

Item #5 Teppy Mountain LLC (PL-SPP-2024-000075)
2026-07-01 Cristina Holt Opposition Testimony
Info Given at WPC 7-2-26 Meeting

From: [Tina Holt](#)
To: [Planning WPC Testimony](#)
Cc: [Kimball, Heather](#); [Kagiwada, Jennifer](#); [Onishi, Dennis](#)
Subject: Special Use Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075, Teppy Mountain LLC Windward Planning Commission
Regular Meeting, July 2, 2026, Agenda Item 5
Date: Wednesday, July 1, 2026 2:23:51 PM
Attachments: [Opposition July 2 Falls on Fire Holt Testimony.pdf](#)

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Special Use Permit Application PL-SPP-2024-000075, Teppy Mountain LLC Windward Planning Commission Regular Meeting, July 2, 2026, Agenda Item 5

Submitted by: Cristina Holt, Resident, Hawaii County Council District 3

Aloha Commissioners,

My name is Cristina Holt and I am a resident of Hawaii County Council District 3. I submit this testimony for the permanent record. I testified in person at the November 2025 contested case hearing and submitted written testimony prior to the May 14, 2026 special meeting. I remain in strong opposition and write today to raise specific concerns about the conceptual site plan and the conditions under which this permit, if adopted, must be strictly limited.

The conceptual site plan designates 14.7 acres across several non-contiguous areas: 8.63 acres for Camp 3, 1.41 acres for Camp 2, 0.56 acres for Camp 1, 0.31 acres for the bonfire area, 0.46 acres for vehicle parking and event check-in, and 3.33 acres for the access road. Between the bonfire area and Camp 3 sits approximately one acre of land that is not included in the permitted area at all. The applicant is asking this commission to accept that during a four-day festival with 500 attendees, a 25-foot burning effigy, fire dancing, and amplified music, people will simply not move through or occupy that unpermitted acre sitting between where they sleep and where the central event takes place. That is not credible, and it is not a condition that can be meaningfully enforced.

This matters for two reasons. First, the actual operational footprint is larger than what is being permitted, and findings of fact should not be adopted on the basis of a site plan that does not reflect reality. Second, it further undermines the already suspicious 14.7-acre total, which lands eight tenths of an acre below the 15-acre threshold that would trigger State Land Use Commission review. On a 1,419-acre property, that precision is not a coincidence. It is a strategy.

The site map omissions do not stop there. The Falls on Fire website describes the event as a camping event focusing on, among other things, swimming in waterfalls, and explicitly notes that waterfalls and streams are accessible at your own risk. None of these areas appear anywhere on the site plan, with no use assessment, no safety plan, and no environmental or cultural impact analysis covering them. No adequate archaeological survey has been completed. No cultural impact assessment has been conducted. This is the Hamakua Coast, and these streams and waterfalls are precisely the areas where such assessments are most critical.

Andrew Tepper held this festival several times without a permit, accumulated \$34,400 in fines, defied cease-and-desist orders, and refused to allow county inspectors onto his property while the event was underway. He is currently appealing those fines while benefiting from this permit. The 14.7-acre designation on a 1,419-acre property is a deliberate strategy to avoid state-level scrutiny. And this permit, if allowed to become established, creates the groundwork for a future argument that this land should be rezoned out of agriculture entirely. Events like this grow,

infrastructure becomes permanent, and eventually the argument is made that the zoning should reflect the use. We have seen this pattern before on this island.

If the commission adopts these findings today, I urge you to impose the following conditions. A hard sunset of no more than three years, with mandatory demonstrated compliance before any renewal. A requirement that the actual event footprint, including all areas where attendees gather and swim, be formally surveyed and mapped before the permit takes effect. And all past fines paid in full as a precondition for the permit itself, not merely for the 2026 festival.

Finally, when the county formally adopts findings of fact and approves this permit, it assumes institutional responsibility for what happens on that land. The county will go on record as having sanctioned this use, including the waterfall access advertised on the applicant's own website but absent from the site plan, the unpermitted acre between the bonfire and Camp 3, and streams running through a property with no completed cultural or environmental assessment. If something goes wrong, the county has blessed it. That is not a neutral act. It is the county standing alongside a wealthy developer against a community that has repeatedly, clearly, and on the record said no. The commission should weigh that carefully before adopting these findings.

The laws and regulations governing land use exist for everyone, regardless of how much land they own or how many lawyers they can afford. Our agricultural land is precious. Please protect it.

Mahalo for your time and your continued service to this community.

Tina Holt
Hawaii County Council District 3