



## 3. Public Involvement/Participation

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### 3.1 Overview

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The County recognizes that an active and involved community is crucial to the success of the SWMP, and that the public can provide valuable input and assistance. Community engagement allows for:

- **Broader public support**, since citizens who participate in the development and decision making process are partially responsible for the program and more likely to take part in its implementation;
- **Shorter implementation schedules**, due to fewer obstacles in the form of public and legal challenges and increased sources in the form of citizen volunteers;
- **A broader base of expertise and economic benefits**, since the community can be a valuable, and free, intellectual resource; and
- **A conduit to other programs**, as citizens involved in the storm water program development process provide important cross-connections and relationships with other community and government programs. This benefit is particularly valuable when trying to implement a storm water program on a watershed basis.

### 3.2 Permit Requirement

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The State's General Permit requires an operator of a regulated small MS4 to include users of the permittee's small MS4 in developing, implementing, and reviewing the SWMP Plan.

### 3.3 Existing Public Involvement/Participation Programs

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The County has a history of partnering with community organizations in a variety of public involvement/participation programs. The County Administration has exhibited its commitment to community engagement by establishing a position of Environmental Coordinator (EC) within the Mayor's Office. The EC provides access to information and resources, and serves as an advocate to see that important environmental concerns are brought before decision makers. The EC responds to and coordinates a broad range of environmental issues, such as watershed protection, invasive species, agricultural sustainability, marine protection, and renewable energy. The EC serves as the Mayor's liaison on environmental issues by pursuing long-range projects and by collaborating with a wide range of community organizations. The EC is the current Chair of the Maui Conservation Alliance (MCA), which is a cooperative partnership of government, private, and non-profit organizations who manage Maui's native ecosystems and watersheds. The EC's website includes an "Eco-Partners Resource Directory" that identifies environmental stakeholders on Maui.

The County Department of Housing and Human Concerns, Volunteer Center, operates a program called *HandsOnMaui*, an affiliate of the *HandsOn* Network. The *HandsOnMaui* website is enabled through the Get Connected searchable database which provides an easy to use web-based platform for searching volunteer opportunities in the community. The website has been well received, as indicated by over 1,800 views of agencies and needs in the month of February 2014. Agency pages provide vital information regarding the group

mission, function, and contact information. Agency users can personalize their agency page with photos, event updates, and links to social media pages.

Volunteer users can “Become a Fan” of an agency or organization, allowing them to keep up-to-date with Agency events through adding their information to an email distribution list. Volunteer users can use the events tab to see a listing of all upcoming agency events or filter by date or event type for personalized events. *HandsOnMaui* is an effective tool to highlight events and service opportunities as well as stay connected with stakeholders. *HandsOnMaui* also facilitates volunteer leader development through leading the organization of workshops approximately every 3-4 months which focus on methods of motivation and networking. *HandsOnMaui* is a possible means for storm water program volunteer solicitation and coordination.

Another example of community partnering with storm water impact is the County’s partnership with Maui Nui Gardens, located in the UA. The Mission of Maui Nui Botanical Gardens is to foster appreciation and understanding of Maui Nui’s plants. They promote landscaping with native plants, in the form of rain gardens and bioswales, as a way to improve storm water runoff through increasing infiltration, reducing runoff, improving water quality, and increasing water conservation. In partnership with County DWS, Office of Economic Development, and DPR, the facility incorporates water conservation techniques such as xeriscaping, and provides a place where people can learn about money-saving water conservation methods. DWS educational handbooks and materials are distributed regularly at events at the Gardens.

The County DEM provides funding to non-profit Mālama Maui Nui (MMN) to conduct a variety of activities that positively affect storm water quality. Through litter pickups, marine debris cleanups, invasive species removal, native planting, recycling events, and education programs, MMN brings

individual volunteers, local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies together to promote the environmental health of Maui County.

MMN receives funding from the County to operate a number of programs:

- litter prevention (community cleanup days, education events, and quick response to illegal dumping);
- recycling (paint exchange, used motor oil recycling, household battery recycling, community recycling events);
- beautification (watershed habitat restoration volunteer opportunities); and
- education (uncovered truck load education with the Maui Police Department, educational workshops, educational materials).

