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Honolulu Seawater A/C project completes final environmental impact statement

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The \$250 million **Honolulu Seawater Air Conditioning** project to cool Downtown Honolulu office buildings and condominiums towers with a revolutionary air-conditioning system, has completed its final environmental impact statement, a key development for [the long-planned project](#).

Comments for the project are now being accepted through the 45-day review period, which began on June 13 and ends on July 28.

The comment period is intended to give the public the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns before a decision is made by the Army Corps of Engineers, the lead federal agency regulating the project.

Virginia-based Cardno TEC, which has a Honolulu office and provides consulting in engineering, environmental management, architecture, planning, and infrastructure management, prepared the final EIS.

It addresses comments on the draft EIS that resulted in major changes such as the addition of two new alternatives that incorporate deeper return seawater discharges, new water quality data, analysis of the potential effects of discarded military munitions in the project's area, completion of a proposed mitigation plan to minimize impacts to marine life and completion of an environmental hazard management plan for dealing with toxic and hazardous materials.

The final EIS also noted that there is a need for the project, based on economic and environmental reasons, to increase the use of renewable-energy resources and decrease the use of imported oil to generate electricity in Hawaii.

To see the entire 834-page report, [click here](#).

The Honolulu Seawater Air Conditioning project [signed up its first federal customer last month](#)— Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse — with **Hawaiian Electric Co., Finance Factors Ltd.**, First Hawaiian Center, One Waterfront Towers, and Remington College also signed on to use the system.

[Eric Masutomi](#), president and CEO of Honolulu Seawater Air Conditioning, has noted that the success of the project's downtown district cooling system will ultimately be dependent on gaining a sufficient number of Downtown Honolulu commercial, residential, and governmental users to support the privately-financed development project.

The system will provide air conditioning to buildings in Downtown Honolulu by pumping deep ocean water through a pipeline more than four miles offshore to a cooling station in Kakaako.

The projects reducing electricity usage is the equivalent of a 30-megawatt wind farm or a 42-megawatt solar energy farm, the developer said.

It is scheduled to start construction in late 2014 and begin providing chilled water services to customers in 2016.

Duane Shimogawa covers energy, real estate and economic development for Pacific Business News.