

North Kohala Microgrid



Hawaiian Electric is developing a microgrid project to improve reliability and resilience in North Kohala on Hawai'i Island. It would be the first utility microgrid based on storage in the state of Hawai'i, if approved.

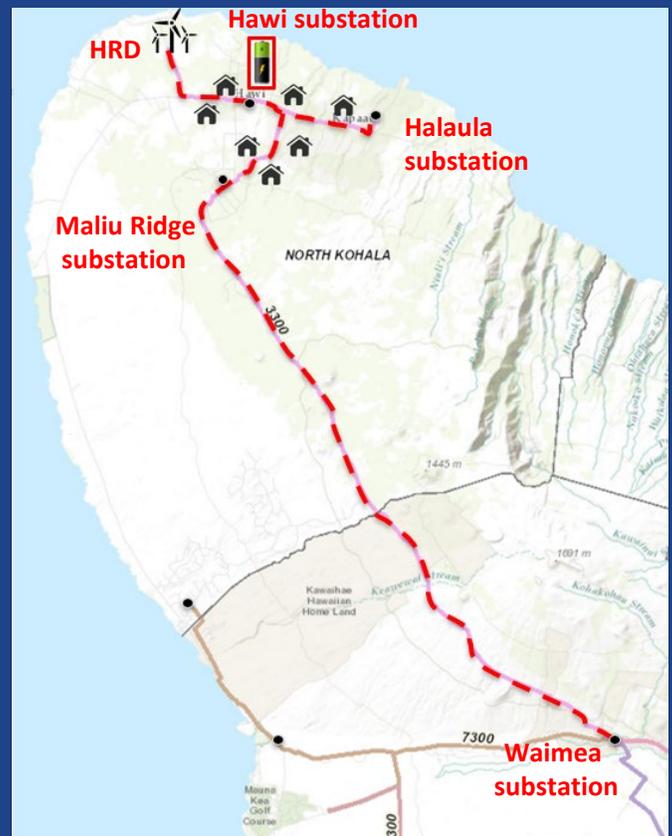


Background

North Kohala is served by a 34.5 kilovolt (kV) sub-transmission line built in the 1950s. The line spans 24 miles, from the Waimea Substation to the Hāwī and Halaula Substations and extends to the Hāwī Renewable Development wind farm. It is a radial line and the only line sending electricity to North Kohala. Annual maintenance work and emergency repairs require power outages that impact about 2,000 customers in the area.

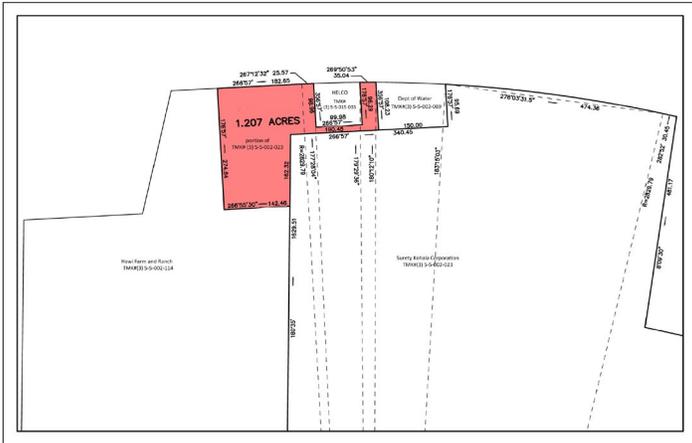
Options

Hawaiian Electric recognized the challenges these outages create for the community and since 2007 has worked closely with local stakeholders to develop a solution that meets the needs of both the North Kohala community and Hawaiian Electric. After multiple outreach and engagement events with government officials, community groups and community stakeholders, the option to rebuild the existing sub-transmission line and create a microgrid supported by a battery energy storage system (BESS) was identified as the preferred solution. The North Kohala microgrid project would allow Hawaiian Electric to better serve its customers in North Kohala while the existing sub-transmission line is rebuilt and when the line is impacted by planned or unplanned events. The microgrid project should lead to fewer outages and shorter outage durations when an outage is necessary. It is designed specifically to operate as a microgrid to provide electric service to North Kohala when power cannot be provided by the interconnected island grid.





North Kohala Energy Storage RFP



In October 2021, Hawaiian Electric filed a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) with the Public Utilities Commission for the BESS portion of the microgrid, seeking a 5 megawatt (MW) / 30 megawatt-hour (MWh) standalone energy storage capacity system for integration with a microgrid controller system owned and operated by Hawaiian Electric. The microgrid project would be located next to the Hawaiian Electric Hāwī Substation, if approved.

In January 2022, the Commission opened Docket No. 2022-0012 for the North Kohala Microgrid RFP proceeding.

The final RFP was approved and opened to bidders on March 24, 2023, with Proposals due by May 31, 2023. On August 29, 2023, the RFP was closed without an award. Following a comprehensive evaluation process, Hawaiian Electric concluded that the proposals did not meet the criteria set forth in the RFP. On March 6, 2024, the Commission closed the Docket. Hawaiian Electric is determining the appropriate next steps and will provide updates as information becomes available.

Comments can be emailed to renewableacquisition@hawaiianelectric.com or submitted to the Commission via their website hpuc.my.site.com/cdms/s/consumers/public-comments.

For more information, visit our [North Kohala Energy Storage RFP page](#).

Community Outreach

We encourage the community to continue to be part of the process. Since the microgrid controller will be owned and operated by Hawaiian Electric, we're managing the overall community outreach for this project. The selected proposer for the RFP is expected to participate and assist with our community engagement and cultural resource efforts as well as listen to and address any community concerns or issues regarding the BESS. We're also developing a cultural resource impact plan, and the selected proposer will be required to comply with any requirements set forth in the plan or by Hawaiian Electric. We'll continue to partner with [Hawai'i Energy](#) to educate the community about energy efficiency and rebate programs that help conserve energy and reduce usage.

