

12/08/2017

Contact: Beth Tokioka

808.246.4348

btokioka@kiuc.coop

KIUC's Receives Approval for Holdover of Hydro Permit

Līhu'e, Kaua'i, HI – 12/08/17 – The State Board of Land and Natural Resources today approved the holdover of a revocable permit for water use at the Blue Hole Diversion, which allows KIUC to operate two hydroelectric facilities that contribute 1.5 megawatts of energy to the island's renewable portfolio.

The action was taken at the BLNR meeting on O'ahu today. The diversion allows a portion of the water to flow from the North Fork of the Wailuā River through a series of ditches to the Upper and Lower Waiahi hydroelectric plants. The hydros and ditch infrastructure were built in the 1920's by Līhu'e Plantation, and have enabled diversified agriculture to continue in the Wailuā and Kalepa areas to this day. Other downstream uses of the system include drinking water for the County Department of Water and ecotourism businesses.

“We are pleased that the holdover was granted and will continue to work with the State in pursuit of a long-term lease for the Blue Hole Diversion,” stated KIUC's President and Chief Executive Officer, David Bissell. He noted that the hydro facilities are KIUC's lowest-cost source of generation, and displace the use of 500,000 gallons of diesel every year.

A critical step toward execution of a lease is for the State Commission on Water Resources Management (CWRM) to set Interim Instream Flow Standards (IIFS) for the river. “We understand from CWRM's testimony today that they may be ready to release a draft of their IIFS recommendations as early as March,” said Bissell. “KIUC has been assisting CWRM in its data collection efforts and we look forward to participating in that important community discussion.”

KIUC will also be consulting with the Department of Hawaiian Homelands on their water needs.

A copy of Bissell's testimony to the BLNR is attached.

###

Photo of Blue Hole Diversion taken in early November 2017.

