



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

News Release

For Immediate Release: January 14, 2022

COUNTY OF KAUA'I
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
TROY TANIGAWA, ACTING COUNTY ENGINEER
(808) 241-4993

Jan. 14 update on Menehune Road closure

WAIMEA – Officials are announcing the following updates for the Waimea community affected by the rockslide that occurred on Menehune Road on Jan. 4.

The next news release update is expected to be given on Tuesday, Jan. 18. A daily newsletter with up-to-date information will continue to be posted online at www.kauai.gov/KEMA. To view, click on the blue button at the top of the page labeled “Waimea Valley Rockslide.”

“As we approach day 11 since the rockslide, we’ve seen our westside community come together in many ways that it is truly inspiring,” said Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami. “This week’s food distributions were another example of a community-led, government-supported initiative that works. I want to thank our community partners for stepping up and offering the help our residents needed while providing a huge relief for our team – we couldn’t have done it without all of you. I also want to acknowledge our elected officials for their invaluable support and assistance throughout this incident. And of course, mahalo to our entire County of Kaua’i team for leading us throughout this emergency, both on and behind the scenes.”

Road Closure and Slope Stabilization

Menehune Road is expected to remain fully closed until the end of January. Reopening of the roadway will be based on when the slope above the roadway is stabilized and deemed safe for daily passing. Contractors are working seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Due to roadway embankment erosion concerns, crews on Thursday removed a large (6' x 10') boulder that had fallen into the river during the rockslide. Contractors simultaneously continue to work on slope stabilization activities, including the installation of a chain link fence along a portion of the slope. The fence will protect the historic bridge from rocks released during ongoing rock scaling work. HiTech, the county's contractor, anticipates the focus of work will shift primarily to rock scaling by Friday afternoon.

While repairs are underway, large, loose boulders will continue to fall onto the roadway below. The public is reminded not to cross or approach the rockfall site at any time. Doing so could result in severe injury or death. The public is urged to heed all warnings and use the alternate route on Panini Road if you need to access the area.

Waimea Swinging Bridge

Work to repair the Waimea Swinging Bridge will start after the slope is stabilized. Given the historic nature of the bridge, officials expect this to be a long-term repair project. Understanding that the pedestrian bridge is an important point of access to Makaweli residents, officials will continue to work with residents on continued needs. Makaweli residents requiring assistance are urged to contact the Kaua'i Emergency Management Agency (KEMA) at 808-241-1800.

Refuse Service

The next refuse collection is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 18. Residents are asked to leave their bagged trash in their refuse carts next Monday, Jan. 17, for early-morning pickup on Tuesday. Any updates or changes to this schedule will be announced in the online daily newsletter.

To ensure efficient pickup, please double bag your household trash and place it in your county-issued refuse carts. Bulky items, green waste, and loose trash will not be collected at this time. For those without refuse carts, please leave your double bagged household waste in a covered trash receptacle at the side of the road immediately adjacent to your driveway. Trash receptacles must not exceed 50 pounds, and more than one covered receptacle may be used.

Food Distribution

Another community-led food distribution was held Friday, Jan. 14. Officials thank the following organizations and community partners for their past and ongoing assistance with providing food and supplies to residents: The Kekaha Ag Association, E Ola Mau Na Leo O Kekaha, Hawai'i FoodBank – Kaua'i Branch (HFB-Kaua'i), Kumano I Ke Ala, KIUC, Chad Buck of Hawaii Foodservice Alliance, Waimea Hongwanji, West Kaua'i Christian Center, County officials, Kaua'i County Council Members, Hawai'i Community Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, Vandersloot Foundation, Nourish Kaua'i, Waimea High School, Senate President Ron Kouchi, U.S. Representative Kaiiali'i (Kai) Kahele, 'Āina Ho'okupu O Kilauea, state DLNR-DOFAW, and local farmers and fishers for also contributing to the food distribution.

The next food distribution will be announced when a schedule is confirmed.

Wellness Checks/Needs Assessment

While the road remains fully closed, crews will continue wellness checks and needs assessments for residents along Menehune Road and on the Makaweli-side of the river, as well as provide daily updates online at www.kauai.gov/KEMA.

Panini Road Emergency Access Route

The State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has opened an alternate emergency access route from Waimea Canyon Drive, known as Panini Road. The Panini Road access is limited to local residents and first responders via 4 x 4 usage only. Motorists are urged to drive slowly and cautiously, as heavy machinery is in the area, and crews with DLNR are continuing to improve the road.

More Info

If anyone in the affected area requires assistance during work hours, please call the Kaua'i Emergency Management Agency (KEMA) at 808-241-1800. After working hours, please call Kaua'i Police Dispatch at 808-241-1711. If you have an emergency and require immediate assistance, please call 911. If you have a kupuna needing assistance from the Agency on Elderly Affairs, please contact their office at

808-241-4470. If you have a school-aged child who needs assistance with distance learning options, please contact KEMA at 808-241-1800.

Those wishing to provide services or resources are asked to coordinate with KEMA.

A daily newsletter with up-to-date information will continue to be posted online. To view, visit www.kauai.gov/KEMA and click on the blue button at the top of the page labeled “Waimea Valley Rockslide.”



Above photo courtesy of County of Kaua'i: The State DLNR has opened an alternate emergency access route from Waimea Canyon Drive, known as Panini Road. This access is limited to local residents and first responders via 4 x 4 usage only.



Above photos courtesy of County of Kaua'i: A community-led food distribution was held today, Jan. 14, for Waimea Valley residents. Mahalo to the following organizations and community partners for their past and ongoing assistance with providing food and supplies to residents: The Kekaha Ag Association, E Ola Mau Na Leo O Kekaha, Hawai'i FoodBank – Kaua'i Branch (HFB-Kaua'i), Kumano I Ke Ala, KIUC, Chad Buck of Hawaii Foodservice Alliance, Waimea Hongwanji, West Kaua'i Christian Center, County officials, Kaua'i County Council Members, Hawai'i Community Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, Vandersloot Foundation, Nourish Kaua'i, Waimea High School, Senate President Ron Kouchi, 'Āina Ho'okupu O Kīlauea, state DLNR-DOFAW, and local farmers and fishers for also contributing to the food distribution.

Below photos courtesy of Hawai'i Food Bank – Kaua'i Branch:





###