



# Ala Wai FRM Update

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**Honolulu District**

**BUILDING STRONG®**  
December 2019

***EMAIL UPDATE TO THE ALA WAI FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST, 23 DECEMBER 2019:***

*(if you are not already receiving these email updates or would like to be added to the email distribution list, contact [AlaWaiFloodProject@usace.army.mil](mailto:AlaWaiFloodProject@usace.army.mil))*

## **PM CORNER**

Aloha kākou,

We've almost come to the end of 2019. As I reflect back on this past year, I am thankful to have worked alongside the community and our partners to help develop the Ala Wai Flood Control Project thus far. While there is still much to accomplish together going forward, I am encouraged by our continued engagement and open dialogue. Your voice is a valuable part of this process and we remain committed to keeping the communication channels open. This newsletter is just one piece of our commitment to help keep you informed on any updates and where you can get involved.

I am hopeful that together we can deliver a project that protects the community, the infrastructure, and the economy while balancing engineering solutions with the ecosystem, both urban and natural.

We hope you enjoy the holiday season and I look forward to engaging with you all in the near future.

From our team to yours, Mele Kalikimaka, E pili mau na pomaika'i ia'oe (Merry Christmas, may blessings be ever with you)!

I invite you to view the updates below.

The Ala Wai Team

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## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **I. PAST ENGAGEMENTS:**

Manoa Neighborhood Board- Jeff Herzog, the Project Manager for the project presented an update at the Manoa Neighborhood Board on November 6, 2019. He presented the updated modeling in the Manoa brochure, as well as answered questions from board members and the audience. Many questions related to community concerns about flood risk, as well as questions about the process and schedule.

McCully/Moiliili Neighborhood Board- Jeff Herzog presented an update with Mark Yonamine from the City and County Department of Design and Construction on November 7, 2019. He presented the McCully/Moiliili brochure as well as answered questions from board members and the audience. Questions ranged from statements grounded in historical knowledge to questions about long-term impacts of flooding in the community. The community in McCully and Moiliili is recognized as the community with the greatest risk during a storm event. During the presentation, Jeff

reiterated that, no matter which of the three valleys the water originates from, it all settles out in McCully and Moiliili. With or without the constructed features, the community is vulnerable to flooding, the constructed features aim at reducing the volume of water and the depth of water the settles in the community. Most residual risk can be attributed to the topography and dense urban environment which limits the area's ability to absorb the volume of water. For this reason, the Ala Wai project is also authorized to assist the City and County with additional resilience features such as emergency action plans and early warning systems to further reduce the risk on the community.

Kaimuki Neighborhood Board- The Ala Wai team presented an update to the Kaimuki Neighborhood board at the November 20, 2019 meeting. The team answered questions from board members and the audience on schedule and impacts to the community.

## II. PLANNED ENGAGEMENTS

The team has initiated coordination for several small engagements focused on topics like schools, agriculture, paddlers, and local businesses, to name a few. The goal of the smaller engagements is to facilitate two-way communication, which is the reason for limited audience and focused topics. After the smaller engagements, the team will look to host some larger audience engagements. The format of the engagements will vary from workshops with displays, to presentation of findings and feedback as the team continues to investigate system modifications.

Look for a full schedule of engagements in the January, 2020 Newsletter.

## III. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why do you keep moving the project forward despite the opposition?

A: Receiving community feedback on projects, whether it be critical or supportive is an essential part of our process. Our goal is to listen to concerned community members and work together towards solutions where possible. Most people we talk to during engagements recognize the need for flood protection. Their concern is ensuring that it is done right, and that they have an opportunity to participate. The project as a whole has come a long ways over the past year, from updating technical data to receiving community feedback. Moving forward with all of this, plus continued collaboration can deliver a project that protects the community, the infrastructure, while serving as a model for how future projects on Oahu should be delivered.

Q: Are you going to look at more Ecosystem Restoration Opportunities?

A: The short answer is yes, but what needs to be clarified is that the term "Ecosystem Restoration" has many meanings to different groups. While the project was not able to justify ecosystem restoration as defined by the Federal Government, many of the environmental operating principals required by federal mandate align with much of the same ecosystem restoration principles requested by the community. Therefore, the project team is looking at ecosystem restoration opportunities as defined by the community. Moving forward this includes using soft natural features and native materials in lieu of concrete, as much as possible. It also means investigating features that have less impact on the natural flow of water within the streams. Where impacts are identified, action is taken to mitigate impacts, providing opportunities for the habitat to thrive. We will continue to share these types of opportunities with the community as we balance an engineering solution with the ecosystem, both urban and natural.

Q: Why is there such a rush to sign the Agreement?

A: The 2018 Emergency Supplemental program selected projects for funding based on imminent risk to public safety and property. This funding allowed for an accelerated process which enables implementation of these risk mitigation features much more quickly than the standard process. As the Corps of Engineers can't operate unilaterally in Civil Works, a non-federal Partner is needed to move forward into the next stage of the project. The City and County of Honolulu has agreed to be our partner, but an official agreement hasn't been solidified to date. An agreement is in

the best interest of both the federal and non-federal party, because it outlines the obligations and expectations for both parties, which will better ensure the project objectives are met.

## **TEAM UPDATES**

### **I. PROJECT MANAGEMENT UPDATES**

The Ala Wai Team met several times over the past month to develop a community engagement plan. The team, consisting of the Honolulu District, the Department of Design and Construction, the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience, and the Mayor's Communications Officer, met to discuss timeline and engagement plans. The team identified a need to schedule both small audience and large audience engagements in different forums to discuss different topics.

### **II. TECHNICAL UPDATE**

The team is continuing to update its modeling and information. We are working closely with City and County agencies, such as Design and Construction, Department of Enterprise Services and Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resilience to ensure our engineering and data lines up with our partner's needs to balance risk reduction and resilience in the community. In addition to working with our City partners, we are engaging and looking to collaborate with local experts to discuss, validate, and compare data. The team recognizes the importance of incorporating local and traditional knowledge into the engineering recommendation for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Control Project.

### **III. SENIOR LEADER ENGAGEMENTS**

Senior Executive Board Meeting- On Friday, December 6, 2019, Mayor Kirk Caldwell met with Brigadier General Thomas Tickner, Pacific Ocean Division Commanding General, who represents the regional division that oversees Honolulu District, at the quarterly Senior Executive Board (SEB) Meeting for the Ala Wai Canal Flood Project. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss project updates, community engagements, as well as laying out a path forward for the project.

This is the second time the SEB convened, with the first engagement occurring in June 2019. Both the City and County and the Corps identified areas to improve communication and committed to doing so. In addition to a monthly newsletter from the Ala Wai Team, there will be a future monthly media roundtable event to provide updates, information, and answer questions pertaining to the project. The Mayor and General both recognized and expressed a need to address flood risk in the Ala Wai Watershed.

\*\*\*The team continues to encourage community feedback and engagement through email. Please feel free to email the team at [AlaWaiFloodProject@usace.army.mil](mailto:AlaWaiFloodProject@usace.army.mil).

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

**Figure 3 - Floodplain Map**  
 Hydrology and Hydraulics Study  
 Flood of October 30, 2004  
 Manoa Stream, Oahu, Hawaii

**Legend**

- ★ Stream Gauge
- Flooded Areas
- FEMA Flood zones**
- 100 yr floodplain (AE)
- 100 yr floodplain (AEF)
- 500 year floodplain (X3)
- Sub Basins
- 3 Lowway
- 4 Park
- 5 Woodlawn
- 6 Kamae

**5% AEP (20-year)  
 Rain Event Model  
 in 2D**

Max  
 3.00  
 2.00  
 1.00  
 0.00

Source: Data: HydroQual, Inc., 2004; Carlisle & Associates, Inc. 2004  
 R.E. Wilson, Steven Jacobowitz, P.E., and Dr. Will Tappin, P.E.

SHANE HOA - QUANGTRUONGMEDIA.COM

Kang Ching waded through the intersection of Fien and Hanoi streets yesterday to take photographs. The flooding was made worse when the canal that channels Maekong Stream overflowed its banks at Fien and Phanhoai streets.