Harry Kim Mayor

**Roy Takemoto** *Managing Director* 



William A. Kucharski
Director

**Diane A. Noda** *Deputy Director* 

# County of Hawai'i

### **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

345 Kekūanāoʻa Street, Suite 41 · Hilo, Hawaiʻi 96720 Ph: (808) 961-8083 · Fax: (808) 961-8086 Email: cohdem@hawaiicounty.gov

October 12, 2020

Mr. Jelani Shareem EPA Region 9 Compliance Officer 75 Hawthorne Street San Francisco, CA 94105-3901 (Via E-mail: shareem.jelani@epa.gov)

Ms. Kate Rao EPA Region 9 LCC Project Coordinator 75 Hawthorne Street San Francisco, CA 94105-3901 (Via E-mail: rao.kate@epa.gov)

SUBJECT: Request for Change to Compliance Milestone for Pāhala

Federal Administrative Order of Consent EPA Docket No. SDWA-UIC-AOC-2017-0002 Pāhala Large Capacity Cesspools (LCC)

Dear Mr. Shareem and Ms. Rao:

The County of Hawai'i (County) finds it necessary to request a change to a compliance date for the subject project in accordance with Paragraph V.F.50 of the Administrative Order of Consent (AOC):

- 1. Compliance Provision V.A.29.c: acquire land for Pāhala Wastewater Treatment Facility (Pāhala WWTP)
  - A. <u>Request:</u> The County requests this Compliance Date be revised to June 28, 2021 (from the previously revised Milestone Due Date, within 8 months of publication of the Final Environmental Assessment with a backstop to be completed no later than January 24, 2021, approved by EPA on September 9, 2019).
  - B. Justification:
    - 1. A Final Environmental Assessment (EA) was published March 8, 2020, making the new land acquisition milestone due date November 8, 2020.

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- Representatives from Kamehameha Schools previously provided confirmation (May 28, 2018) that they supported acquisition of a portion of the property for a Wastewater Treatment Plant to serve the community.
- b. The Final EA proposed the Pāhala WWTP on a portion of Tax Map Key (TMK) (3) 9-6-002:018. The property is part of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate Trust (Kamehameha Schools or KS) required to be obtained via eminent domain. Eminent domain proceedings have been significantly delayed due to suspensions and restrictions to minimize spread of COVID-19, beginning with Governor Ige's March 5, 2020 Emergency Proclamation.
  - i. Supplemental Appraisal delayed two months due to inter-island travel restrictions.
  - ii. Unanticipated independent technical desk review, which was conducted to determine whether the Appraisal Report Regarding Agricultural Property complied with Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, resulted in another month delay.
  - iii. Representatives from KS requested a meeting to discuss terms and provided comments on the resulting Resolution, which is on the October 7, 2020 Council Agenda. A second hearing is anticipated October 21, 2020. The meeting request, coordination and implementation were impacted by effects of COVID-19 mitigations still in effect, resulting in an additional three and a half months delay. The second hearing adds another half month.
  - iv. Once County Council approves the Resolution for Condemnation, DEM corporation counsel will petition for eminent domain. Because of the current COVID-19 situation the length of time needed for the Court to act on this request is difficult to predict, so attempt will also be made to negotiate right-of-entry to commence work with KS.
  - v. After Final Order of Condemnation or ten days after the County receives possession, the Special Permit and Public Utility Subdivision applications can be submitted.
- 2. Other Compliance Dates, including required closure for the existing Large Capacity Cesspools (LCC's), are unaffected by the requested revision to this Compliance Provision. For purposes of this request, DEM Corporation Counsel will build in language for the Court to accommodate geotechnical testing, probes and borings, submittal of subdivision and permit applications, advertisement, bid, award, and notice to proceed with Pāhala WWTP construction. Other Compliance Dates may be still impacted by other issues, including extended review of the projects' archaeological monitoring plan (AMP) prior to approval for preliminary geotechnical investigation.

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a. Representatives from KS and their lessee, M. L. Macadamia Orchards L.P., indicated they would be amenable to allowing access to the site to conduct borings and subsurface testing needed to finalize design in the interim.

