: Is there an enforcement mechanism for wells that are not reporting?
A: Yes, CWRM can pursue reporting.
- 14) Q: Is there a time when we have to worry about agricultural companies using groundwater for irrigation?
A: Well permits can be requested for agricultural uses. [If there is competition or threats to water resources, CWRM may designate a water management area and institute a water use permitting system.]
- 15) Q: Is there a priority for water? Who protects existing users?
A: Water belongs to the public. The Public Trust Doctrine prioritizes certain uses. [Upon designation of a water management area, the shared use doctrine is replaced by a water use permitting system, and all existing users must apply for a permit to continue their existing use. The Water Code gives some priority to existing users.]
- 16) Q: Is there any discussion for new reservoirs (for potable water)?
A: No.
- 17) Q: What is the water in the reservoirs used for?
A: Primarily for agricultural use.
- 18) C: The waterfall at the end of Wailua River was mentioned.
A: There is a very small pump there. However, the reason the water was not flowing was because there was no rain.

NEXT STEPS:

FAINC will continue to collect and analyze data and will explore the issues that were raised during the meeting. The findings will be presented at the next public information meeting. In the meantime, new and updated information will be posted on the DOW website periodically.