

Aloha DLNR Chairman Peter Young, and members of the Governor's Maui Advisory Committee,

My name is Anne Rillero and I am the Marketing and Public Relations director at Pacific Whale Foundation. I also enjoy taking my family swimming, surfing, windsurfing and snorkeling along Maui's shorelines.

I am here today on behalf of Pacific Whale Foundation to respectfully request your leadership in establishing boat sewage pump out facilities at Hawaii's harbors.

At Pacific Whale Foundation, we want our ecotours to have minimal disruption on the marine environment. That's why we use eco-friendly biodiesel on our boats. We follow a strict set of best practices guidelines when operating vessels where whales are present. We don't allow our passengers to enter the water to swim with dolphins. We teach our snorkelers to stay ten feet or more from sea turtles, to not feed the fish, to not step or walk on corals and in general, to watch wildlife responsibly.

I think it's fair to say that many individuals, businesses, boat operators and agencies in Hawaii share our interest in protecting the marine environment. However, the lack of pump out facilities in Ma'alaea and other small boat harbors in Hawaii runs contrary to everyone's efforts to protect our treasured ocean ecosystems.

Here on Maui each year, about 1 million passengers-- excluding those from cruise ships -- go boating from Lahaina and Ma'alaea harbors. Think about it: if just 20% of these passengers use the toilets on the boats, at two gallons per flush, that's 400,000 gallons of effluent being dumped yearly off the coast of Maui -- or about 1,000 gallons per day. This is not in the best interest of the marine environment. It is just not acceptable.

Pacific Whale Foundation has been actively working with our state and county governments to resolve this situation. We have been meeting regularly with Carol She and the Ma'alaea Harbor Advisory Group to address this issue. We have also met with a group convened by the Mayor to address near-shore water quality issues, testified before the Advisory Council of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and helped the council draft a letter to Governor Lingle and the mayors of Hawaii's counties.

For years, we have been promised that the renovation of Ma'alaea Harbor would bring pump out facilities. The wait continues. We've concluded that it's wrong to let the problem go unaddressed while waiting for the long delayed renovation of the harbor.

We have been working with Carol She and her group to find a short-term solution -- an interim pump out set up. The best direction at this point appears to be installing a permanent arterial pump system. However, to become a reality, it needs a budget -- it needs funding -- and to be designated a DLNR and DOBOR priority.



After the Ala Wai Harbor, Ma'alaea Harbor is the second highest generator of DOBOR fees in Hawaii. Let's direct some of those fees back to this harbor, to install this arterial pump out system.

In Lahaina, there is a pump out station. However it is located on just one side of a loading dock. The ferry uses this side of the dock, as do vessels carrying cruise ship passengers to and from shore. With the high volume of traffic at this dock, it is almost impossible for other vessel operators to use this pump out facility. We urge you to expand this facility, so it can adequately serve all the vessels in the harbor.

Statewide, we ask that you establish educational campaigns for boaters and harbor staff at harbors with existing pump out stations to promote greater utilization of the pump out facilities.

In addition, we request that you survey boat operators to determine passenger loads and waste generation at Hawaii's other harbors to create a priority list for installation of additional pump out facilities.

Hawaii isn't alone in addressing this issue. In 1992, Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. Congress identified vessel sewage as a "substantial contributor to localized degradation of water quality in the United States." They recognized that efforts to control boat pollution were hindered by an inadequate number of pumpout and dump stations. The Act established a federal grant program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the construction, renovation, operation and maintenance of pumpout and waste reception facilities and for related educational programs. We owe it to our ocean environment to investigate these funding programs, and to find ways to fund pump out facilities in Hawaii.

In closing, I'd like to add a piece of late breaking news. Pacific Whale Foundation has arranged, through a commercial septic tank pumping company, to have our boats pumped out daily at Ma'alaea Harbor. The cost of this is huge -- \$800 per week for three boats. Over a year, that's \$41,600. That's on top of the harbor fees that we pay -- harbor fees that would ideally have helped fund adequate pump out facilities to begin with. We are moving forward on this as of April 15 -- but we also encourage DLNR and DOBOR to take quick and decisive action to resolve the pump out issue for all of the boaters in Ma'alaea and Lahaina.

Ecotourism and tourism are important to our state. A clean and healthy ocean is vital to attracting visitors. Please be proactive in addressing the pump out issue. Thank you for your interest and your time.