Copies of the following are provided for reference:

- 1. Exhibit 1: Pāhala Project Schedule, Revision 31, dated September 10, 2020
- 2. Exhibit 2: Pāhala Connections, dated July 2020, including a Map depicting Pāhala WWTP Site

Finally, an updated description of the sequenced steps required for acquisition of property for Pāhala WWTP is provided below:

- 1. Determination of public need for the site. (AOC Signed June 22, 2017; Draft EA published September 23, 2018 and re-published November 8, 2018)
- Initial contact with the property owner to discuss possible acquisition of the property and to obtain permission to enter to determine feasibility of the property for its intended use. (Completed May 28, 2018)
- 3. Confirm feasibility of the property for its intended use (technical as well as public acceptability). (PER Completed June 2018, revised November 2019)
  - a. Perform an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) of the property. (Completed July 17, 2017)
  - b. For projects funded by the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF); the State of Hawai`i Department of Health (DOH) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHO's) and other applicable agencies in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106. (SHPD Concurrence with EPA's determination of "no historic properties affected" dated February 20, 2020)
  - Perform an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project. (Archaeological Monitoring for identification purposes stipulated, State Historic Preservation Division [SHPD] approved AMP required prior to project work commencing; Final EA/FONSI published March 8, 2020)
  - d. Prepare and submit AMP to SHPD. (Completed May 2, 2020)
  - e. SHPD Review and Approval of AMP. (Log # 2020.01018 May 5, 2020, in Progress)
    - i. Required to complete geotechnical investigation, ground penetrometer testing, and final design.
- Perform a Title Search of the property. (Initially Completed October 2016. Repeated July 30, 2020 for eminent domain proceedings)

- Perform a survey (Boundary and Topographical) of the property to include a survey map as well as metes and bounds description of the property. (Topographical Survey Completed approximately February 2019, Boundary Survey pending AMP and Final Plat)
- 6. The currently 42.5-acre property must be subdivided, as only a portion of the property is needed for the Pāhala WWTP Site. A Preliminary Subdivision Map and Legal Description was completed on March 18, 2020.
  - a. Preliminary Subdivision Application (pending Kamehameha Schools signature, Final Order of Condemnation or possession) chronology:
    - i. KS requested County consult with/obtain consent from their tenant on proposed road relocation May 1, 2020 (Completed May 15, 2020);
    - ii. KS attorney requested a review copy of the Preliminary Subdivision Application pre-signature May 9, 2020; and
    - iii. On May 19, 2020 KS representatives reiterated an inquiry into why the County is not taking responsibility or a role in compensating their tenant for lost macadamia trees, stating "They would not be experiencing a loss of future income if it weren't for the County's project/condemnation".
    - iv. On October 7, 2020 KS representative stated it's unlikely they will sign a subdivision application before the compensation and damages that must be paid to them and their lessee is worked out.
- 7. Complete Appraisal of the Pāhala WWTP Site and associated easements, including trees. (Second Supplemental Appraisal Report Completed May 20, 2020)
  - a. Conduct a previously unanticipated, independent technical desk review that determined the Appraisal Report Regarding Agricultural Property is compliant with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions. (Completed June 29, 2020)
- 8. After EA challenge period and based on current, valid Appraisal, negotiate terms for acquiring property rights needed with Kamehameha Schools. (Completed September 2, 2020)
- 9. Allotment of funds for Pāhala WWTP property acquisition. (Completed August 31, 2020)
- 10. Submit Condemnation Resolution for County Council hearing. (Draft Resolution with revisions specified by KS representatives passed October 7, 2020 first Council hearing. Second hearing anticipated in November.)
  - a. Representatives from KS confirmed September 1, 2020 that they:
    - i. will not be stating objections to the resolution,

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- ii. they are reserving all rights and arguments that KS may have with respect to the compensation and damages that should be paid to KS and KS' lessee, and
- iii. they are not waiving any defenses and arguments that KS may be able to assert in any eminent domain proceeding that may be filed.
- b. Seek agreement with KS regarding the terms of the condemnation or proceed to litigation in accordance with HRS Sections 101-14 and 101-15.
- 11. Obtain Final Order of Condemnation.
- 12. Obtain Special Permit in accordance with HAR §15-15 and HRS §205 for use of Agricultural Lands for a Wastewater Treatment Facility after completion of the EA and stipulated agreement regarding terms of condemnation of land for the Pahala WWTP.
- 13. Obtain tentative approval of the preliminary plat.
- 14. Obtain title report in the name of the County as owner of the land.
- 15. File a final subdivision plat (normally within one year after tentative approval of the preliminary plat but Planning Director may allow extension for good cause).

