

RECEIVED

08 SEP 18 P3:24

**BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
STATE OF HAWAII**

COMMISSION ON WATER
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In the Matter of Petitions to Amend Interim
Instream Flow Standards for East Maui
Streams

TEENA RASMUSSEN BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF
HAWAIIAN COMMERCIAL AND SUGAR
COMPANY'S MOTION TO CONSOLIDATE
PETITIONS TO AMEND INTERIM INSTREAM
FLOW STANDARDS FOR EAST MAUI STREAMS
AND COMPLAINT RELATING THERETO FILED
MAY 29, 2008

**TEENA RASMUSSEN BRIEFS RE: HAWAIIAN COMMERCIAL AND SUGAR COMPANY'S MOTION TO
CONSOLIDATE PETITIONS TO AMEND INTERIM INSTREAM FLOW STANDARDS FOR EAST MAUI
STREAMS AND COMPLAINT THERETO FILED MAY 29, 2008**

I Teena Rasmussen submit this brief regarding Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company's Motion to Consolidate Petitions to Amend Interim Instream Flow Standards (HFS) for East Maui Streams and Complaint Thereto Filed May 29, 2008. I support the motion to consolidate because I depend on the EMI system for water and my agriculture operation also indirectly depends upon HC & S for its viability.

My name is Teena Rasmussen. I am Vice-President of Paradise Flower Farms, Inc. and a member of the Hawaii Farm Bureau. I am also the past president for the Maui Chamber of Commerce, and Past Chair of the Agriculture Development Corporation, and a current member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Our company has a 50 acre farm in the Kula Agriculture Park that depends 100% on water from the East Maui Water Shed. Our farm receives water that is delivered using the EMI ditch system and is then pumped to the Kula Ag. Park in Pulehu and delivered through a county water meter. We also have an upper elevation farm that depends on water from East Maui as well. We produce over 3 million lei flowers per year and sew and sell over 150,000 lei per year. We employ 25 people.

Farming is a high risk business with severe weather variables, economic downturns, insects and plant diseases and global price competition. But our biggest fear year-in and year-out is availability of water and the potential of planting crops that might shrivel up and die if we were to have our water allotment cut.

Our farm is intertwined with many other farms and businesses in Hawaii. We purchase from at least a dozen farms, we spend at least one half million dollars on supplies and fuel within Maui county. We spend another one half million on employee payroll & healthcare insurance. The businesses who sell our lei also provide jobs and income in Maui.

By keeping our farm alive and many others, like the diverse vegetable farms in Kula, we are accomplishing many important benefits to our island.

1. We are reducing the need for imports that are the number #1 pathway for the introduction of Invasive species into Hawaii.
2. Active farming staves off land development. The more farms we have, the less development pressures there will be. Just look what the shutdown of Amfac sugar did to the West side of Maui and Olowalu. Gentleman estates are dotting the hillsides all along the Pali coast.
3. Farms help keep the country "country". Farms create a rural community, and a rural community can relieve an island of the pressure of traffic and extreme urban development. Rural communities provide quiet relief from our busy towns and cities.
4. Keeping farming alive moves us toward sustainability. When we farmers put a gallon of water in the soil, we produce something that sustains our island community: food supply security, soil management, green space, open space, plus jobs, quality of life and contributions that reach far and deep into the community.
5. Farming enhances the Hawaii experience for our visitor and residents. What would Hawaii look like without fresh flower lei, pineapples, mangoes, rolling sugar cane fields, and beautiful cattle and goat ranches? What will distinguish us from every other visitor destination? What would it be like to live here without these scenic farms and ranches? Agriculture and our fledgling agri-tourism businesses are providing these real and natural experiences for both residents and visitors.

This motion considers the establishment of instream flows for five specific streams without considering the entire system. I am very concerned about this process. As a business we do not make decisions in isolation, but make sure we have as much relevant information as possible before reaching a final conclusion. Looking at the watershed as a whole, and balancing instream flows with instream and offshore uses is the only true way all users will be protected.

Today, decisions will be made that will affect the viability of agriculture on Maui into perpetuity!

Please be fair and balanced in your deliberations and take into consideration all the streams as a whole, and all the diverse users and their livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

DATED: Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii, September 17, 2008.



Teena Rasmusen
Paradise Flower Farms
Vice President