



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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KUHIO HIGHWAY FROM WAIKOKO TO WAINIHA TO OPEN TO LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY BEGINNING FRIDAY, MAY 4

***\$8 million in quick release Federal Highway Emergency Relief funds approved;
total to restore the 2-mile stretch of Kuhio Highway damaged in April flood
estimated at \$40 million.***

LIHUE – The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) and the County of Kauai announces the single lane route on Kuhio Highway (Route 560) from Waikoko to Wainiha will be open to local traffic only beginning Friday, May 4, 2018. Residents of Wainiha and Haena driving vehicles under 10,000 pounds will be allowed to use the single lane on a limited basis, between the hours of 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., weather and conditions permitting. Details of the limited access are provided within this news release.

Access to the single lane route between Waikoko and Wainiha for local traffic will be dependent on current weather conditions to ensure safety along the 2-mile stretch. The National Weather Service has extended a Flash Flood Watch for Kauai, Niihau, and Oahu through late Friday night. Should the local access be suspended due to weather, HDOT and the County of Kauai will provide updated information through the media and social media accounts.

The 10,000-pound weight restriction means only passenger vehicles such as sedans, SUVs and pickup trucks will be allowed on the highway. North Shore residents seeking access to the single lane route are advised to check their individual vehicle weight, which can be found on the vehicle's registration. All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and Utility Task Vehicles (UTV) will not be permitted to travel on the single lane route.

“Safety is our first priority as we continue recovery efforts in the areas that were isolated last month by heavy flooding and numerous landslides. We are actively deploying disaster response resources to help residents and businesses in those areas. I am pleased that work has progressed to allow residents of Wainiha and Haena to safely use the highway; however, we are asking visitors to enjoy other areas on Kauai to avoid impacting the ongoing recovery efforts. We also ask the same of the general public,” said Gov. David Ige.

“This is a significant development, and I’d like to thank our entire team of responders who have worked diligently towards reopening a safe pass way for our isolated residents. However, there is still much work left to be done in the Wainiha-Haena area. And while we continue to conduct these emergency operations, this area will be limited to residents only until further notice. We appreciate everyone’s understanding, residents and visitors alike,” said Mayor Bernard Carvalho.

Local access to the 2-mile single lane of Kuhio Highway between Waikoko and Wainiha will be available on the following schedule:

- 6 a.m. Waikoko to Wainiha
- 6:30 a.m. Wainiha to Waikoko, to include shuttle
- 12 p.m. Waikoko to Wainiha, to include shuttle
- 12:20 p.m. Wainiha to Waikoko,
- 12:40 p.m. Waikoko to Wainiha,
- 1 p.m. Wainiha to Waikoko to include shuttle
- 6 p.m. Wainiha to Waikoko,
- 6:30 p.m. Waikoko to Wainiha, to include shuttle

Guided access via escort vehicles will be provided on an alternating basis with trips between Wainiha and Waikoko per the above schedule. Residents using the single lane route will be required to adhere to the 10,000-pound weight restriction and speed restrictions as indicated by signs along the route. Staging for the limited local access, which is dependent on weather, will take place at manned checkpoints.

Placards will be issued to Wainiha and Haena residents only. To receive a placard, residents must bring their vehicle and be prepared to prove residency. Placards may be picked up from Planning Director Mike Dahilig at the County office at the Hanalei Colony Resort between 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. beginning on Thursday, May 3, and between 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday, May 4.

Insurance adjusters, utility company personnel, private contractors and others needing access to work in the communities past the single lane route are asked to coordinate their travel needs through the Kauai Emergency Management Agency at 808-241-1800. Those people with approved access will need to have their name on a list provided to the personnel at the checkpoints in order to be allowed through.

HDOT crews and contractors continue to work to stabilize and clear debris on Kuhio Highway on the North Shore of Kauai following the April 14, 2018 flood event. The route was opened for one-lane emergency access on April 28, 2018.

On Thursday, May 3, 2018, HDOT was informed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that \$8 million in quick release funding has been approved for the emergency work to restore access to the route between Waikoko and Wainiha. The current estimate for total emergency costs for the response and recovery work on Kuhio Highway is \$40 million. HDOT will seek FHWA Emergency Relief (ER) funding, which is provided on a cost-share basis for repair or reconstruction of highways damaged as a result of natural disasters. More information on FHWA ER funds can be found at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/erelief.cfm>

“The initial release of funds from FHWA so quickly after the April flood is a great help to State Highways and those dependent on Kuhio Highway as a lifeline for food, supplies, and the essentials of daily life,” said Hawaii Department of Transportation Director Jade Butay. “I am grateful to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and FHWA Acting Administrator Brandye Hendrickson for the speed with which they’ve replied to our initial request for funds.”

Future phases of the work will likely require reassessment of and modification to management of public access through the construction site. The full reopening of Kuhio Highway from Waikoko to Wainiha for two-way traffic is expected within three to four months. A detailed schedule for the restoration of unrestricted access to Wainiha and Haena will be available following the upgrade of the Waioli, Waipa, and Waikoko Bridges (the three Ws) scheduled to start in June.

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