

13th HAWAII ENERGY CONFERENCE+EXHIBITION

May 20 & 21, 2026 | Maui Arts & Cultural Center



Presented by maui economic DEVELOPMENT BOARD

383

PARTICIPANTS



The 13th Annual Hawaii Energy Conference was held May 20, 21 at the Maui Arts & Cultural Center bringing together nearly 400 energy leaders, policymakers, innovators, and community voices to examine this year's theme: **Energy: Power, People and Place.**

Maui Economic Development Board has presented the conference since 2014 to explore the challenges and opportunities in Hawaii's transition to renewable energy. Maui County Mayor Richard Bissen opened the two-day conference that featured dynamic keynote addresses, engaging panels, and in-depth discussions. This year's program actively explored pathways to resilience and sustainability using firm power, while incorporating the lessons learned from successful indigenous projects.

"It's really learning from an indigenous perspective how we can connect together, so that we can understand what this demand on energy is going to look like in the future," said Newton. "I think the world is going to have a significant demand on energy going forward because of climatization, because of the developments of AI – and we've got to ask ourselves those questions of how do we play in this development going forward?" said Mana Newton, Group CEO, Tauhara North No. 2 Trust, New Zealand

Newton delivered a powerful keynote sharing the journey and story of geothermal energy in their community. It was a story of inclusion; ownership; and of regeneration; balancing cultural stewardship with commercial viability to strengthen resilience.

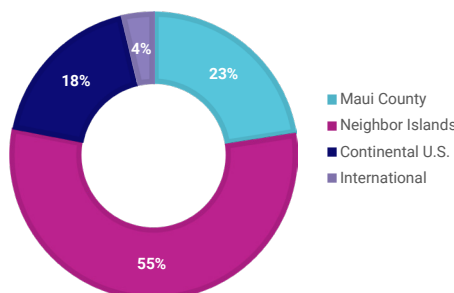
Jacqui Hoover, Chair of the conference program committee, Director of Hawaii Island Economic Development Board said, "The things we learn here, the innovations we put in place, the technologies we test - we're really setting the bar and establishing the floor as well as the ceiling for energy overall. People who come, whether it's from across the state of Hawaii or the continent, even international, we're able to take our lessons learned and weave them together, as we do in Hawaii, weaving together our mana'o, our knowledge, as well as the opportunities and our resources."

A Deep Dive Session provided an opportunity to explore the topic of 'Water and Energy' in greater depth with an intimate group exploring current and emerging options for seawater desalination, the status of desalination plans on Oahu and Maui, and the energy challenges that influence the feasibility and cost of these technologies.

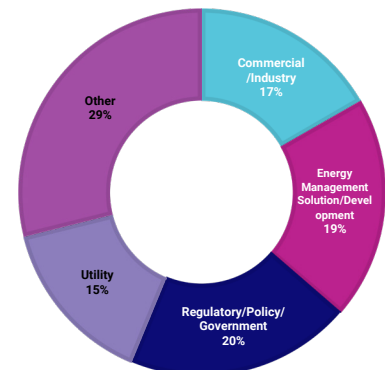


Visitors from Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Korea, Puerto Rico, and across the Continental U.S joined Hawaii-based attendees for networking with each other and with the exhibiting companies showcasing leading edge technologies in renewable energy.

ATTENDEES BY LOCALE



ATTENDEES BY INDUSTRY



2026 PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

WED | DAY 1

OPENING KEYNOTE

Mana Newton, Group CEO, Tauhara North No. 2 Trust, New Zealand

RESILIENCE & MICROGRIDS

Moderated by **Robert “Rocky” Mould**, Executive Director, Hawaii Solar Energy Association

Ali Andrews, CEO, Shake Energy Collaborative

Russell Garcia, Development Director, Higher Education, Johnson Controls Sustainable Infrastructure

Andrew MacCalla, Founder & CEO, Collective Energy

Ferdinand Ramos-Soegaard, Associate Commissioner, Negociado de Energia de Puerto Rico

DEEP DIVE: WATER AND ENERGY

Discussion led by **Ben Sullivan** owner of LeaHi Design

Lauren Roth Venu, CEO, 3Water, Inc

John Stufflebean, Director, County of Maui Water Supply

Barry Usagawa, Program Administrator, Honolulu Board of Water Supply

Srinivas “Vasu” Veerapaneni, Global Practice Technology Leader, Reuse, Desal and Advanced Processes, Black & Veatch.

FEATURED PRESENTATION | THE “MAUI METHOD”

Christopher Wegner, Hazard Mitigation Specialist, Maui Emergency Management Agency

HIGHER SOLAR COSTS & 100% RPS

Moderated by **Wren Wescoatt**, VP of Development, Longroad Energy

Jeffrey Mikulina, Executive Director, Climate Hawaii

Nicola Park, Director, Clearway Energy

Josh Powell, CEO and Co-Founder, RevoluSun

FEATURED PRESENTATION | BEST PRACTICES FOR ADDING LARGE LOAD TO THE GRID

Mark Kolesar, Senior Advisor, Ankura Consulting Group, Canada

CYBERSECURITY FOR HAWAII'S RESILIENT ENERGY FUTURE

Moderated by **Edward Tavares**, Vice President Chief Information and Security Officer, Hawaiian Electric

Jimmie Collins, Chief of Planning and Operations, State of Hawaii Office of Homeland Security

Jordan Henry, Director, Cybersecurity Research Center, National Laboratory of the Rockies

Chuck Weissenborn, Public Sector Chief Technology Officer, Facility Security Officer, Dragos Public Sector

BEST PRACTICES IN PERMITTING AND POLICIES

Moderated by **Jonathan Koehn**, Director, Climate Initiatives Department, City of Boulder

Leila Banijamali, CEO, Symbium

Representative Greggor Ilagan, Hawaii State House District 4

Rohimah Moly, Deputy Director, Energy & Climate, California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

THU | DAY 2

OVERVIEW OF DAY ONE AND DEEP DIVE

Jacqui Hoover, Chair, Conference Program Committee; Executive Director and COO Hawaii Island Economic Development Board; and President Hawaii Leeward Planning

Ben Sullivan, Owner, LeaHi Design

POWER, PEOPLE, AND PLACE

Moderated by **Nā'ālehu Anthony**, Activist, changemaker and storyteller

Andy Blair, Co-Founder & Director, Upflow, New Zealand

Mana Newton, Group CEO, Tauhara North No. 2 Trust, New Zealand

Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez, County of Maui

Wayne Yazza, Director of Utilities, Picuris Pueblo Indian Tribe

FEATURED PRESENTATION | HARDENING THE GRID

Marc Asano, Director, Wildfire Strategy, Hawaiian Electric

LNG IN HAWAII

Moderated by **Jennifer Potter**, Faculty Energy Specialist, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute

Representative Nicole Lowen, State of Hawaii

Erik Montague, VP Development, JERA America

Rick Rocheleau, Director, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute

Stephen Walls, Deputy Energy Officer, Hawaii State Energy Office

FEATURED PRESENTATION | COMMUNITY-LED ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Caroline Carl, Executive Director, Hawaii Energy

Jennifer Yoshimura, Energy Director, Sustainable Molokai

RENEWABLE FUEL SUPPLY FOR HAWAII

Moderated by **Michael Angelo**, Executive Director, Hawaii Division of Consumer Advocacy, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Bob King, President, Pacific Biodiesel

Christyn Senda, Director of Project and Business Development, Hawaii Gas

Joelle Simonpietri, Founder and CEO, Aloha Carbon

Jamie Ware, Project Director, Par Hawaii

CULTIVATING A ROBUST CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE

Moderated by **Samantha Larson**, Project Manager, AE Consulting

Spencer Alexander, Teacher, James Campbell High School

Leroy Chincio, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, IBEW 1260

Kazu Hayashida, Manager of Workforce Planning, Hawaiian Electric

Damien Kim, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, IBEW 1186

Marshall Norman, Program Manager, University of Hawaii - Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges

