



## HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

November 30, 2023  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **DISTRICT 2 ANNOUNCES NFWF & NOAA GRANT OF \$2 MILLION TO CREATE A COMMUNITY-BASED RESILIENCE AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN IN HILO BAY**

Council Member Jenn Kagiwada is pleased to announce that Hawai‘i County has secured a \$2 million grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with funds contributed by the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program through the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF). These grants support design and implementation of projects to enhance the resilience of coastal communities and improve habitat for fish and wildlife across the U.S.

"We're deeply grateful for the NCRF's support for our proposal to create this Watershed Management Plan for Hilo Bay," said Council Member Jenn Kagiwada. "This work is crucial to address systemic pollution issues our community has been facing for decades, as well as taking proper steps to create a workable plan with all stakeholders to ensure future emergency preparedness and climate resiliency." Kagiwada added, "Partnerships for this work have already begun as so many organizations contributed to and supported our grant application."

The award will be officially accepted by the Hawai‘i County Department of Research and Development with the County providing matching funds of \$464,300 for a total project budget of \$2,464,300. These funds will support creating a community resilience and watershed management plan that utilizes nature-based solutions to enhance resilience along the Hilo Bay coastline and within the Hilo Bay Watershed, protecting the watershed's unique ecosystem and critical habitats for endemic, endangered marine flora and fauna. \$200,000 of the matching funds will be used to engage local partners to ensure a true community-based plan.

NFWF launched the NCRF in 2018 at Congress's direction, in partnership with NOAA. The program supports on-the-ground projects to engage communities and reduce their vulnerability to growing risks from extreme weather, rising sea levels, flooding, and other coastal hazards through strengthening coastal ecosystems that benefit both people and wildlife.

A list of the 2023 grants made through the National Coastal Resilience Fund is available [here](#).

###

**MEDIA CONTACT: Shannon Matson**, Legislative Assistant D2  
[shannon.matson@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:shannon.matson@hawaiicounty.gov) 808.961.8015