



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER  
NAVY REGION HAWAII  
850 TICONDEROGA ST STE 110  
JBP HH HI 96860-5101

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Aloha, Stakeholder,

This is the Navy's ninth and my second Red Hill stakeholder letter to the community. As we end this year, my thoughts are with all the deployed Sailors and their families during the holiday season. Five of our Hawaii-based surface ships as well as some of our submarines are deployed away from home. Those Sailors are standing the watch in our nation's defense. They are not unlike the veterans we recognized during the 76<sup>th</sup> Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day commemoration. World War II veterans and those who have followed stood the watch, and we owe our quality of life, peace and prosperity to their service and sacrifice.

During and since World War II, our Navy and military has relied on fuel available at Pearl Harbor. In the Pacific, the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Facility continues to be absolutely essential in meeting our national security requirements. The Navy is protecting Hawaii and our nation while, at the same time, continuing to modernize Red Hill and keep our drinking water safe to drink. Toward that end, please allow me to highlight some of the progress we have made over the past year and our commitment in 2018 and beyond.

With our submission of the Tank Upgrade Alternative (TUA) report on December 8, the Navy and Defense Logistics Agency provided one of several tools to our regulators – both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) – to help evaluate six options for upgrading the tanks at Red Hill. I welcome stakeholders and neighbors to read the comprehensive report, available on the EPA's Red Hill website: <https://www.epa.gov/red-hill>. The EPA also posted a new December fact sheet on its site that provides updates on enhanced tank maintenance procedures, the groundwater monitoring network, drinking water standards, tank upgrade study, and the process for selecting upgrades, along with other information.

Over the next year, we will use the TUA Report and other documents to help weigh and rank the six alternatives. Regulators received our decision process, which outlines the overall way ahead and offers tentative dates of key data inputs, public outreach meetings, Department of Defense (DoD) review/decision, regulator review/decision, and ultimately a briefing to the House Armed Services Committee.

We also continue to make progress in determining the best leak detection systems as part of our modernization initiatives at Red Hill. Soon, we will test three technologies using approved protocols designed specifically for the Red Hill facility. Similarly, we are making good progress in the environmental sections of the Administrative Order on Consent and Statement of Work (AOC-SOW). Recently derived hydrogeology data, as well as historic reports, support evidence of a valley barrier. The existence of such a barrier could prove to prevent groundwater in the Red Hill area from reaching Board of Water Supply drinking water wells. We are confirming this evidence using best engineering practices and by collecting additional data. In fact, we already started drilling our next monitoring well to gather that data, which will be used with other information from the attenuating study, a seismic test, valley pumping tests and other initiatives to give everyone a clearer picture of the flow of our groundwater.

Earlier this month, our subject matter experts, along with other DOD technical experts, met with EPA and DOH regulators in California for in-depth technical discussions on the current

data analysis for the AOC-SOW's quantitative risk and vulnerability assessment section. Regulators confirm our drinking water continues to be safe to drink and the Red Hill tanks are not leaking. The EPA confirms that drinking water meets all federal and state standards. Full drinking water reports are available online, and additional information about how the DoH safeguards drinking water is available at <http://health.hawaii.gov/sdwb/>.

Looking ahead, in 2018 we plan to hold an open-house public information workshop in coordination with EPA and DOH. The exact date is yet to be determined, but we will announce a formal public comment period shortly after the holidays. Although we had a few scheduling delays getting started, our Red Hill team is now setting up additional briefings to answer the community's questions at neighborhood boards on Oahu. We're happy to present the science, facts and evidence behind our decision-making process. For more general information from the Navy about Red Hill, I invite you to visit our website: [www.cnic.navy.mil/redhill](http://www.cnic.navy.mil/redhill).

There is much more work to do in studying, analyzing and then implementing all the right initiatives at Red Hill. We must understand every potential action, reaction and consequence of our decisions, but this is also a good time to recognize how much progress we have made and continue to make. The Navy has invested and continues to invest a significant amount of money and other resources to maintain and improve Red Hill. Let's also keep in mind the strategic importance of Red Hill's critical role in our nation's defense.

On behalf of all the Sailors proudly serving in Hawaii – many of whom are deployed and away from their families during the holiday season – thank you for your steadfast support. We will continue to stand the watch, carrying out our mission while at the same time ensuring the drinking water remains safe for all of us. From my family and our Navy team here, Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year to you and yours.

Very Respectfully,



B. P. FORT  
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy