

# PAHALA CONNECTIONS

Keeping Pahala informed about community wastewater improvements.

<https://www.hawaiiicounty.gov/departments/environmental-management>

**We Are Listening.** This newsletter is intended to enable communication and provide transparency. The community’s past input on the Pahala project has been very valuable, so please continue to share your thoughts and contact us if you have a topic you would like to see in future newsletter issues.

## A Long Awaited Solution

The current wastewater collection system was built nearly three-quarters of a century ago. The outdated system still moves sewage from about 109 lots through substandard backyard lines to two Large Capacity Cesspools (LCCs). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found cesspools can release disease-causing pathogens and pollutants into groundwater, streams, and the ocean; and required the closure of existing LCCs by April 2005. In 2010, the Hawaii County, Dept. of Environmental Management, Wastewater Division (Hawaii County) took over the responsibility to close the LCCs in Pahala. In March 2020, the State of Hawaii, Office of Environmental Quality Control published a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) that resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (available on our website). **This major milestone allows the County to move ahead!**

“ I hope you and your families are staying healthy and safe during these challenging times. We want to update the community on the Pahala sewer project since we last met in March 2019. We hope you find this newsletter informative and helpful. ”

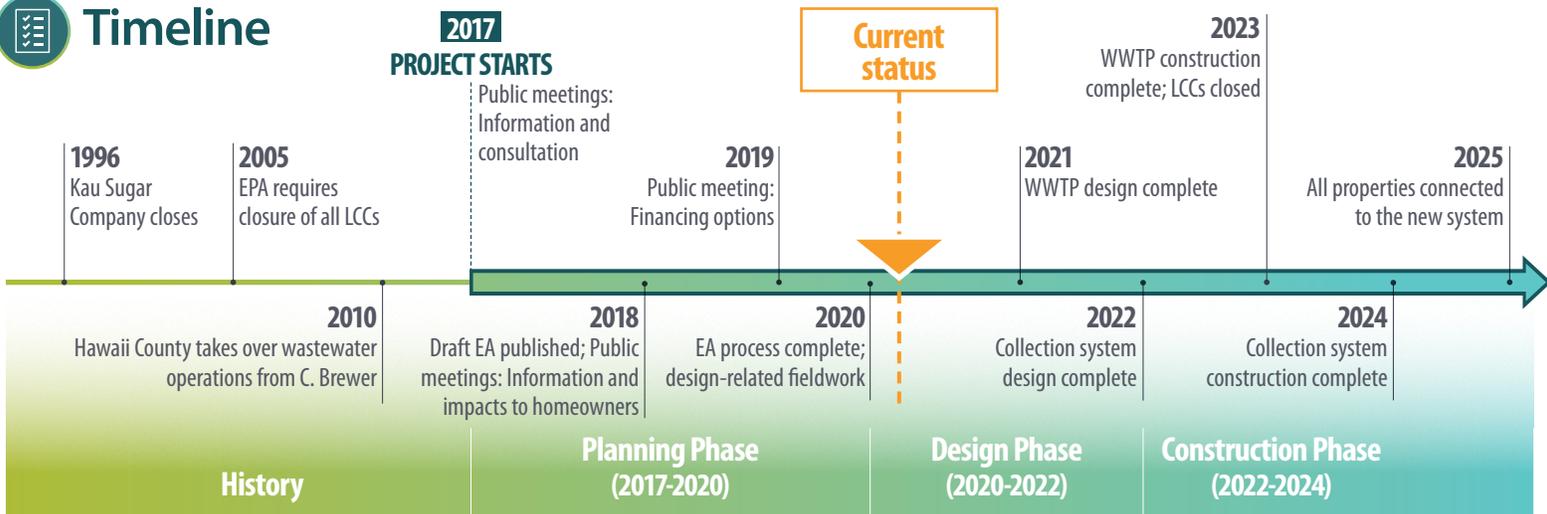


William A. Kucharski, Director

The existing sewer system is harmful to our health and environment. The new Pahala Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) will help protect the environment and promote propagation of native plants and trees in constructed wetlands and tree groves.



## Timeline



## ➔ What's coming up in Pahala

Pahala residents will soon see County consultants in the community doing field work. Surveyors will collect information that will be used to design the new collection system. One of their tasks will be to look at properties connected to the LCCs and locate where "dry" sewer pipes were installed a decade ago. This will show how the County can connect these homes to the new system and close the LCCs. Affected property owners received a request for entry from either the surveyors or the County.

Rich cultural resources exist throughout Pahala. We know the community is concerned about how the project might impact these resources. Archaeologists are working to locate and inventory historically significant sites throughout the project area. The results of their efforts are on our website.

We submitted a plan to the Department of Land and Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) for archaeological monitoring during ground disturbing work. The plan makes sure cultural and historical resources encountered will be properly handled.

Geotechnical engineers and scientists are studying conditions under Pahala's ground surface. In 2019, a

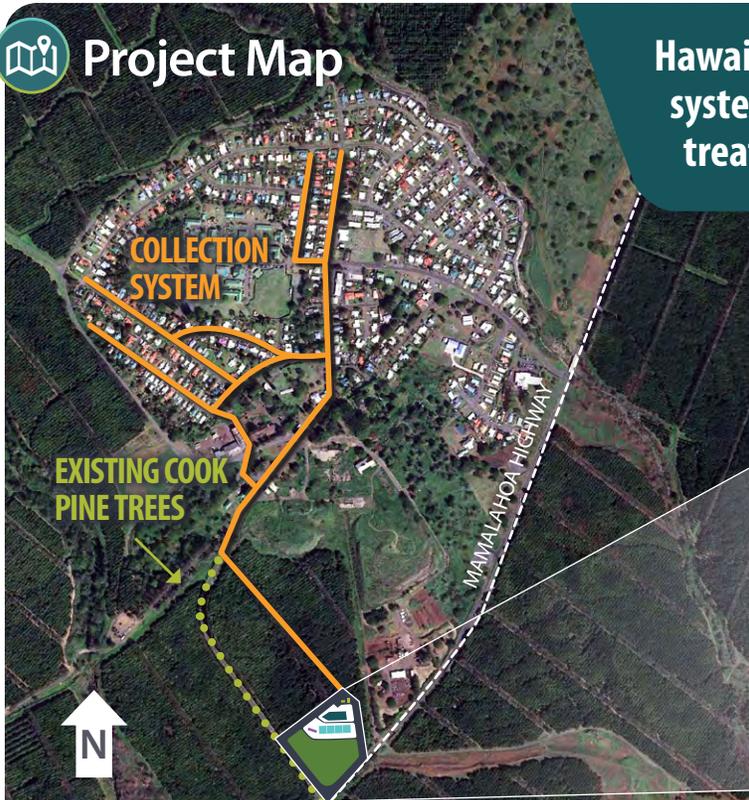


**Non-invasive Ground Penetrating Radar technology will help find lava tubes and protect underground cultural sites.**

field crew used non-invasive electrical resistivity and ground penetrating radar technology to look for lava tubes. Another team will be coming to town to collect drilled rock samples. This will allow the project team to map lava tube pathways and identify strategies to avoid or protect lava tubes at the design stage.

**Mahalo to the Pahala Community for your response, engagement and patience!**

## 📍 Project Map



**Hawaii County will replace the aging wastewater system with new collection pipelines, secondary treatment, and a land application facility.**

