

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2020  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 768  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, GUBERNATORIAL  
NOMINEE, NEIL HANNAHS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2024**

**The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the Governor's nomination (Governor's Message 768) of Mr. Neil Hannahs to serve on the Commission on Water Resource Management (Commission) for a term to expire 6-30-2024.**

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §174C-7(d) provides that an independent nominating committee composed of two (2) members selected by the Governor, one (1) by the Senate President, and one (1) by the Speaker of the House of Representatives solicits applications by public notices published in newspapers statewide, in the Commission's monthly bulletin, and on the Commission's website. The Nominating Committee reviews applications and sends the names of at least three qualified individuals for each opening to the Governor for consideration.

HRS §174C-7(b) provides that Commission members must have "substantial experience in the area of water resource management." In addition, one member must "have substantial experience or expertise in traditional Hawaiian water resource management techniques and in traditional Hawaiian riparian usage such as those preserved by" HRS §174C-101.

Following this nominating process, the Governor selected Mr. Neil Hannahs.

Prior to founding Ho‘okele Strategies LLC (a consulting enterprise to connect inspiring social entrepreneurs with exceptional mentors and aligned impact investment capital) in 2016, Mr. Hannahs worked for over 40 years for Kamehameha Schools, an institution committed to perpetuating Hawaiian values and traditions. He held numerous positions of increasing complexity and responsibility during his long tenure, culminating in Strategic Integration Director for Kamehameha School’s Land Assets Division from 2000 to 2015. In this capacity, Mr. Hannahs was responsible for managing extensive tracts of conservation land as well as approximately 170,000 acres of agricultural land in a culturally appropriate manner. One of the goals of the Land Assets Division’s Strategic Agricultural Plan is to “restore and revitalize traditional systems: lo‘i kalo, loko i‘a, and dryland field systems”.

Mr. Hannahs has substantial board chair, trustee and director level experience and has honed an understanding of the fundamental duties of care, loyalty, and stewardship, and of the distinction between oversight responsibilities of governance boards and management responsibilities of operational executives. He has served as director of the Kohala Center, the Aloha Kuamo‘o ‘Āina, and Hawaii BioRefineryCo and on the boards of the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, the Wai‘anae Coast Redevelopment Corp. (Ma‘o Farms), and the Polynesian Voyaging Society.

In addition, Mr. Hannahs has cultivated skills in strategic alignment, goal setting, performance management and accountability reporting through three decades of executive level experience in directing operations, building mission-driven teams and managing in a hierarchy of delegated authority. He has developed a high level of proficiency in consultative strategic planning, as well as developing policies and tactics that offer meaningful guidance for operations. Finally, Mr. Hannahs possesses two decades of service in a variety of advisory or director positions to perpetuate Hawaiian values and practices and to integrate Hawaiian culture into academic, legal, and land use decision-making.

Mr. Hannahs is also a current member of the Commission on Water Resource Management. During his tenure at the Commission, Mr. Hannahs has contributed greatly to the resolution of long-standing water issues, including the restoration of stream flows for numerous streams on Maui as well as the Waimea River on Kaua‘i. Mr. Hannahs is committed to ensuring prudent use of water while also inducing private and public investment to concurrently enable economic benefits and water conservation.

Mr. Hannahs would bring to the Commission knowledge of traditional Hawaiian water resource management as well as seasoned executive and leadership skills and experience in organizational governance, land and resource management, educational administration, communications, cultural programs, community-building, and strategic planning. The Department strongly supports the nomination and appointment of Mr. Neil Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management.



**Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Aha Moku Advisory Committee  
State of Hawaii  
Post Office Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

Testimony of  
Leimana DaMate, Executive Director

Before the Senate Committee on  
Water and Land

Wednesday, May 13, 2020  
1:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In **SUPPORT** of  
**GM 768, Neil Hannahs**  
**Relating to the Commission on Water Resource Management**

The Hawaii State Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) stands in strong support of Gubernatorial Nominee, GM Neil Hannahs for consideration and confirmation to the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM), for a term to expire on June 30, 2024.

A life resident of Hawai'i, and a native Hawaiian, Neil Kaho'okele Hannahs is one of the rare executives who can and has combined an inherited understanding of cultural sensitivity with an extensive professional background of leadership, governance organization, strategic planning and conflict resolution. He thoroughly understands the value of water and the need to protect and enhance the water resources of the State of Hawaii through wise, responsible and effective management.

One of the most important aspects of CWRM is the Water Resource Protection Plan (WRPP). The mandate of the WRPP is to "protect and sustain ground and surface water resources, watersheds, and natural stream environments statewide." Mr. Hannah's skill in communication and managing conflict makes him essential to the CWRM as it engages in multi-level stakeholder outreach to understand the issues, values and priorities that Hawai'i's communities, particularly the Native Hawaiian communities have. To the indigenous people, the native Hawaiian - water is life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure. We ask that you approve the nomination of Neil Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management.

Respectfully yours,

Leimana DaMate, Executive Director  
Hawaii State Aha Moku  
Phone: 808-640-1214  
Email: [Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov](mailto:Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov)



**GM768**

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE COMMISSION ON WATER  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, NEIL HANNAHS, FOR A TERM TO  
EXPIRE 6-30-2024**

Senate Committee on Water and Land

May 13, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Room 229

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** GM768, which would continue Neil J. Kaho'okele Hannahs' role as a Commissioner on the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM), as one who possesses the requisite "substantial experience or expertise in traditional Hawaiian water resource management techniques and in traditional Hawaiian riparian usage."

Mr. Hannahs' arguably unparalleled background in land and water resource management in Hawai'i has greatly informed, and will continue to inform, his ability to facilitate comprehensive discussions and decision-making with his CWRM colleagues. Among his many relevant experiences, Mr. Hannahs has worked with the largest private landowner in the state, Kamehameha Schools, for over four decades, of which he served for 15 years as the Director of Strategic Integration in Land Assets; in this latter role he was responsible for managing 358,000 acres of agricultural and conservation lands. His career also included nearly five years as the Kamehameha Schools' Region II Director, where he managed 50,000 acres of land in Windward O'ahu, Kaua'i, Maui, and Molokai. During his tenure at Kamehameha Schools, Mr. Hannahs was also singularly instrumental in the integration of cultural practices and considerations into his employer's land management models, such as through the development of unprecedented Natural and Cultural Resource Management Plans, the brokering of culturally-appropriate watershed management partnerships, and the establishment of stewardship programs that balanced and optimized the economic, cultural, environmental, educational, and community benefits of the lands he managed. Such experiences will continue provide Mr. Hannahs with ample practical knowledge and invaluable cultural insight directly relevant to CWRM's mission of overseeing the management of our public trust water resources.

Notably, since his appointment, Mr. Hannahs has indeed contributed significantly to positive, proactive, and unprecedented actions by CWRM. Among other CWRM actions, during his tenure, Mr. Hannahs has (1) supported the first-ever Commission-initiated update to Interim Instream Flow Standards (IIFS) for streams in West Maui, including the rejection of the late contested case request by gentlemen farm subdivision representatives; (2) participated in the Commission's Decision and Order (D&O) updating IIFS standards for East Maui – a historic

decision restoring full undiverted flow to the main kalo-supporting streams and restoring additional flow to the remaining streams covered under the kalo farmers' IIFS update petition; and (3) rejected a proposal to impose thousands of dollars in fines against kalo farmers in Nā Wai 'Ehā, based on an "insubstantial" modification of stream flow previously approved by CWRM staff, and instead supporting the establishment of an expedited permitting process for kalo farmers. His comments and thoughtful contributions during these and many other CWRM decisions and actions have reflected a high degree of diligence; commitment to CWRM's statutory, fiduciary, and public trust obligations; and creativity in bridging traditional and Western values and knowledge, in no doubt informed by his depth and breadth of experience in land and resource management, as well as his demonstrated commitment to the communities and islands of Hawai'i.

As a final matter, OHA notes that as a CWRM member, Mr. Hannahs has also been extensively briefed on water waste complaints and IIFS noncompliance issues, and therefore has an established understanding of the substantial community concerns regarding these ongoing matters.

For these reasons, OHA is confident that Mr. Hannahs will continue to be an invaluable asset to CWRM as it carries out its increasingly important kuleana as "Ke Kahuwai Pono." Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** GM768. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

## BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HI 96843  
www.boardofwatersupply.com



May 13, 2020

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ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.  
Manager and Chief Engineer

ELLEN E. KITAMURA, P.E.  
Deputy Manager and Chief Engineer

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Water and Land  
State Senate  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kahele and Members:

Subject: Governor's Message No. 768: Submitting for Consideration  
and Confirmation of Neil Hannahs to the State Commission  
on Water Resource Management

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports Governor's Message No. 768 on the confirmation of Mr. Neil Hannahs to the State Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM).

The BWS had the opportunity to work with Mr. Hannahs on community water planning, water conservation, watershed protection and environmental and cultural education over many years. Mr. Hannahs is also a past member of the BWS Stakeholder Advisory Group that provided important insight and recommendations to our Water Master Plan and Long-Range Financial Plan and Water Rate Study. Mr. Hannahs substantial experience in cultural and environmental sustainability significantly improved our water plans and perspectives.

Serving on the State CWRM, Mr. Hannahs provides balance and strategic insight to water resource management decisions that will have long term benefits to Oahu. Reappointment of Mr. Hannahs will ensure the State's water resources will be protected and managed in a culturally appropriate manner.

Thank you for your consideration of our supporting testimony.

Very truly yours,

  
ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.  
Manager and Chief Engineer

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 1:10:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Summer Sylva	Testifying for Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Kahele, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Water and Land:

Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation supports Neil Hannahs' confirmation to the Commission on Water Resource Management for a term to expire 06-30-2023. Mr. Hannahs has served the community well as a member on the Commission, by ably, fairly, and prudently discharging his duty as a commissioner "to protect and manage the waters of the State of Hawai'i for present and future generations." His decision-making reflects thoughtful adherence and fidelity to the principle that "the waters of the State are held in trust for the benefits of the citizens of the State."

The public interest is best served when our Commissioners understand and take seriously their role as the primary guardian of our public trust resources, and take the affirmative steps necessary to faithfully discharge the public trust duties entrusted them. Mr. Hannah's confirmation to the Commission would further that purpose for the benefit of present and future generations.

For all the above reasons, NHLC supports this confirmation. Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Summer Sylva, NHLC Executive Director

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 11:50:28 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Morgan	Testifying for Kualoa Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support the nomination and reappointment of Neil Hannahs to the State Commission on Water Resources Management. There is no person more qualified in the state of Hawaii for this position than Neil. He has the background, knowledge and wisdom to make the right decisions for Hawaii.

Mahalo

John Morgan



**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 12:21:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter Merriman	Testifying for Merriman's Restaurants	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senator Kaiali'i Kahele and Committee on Water and Land Members,

Please allow me to express my complete support in the re-appointment of Mr. Neil Hannahs in a second term on the Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR) Commission on Water Resource Management.

I have known Mr Hannahs for many years and worked with him on nonprofit boards.

The State of Hawaii could not find a better person to serve on this committee.

Neil's intellect, moral judgement, work ethic and passion for Hawaii make him the perfect candidate.

Please let me know if I can be of any further help.

Aloha,

Peter Merriman

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/11/2020 2:00:30 PM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Testifying for Ponoholo Ranch Limited	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony of  
Rosalind Leolani Solomon

Before the Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

1:00 P.M.

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

**In Support of**

**GM 768, Neil Hannahs**

**Relating to the Commission on Water Resource Management**

I have known Neil Hannahs for over 50 years and believe him to be a man of high integrity and honorable stature. He possesses substantial experience and expertise in planning, leadership and organization through his professional career. He has a deep understanding and aloha for our Native Hawaiian culture and the community at large. I can think of no one more qualified to serve on the Commission on Water Resource Management.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Neil Hannahs and hope you will approve his nomination to the Commission on Water Resource Management.

Mahalo and aloha,

Rosalind Leolani Solomon

Email: [Hawnrozz@msn.com](mailto:Hawnrozz@msn.com)

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/11/2020 5:45:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matthew K Lynch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Although I am testifying as a private individual, my perspectives are shaped by my professional experience as a former member of Hawai'i Green Growth's Board of Directors, and as current President of the Board of Directors for Kahumana Organic farm, and Director of Sustainability Initiatives at the University of Hawai'i.

I strongly support the nomination of Neil Hannahs to serve a second 4-year term on the State Commission on Water Resources Management.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Kamakani Lynch

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/11/2020 7:44:41 PM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kevin Chang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senate Committee on Water and Land State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Gil-Agaran, and Committee Members,

I strongly support the re-appointment of Mr. Neil J Kaho'okele Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management.

I have known Mr. Hannahs for almost two decades now. I consider him a friend, an effective leader and mentor. Mr. Hannah's love for Hawai'i, his professional experience, life's work and mentorship inspired in many ways the trajectory of the work myself and many not-so-young anymore people do today in regards to caring for Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources.