Please contact Dora Beck at <u>dora.beck@hawaiicounty.gov</u> or me at <u>william.kucharski@hawaiicounty.gov</u> should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

William A. Kucharski

Willett

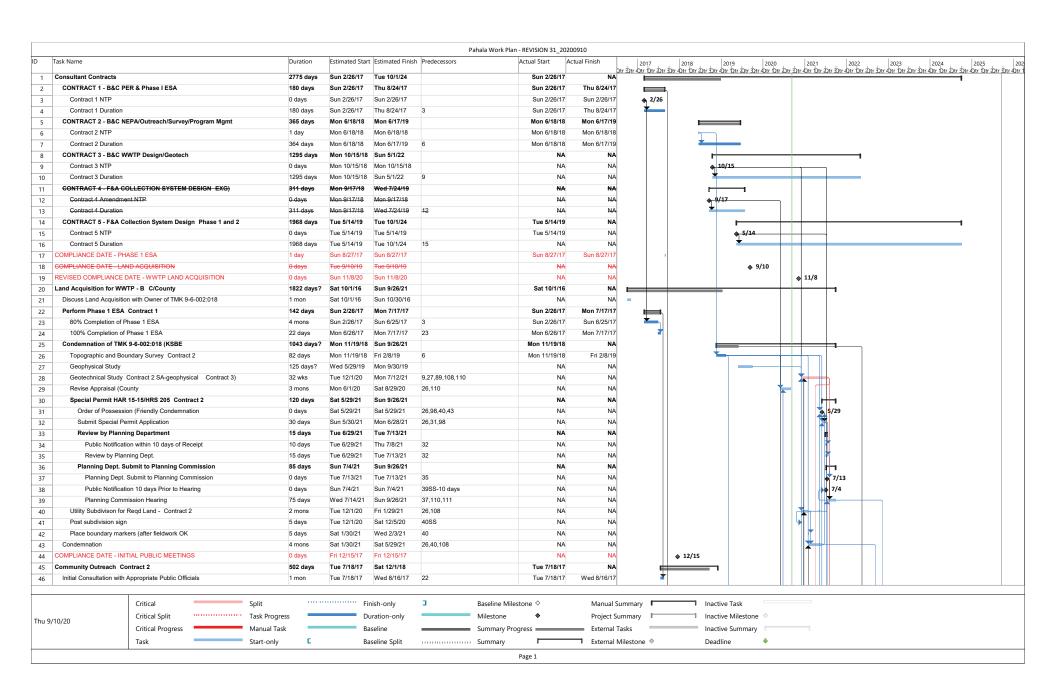
Director

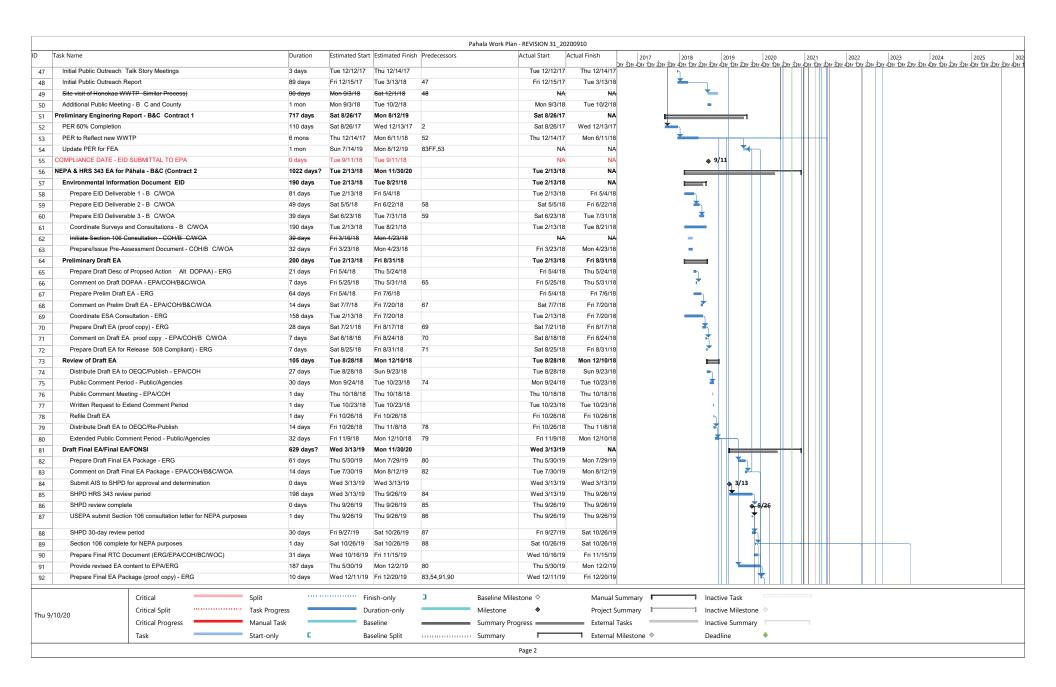
Attachments

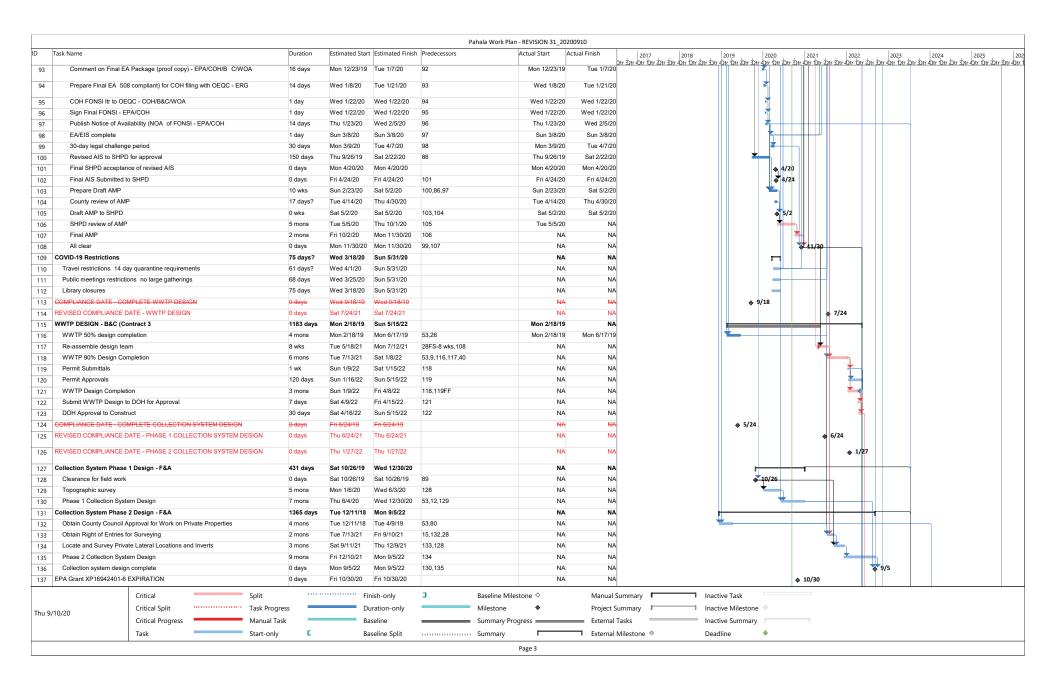
cc: Diana Mellon-Lacey, Deputy Corporation Counsel

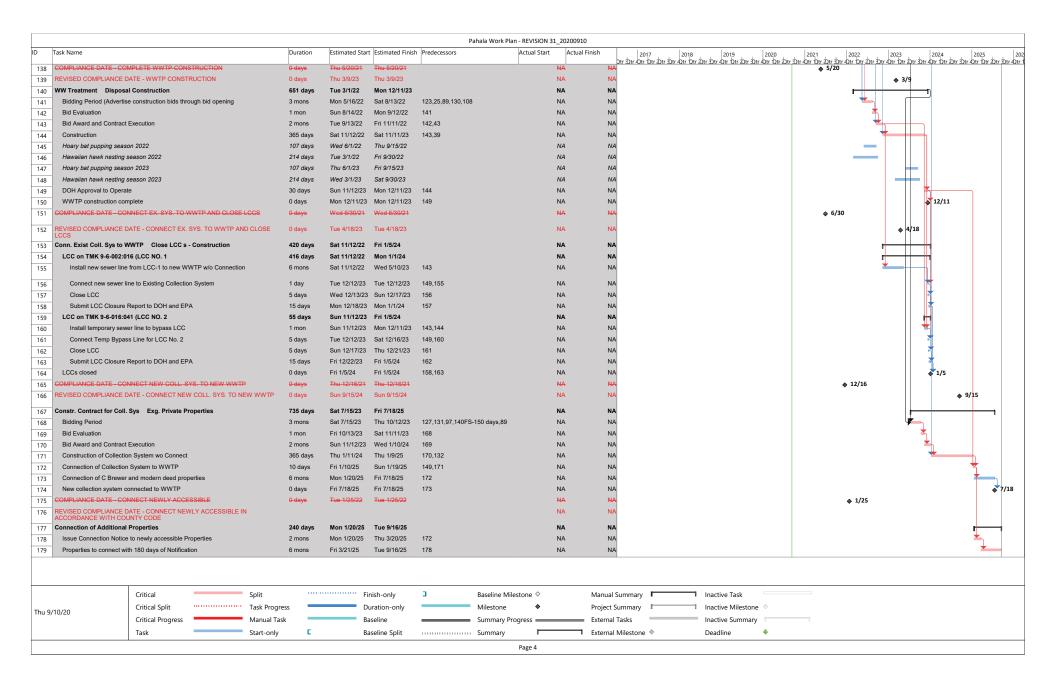
Dora Beck, P.E., Wastewater Division Chief

Craig Lekven, P.E., Managing Engineer, Brown & Caldwell









### PAHALA WORKPLAN REVISION 31 – 20200830 Assumptions and considerations

Planning/Design Milestones:

Schedule utilizes actual review and approval of draft AIS by SHPD. All included dates are based on Section 106 complete for NEPA purposes February 20, 2020. SHPD subsequently required approval of an unanticipated archeological monitoring plan (AMP prior to ground-disturbing activities – now included in the schedule, which impacted schedule critical ground disturbing work such as geotechnical studies that needed to be completed prior to design. Consultant will submit an updated schedule within 14 calendar days of receiving approval of AMP from SHPD. Dates shown include additional services/steps c ausing unforeseen delays and schedule impacts) which were added by SHPD after the receipt of the September 26, 2019 EPA AOC extension. County will request an additional AOC extension, and County and Consultant both assume EPA will grant a reasonable and achievable extension.

The schedule assumes 90% design is based on 50% PER and design without major modifications. At this time, travel and gathering restrictions due to the COVID19 pandemic continues to impact the design schedule. Schedule will be updated as more information becomes available.

- Permitting: Consultant has no control over duration of review or extent of comments by permitting
  authorities. Dates shown reflect submittal of initial permit application by Consultant at 90% design
  and permitting authority approval in a timely manner. It is mutually agreed that the contract
  milestone will be amended if permitting authority approval is not received within the identified review
  timeframe, or if additional tasks and/or resubmittal of application package are required. The County
  may be able to assist with requests to the permitting authority to expedite review and response.
- Bid period / Construction contract procurement: This County action is shown for reference only and assumes a timely execution. Additional time spent by the County will extend the completion date of this task by a similar duration.
- Construction completion: Due to the critical feedback and approvals required, construction
  completion is dependent on timely County, outside agency, and Construction Contractor review
  schedule and impacts of response comments. The construction schedule and any potential requests
  for additional work are outside of the Consultant's control. A regular review of third-party
  performance should be considered so that associated schedule impacts can be identified and
  considered by the Construction Contractor for possible corrective actions.
- Construction period milestones: Dates shown are estimates only and will be mutually determined at
  the appropriate time based on the Contractor's Construction schedule; Construction Contractor's
  schedule will dictate timing of Consultant's services.
- Changes to schedule since rev30 20200518:
  - o AMP added to the schedule per SHPD review comments.
  - Investigative work (Geotech and survey set to start after estimated AMP approval and NOT concurrent with design work.
  - All DOH reviews for approval to construct and to operate estimated at 30 days no impact to project completion dates.
  - Updated nesting seasons for appropriate years construction contractor to work around these dates - no impact to project completion dates.
  - o Revised WWTP design compliance date to 7/24/2021 (15 months after final AIS submitted to SHPD no impact to project completion dates.

