

INITIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is proposing to fund two projects for the County of Hawai'i Department of Public Works (DPW) and the County of Hawai'i Department of Water Supply (DWS) in Hawai'i County, Hawai'i, to repair roads and install water lines along Pohoiki Road, Leilani Road, Highway 137 (Projects) and Kumukahi Lighthouse Road. The proposed action would repair damage from the 2018 Kīlauea volcano eruption in the southeastern portion of the island in the Puna district to bring the roads back to their pre-disaster function. Funding would be provided through the Public Assistance (PA) Program as authorized under Section 428 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended.

FEMA intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Projects in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Executive Order (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management; EO 11990, Wetlands Protection; and EO 12898, Environmental Justice. FEMA hereby also provides interested parties with a notice of its intent to carry out an action affecting a floodplain or wetland.

The County of Hawai'i has applied for PA funds for the Projects. The purpose of the Projects is to recover from damage to the transportation network and water utilities caused by the volcanic eruption and resulting overland lava flows in the Puna district of the Island of Hawai'i. The Projects consist of the following: 1) realign and repave approximately 9.2 miles of roads to bring them back to their pre disaster function; and 2) install new and replacement water lines along approximately 7.9 miles of roads.

Portions of the project area are in the 100-year floodplain as depicted on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Numbers 1551661204F, 1551661212F, 1551661213F, and 1551661435F, effective date September 29, 2017. The FIRMs show that portions of the project area along Highway 137 lie within Zone AE, an area that has a 1-percent probability of flooding every year and where predicted floodwater elevations have been established. A portion of the project area along Pohoiki Road lies within Zone D, an area of undetermined flood hazard.

Initial comments concerning the Projects, potential alternatives, and preliminary identification of environmental issues will be accepted from the affected public; local, state, and federal agencies; Native Hawaiian Organizations; and other interested parties to assist FEMA with identifying the scope of the EA and inform decision-making. Comments should be made in writing and sent to the FEMA contact listed below. Comments must be received by October 6, 2022 to be considered.

Additional information about the Projects, including maps showing the project components and potential impacts on floodplains, may be obtained by contacting FEMA or the County. Once complete, the draft EA will be made available for public review and comment.

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