



## ***The Current Newsletter***

***September 2023***



\*Photo Credits: Governor Josh Green, M.D.'s Photostream\*

## **A Message from Chief Energy Officer Mark B. Glick**

All of us at HSEO are deeply saddened by the devastating fires on Maui. Our hearts go out to all those who have lost their homes, livelihoods, and loved ones in this tragedy. We stand with you in solidarity and hope, and we offer our sincere condolences and support now and every day.

Governor Green activated the State's Emergency Operations Plan in response to the fires on Maui and Hawai'i County. HSEO, like other State agencies, supports the Emergency Operations Center in its role as a designated agency through Emergency Service Function (ESF) 12 – Energy and Emergency Service and ESF – 15 – External Affairs.

The ESF structure is a national framework used to coordinate response among state agencies and federal partners. Since the EOC was activated, HSEO has provided staff and resources to address critical energy infrastructure needs and to provide important information to the public. HSEO staff will continue to prioritize the needs of the disaster recovery response as it transitions into its future phases.

Last week, the Biden Administration announced a \$95 million award from the Department of Energy (USDOE) to harden Hawai'i's electric grid, improve service, and make our islands more resilient to future events. HSEO works closely with our federal partners, other state agencies, and industry partners to improve Hawai'i's energy resilience measures and USDOE's support will help accelerate our efforts to better withstand future events.

In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency announced that HSEO's Ko'olaupoko Critical Customer Hub application has been selected one of the finalists for this year's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) National Competition. This \$8.3 million project will develop three Critical Customer Hubs in the Ko'olaupoko region of O'ahu. The hubs function is similar to a microgrid with equipment that lets Hawaiian Electric isolate and power essential community facilities during long outages.

We are thrilled to see this project advance and will be working with FEMA, HI-EMA, and Hawaiian Electric to bring this novel concept to fruition.

Clean energy will certainly play a major role as Hawai'i rebuilds, and we stand ready to assist the affected residents and communities at the appropriate time. HSEO is inspired and informed by Governor Green's eloquent statement that "Lāhainā belongs to its people — and we are committed to rebuilding and restoring it the way THEY want it."

With Aloha,



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## Hawai'i State Energy Office Preparing Decarbonization Strategy

The impacts of a warming climate are felt throughout the world. In Hawai'i, a warming climate means rising temperatures on the land and in the ocean, coral bleaching, sea level rise, an increase in frequency of extreme weather events, ocean acidification, drought, biodiversity loss, and human health impacts among others.

While a significant reduction in greenhouse gases is needed worldwide to mitigate the growing impacts of the climate crisis, Hawai'i has committed to doing its part in reducing the state's contribution to the insurmountable global issue. Mitigating or reducing atmospheric climate warming pollutants, or greenhouse gases, is broadly called "decarbonization."

Decarbonization is two-pronged: it involves curbing the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, while simultaneously enhancing and protecting the potential of natural sinks to absorb these emissions. The exploration of technological sinks is viewed as a long-term action that is also being explored.

The role of the State and HSEO in supporting decarbonization is driven by technical support, strategic planning, policy and advocacy, and seeking funding opportunities.

In 2022, [Act 238](#) mandated the Hawai'i State Energy Office to "analyze pathways and develop recommendations for achieving the State's economy-wide decarbonization goals" following the legislative directive.

HSEO is working with consulting firm E3 to conduct this quantitative analysis, which will expand upon the work and preliminary analysis completed by Hawaiian Electric earlier this year. The study will evaluate emission reduction pathways from all emitting sectors economy wide.

HSEO is hosting a workshop to provide an overview of the study's approach to the decarbonization analysis, as well as provide an opportunity for stakeholder feedback and discussion. **The workshop will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, from 9:00 to**

**10:30 AM and will be recorded.** A recording and presentation materials will be posted on HSEO's Decarbonization Webpage. If you want to participate in the workshop, please email [monique.m.schafer@hawaii.gov](mailto:monique.m.schafer@hawaii.gov) to register.

An open link for stakeholders to provide feedback is available on [HSEO's Decarbonization Webpage](#). Feedback will be accepted through the end of October; however, earlier submissions are preferred.

**[Learn more about the State's Decarbonization Strategy!](#)**



## The State is Developing Two Major Climate Action Plans for Climate Mitigation in Hawai'i

The State of Hawai'i intends to strengthen current climate action approaches in creating and implementing its Priority Climate Action Plan and

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan. These plans will integrate indigenous Kanaka Maoli principles like 'ike 'āina with the most up-to-date findings in climate science.

### **PRIORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (PCAP)**

A roadmap prioritizing and coordinating projects to be ready to apply for the \$4.6 billion available nationwide for climate action implementation. The State of Hawai'i PCAP will identify the most pressing areas in need of GHG reduction and determine fitting implementation-ready measures. The PCAP will use the most recent statewide GHG inventory as a baseline for priority actions.

### **COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CCAP)**

The State of Hawai'i CCAP will build upon the State PCAP, and identify all major sources and sinks of GHGs, establish short and long-term reduction goals, and fit strategies and measures. The CCAP will examine current GHG emissions, and projected emissions without any changes to status quo activities, and compare these to projected emissions with economy-wide GHG reduction activities fully carried out.

The CCAP will be developed using the relationships and networks created during the PCAP planning phase. Community engagement will be particularly focused on ensuring disadvantaged and marginalized communities are included in planning, and that the planning process is accessible. Engagement will also build a broad coalition of local organizations and leaders to ensure all of our communities are represented in the engagement and planning process.



The [State Climate Commission](#) is the lead on this project and will be focused on the inclusivity of all interested and affected stakeholders in the process of plan development and fund disbursement. This will involve gathering input from key stakeholders and communities and transparent communication. This includes community meetings, regular digital and offline updates, and producing an accessible, one-stop hub for information for both the grant and State Climate Plans. The plans are being developed in conjunction with the [Hawai'i State Energy Office's State Decarbonization Strategy](#) and the County Climate Action Plans.

[\*\*Learn more about the Commission's Climate Action Plans!\*\*](#)

[\*\*Check out the Commission's goals and mitigation strategies!\*\*](#)



## Clean Energy Wayfinders Preparing for New Term

HSEO is starting its second year of the Clean Energy Wayfinders program. Six Wayfinders will be serving the islands of Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i Island to continue building community capacity and participation in Hawai'i's renewable energy transition. Five of the six

Wayfinders are returning for a second term. The Wayfinders that left us have stayed in Hawai'i and moved into clean energy and community outreach positions with other organizations - something we are thrilled to see as it is an intended outcome of the program! We hope to share even more exciting news about the program very soon, but for now this is a look at some of the priorities ahead for the Wayfinders.

**Decarbonization:** The Wayfinders will support HSEO's outreach and engagement efforts for the Decarbonization Strategy. Wayfinders will help to develop accessible materials and engagement opportunities about the foundational information that everyone should know to best participate in conversations about Decarbonization. Addressing Decarbonization can be intimidating because it is an economy-wide conversation that requires a level of technical understanding of topics including climate change, greenhouse gases, the carbon cycle, and the many sectors that contribute to our state's emissions, so the Wayfinders will focus on "translating" the information to best meet community members where they are while drawing connections to existing community priorities. They will also broaden HSEO's engagement capacity by bringing the Decarbonization conversation to schools, community events, and meetings.

**NOAA Understanding Energy Transitions and Coastal Resilience:** HSEO is partnering with UH Sea Grant on a project focused on building sustained dialogue and relationships between island communities across Hawai'i to inform the state's renewable energy future. This two-year project will expand HSEO's Energize Kākou program by working closely with community organizations to co-develop outreach and engagement strategies based on community



needs and culture, build community capacity for understanding and participating in energy transition conversations, and identify community priorities for increased climate and energy resilience. The project will also include a conference bringing together other grant awardees from Alaska, Puerto Rico, and Guam to share progress and opportunities for further collaboration between coastal communities.

The Wayfinders continue to seek avenues to connect with community organizations, schools, and other groups. We invite you to reach out to your local Wayfinders to explore ways in which we can collaborate and collectively contribute to Hawai'i's sustainable energy future!

**[Get engaged with the Wayfinders here!](#)**

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## Hawai'i Green Business Program Forums Rescheduled

Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) coordinates the Hawai'i Green Business Program (HGBP) that assists and recognizes businesses that strive to operate in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

The HGBP creates a profitable partnership between business, government, and a concerned public. Through improvements in operational efficiency, procurement procedures, regulatory compliance, and community relations, HGBP awardees see improvement to their financial

bottom line, while supporting efforts towards achieving a more sustainable Hawai'i.

In pursuit of this program's mission to facilitate more opportunities to participate and to help businesses, we are hosting a series of forums statewide to hear from recent awardees of the HGBP and presenters about rebates and incentives. After the presentations is a site tour of a venue that is a recent awardee to see their green practices in action! August forums were postponed due to the wildfires on Maui and Big Island. Visit the [Hawaii Green Business Program website](#) or click on the link below to see when forums are planned in your community.

**[Stay up-to-date on when and where a forum will be in your community here!](#)**

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*\*A rendering of the Ala Pono bridge, connecting the McCully-Mō'ili'ili-Waikiki neighborhoods\**

## Federal Grant Win for the Ala Wai Pedestrian Bridge!

The Hawai'i State Energy Office helped to facilitate grant writing assistance to the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS), who has been awarded \$25 million in RAISE grant funds to help with the cost of constructing the Ala Wai Pedestrian Bridge (Ala Pono). HSEO has access to free grant writing assistance from Hua Nani Partners, as Hawai'i is a

member of the U.S. Climate Alliance. With this commitment of federal funds, the project and its stakeholders can confidently move forward on this key pedestrian and bicycle link for the McCully-Mō'ili'ili-Waikīkī area of Honolulu.

The Ala Pono Bridge will play an important role in the State's decarbonization efforts, as it is expected to facilitate reduced emissions by promoting a modal shift to active transportation, especially for local, neighborhood-adjacent trips.

[Interested in learning more about RAISE?](#)

[The RAISE project description can be found here!](#)

[Up-to-date information on the project's development can be found on the Ala Pono page!](#)

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## Planning for Greater Transportation Choices and Low-Energy Intensive Modes of Transportations at the Hawai'i Conference of Planning Officials

The Hawai'i State Energy Office will be facilitating a panel on the energy reduction and transportation benefits of Mobility Hubs at the upcoming **Hawai'i Conference of Planning Officials (HCPO) on September 7, 2023, from 3:00 PM-4:30 PM at the Sheraton Waikīkī.**

Mobility hubs are spaces where walk, bike, roll, and public transit modes of transportation are co-located alongside improvements to the public realm. They enable people to make smooth and safe transfers between different modes, encouraging people to swap trips in their private

vehicle for trips made via bus, bike, scooter, walk, or carshare.

Providing people with more transportation choices is an important aspect of decarbonizing our economy, particularly assuring a just and equitable transition. Register for the HCPO and hear how speakers from Hawai'i Island, O'ahu, and Kaua'i are helping to plan our low-energy intensive transportation future.

For more information, including how to register, visit the [American Planning Association Website Hawai'i Chapter](#). See you there!



### Looking to Join the HSEO Team?

We have open positions for talented people who are passionate about the work we do. Help us help Hawai'i transition to a cleaner, stronger economy!

[Visit energy.hawaii.gov/careers today!](https://energy.hawaii.gov/careers)



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