



COMMENT FORM



Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment / Overseas Environmental Assessment

Joint Task Force-Red Hill (JTF-RH) and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) welcome your comments on the Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment. To be most helpful, comments should be clearly written and describe specific issues or topics.

Public Comment Period: June 9, 2023 to June 30, 2023.

Comments must be postmarked or received electronically by 11:59 PM Hawaii Standard Time (HST) on June 30, 2023.

1. Your information:

JTF-RH and DLA will consider each comment during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, and all comments become part of the public record. In the event the contents of specific comments are incorporated into the NEPA analysis, released in whole or in part in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, or otherwise disclosed to the public, JTF-RH and DLA will not publish or otherwise disclose other potentially identifying information such as home addresses or e-mail addresses. You may also comment anonymously, by skipping to the comment section.

Name: Kurt Fevella

Title: State Senator

Agency/Organization: Hawaii State Senate

Street Address: 415 S. Beretania st. Room 231

City, State, Zip: Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Email Address: senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov

2. Please provide your comments below. Please print clearly. Additional room is provided on the second page. Mail this form to the address at the bottom of page 2.

As the Senator for the Ewa region, I have consistently supported the protection of our precious water resource. I support the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSF) defueling, relocation of the fuel, and the permanent closure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the following comments:

- 1.All best management practices should be followed to ensure the safe and immediate defueling should be used.



**Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation
Draft Environmental Assessment / Overseas Environmental Assessment**

Public Comment Form (continued)

2. Pg. 2-6, section 2.4 Alternatives Considered But Not Carried Forward For Detailed Analysis; I concur. Tanker trucks should not be used to transfer fuel from the RDBFSF to Pearl Harbor via roadways.
3. A description of the mitigation measures to address a potential catastrophic event, spill, accident, etc. should be included.
4. Exploring every avenue to retain the resource within the State of Hawaii should be pursued without jeopardizing the health and safety of our people and our vital resources.

If you have any questions, or would like to follow up, please feel free to contact my office for more information. I appreciate your attention to the concerns of the community and look forward to seeing the feedback incorporated into the next possible assessment.

Sincerely,



Senator Kurt Fevella
State of Hawai'i, District 20
Minority Leader

-State Capitol, Room 231
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Phone: (b) (6)
Fax: (b) (6)

Comments must be postmarked or received electronically by 11:59 PM (HST) on June 30, 2023.

Mail this form to:

**JTF-Red Hill
Attention: Plans Directorate
1025 Quincy Avenue, Suite 900
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI 96860**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENT





STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
560 N. NIMITZ HWY., SUITE 200
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

June 22, 2023

Joint Task Force-Red Hill
Attn: Plans Directorate
1025 Quincy Ave, Ste 900
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawai'i 96860

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment
Red Hill Defueling and Relocation
Hālawā Ahupua'a, 'Ewa Moku, Oahu Mokupuni
Tax Map Key: (1) 9-9-001:008; 9-9-010:001 and 006

Aloha:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is in receipt of your press release dated June 9, 2023, inviting public comment on the June 2023 Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment (hereinafter "DEA") for the Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation project at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility ("RHBFSF") of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam ("JBPHH"), Hāiawa, O'ahu. The Joint Task Force-Red Hill ("JTF-RH") and Defense Logistics Agency ("DLA") has prepared this document in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act ("NEPA"), Executive Order 12114, and Council on Environmental Quality and Department of Navy regulations. Defueling is needed to protect human health and safety, and local water supplies from further contamination. This is the first step in the greater process of full closure and remediation of RHBFSF.

RHBFSF currently hosts a total of 20 vertical underground fuel storage tanks containing approximately 12.5 million gallons of fuel.¹ In operation under the Department of the Navy since 1943, the DEA lists at least two (documented) mass fuel leaks that occurred in January 2014 and May 2021. The latter release resulted in the contamination of the Red Hill drinking water well that serviced 93,000 Navy water system users. The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) further stopped pumping water from the Hālawā Shaft, Hālawā Well, and Aiea Well. On March 7, 2022, the Secretary of Defense directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to defuel and permanently close the RHBFSF. The DoD subsequently formed the JTF-RH on September 30, 2022, to ensure the safe and expeditious defueling of Red Hill. The defueling is also necessary to comply with the State of Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) 2021 and 2022 Emergency Orders, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2023 Consent Order.

¹ Fuels consist of: F-24 (kerosene-based product for commercial airline sector); F-76 (marine diesel); and JP-5 (jet propulsion)

The proposed action is the gravity-based defueling of RHBFSF through the utilization of existing infrastructure. There is no new construction proposed as part of the action. Three alternatives are currently being evaluated as part of the DEA. Alternative 1, or the “no action alternative”, would distribute fuel to JBPHH at regular demand over a period of 10 to 14 months. Alternative 2 would transfer fuel aboard up to eleven marine tankers over a period of two to four months. Based on priority demand, the fuel would then be transported to one of nine possible locations: Campbell Industrial Park on O‘ahu; Point Loma or Selby, California; Vancouver or Manchester, Washington; Sasebo, Japan; Subic Bay, Philippines; Port of Singapore; or, Darwin, Australia. Alternative 3 would also involve the marine transport of fuel, but will allow for the commercial sale of up to 106 million gallons of fuel first prior to the dispersal to any of the relocation facilities listed in Alternative 2. Currently, it is anticipated that there will be no significant environmental impacts from the proposed action.

OHA certainly appreciates the current level of expediency and oversight to initiate physical defueling by October 2023. We indeed acknowledge that this is but the first step in a greater process to full closure and remediation. As the greater process will trigger more NEPA documents and other respective Federal compliance needs (i.e., National Historic Preservation Act), OHA’s comments provided below are to help guide and improve this work with greater transparency, public comment opportunities, and cooperation with local agencies.

Public Comment Period and Engagement

OHA observes that the comment period for the DEA is set at 21 calendar days. Pursuant to 45 CFR 900.303, NEPA environmental assessment documents must be available for public comment for not less than 15 calendar days. While technically the JTH-RH is in compliance with the regulation, OHA suggests that going forward a 30-day public comment period be the absolute minimum given the length of these documents, technical details, and the heightened level of public interest in Red Hill related defueling and remediation actions. Indeed, 45 CR 900.303(c) does allow for a longer period of public comment by the project’s “Approving Official”. Arguably, an additional 9 calendar days for public comment would not have been detrimental to the overall project timeline. This would further provide parity with the State of Hawai‘i’s own HRS 343 process as 30-days is the minimum standard for DEA comment periods.²

As was the case with the current effort, OHA further supports at least two public meetings as part of the release of NEPA documents for later RHBFSF closure and remediation actions as we anticipate those dialogs to be much more interactive and public-focused. Notes or summaries of each meeting should then be posted on to the Defueling Dashboard. In an effort to assist the JTH-RH with outreach efforts to the Hawaiian community, OHA would also appreciate advance notice of public comment periods and meetings so that we may jointly disseminate the information via our social media outlets and monthly newspaper, *Ka Wai Ola*, in a manner that allows for the full comment period to be realized.

² See HAR 11-200.1-20(b).

We believe these recommendations are in-line with DLA’s current NEPA policy to “encourage public involvement” as part of the EA process.³ Further, the Navy may want to direct JTF-RH and DLA to craft an actual NEPA public participation plan as an optional tool for RHBFSF closure and remediation actions under 32 CFR 775.11 as a means to establish set protocols (i.e., meeting minutes/notes, comment periods) for public engagement processes in writing and help manage public expectations.

National Historic Preservation Act Compliance

In regard to cultural resources and historic properties, the DEA states that “defueling through existing pipelines and relocation by fuel tanker would involve no activities with the potential to affect historic buildings, archaeological sites, or traditional cultural properties.” Section 5.4 further states that the proposed action is consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Yet, there is no other mention of any effort to initiate NHPA Section 106 consultations with Native Hawaiian organizations (NHOs).

However, OHA does acknowledge that while not disclosed in the DEA, the JTH-RH team verbally revealed in the June 20th public meeting that NHPA Section 106 would not be triggered for the current action due to an existing NHPA Programmatic Agreement (PA) for JBPHH that indicates routine operations, like defueling operations via existing infrastructure, are not considered Federal undertakings. Thus, the current action would not be subject to the Section 106 consultation process. OHA believes that such a decision should’ve been publicly disclosed in writing within the DEA and a link provided to the actual PA on the Defueling Dashboard. Further, any signatory of the PA should be apprised of the situation via a written letter to ensure there aren’t any objections. As JBPHH may be operating under several NHPA related PAs, it is unclear to OHA what the specific language or condition is for the PA that was cited for the current defueling effort.

While defueling via existing infrastructure may indeed be perceived as routine, OHA believes the Navy has a responsibility to ensure the utmost level of transparency and collaboration is achieved for defueling and RHBFSF closure actions to aid in rebuilding public trust.

Third-Party Quality Validation

Prior to the initiation of defueling operations, the DEA describes that at least 253 repairs⁴ were needed on fuel pipelines, the underground pump house, and RHBFSF facility. These repairs were requested within DOH and EPA orders. To ensure the quality of the repairs, the DOH approved a Third-Party Quality Validation Plan for a third-party quality validator to inspect the work. While the progress and approvals of these repairs are posted on the online “Defueling Dashboard”, specific details (i.e., photos, repair narrative) are not included.

³ See pg. 5, Section 4.b.(5) of the December 2011, Defense Logistics Agency Regulation, DLAR 1000.22, “*Environmental Considerations in Defense Logistics Agency Actions*”.

⁴ Repairs to include, but not limited to: replacing and repairing pipe components, valves, fittings and seals; inspecting and repairing dents in pipes; adding or repairing pipe supports and braces; and, replacing deficient pressure gauges.

During the June 20th public meeting, the JTH-RH team verbally confirmed that repair specific information and subsequent third-party quality validator reports are not currently available on the online Defueling Dashboard. However, it was implied that some of that information may be available upon request. OHA advises that the DEA disclose that such requests can be made by interested parties. Further, given the BWS's experience and role in maintaining O'ahu's civilian water system, OHA would advise that they be provided with an opportunity to review the third-party quality validator reports prior to initiating the defueling action. Additionally, an explicit note or link on the Defueling Dashboard could be added for individuals that want to request more information regarding specific repairs. OHA believes these recommendations will aid with upholding project transparency.

Consultation with BWS

As noted above, BWS has vast experience in maintaining and operating O'ahu's civilian water system. Further, they have been actively involved in public meetings and outreach ever since the 2021 fuel leak. Within the DEA, OHA observes that BWS maps and their 2019 *Informational Briefing* are cited as references. In the June 20th public meeting, the JTH-RH team verbally indicated that their team continues to work with BWS on RHBFSF related actions.

However, while consultation with BWS is reported to be occurring and BWS documents are cited in the DEA as reference materials, there is no direct mention of their thoughts or concerns on the current defueling action. Despite BWS's independent ability to provide comments along with the general public, OHA believes that given BWS's expertise, ongoing consultations with BWS should be reasonably described or summarized within the DEA to help further instill public confidence in the repairs and demonstrate Navy cooperation with local authorities. JTH-RH could take this a step further by providing a Defueling Dashboard link to any of the more recent BWS consultation or public meeting summaries or notes. BWS should be viewed as a valued State-level government partner and O'ahu water expert. Thus, there is no question that including descriptions or summaries of current consultation events with BWS for the defueling plan would be beneficial to the JTH-RH team and the greater effort to instill public trust.

We believe this recommendation to integrate BWS concerns is in-line with DLA's current NEPA policy to "invite cooperation and assistance from federal, state, regional, and local authorities..." during the planning process of an EA document.⁵ Further, such disclosure and continued consultation with BWS would be in-line with 32 CFR 775.10, which encourages the Navy to establish "close and harmonious planning relations with local and regional agencies..." for "environmental related problems."

Reservations on Alternative 3

OHA acknowledges that both Alternatives 2 and 3 would effectively result in the most expeditious means to evacuate fuel from RHBFSF. However, while Alternative 2 allows for a level of environmental review over the nine listed fuel relocation area possibilities, this cannot be done for

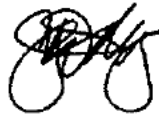
⁵ Same reference as Footnote 2 above.

Alternative 3 as it is unknown where sold fuel would be transported to by commercial buyers. Thus, arguably, OHA believes there is a greater level of environmental oversight associated with Alternative 2 in comparison to Alternative 3. Given this consideration, OHA has reservations with utilization of Alternative 3.

Closing Remarks

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment. OHA looks forward to seeing our suggestions pertaining to the public comment period and engagement, NHPA compliance, third-party quality validation, consultation with BWS, and reservations with Alternative 3 taken into consideration. These comments and concerns are meant to be constructive in helping the JTH-RH team and the Navy refine their Defueling Dashboard and processes for future NEPA roll-outs associated with RHBFSF closure and remediation. Indeed, we certainly look forward to the expeditious removal of fuel from RHBFSH in a responsible manner that is consistent with existing DOH and EPA Orders and project specific best management practices. Should you have any questions, please contact OHA's Lead Compliance Specialist, Kamakana C. Ferreira at (b) (6) or by email at kamakanaf@oha.org.

'O wau iho nō me ka 'oia 'i'o,



Sylvia M. Hussey, Ed.D.
Ka Pouhana, Chief Executive Officer

SH:kf

CC: Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees

From: norsylv@dma.mil
To: [JTE-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 9:03:43 PM

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Name Your information Kirsten Kagimoto
Title Strategic Communications Manager
Agency or Organization Sierra Club of Hawai'i
Address PO Box 2577
Honolulu US 96803
Email kirsten.kagimoto@sierraclub.org
Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment ("EA/OEA")

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i has a long history of protecting our islands' natural and cultural resources, access to clean water systems, and the health and welfare of our communities. We recognize that the draft environmental assessment for the movement of fuel from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility marks a potential shift towards greater transparency in Department of Defense operations; however, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i expresses its concern regarding a need for the EA/OEA to incorporate the spirit and directives of Executive Order 12898 ("EO 12898"), in assessing the potential impacts of Alternative #2 on proposed relocation sites and adjacent communities – especially those that have experienced past exceedances in environmental and public health limits.

While the EA/OEA purports to be consistent with the policy considerations behind EO 12898, further consideration of the environmental justice effects of the proposed relocation is strongly recommended. EO 12898 seeks the achievement of environmental justice by "identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations." (1) Accordingly, further work must be done to ensure that the EA/OEA reflects the full meaning of environmental justice, which includes every individual's explicit right to a healthy environment being freely exercised, "whereby individual and group identities, needs, and dignities are preserved, fulfilled, and respected in a way that provides for self-actualization and personal and community empowerment." (2) Given that communities proposed to receive environmentally hazardous fuel under the EA/OEA have been disproportionately burdened by environmental injustices, including those arising from US military actions and activities, the EA/OEA must assess how these disproportionate burdens may be exacerbated by the added threats and risks of the proposed movement and storage of fuel.

In addition, an essential component of environmental justice is community engagement, inclusion, and agreement to actions that could place them at disproportionate risk of harm. All such individuals should be entitled to active participation throughout the decision-making process. No community should be denied crucial knowledge regarding projects that exacerbate their vulnerability to environmental impacts, especially when such impacts may be compounded by prior impacts and future threats such as the climate impacts. (3)

Alternative #2 in the EA/OEA insufficiently assesses and addresses the environmental justice ramifications of its proposal to relocate fuel to existing locations within the DoD fuel supply chain, to communities that have historically experienced disproportionate harms to their surrounding environment. We advise the Navy to consider Alternative #2 as a sorely needed opportunity to acknowledge and assess past and present environmental and subsequent socioeconomic harms, and ways to mitigate any potential exacerbation of such harms – including but not limited to remedial actions that address the disproportionate burdens that recipient communities have experienced and continue to experience. Anything less than preventative and restorative measures in the relocation plan, with full transparency, outreach, and engagement for destination communities, risks perpetuating and amplifying existing environmental injustices.

A quick review of proposed sites for receiving fuel in Alternative #2 reveals the following entrenched environmental injustices:

--West O'ahu (Campbell Industrial Park): West O'ahu residents have been subject to health inequities for decades due to poor air and water quality from various "community disamenities" – including the siting of power facilities and O'ahu's primary landfill in the region (which have notably been used to process (burned) and store highly hazardous military waste). In the recent past, the EPA has also found Campbell Industrial Park facilities to be in violation of the Clean Air and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act for improper management of hazardous waste. (4) The impact is so acute in this area that a study found that the life expectancy estimate of residents in the Waianae zip code to be ten years less than the rest of O'ahu; (5) many of these residents are working class communities of color with the highest percentage of Native Hawaiians on the island.

Further west, military occupation and use of the Mākua Military Reservation have raised significant concerns about the environmental health impacts of military training in the area, which has also deprived Native Hawaiians of their physical and spiritual connections with their ancestral lands in Mākua Valley.

From an environmental justice perspective, it should be acknowledged that the historical and present presence of the military in West O'ahu has riddled the area with contaminated land and waters, causing physical, spiritual, and cultural harms to people and the environment, and the threat of exacerbating these harms through the potential storage of fuel in the region must be assessed and mitigated through community consultation and remedial actions.

--Selby, California: Selby most notably houses the Selby Slag, a 66-acre, 2.5 million ton slag pile loaded with toxic heavy metals, a state Superfund site. This highly contaminated stretch of San Francisco Bay waterfront land is laced with huge amounts of health-damaging lead, zinc, copper, arsenic, antimony, cadmium, and nickel. (6) Additionally, there are numerous oil refineries, chemical plants, and steel plants in Selby, practices that are known to be large polluters. Further exposure to potential hazards would potentially exacerbate dwindling resources for this community, and such threats should be assessed and mitigated through community consultation and remedial action.

--Puget Sound, Washington: The Puget Sound has experienced a number of environmental issues especially related to the health of their aquatic ecosystems. As reported by the Department of Ecology, industrial activities like agriculture, manufacturing, and wastewater treatment have all contributed to toxic pollution, acidification, and bacterial pollution in Puget Sound. (7) Given that two-thirds of the state's population lives in the Puget Sound region, assessing the disproportionate risk to these communities in the fuel relocation process is critical.

Comments --Vancouver, Washington: Vancouver already ranks as one of the cities with the greatest environmental health risks to residents due to lead exposure, proximity to Superfund sites, diesel emissions, and various air quality issues. The EA/OEA must assess the threat of exacerbating these health risks under Alternative #2, as well as options for mitigating such risks through community consultation and remedial actions.

--Manchester, Washington: The Manchester Fuel Depot is the Pentagon's largest single fuel station in the US, storing approximately 1.8 million barrels of fuel. (8) This site has confirmed or suspected contamination and is in the state cleanup process under Washington's Model Toxics Control Act. The facility sits on approximately two miles of shoreline and is separated by a 26-acre tidal lagoon, Little Clam Bay, and a county road. The property also contains a perennial stream, Beaver Creek, which runs through the north end of the facility and various man-made spill containment ponds. In June 2023, it was reported that two types of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that exceed an advised environmental standard were detected at Naval Base Kitsap-Manchester in 2022. The surrounding community is awaiting answers for the water tests underway. In the meantime, they must be consulted and options for mitigating the risks of exacerbating their current environmental challenges – including through remedial actions – must be assessed.

--Sasebo, Japan: Sasebo was a small fishing village militarized by the Imperial Japanese Navy that was later greatly destroyed during World War II and reestablished by the Allied forces and US Fleet Activities. (9) Sasebo remains a US Navy installation today that primarily serves to repair US and Japanese naval ships. (10) Navy ship repairs often require large quantities of hazardous and toxic materials, which, when coupled with the waterfront location of shipyards that provide pathways for potential pollutants to enter directly into the aquatic environment, are greatly problematic. (11) The Sasebo community must be consulted as part of the EA/OEA process and options to mitigate the exacerbation of existing threats to their environment, health, and welfare must be assessed.

--Port of Singapore: The Port of Singapore is the top maritime capital of the world as well as one of the busiest. Emissions from ships as well as other sources of air and water pollution, noise, odors and visual impact are among the main environmental impacts of the port. Community consultation and remedial actions to mitigate additional environmental threats and impacts must be assessed.

--Subic Bay, Philippines: The legacy of the US military in the Subic Bay is one of toxic waste spilled and pumped into waterways and buried in landfills for decades. (12) The area's inhabitants have experienced toxic pollution and environmental health issues since the 1990s. A study in 2000 for the Philippine Senate also linked the toxins to "unusually high occurrences of skin disease, miscarriages, stillbirths, birth defects, cancers, heart ailments and leukemia." (13) Subsistence fishers have been dislocated due to the pollution to the bay over the past decade. Community consultation and remedial actions to mitigate additional environmental threats and impacts arising from the movement and storage of fuel under Alternative #2 must be assessed.

--Darwin, Australia: Darwin residents have already dealt with years of PFAS contamination as a result of extensive military presence in the port. It has been confirmed that recreational activities should be avoided in the two nearby creeks, which are popular fishing spots, particularly with local Indigenous groups (14). Homegrown produce on residential properties in the area could pose a health risk because of PFAS concentration in the soil as well. Community consultation and remedial actions to mitigate additional environmental threats and impacts arising from the movement and storage of fuel under Alternative #2 must be assessed.

Given the historical and present environmental injustices at and surrounding the proposed fuel receiving sites, much of which are the result of military activities, the Joint Task Force-Red Hill and US Defense Logistics Agency is urged to complete a thorough assessment of the impacts of fuel relocation on these sites' environment and surrounding communities - including ways in which these injustices may be exacerbated by the threat of fuel movement and storage. It is essential that the Navy is transparent in the relocation process and both assesses and takes restorative or remedial actions to fulfill the spirit and directives of EO 12898, and ensure earnest trust is built with communities both nationally and internationally. Restorative measures should be taken to mitigate any anticipated impacts to ensure that similar detrimental events like the fuel releases and forever chemical spills at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility do not harm the land, water, and people of any area. Importantly, nearby communities that may be subject to fuel relocation should be notified and meaningfully engaged in the decision making process before the arrival of fuel.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments and for providing additional information on the Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment.

- (1) Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 59 Fed. Reg. Vol. 59 (Feb. 16, 1994)
- (2) <https://www.nmhealth.org/publication/view/help/309/#:~:text=Environmental%20justice%20refers%20to%20the,and%20personal%20and%20community%20empowerment>
- (3) *Vecinos para el Bienestar de la Comunidad Costera v. FERC*, 6 F.4th 1321, 1329 (D.C. Cir. 2018), ruling that the analysis of the project's impacts on communities would extend well beyond the project sites.
- (4) <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-fines-par-hawaii-refining-facilities-over-chemical-safety-hazardous-waste>
- (5) https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2018/18_0035.htm
- (6) <https://www.sunflower-alliance.org/comment-on-selby-slag-remediation-april-12/>
- (7) <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Puget-Sound/Issues-problems>
- (8) <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/local/2017/12/05/manchester-fuel-depot-plans-replace-wwii-era-underground-storage-tanks/915357001/>
- (9) <https://www.pearlharborhistoricsites.org/blog/sasebo>
- (10) <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/RMC/SRF-JRMC/Japan-Tours/WorkingInJapan/SRFJRMCsaseboOperations/>
- (11) <https://www.oecd.org/sti/ind/46370308.pdf>
- (12) https://globaldale.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/toxic_wastes_facts-figures-nov-12-2011.pdf
- (13) <https://mandalaprojects.com/ice/ice-cases/subic.htm>
- (14) <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/jul/27/seafood-in-popular-darwin-fishing-spots-contaminated-by-toxic-foam>

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
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Name Your information Marti Townsend

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Via Webpage Submission
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Joint Task Force Red Hill
1025 Quincy Avenue, Suite 900
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI 96860
<https://www.pacom.mil/JTFRed-Hill/NEPA-Comment/>

Re: Response to request for public comment regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment for Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation

Dear Commander Sohaney:

Earthjustice Mid-Pacific (“Earthjustice”) submits these comments in response to the public comment period announced by the Joint Task Force – Red Hill (“JTF-RH”) on June 9, 2023. Earthjustice is a non-profit environmental law firm that has been working in Hawai’i since 1988 to protect the island’s natural and cultural resources. Since then, Earthjustice has led campaigns that have ranged from safeguarding human health and to holding the military and state actors accountable for damage to Hawai’i’s imperiled environment.

The Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (“RHBFSF”) is the military fuel facility that contaminated Oahu’s sole source aquifer and the primary source for drinking water for a majority of the island. Over the course of its near-80 years of operation, RHBFSF has released at least 200,000 gallons of jet fuel into the environment. In 2021, a series of fuel leaks released at least 19,000 gallons of fuel into the Navy’s drinking water system, which serves 93,000 people. Many residents reported significant health symptoms after exposure to the contaminated water; for

some the health impacts have not dissipated. The State of Hawai'i Department of Health, Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States Secretary of Defense understood the urgency and respectively required the Navy to defuel the facility's storage tanks.

The DEA presents actions for the Red Hill Defueling and Relocation project ("defueling project") that would purportedly be executed in a "safe and expeditious manner." However, Earthjustice raises certain questions regarding the extent to which the proposed actions are safe and expeditious and whether safer and more expeditious actions are available.

A. The DEA fails to explore certain alternatives that pose less risks to the environment as well as alternatives that could further expedite the defueling project.

The DEA presents the following alternatives: (1) "No Action Alternative," (2) "Relocation," and (3) "Commercial Sale and Relocation." These alternatives preserve the fuel by either selling the fuel to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, transporting the fuel to various Department of Defense ("DoD") fueling points, or a combination of transporting a portion the fuel to the DoD fueling points and the commercial sale of the remaining portion. Additionally, the DEA lists alternatives that were considered but not given a full analysis. Of the eight alternatives listed, there is no alternative for disposing of the fuel.

Disposing the fuel may seem similar to the alternative already considered and dismissed in the DEA related to donating the fuel. The DEA dismissed the donation alternative because "donating fuel from RHBFSF would not be an efficient or financially-sound practice." (DEA at 2-6.) However, disposal of the fuel could still be an efficient and financially-sound practice for removing the risk of fuel over the water supply. Given the scale of relocation efforts, involving eleven tanker ships and a multitude of personnel assigned to each step of the process, eliminating the fuel in RHBFSF or at a nearby location could be a more cost-effective alternative than the relocation alternative and the commercial sale and relocation alternative. Moreover, the disposal alternative reduces the risk of fuel leaks, reduces the emissions associated with transporting the fuel overseas, and could be completed within a shorter timeframe than relocation and commercial sale and relocation.

The DEA also neglects the alternative of storing the fuel in commercial tankers. Storing the fuel in commercial tankers is similar to the no action alternative as it stores the fuel on island for what may be an extended time period. The DEA dismisses the no action alternative as a viable alternative because it "does not

expeditiously defuel RHBFSF as it could take as long as fourteen months to execute.” (DEA 2-2, emphasis added.) The commercial tanker alternative is different from the no action alternative as it may still meet the purpose and need for the Proposed action because industry demand will not dictate how long the fuel will stay in RHBFSF. The fuel in RHBFSF will be transferred to the commercial tankers, which would mark the completion of the plan. Transferring the fuel to commercial tankers could be a more expeditious and environmentally sound process than the relocation and the commercial sale and relocation alternatives because it will not include the additional step of transporting the fuel to locations within the DoD fuel supply chain.

B. The DEA fails to provide adequate details on the process and procedures for leak checks.

RHBFSF has a long history of accidental fuel releases due in large part to the facility’s age, complexity, and poor maintenance, as well as insufficient training, experience, and overall expertise of the personnel operating the facility. The DEA acknowledges that “[t]he chief environmental concern related to water resources is the potential for fuel spills at any point in the process, where fuel could potentially further contaminate water resources, including drinking water sources.” (DEA 3-7.) Given this overriding concern, the DEA should properly detail best management practices to avoid fuel spills and discuss mitigation measures for fuel spills that may occur away from fueling piers or receiving locations.

Although each alternative of the defueling plan involves removing the fuel and transporting the fuel through an existing DoD pipeline system, the DEA discusses fuel spills primarily in the context of defueling from RHBFSF tanks and pipelines, the pipeline in the underground tunnel connecting RHBFSF to the UGPH, the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, fuel receiving locations, and at the fueling pier. The DEA claims that large fuel spills from RHBFSF facilities and the underground pipeline could potentially lead to water contamination, but that fuel spills would be highly unlikely given the mitigation measures included in the defueling plan. Additionally, the DEA provides best-management practices to “[p]revent spread of potential fuel spills at the pier.” (DEA 2-7.) This subset of practices included “[r]overs and/or watch standers” who “would be on the pier to inspect and perform leak checks.” (DEA 2-7.) The EA lacks important detail on how the watch standers will operate, including methods or frequency of leak checks. The DEA must clarify, among other details, whether these leak checks will only be executed with visual checks, whether multiple personnel will be used to ensure the accuracy of the checks, and how often the leak checks will be performed.

The DEA dismisses the possibility of water contamination as a result of fuel spills from the above-ground piping. The DEA minimizes the significance of above-ground piping to the project's environmental consequences as "[t]he only above-ground piping along the route occurs after the UGPH for approximately 700 ft. along a largely paved area that is 900 ft. from the harbor." (DEA 3-10.) The DEA does not provide a best-management practice or mitigation measure that addresses this possibility, which may seem remote, but could be significant if fuel escapes from this area.

C. Conclusion

In sum, Earthjustice has serious concerns regarding the DEA's dismissiveness of certain action alternatives and possible harms for the Proposed Action. The potential for significant health impacts after previous instances of contamination necessitates full and meaningful analysis of impacts. We look forward to proper disclosure of the project's methods and mitigation measures in future environmental review documents. If you would like to discuss these comments further or have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email at mtownsend@earthjustice.org or by telephone at (b) (6).

Sincerely,

/s/ Marti Townsend
/s/ Cresencia Meno
EARTHJUSTICE

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 5:24:06 PM

CAUTION: Your email client may display clickable links. The data in this email is provided without modification, as the user entered it. Before you click or use any link provided in this email, please confirm the authenticity of the link.

Name Your information Meredith Wilson

Title

Agency or Organization

Address

(b) (6)

Email

(b) (6)

I, Meredith Wilson, wish to withhold my Street Address from public review

I'll provide comment/questioning with corresponding page number for reference purposes.

i) Where are the US Indo-Pacific Command Fragmentary Orders of 5 & 23 Jan 2023 located? This screening factor does not seem familiar.

ii) If the JTF Red Hill considers the job of defueling not done "until the last drop" and that includes the sludge & fuel within the low-points of facility, why are they NOT in the scope of this EA?

1-3) For the 5% or less buried pipeline that cannot be visually inspected, there needs to be a way for cameras to be installed or a type of tracking to exist there for leaking

2-4) Why is the fuel from the unpacking and 4 in. tank bottom the only fuel being tested?

2-5) Purchasers' tanker ships will not have this same oversight, that is problematic.

3-1) "Defueling involves no activities with potential to affect traditional cultural properties"—To quote a letter from HI state legislature to Navy leadership on Oct. 18, 2021: "Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam occupies the land and nearshore waters historically known as Pu'uloa. During the Kingdom of Hawai'i, Pu'uloa was operated as a fishpond that fed the residents of O'ahu until it was forcibly given to the U.S. military in 1887 via the "Bayonet Constitution." Because it is operating on traditional

Comments

Hawaiian lands and waters, it is absolutely critical that the U.S. military conduct itself with the highest level of respect and transparency.”

3-10) If in July 2020, DOH listed both Pearl Harbor units (estuary and marine waters/Mamala Bay) for failing to attain water quality standards, there should be a laid-out standard how visual inspection of waters upon defueling will take place. Turbidity/sediment is already an issue in this area.

3-33) In past 3 years, overfilling a vessel has resulted in ~5 gal. spilled & pipeline failure ~100 gallons, but does this include the issue at Hotel Pier beginning in March 2020? If a total of 7,700 gallons were reportedly “recovered” from Mar 2020-Jul 2021, how can the public be assured of what was actually released into the environment?

3-35) National Emission Standards for hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) were implemented for marine loading terminals that ONLY load crude oil or gasoline, NOT kerosene, which is the JP-5 classification. EPA should hold Navy accountable to these same HAP standards for this particular fuel movement in efforts to align & streamline with the Clean Air Act.

3-41) Since VOCs can be released as “fugitive emissions” from vessel during loading & transit, how is it possible for these to be measured?

4-3) This overview of the issues at Hotel Pier is not inclusive. For this to be the pier to take on the sole task of ALL defueling, this is where the biggest concern lies.

-On 17 Mar 2020, petroleum was observed and kept going for (22) days until it “stopped on its own” (not by a concerted resolution), but resumed on 2 June 2020. (quote from Honolulu Civil Beat 8 Oct 2021 article)

-This fuel was originally thought to be from historical plume, but upon Dec 2020 investigation (albeit only AFTER a 30 June 2021 letter from DOH requesting to do so), it was found to be “un-weathered” a.k.a. fresh JP-5 from leaking underground pipeline.

-With this track record of the inability to identify & stop leaks, how can we trust that the same won’t continue?

-As of Jan 2021, the pipeline at Hotel Pier failed (2) leak detection tests and DOH did not find this out until May 2021. Any leak detection test results must be reported to DOH immediately.

-Even after a Feb 2, 2021 site visit from contractor PENCO “almost immediately” confirmed an active leak, Navy’s stance STILL was not to acknowledge Red Hill pipeline was source of the leak. This oil spill cleanup company was later hired—was their job even completed?

-“The Navy continues to perform work to recover residual oil

from the ground, mitigate migration of oil to the water, and recover any oil that does reach the water”—How could the operators even tell the difference between a potentially still active Hotel Pier pipeline leak and upcoming defueling issue? How can the public trust that Hotel Pier isn’t a readymade scapegoat?

Thank you to all those who worked tirelessly on this report. There is a ton of information here about endangered species and overseas/port details that were incredibly helpful.

Ref Id: 1QtRUNVLY0KUHWRa2KjBdQ

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Saturday, June 10, 2023 12:57:30 PM

CAUTION: Your email client may display clickable links. The data in this email is provided without modification, as the user entered it. Before you click or use any link provided in this email, please confirm the authenticity of the link.

Name	Your information Scott Delgado
Title	Poisoned Father
Agency or Organization	
Address	(b) (6)
Email	(b) (6)
Comments	I would like the Red Hill Fuel Depot to be completely decommissioned because 1) the navy can not keep up with the repairs of this facility and 2) the thought that they had to cover it up instead of telling people what happened is unforgivable. I could have protected my family better if I had known about the leaks and other things.

Ref Id: bB2GtOyAwU24UHhnEwnsIA

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Saturday, June 10, 2023 12:45:01 PM

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Name	Your information Monique Delgado
Title	
Agency or Organization	
Address	(b) (6)
Email	(b) (6)
Comments	Red hill needs to fully be shut down no reuse it's not safe to store anything above the aquifer. Red Hill full shut down needs to be enforced.

Ref Id: 7J5ePWvD_k2mqBU01qEv2Q

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Monday, June 12, 2023 5:30:21 PM

CAUTION: Your email client may display clickable links. The data in this email is provided without modification, as the user entered it. Before you click or use any link provided in this email, please confirm the authenticity of the link.

Name	Your information Pauline Arellano
Title	
Agency or Organization	
Address	(b) (6)
Email	(b) (6)
Comments	<p>06-12-23 Public Comment on Red Hill</p> <p>RED HILL The 8th Wonder of the World</p> <p>I am of the opinion that Red Hill is the 8th Wonder of the World.</p> <p>Red Hill served us well from WWII to the present. There are better, safer, newer ways for fuel storage. The time has come to decommission it. Clean and re-line the tanks and fill them with non-potable water.</p> <p>Make it an attraction. Allow the curious to marvel at the incredible feats of engineering that created these HUGE metal monoliths, hidden in plain sight inside a mountain. Then allow them to understand its place in history. It would be a fun learning experience for locals and visitors.</p> <p>(b) (6)</p>

Ref Id: 65vkNCfEK0icoruJl903KQ

From: noreply@dma.mil
To: [JTF-RH NEPA](#)
Subject: Form
Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 3:54:12 PM

CAUTION: Your email client may display clickable links. The data in this email is provided without modification, as the user entered it. Before you click or use any link provided in this email, please confirm the authenticity of the link.

Name	Your information
Title	
Agency or Organization	
Address	US
Email	
Comments	The Red Hill facility should be completely shut down and all equipment dismantled and removed to include the transportation pipes from the site. Furthermore, a full environmental cleanup should be completed as multiple spills have occurred over the years at the site into the soil which has already impacted the watershed and water supply of the surrounding area and has the potential to continue to contaminate surrounding water sources as the contaminants spread through the aquifer. The only way to fully decontaminate the site is to fully dismantle and remove the structures and equipment first. Re-use is not an option and should not be considered as material left in place will prevent full clean up in accordance with federal law.

Ref Id: 84KuZGqnTEKd6uT31oX2ww



COMMENT FORM



Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment / Overseas Environmental Assessment

Joint Task Force-Red Hill (JTF-RH) and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) welcome your comments on the Red Hill Defueling and Fuel Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment. To be most helpful, comments should be clearly written and describe specific issues or topics.

Public Comment Period: June 9, 2023 to June 30, 2023.

Comments must be postmarked or received electronically by 11:59 PM Hawaii Standard Time (HST) on June 30, 2023.

1. Your information:

JTF-RH and DLA will consider each comment during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, and all comments become part of the public record. In the event the contents of specific comments are incorporated into the NEPA analysis, released in whole or in part in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, or otherwise disclosed to the public, JTF-RH and DLA will not publish or otherwise disclose other potentially identifying information such as home addresses or e-mail addresses. You may also comment anonymously, by skipping to the comment section.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

2. Please provide your comments below. Please print clearly. Additional room is provided on the second page. Mail this form to the address at the bottom of page 2.

*Request that all 11 tankers are
culturally blessed as it engage to
in the transportation efforts
out of Hawaii
It needs to be blessed culturally as it enters Hawaii
for this significant project*

