

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



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IN REPLY REFER TO:

DIR 0576
HWY-H 06-2.0347

JUN 05 2006

Mr. Mike Price
Chairman
South Kohala Traffic Safety Committee
P. O. Box 383375
Waikoloa, HI 96738

Dear Mr. Price:

This is in response to your April 3, 2006, letter regarding the Kawaihae Harbor Road and other flooding in the Kawaihae area.

As was mentioned in my April 10, 2006, letter to you, the Kawaihae Harbor Road is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DLNR-DBOR). The Department of Transportation will continue to assist with alleviating the ponding problem on Kawaihae Harbor Road by cleaning the drywell until DLNR-DBOR can come up with permanent drainage improvements.

We did investigate the nine flooding areas in Kawaihae that you listed in your April 3, 2006, letter, and the following are our comments:

1. Stream Ditch at harbor when stream at Blue Dolphin Restaurant is clogged. Photos marked #1 show the drainage ditch that in the past has not been kept clear of debris and vegetation. The result has been the water flows across HWY 270.

Comment: The stream at Blue Dolphin Restaurant is in Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Highways Division has no history of flood overtopping in this area.

2. The military/DOT alignment from the new small boat harbor across Akoni Pule HWY 270. This proposed road alignment is in the drainage gully mauka of the small "twin bridges" that drain the gully across HWY 270. The intersection and the road surface will give flood water a channel to accumulate gain velocity and flood the road.

Comment: Highways Division has no history of flooding in the area.

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3. Spencer Park Road has 6" rock in the ditches along the road as an attempt to prevent erosion from flood water. It has been only partially successful with heavy flows washing the rock down into Spencer Park. The new National Park Service building parking lot (photos marked #3) along this section of road has no catch basins or other catchments for flood water and rain. Water collected on this surface will erode the down hill slope and carry silt into the park and bay.

Comment: Spencer Park Road is under the County of Hawaii jurisdiction, and the building and parking lot are located on National Park Service property.

4. Hydrant relocations mauka of harbor. See photos marked 4. The hydrant and 8" fire line feeding it have been relocated several times due to washouts of the slope makai of HWY 270. Indications of mud in the makai HWY 270 drainage ditch and recent restoration of the eroded slope are indicated in the photos.

Comment: The water that is washing out the hydrant is coming from private land mauka of Highway 270. We will pave the shoulder to minimize the possibility of another washout.

5. Queen Emma lands water shed flooding Akoni Pule HWY 270 across from heiau historically floods the area. The problem described in item 3 above is the result of water draining from the area.

Comment: A paved swale on the mauka side of Highway 270 has been constructed to intercept water from Queen Emma lands.

6. Honokoa Bridge area flooding has caused road closures and accidents from hydroplaning vehicles. See photos marked #6.

Comment: We have no history of road closures in this area. Water does pond on the roadway shoulder and drains into Honokoa Gulch before topping the roadway. We will grade the shoulder from the low point to Honokoa Gulch to minimize the ponding on the shoulder.

7. At the intersection of Kaewa Road near the lighthouse is another area of flooding. See photo marker #7. Also referred to as the "camel's back" due to the two (2) hills forming the gully, the area has a makai dirt road intersecting HWY 270 perpendicularly. This road acts as a channel for flood waters to gain speed and carry mud and debris on the highway.

Comment: Water does collect on the roadway shoulder. We will grade the shoulder and clear the path to facilitate drainage.

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8. DHHL subdivision flooding resulting in \$12M in repairs. This wide roadway shown in photos marked #8 intersects HWY 270 from mauka slope. The repairs included addition of several catch basins to slow and contain heavy rain runoff. The intersection still floods during heavy rainfalls.

Comment: One of the conditions imposed on DHHL for access of the subdivision to Highway 270 is that no additional storm discharge be allowed on to the State highway right-of-way. If the intersection still floods, then it is incumbent on DHHL to stop the discharge.

9. Bridge at N. Kohala and S. Kohala Boundary is an area of several accidents due to hydroplaning vehicles and washouts. See photos marked #9. If the culvert under HWY is clogged or cannot drain, all the water collected in the Keanahalululu Gully the roadway floods.

Comment: We have no history of flooding in the area. We agree that a clogged culvert can lead to storm discharge overtopping of the road.

Several of your listed concerns come under our purview. We will address them as soon as possible.

In closing, we would like to thank you for your observations. Your input will help us to improve our highway system.

Very truly yours,



fn RODNEY K. HARAGA
Director of Transportation