MMN operates an effective website used to solicit Maui residents and visitors for a variety of volunteer activities: [www.malamamaui.org](http://www.malamamaui.org)

### **3.4 Proposed Public Involvement/ Participation Programs**

The County intends to give the public ample opportunity to play an active role in the development and implementation of the SWMP. The goal of the public involvement/participation program will be to engage all economic and ethnic groups, and to identify creative ways to gain the public attention and interest.

#### **3.4.1 Stakeholder Focus Group**

The EPA recommends receiving input from the public during development and implementation of the SWMP. The County conducted an initial Stakeholder Meeting on March 11, 2014. The County contacted Maui Tomorrow, a local social and environmental advocacy group, to assist with identifying stakeholders and facilitating the meeting. Other prospective permittees in the UA were also invited. The following stakeholder groups, totaling more than 60 individuals, were invited:

- Maui cultural practitioners;
- Faith Action for Community Equity;
- Local businesses (retail organizations, Chamber of Commerce, A&B Properties);
- Ocean users representatives (canoe paddlers/ kite surfers/fishermen);
- Environmental non-profits (Sierra Club, Maui Tomorrow, Surfrider, Hui o Na Wai Eha);
- Community associations;
- Maui watershed management groups;
- State scientists; and
- Other permittees in the UA (HDOT, HDOE, and University of Hawai‘i - Maui Campus).

More than 20 people, including several County personnel and a representative of DOT, attended the meeting. Before and during the meeting, the County distributed a survey designed to gauge community knowledge of storm water issues and their willingness to be involved in the County’s SWMP (Attachment B).

The meeting consisted of a brief overview of the MS4 permit requirements and the opportunities for public involvement. The majority of the meeting consisted of open discussion of storm water issues in the UA, and potential solutions. The discussion was lively and community members seemed interested in being engaged in the County’s SWMP.

Several attendees from the initial meeting expressed their interest in participating in future

meetings. The County proposes the formation of a Stakeholder Focus Group that would provide community input during implementation of the SWMP, and will seek the involvement of existing community groups such as Maui Nui Marine Resources Council Clean Water Committee. A proposed implementation schedule for the County’s public participation/involvement program is presented in Table 3-1 (items 3-1 and 3-2).

### **3.4.2 Community Volunteer Activities**

The goal of engaging the public in volunteer activities is to increase the effectiveness of the program, to engage the community knowledge pool, and to enhance the community’s personal investment in the SWMP.

The County intends to expand their current community participation/volunteer programs by developing opportunities that focus on storm water. The County will also seek to partner with other permittees in the UA. A proposed implementation schedule for the County’s public participation/involvement program is presented in Table 3-1 (item 3-3).

The County will also explore additional opportunities and methods to increase public engagement in the SWMP. The initially proposed program measures will be evaluated to assess their effectiveness, and modifications to the program will be made if necessary to obtain greater public participation.

**Table 3-1. Proposed Schedule and Goals – Public Involvement/Participation**

Item No.	Proposed Activity or BMP	Proposed Development and Implementation Schedule			Quantifiable Target
		2014/15	2016	2017	
3-1	Involve stakeholders in development of the SWMP.	Solicit community members to attend a preliminary SWMP meeting, and to discuss storm water issues in the UA.	Continue to solicit community input regarding the SWMP.	Continue to solicit community input regarding the SWMP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During preparation of the SWMP, hold a meeting with community stakeholders and other permittees to discuss storm water issues in the UA</li> </ul>
3-2	Involve stakeholders in implementation of the SWMP.	Solicit community members to attend semi-annual SWMP meetings.	Continue to hold SWMP semi-annual meetings.	Continue to hold SWMP semi-annual meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of stakeholders in SWMP semi-annual meetings.</li> </ul>
3-3	Develop public volunteer activities	Coordinate with community partners to develop and solicit volunteers for activities focused on storm water awareness.	Identify two potential projects and solicit volunteers in coordination with community partners.	Identify two potential projects and solicit volunteers in coordination with community partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By program years 2 and 3, conduct two public volunteer activities per year related to storm water awareness.</li> </ul>