Keeping Pahala informed about community wastewater improvements.

https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/departments/environmental management

The community's past input on the Pahala project has been very valuable, so please continue to share your thoughts and contact us if you have a topic you would like to see in future newsletter issues.

## A Long Awaited Solution

The current wastewater collection system was built nearly three-quarters of a century ago. The outdated system still moves sewage from about 109 lots through substandard backyard lines to two Large Capacity Cesspools (LCCs). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found cesspools can release disease-causing pathogens and pollutants into groundwater, streams, and the ocean; and required the closure of existing LCCs by April 2005. In 2010, the Hawaii County, Dept. of Environmental Management, Wastewater Division (Hawaii County) took over the responsibility to close the LCCs in Pahala. In March 2020, the State of Hawaii, Office of Environmental Quality Control published a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) that resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (available on our website). This major milestone allows the County to move ahead!

The existing sewer system is harmful to our health and environment. The new Pahala Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) will help protect the environment and promote propagation of native plants and trees in constructed wetlands and tree groves.



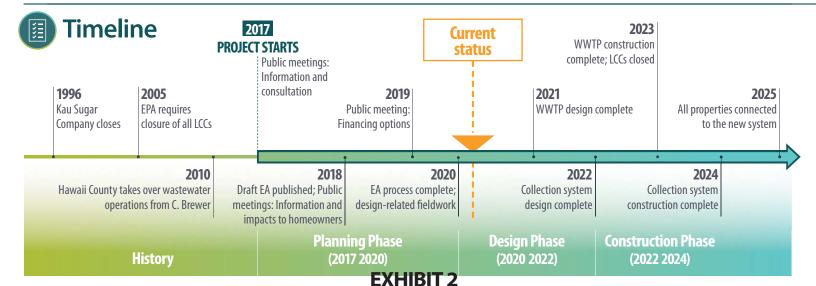
I hope you and your families are staying healthy and safe during these challenging times. We want to update the community on the Pahala sewer project since we last met in *March 2019. We hope* you find this newsletter

*informative and helpful.* 

Willing

William A. Kucharski, Director





## What's coming up in Pahala

Pahala residents will soon see County consultants in the community doing field work. Surveyors will collect information that will be used to design the new collection system. One of their tasks will be to look at properties connected to the LCCs and locate where "dry" sewer pipes were installed a decade ago. This will show how the County can connect these homes to the new system and close the LCCs. Affected property owners received a request for entry from either the surveyors or the County.

Rich cultural resources exist throughout Pahala. We know the community is concerned about how the project might impact these resources. Archaeologists are working to locate and inventory historically significant sites throughout the project area. The results of their efforts are on our website.

We submitted a plan to the Department of Land and Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) for archaeological monitoring during ground disturbing work. The plan makes sure cultural and historical resources encountered will be properly handled.

Geotechnical engineers and scientists are studying conditions under Pahala's ground surface. In 2019, a



Non-invasive Ground Penetrating Radar technology will help find lava tubes and protect underground cultural sites.

field crew used non-invasive electrical resistivity and ground penetrating radar technology to look for lava tubes. Another team will be coming to town to collect drilled rock samples. This will allow the project team to map lava tube pathways and identify strategies to avoid or protect lava tubes at the design stage.

Mahalo to the Pahala Community for your response, engagement and patience!

