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STATE OF HAWAIʻI | KA MOKUʻĀINA ʻO HAWAIʻI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA ʻOIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

IN REPLY REFER TO:

HAR-PM.26.1278

April 23, 2026

Mr. Edward H. Sniffen, Director
Department of Transportation
869 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

KAUAI

Issuance of a 10-Year License to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for two tide houses, weather mast, and other equipment to collect wave and atmospheric data, situated at Nawiliwili Harbor, Kauai, Tax Map Key (TMK) Nos. (4) 3-2-004:024 (Portion), (4) 3-2-004:063 (Portion), and (4) 3-2-004:054 (Portion), Governor's Executive Order (GEO) Nos. 1178 and 2532.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

Hawaii Revised Statutes, Sections 171-6, 171-11, 171-13, 171-17, and 171-95, as amended.

APPLICANT:

NOAA (Applicant) is a government agency whose mailing address for its headquarters location is 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128, Washington DC, 20230.

CHARACTER OF USE:

The Applicant has 2 tide houses powered by solar panels, a weather mast, water sensors, a satellite antenna for data transmission, and survey disks at various point within and just outside of the harbor to collect atmospheric data to assist in predicting atmospheric events.

LOCATION:

Portion of Governmental lands at Nawiliwili Harbor, Kauai, TMK Nos. (4) 3-2-004:024 (Portion), (4) 3-2-004:063 (Portion), and (4) 3-2-004:054 (Portion), as shown on the enclosed map labeled Exhibit A.

ZONING:

State Land Use Commission:	Urban
County of Kauai:	IG

AREA: See enclosed Exhibit A

The original tide house, located within the warehouse is approximately 24 square feet and has solar panels mounted on the exterior of the warehouse. This equipment is expected to be removed within the next couple of years. The newer tide house, also approximately 24 square feet, is located on the segmented pier. It houses electronics with solar panels and is connected to water level sensors along the pier. This tide house will serve as the primary water level station once the original tide house is removed. In addition, a weather mast equipped with meteorological instruments and a box of electronics that record and transmit weather data. Six survey disks are also embedded in the concrete at various points throughout the harbor. These are used by the Applicant to measure ground elevation, which is a requirement to accurately measure relative sea level.

CONSIDERATION:

Gratis.

TRUST LAND STATUS:

Public Land Trust Information System states all the TMKs are listed as Subsection 5(a) of the Hawaii Admission Act (non-ceded).

CURRENT USE STATUS:

The Applicant currently occupies the premises and uses the data collected to monitor and predict weather events. The data, which are collected daily, is available on its Tides and Currents website.

LAND TITLE STATUS:

GEO Nos. 1178 and 2532 for Nawiliwili Harbor, to be under the control and management of the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT).

CHAPTER 343 - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This use is exempt from the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, and Environmental Review Program requirements pursuant to Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), Subchapter 11-200.1, that exempts the following:

> "Exemption Type 1: Operations, repairs or maintenance of existing structures, facilities, equipment, or topographical features, involving minor expansion or minor change of use beyond that previously existing."

The HDOT deems the action as de minimis and exempts it from the preparation of an exemption notice in accordance with HAR, Section 11-200.1-16 (b). The exemption declaration for the action described above, is based on the Exemption List for the HDOT, reviewed and concurred to by the Environmental Advisory Council on February 1, 2022, is as follows:

Exemption Type 1, Part 1:

- No. A1.b. "Repair or maintain buildings, office space, sheds, parking structures, warehouses, utility systems, aircraft aprons and hardstands, hangars, tunnels and other similar structures or facilities necessary for the continued function and use, and to meet current local, state and federal standards and regulations. Actions include but not limited to the following: Utility systems: electrical, interior lighting, plumbing, wastewater, information technology/communication and security systems, heating/ventilation/air conditioning units and other similar systems."

Exemption Type 8, Part 1:

- No. 8f. "Execute and administer rights-of-entry agreements, use and occupancy contracts."

<u>REMARKS</u>:

The Applicant is a government agency whose mission is to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, and ocean conditions, and to share this knowledge to assist with the conservation and management of environmental resources. Data on water temperature, water levels, air temperature, air pressure, and wind strength are collected, analyzed, and shared on the Applicant's website. Part of its mission is to monitor and understand global climate changes and collaborate with international partners to ensure the availability of reliable data, which supports advance warning systems for weather events affecting communities worldwide.

The Applicant has been taking readings from Nawiliwili Harbor since 1954. The oldest survey benchmark still in use at the site dates back to 1966. These benchmarks are used to measure ground elevation and are also utilized by other surveyors and engineers. Additional benchmarks located outside the harbor further support accurate data collection. Currently, the Applicant's equipment is powered by solar panels, and the collected data are transmitted from the tide house via satellite antennae.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on this submittal, testimony and facts presented, the HDOT recommends the issuance of a 10-year License to the Applicant including its conditions and rent, under the terms and conditions cited above and other terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Director of Transportation to best serve the interest of the State.

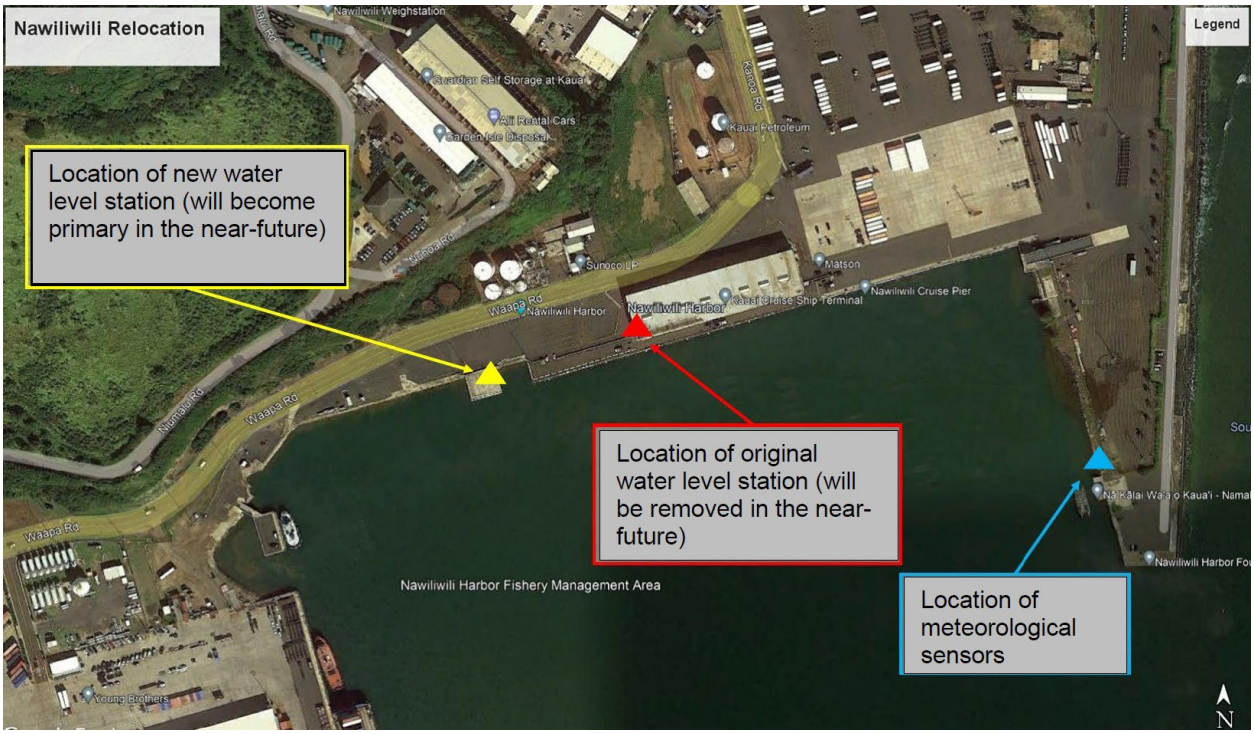
Sincerely,

DREANALEE K. KALILI
Deputy Director of Transportation for Harbors

Enclosure

NOAA
Nawiliwili Harbor

Exhibit A



Location of water level and meteorological sensors in Nawiliwili Harbor. The water level station in the warehouse (red triangle) will be removed in the future and the water level station (yellow triangle) will become the primary location.

Photo of new tide house that will become the primary water level sensors for the Harbor (yellow triangle)

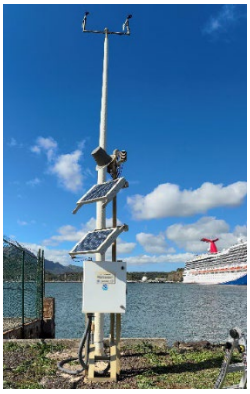


Photo of meteorological sensors, located on the eastern end of the Nawiliwili Harbor basin (blue triangle)