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WAIKĪKĪ BEACH MAINTENANCE PROJECT RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST RESTORED BEACH

(WAIKĪKĪ) – The Waikīkī Beach Maintenance Project, completed a little more than a year ago, is one of four beach restoration projects honored by the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA).

Restored beaches increase shoreline resiliency and a beach's ability to mitigate storm damage and flooding from severe storms. Naturally allowing beaches to adjust to short-term sea level rise while remaining an important part of nearshore ecosystems, is another benefit of restoration. ASBPA created the annual national award to highlight these benefits.

The Waikīkī restoration project finished last May and was carried out along the shoreline of Mamala Bay on the south shore of O'ahu. It is known locally as Royal Hawaiian Beach. It involved the placement of 21,700 cubic yards of sand which roughly doubled the beach's width.

The restoration is another example of the successful public-private partnership between the DLNR Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands (OCCL), which managed the project and the Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District Association (WBSIDA) which put \$1 million toward the \$3.5 million total cost.

Project contractors, Kiewit Infrastructure Group and American Marine were instrumental in its success by continuing to work in poor weather and high surf conditions to complete the job ahead of schedule. The project is part of a planned, every 5-10-year, maintenance of Waikīkī Beach. It employs a "sand recycling" concept utilizing offshore sand eroded from the beach and placing back on the same beach.

OCCL Administrator Michael Cain explained, "It's critical that Hawai'i develops climate change adaptation strategies statewide. This type of regular beach restoration and maintenance is appropriate for an urban coastal environment like Waikīkī and is an integral part of longer-term resilience strategies for Waikīkī. The options for protection and adaptation, however, will need to be fine-tuned to fit the specific needs of other coastal communities across the state. "

Dolan Eversole of the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant and WBSIDA described the project in terms of the long-term adaptation strategy for the region. "In the longer-term, planning for resilience for Waikīkī includes considering a lot of different variables including projections for sea-level rise, beach erosion, flooding and anticipated beach and coastal land use priorities. It is important we view the marine ecosystem, the coral reefs and beaches as a natural buffer to coastal hazards that require protection and regular maintenance just like other man-made protections," Eversole said.

Rick Egged, President of the WBSIDA added, "After one year, we are delighted with the project's results. The beach has not only remained stable but increased in width in some critical areas. This is the second time in a decade we've had a sand replenishment project and we're thrilled to receive this national recognition."

Restoration projects are judged on their economic and ecological benefits, its short- and long-term success, and the challenges each community overcame during the project.

In addition to the Waikīkī Beach Maintenance Project other beaches awarded are, Duxbury Beach Dune Restoration Project, MA; Ocean Isle Beach Shoreline Protection Project, NC; and Sodus Point Beach Project, NY

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(RESOURCES)

(All images/video courtesy: DLNR & WBSIDA)

HD video – "The Big Sand Move – Replenishing Hawai'i Beaches":

<https://vimeo.com/519295137>

Time-lapse video – Waikīkī Beach Maintenance project (May, 2021):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1la0eez3Zcs3We8M70T9Qt9B20V9cCncB/view?usp=sharing>

Before and After Photographs – Waikīkī Beach Maintenance project (May, 2021):

https://www.wbsida.org/s/Pre_post_2021-Waikiki-Maintenance.pdf

Additional maps and project details:

<https://www.wbsida.org/waikiki-beach-maintenance>

More information on beach restoration:

<https://asbpa.org/about-us/awards-program/>

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