

# Wildfire Safety Working Group

Meeting 1 – Hawaiian Electric’s Wildfire Safety Strategy

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

## Attendees

- Marc Asano, Hawaiian Electric
- Bao Duong, Hawaiian Electric
- Delani Watkins
- Laura Acasio
- Amy Adrian, Hawaiian Electric
- Alexander Parker
- Shannon Alivado, Hawaiian Electric
- Amanda Uowolo
- Beth Amaro
- Amir Angha
- Amos Lonokailua-Hewett
- Ali Arabnya
- Leo Asuncion
- Samuel Barlahan
- James Barros
- Nancy Bernal, Hawaiian Electric
- Bill Moore
- Tracie Black, Hawaiian Electric
- Candice Meyer
- Chad Koide
- Cherisse Tao
- Jonathan Chin
- Warren Ching
- Christine Wang
- Kevin Clarke
- Craig Clouet
- Cheresa Coles
- Dan Nuñez
- Daniel Russell
- Derek Wroe
- Alfredo Echeverria
- Ernest Lau
- Erwin Kawata
- Ford Fuchigami
- Geoffrey Fulks
- Tyson Goo
- Gregory Goodale
- Henry Curtis
- Kyra Howe
- Hsun-Ying Kao
- Jacob Tavares
- James Landgraf
- James Napoli
- Jaron Takumi
- Jeff Spohn
- John Stufflebean
- Jordan Hard
- Jordan Molina
- Kainoa Casco
- Kauilehuamelemele Kauhane
- Debra Kelly
- Keola Tom
- Taesun Kim
- Erin Kippen, Hawaiian Electric
- Naomi Kuwaye
- Rob Lee
- Logan Tomokiyo
- Trevor Manago
- Marcey Chang
- Maria Tome
- Mark Vaught
- Sean Mastin
- Annette Matsuda
- Megan Muramatsu
- Melissa Semcer
- Lydia Mertyris, Hawaiian Electric
- Michael Hayashida
- Michael Angelo
- Melissa Nakashima
- Ryan Nakata
- Nani Barretto
- Genki Kino
- Keith Okamoto
- Darwin Okinaka
- Oliver Vaas
- Perry Kealoha
- Brad Rockwell
- Andrija Sadikovic
- Sara Tekula
- Sarah Harris
- Shayne Agawa
- Randall Shiro, Hawaiian Electric
- LeeAnn Silva
- Robert Stout
- Jamie Suzuki, Hawaiian Electric
- Christy Swafford
- Marjorie Tayao
- Taylor Lau
- Kazuo Todd
- Tony Traini
- Uyen Truong
- Uyiosa Osa-Iduma
- Kimberly Vaituulala, Hawaiian Electric
- Michael Walker
- Warren M
- Scott Winecoff
- Rachel Yeager
- Yumi Kam
- Shari Ishikawa, Hawaiian Electric

## Welcome

- Discussed work completed since last meeting

## Our Wildfire Safety Working Group

- This working group is the same group that was started last year with broad representation from government agencies, non-profits, community members, landowners, people with an interest in wildfire mitigation
- Purpose of the group is to share information from Hawaiian Electric and other groups and coordinate and collaborate on how to reduce the risk of wildfires in Hawai'i
- Covered ground rules, including open discussion, publishing slides on the website, and sending meeting notes
- Discussed schedule for upcoming five working group meetings, possibility of a sixth meeting

## Introduction to Hawaiian Electric's Wildfire Safety Strategy

- Introduced the goal and collective approach to Hawaiian Electric's Wildfire Safety Strategy
- Emphasized focus on implementing the strategy on an ongoing basis, including mechanisms to review, monitor, and report on the strategy, which allows for improvements and refinements over time. WSS plan updates will be shared with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) annually.
- Emphasized the need for community engagement, especially with communities in high risk areas
- Shared progress made on initiatives for 2024, including planned versus actual progress on mitigation measures, operational changes, situational awareness, and hardening

## Four Pillars of the Enhanced Wildfire Safety Strategy & Group Discussions

- Hawaiian Electric explained that the strategy is built on four pillars: grid hardening, situational awareness, operational practices, and stakeholder and community partnerships
- Grid hardening
  - Infrastructure improvements based on risk profile of each island
    - Covered conductor can mitigate the risk of sparks from electric lines due to wind or trees. Currently working on initial covered conductor projects in high-risk areas.
    - Undergrounding is much more expensive than covered conductor. The Lahaina undergrounding project is the first project identified for implementation. Cost is dependent on location and scope of the work.



- Breaking up circuit into sections so that an entire circuit does not need to go out if only part of it is affected
    - Deployed more fault indicators so that troubleshooters can identify location of faults faster to reduce restoration time
    - Grid hardening work should prevent some of the faults or disturbances
    - Future forecasting capabilities will help mitigate reliability concerns to enable more granular use of fast trip based on weather conditions
  - Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program
    - Hawaiian Electric has conducted significant community engagement to raise awareness about PSPS, especially in high-risk areas.
    - Looking for hazardous weather, stand up incident management team, closely monitor conditions (wind gusts 45 mph or higher and relative humidity lower than 45%)
    - Proactively shuts off power to reduce the likelihood of ignition occurring, especially in hazardous conditions
    - Will be discussed in more detail at July 30<sup>th</sup> meeting
    - Four occurrences where incident management team was stood up in 2024, no power shutoffs
    - Upcountry Maui PSPS de-energization in early July 2025, power restored once weather passed, lines patrolled, and any required repairs completed
    - Hawaiian Electric will try to give advance notice as much as possible and will continually update customers during an event if power is shut off and during the restoration process via email, text, social media, and the Hawaiian Electric mobile app.
    - Working Group member asked a question about if Hawaiian Electric will look at changing the PSPS trigger requirements once hardening of priority areas are implemented.
      - Hawaiian Electric may consider this once hardening measures are in place.
  - Vegetation management
    - Introducing new programs for vegetation management to enhance existing practices
  - Inspections
    - Inspecting high risk areas annually
    - Inspecting lines and facilities in medium risk areas every three years
    - Inspecting low risk areas every five years
    - Drones are used for inspections and on the ground inspections
    - Building these capabilities to ensure that facilities are in good condition
- Community engagement
  - Increased awareness of impacts and awareness of programs and mitigation strategies
    - PSPS public awareness, preparedness, and responding to questions and concerns, especially for medically vulnerable customers.

- Engaging with other utilities to see other strategies and review lessons learned and incorporating this into Hawaiian Electric's plans.
- Tabletop exercises with emergency and public safety partners to make sure all are prepared for power shutoffs and other types of events.

## Current Status & Next Steps

- Continuing to meet with stakeholders through the working group and community events
- Discussed progress made as of June 2025
- Hawaiian Electric continues to implement mitigation measures while the PUC is reviewing the WSS
- Ongoing procedural process with the PUC to review the WSS
- Discussed possible cost recovery and other funding for mitigation strategies