

Water Status and Call to Action Part 2

Mahanalua Nui Owners:

Two things happened since my last status. On Monday, 4/18/2022, the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC) issued an order to Launiupoko Irrigation Company (LIC). While the PUC clearly heard the input from struggling HOA members and said they were inclined to approve higher rates for relief, they didn't do it. Instead, they requested more information from LIC to be delivered by May 2, 2022. The order is critical of LIC for not acting timely and not answering information requests directly and completely. In the order, the PUC clearly blames LIC for rate case delays.

On Tuesday, 4/19/2022, the state Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) approved temporary relief from the IIFS standards that govern how much water can be diverted from Kau'ula Stream. A minimum diversion of 300,000 gallons per day were guaranteed for 90 days to the cacao farm and the three kuleana families in Kau'ula Valley even on low flow days. The Commission based their decision to only supply four consumers on the belief that all other LIC customers can use potable water as an alternative supplement for irrigation. Testimony from the HOAs' attorney and LIC pointed out the potable system is not capable of supporting our agricultural needs and that many users aren't set up to use it but that did not sway the Commissioners.

The PUC would likely would not have taken any action if they didn't sense the urgency in our letters. I encourage you again to write the PUC requesting quick approval of LIC's temporary rate request to provide enough revenue so LIC can supply consistent irrigation water. (Sample letter attached) You could stress in your letter that based on their latest order you understand the PUC is busy working with LIC to fully understand LIC's request, but it is LIC's customers who are suffering every day the case drags on. Urge them to take quick action to provide emergency relief via the temporary rate case and make adjustments as they work through the permanent case.

Please send your letter via email to the PUC at puc@hawaii.gov.

Mahanalua Nui HOA Board of Directors