



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2020

ROYAL HAWAIIAN GROIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT BEGINS NEXT WEEK

(Honolulu) – The existing Royal Hawaiian groin was installed 93-years ago and for decades it protected one of the most popular stretches of beach in Waikīkī. The virtual shut-down of Hawai‘i’s visitor industry during the COVID-19 crisis is providing a rare silver-lining. Next week the DLNR Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands (OCCL), in partnership with the Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement Association (WBSIDA), is kicking off work on a modern replacement groin, with construction work made much easier and safer without hundreds of visitors on the beach.

The construction of the 160-foot-long replacement groin was originally set to begin this fall but was moved up to next Monday when a contractor will begin staging needed equipment and supplies on the beach.

The original groin could fail. It is connected to the Royal Hawaiian Hotel seawall and structural engineers determined it is leaking sand and showing severe signs of deterioration including large voids, cracks, bowing and no apparent internal reinforcement. A failure would result in the destabilization and eventual loss of over 1,700 feet of sandy shoreline located to the east of the groin.

The objective of the project is to maintain the beach so that it can provide its intended recreational and aesthetic benefits, facilitate lateral access along the shore, and provide a first line of defense to the backshore in the event of storm wave attack. The new groin will also reduce the adverse impacts of beach sand migrating offshore. It will be a sloping basalt rock rubble-mound in an L-shaped design. Contractors will use an adaptive re-use plan with the new structure built around the remnants of the existing groin. The new groin is designed to maintain the approximate beach width of the 2012 Waikiki Beach Maintenance shoreline nourishment project. No enlargement of the beach is planned as part of this project.

On Thursday, project managers and representatives from OCCL met with managers of hotels that front the Royal Hawaiian beach to provide updates on the construction and to discuss what steps should be taken to provide security and public safety.

The existing Royal Hawaiian Groin is approximately 370-feet in total length. Only its first 150-feet of the groin is functional; after that it is submerged and broken. The groin was originally built in 1927 and it utilized a large rubble mound on the western side to provide structural stability. This rock buttress no longer exists. The partial failure of the structure has led to increased undermining of the foundation and loss of sand from the newly nourished beach on the east side.

“This project serves as a critical erosion control measure that will improve the stability of Waikīkī Beach but is also an important step towards increasing the resilience of Waikīkī Beach to coastal hazard events and climate change impacts such as sea-level rise in Waikīkī.” said Sam Lemmo, OCCL Administrator.

“The Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District is eager to see this long-awaited project get underway during this time of recovery and renewal. The WBSIDA is proud to be a partner on this essential and transformative project and usher in the onset of a new era of proactive beach management plans and improvement projects underway in Waikiki.” said Rick Egged, President of the WBSIDA.

The \$1,500,000 project is supported through a public-private partnership with the Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District which is paying for 50% of the project through a special tax assessment from Waikīkī commercial properties. The University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program is providing community outreach and coordination for the project and will be involved with project monitoring and evaluation.

The project is scheduled to begin next Monday with a construction timeline of two months. The project consultant and engineering designer is Sea Engineering, Inc and the construction contractor is Kiewit Infrastructure West Co.

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(All video/photos courtesy: DLNR)

Video:

<https://vimeo.com/413782765>

Photographs:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4ipj84odt1v9ysm/AADZzNcX4Z1m8cYFXw5O27Gda?dl=0>

For more information and construction updates:

<https://www.wbsida.org/projects-royalhawaiiangroin>

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