I believe Mr. Hannah's continuing role on CWRM is a necessarily element to asking, struggling with and answering the hard questions and work to right the canoe on sustainable resource management for future generations, especially in regards to our most precious resource, our water.

I strongly support your vote in favor of the re-appointment of Mr. Hannahs to the Commission on Water Resource Management. Ola I ka wai.

PÅ«pÅ«kahi i holomua e ho'okanaka

Kevin Chang

**Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Attn: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele**

*Testimony of LeeAnn E.P. Silva*

**In SUPPORT of GM768  
Confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee Neil J. Kaho'okele Hannahs to the  
Commission on Water Resource Management**

May 12, 2020

Aloha Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to submit this testimony in strong support of GM768, consideration and confirmation to the Commission on Water Resource Management, Gubernatorial Nominee, Neil Hannahs.

I have known Neil for over 30 years and have had the privilege of working with him in various personal and professional capacities. I believe he has the experience, integrity, talent and ability to make a tremendous contribution in serving our State on the Commission on Water Resource Management.

Neil is smart, principled, and has the heart of a true servant leader. He never hesitates to engage on tough issues, yet has a masterful way of doing so, always with compassion, insight, understanding and humor. He is an effective and dedicated public servant, and contributes his time and talents to our community through a wide range of activities and services.

Over the past four years, Neil has served our pae 'āina well on the Commission on Water Resource Management. I respectfully urge your committee to **confirm** his nomination for another four years.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 4:59:17 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Maenette Benham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou!

I strongly support the re-appointment of Neil J. Kaho'okele Hannahs to a second term on the DLNR Commission on Water Resource Management. A konohiki of our 20th and 21st Century he has stewarded our 'Āina in ways that has maximized the value of our history and knowledge (ancestral roots) and at the same time strategically engaged our 'Āina to support the health and well-being of the people of Hawai'i. His careful and informed insight has supported the good work of the commission and I know he'll continue to commit his resources and energy to serve and to make a productive impact on the commission's efforts.

Mahalo nānui for this opportunity to lend my support to a much beloved and respected community leader, a Historic Hawai'i Kama'Āina of the Year recipient, Mr. Neil Hannahs.

e mālama pono!

Maenette K.P. Ah Nee - Benham



**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 6:26:37 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Albie Miles	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the nomination of Neil Hannahs to serve another 4-year term as a member of the State Commission on Water Resources Management. Governor Ige has nominated him to serve a second term. Mr. Hannahs is a tireless servant of public interests and has served the community well during his first term. Please allow him to continue to do his excellent work and serving the community of Hawaii in this role.

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 10:03:28 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Marlene Kamuela Purdy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/12/2020 10:39:26 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Keoni Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Kahele and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

I submit this testimony in strong SUPPORT of Neil Hannah's reappointment to the State Commission on Water Resources Management. His decades of service at Kamehameha Schools managing their agricultural and conservation land assets offers the Commission an invaluable expert in understanding and balancing the stewardship of our precious natural resources with community and commercial needs. This balanced and measured approach is critical to meeting the requirements set forth in Hawai'i's State Constitution Article XI Section 7 that "the State has an obligation to protect, control and regulate the use of Hawaii's water resources for the benefit of its people." The Hawai'i Supreme Court further opined on the public trust doctrine as "the right of the people to have the waters protected for their use [which] demands adequate provision for traditional and customary Hawaiian rights, wildlife, maintenance of ecological balance and scenic beauty, and the preservation and enhancement of the waters . . ."

You will not find more experienced, qualified, and caring individuals to serve on this critically important Commission than Neil Hannahs.

Me ka ha'aha'a,  
Keoni Lee

**LATE**

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/13/2020 7:50:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ulalia Woodside	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

It is my pleasure to submit testimony in strong support for GM 768 in consideration and confirmation to the Commission on Water Resource Management of Gubernatorial Nominee, NEIL HANNAHS.

Neil brings decades of experience in land and water resource management expertise from his professional private landowner, agriculture manager, and small business incubator experience. He has a balanced approach to problem solving and seeks to build understanding with all parties through shared information gathering and analysis. His experience and approach brings credibility to the Commission's deliberations and decisions.

It is with stong support that I submit this testimony in favor of Neil Hannahs' appointment to the Commission on Water Resource Management - GM768.

Mahalo,

Ulalia Woodside

**LATE**

**GM-768**

Submitted on: 5/13/2020 11:54:26 AM  
Testimony for WTL on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Julie Leialoha	Individual	Support	No

Comments: