

To: West Maui CPAC
From: Karen Comcowich
RE: Ready and Resilient Systems

The following policies and action items would help with flooding, groundwater recharge and help maintain cooler temperatures with the added benefit of mitigating sewage problems. According to americanrivers.org:

“ . . . planting trees, restoring wetlands, and creating green roofs are often the most cost-effective ways to expand the capacity of sewer systems. A single mature tree with a thirty-foot crown can keep 4,600 gallons of water out of the sewer each year.”

A) Create parks and open space in areas sensitive to flooding and around the native forests as a protective buffer both for the forest and development.

B) Amend the county code to require permeable surfaces and other LID standards be used in new or redeveloped parking lots and streets to mitigate runoff and help with groundwater recharge.

C) Add to #14 including planting a forest around the sewage treatment plant, for beauty, air freshening and decreased reliance on injection wells, implement if possible.

Because there has been an increase in the use of asphalt and concrete throughout West Maui, when it rains more storm water is going into the sewers and ocean, and less being filtered through the ground and recharging the aquifer:

D) Develop guidelines and incentives for landowners, both large and small, to have more permeable surfaces on their property.

From October 24, 2019

Three of the biggest concerns we have as a community are fire, flooding and access to clean fresh water. These three items are interlinked. Especially since some of the solutions overlap. For example, for fires we need a fire break and defensible area around subdivisions to make it easier fight the fire. With flood we need an area to absorb and channel the excess water. For maintaining our freshwater supply, we need to ensure our ground water is being recharged by encouraging permeable surfaces and bioswales (landscaped areas where water is filtered and captured by plants). I propose the following action:

E) Develop and implement a plan for Bike paths, green ways and bioswales to be used around existing development and between new developments as fire breaks, and flood mitigation.

F) Provide incentives to landscape with drought-tolerant plants and water conserving-irrigation systems.

G) Initiate legislation to assign responsibility and provide adequate funds for periodic stream and storm channel cleaning and fire break maintenance on private land. Also include a community education component. Particularly addressing landowners in sensitive areas.

H) Preserve and Expand the native forests in the Pu'u Kukui Watershed and Kahalawai Watershed to help with flood mitigation and water recharge. Fully funding an educational component to inform the community (especially dirt bikers) of the importance of our native forest.