



ENERGY: POWER, PEOPLE, AND PLACE

Bringing together leaders, policymakers, cooperatives, and energy innovators, the 2026 Hawaii Energy Conference will discuss pathways to resilience and sustainability using firm (dispatchable source) power, while incorporating the lessons learned from successful indigenous projects.

From geothermal in Hawaii to energy projects on tribal lands and cooperative models across the U.S. and New Zealand, participants will share experiences and strategies for advancing energy solutions while maintaining harmony with local landscapes and traditions.

Join us May 20 and 21 to engage in meaningful dialogue on how policy, technology, and cultural wisdom can shape a resilient and more affordable energy future across all generations.

REGISTER NOW

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

7:00 AM **REGISTRATION |** Founders Courtyard
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:00 **CULTURAL OPENING |** Castle Theater
E KOMO MAI (WELCOME)

Leslie Wilkins, President and CEO, Maui Economic Development Board, Inc.

WELCOME

Richard Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui

8:30 **OPENING KEYNOTE**



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

9:00 RESILIENCE & MICROGRIDS

Lessons from Remote and Island Communities: selected areas share lessons on microgrids, storage, and resilient infrastructure. Format could be a rapid case-study panel + moderated discussion

Moderated by:

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

10:00 COFFEE BREAK AND EXHIBIT SESSION

10:30 DEEP DIVE: WATER AND ENERGY

Despite being surrounded by water, many communities in Hawaii face water shortages, including areas affected by the 2023 fires. Learn about options to desalinate seawater, the status of plans for desalination on Oahu and Maui, and how energy costs limit the use of desalination.

Discussion facilitated by **Ben Sullivan**

10:30 FEATURED PRESENTATION | THE “MAUI METHOD”

Christopher Wegner, Hazard Mitigation Specialist, Maui Emergency Management Agency

10:45 HIGHER SOLAR COSTS & 100% RPS

If tariffs and decreasing tax credits make solar more expensive, should Hawaii re-think its commitment to clean energy? Changing state and federal policies could make electricity costs from utility-scale and distributed PV projects in Hawaii higher than “avoided cost” of burning fossil fuel for the first time in decades. Will this affect customers’ appetite for solar? How will the industry and regulators adjust? Should this change Hawaii’s quest for 100% renewable generation by 2045?

Moderated by:

Wren Wescoatt, VP of Development, Longroad Energy

Panelists:

Jeffrey Mikulina, Climate and Social Impact Strategist, Climate Hawaii

Nicola Park, Director, Clearway Energy

Josh Powell, CEO and Co-Founder, RevoluSun

11:45 NETWORKING LUNCH | Founders Courtyard
EXHIBIT SESSION WITH DESSERTS | Exhibit Hall

1:15 PM FEATURED PRESENTATION

1:30 CYBER RESILIENCE

2:30 AFTERNOON BREAK

3:00 BEST PRACTICES IN PERMITTING AND POLICIES

4:00-5:30 PM NETWORKING RECEPTION | Exhibit Hall

THURSDAY, MAY 21

7:00 AM REGISTRATION

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST | Founders Courtyard

8:00 OVERVIEW OF DAY ONE AND DEEP DIVE

8:30 POWER, PEOPLE, AND PLACE (90 min)

Starting plenary conversation with cultural leaders, energy executives, and policymakers on how Hawaii is redefining "generation"—power generation, cultural generation, and generational responsibility. Models from Hawaii, Tribal Nations, and the Pacific. How communities are designing and governing their own projects, what works, what fails, and what others can learn. Geothermal energy in Hawaii. What is the right model?

Moderated by:

Nā'ālehu Anthony, Activist, changemaker and storyteller

Panelists:

Andy Blair, Co-Founder & Director, Upflow

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

10:00 COFFEE BREAK AND EXHIBIT SESSION | Exhibit Hall

10:30 FEATURED PRESENTATION

10:45 LNG IN HAWAII

The Natural Tension Around Natural Gas: The conventional wisdom is that fossil LNG is cheaper and lower carbon intensity than petroleum fuel oil. What's real, and what's an untested assumption? What are the actual landed cost and carbon intensity estimates to bring LNG to Hawaii? What infrastructure is needed, where would the fuel be coming from, how does it get to the end-users, and who pays for it? How does it help (or not) the development of renewable natural gas? How does it fit (or not) with the Hawaii Gas utility's recently published Integrated Resource Plan? What's the status of Hawaii Gas's RNG procurement?

Moderated by:

Jennifer Potter, Faculty Energy Specialist, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI)

11:45 NETWORKING LUNCH | Founders Courtyard

EXHIBIT SESSION WITH DESSERT | Exhibit Hall

1:15 PM FEATURED PRESENTATION

1:30

RENEWABLE FUEL SUPPLY FOR HAWAII

HECO is preparing its next round of firm renewable energy generation procurement. Hawaii Gas has submitted its Integrated Resource Plan, issued its Renewable Natural Gas and Hydrogen RFP, and submitted its Renewable Gas Tariff. Where is the biofuel going to come from? Who's working on this? What kind of fuel, what is it made from, and where from? What's the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions carbon intensity? What's the status of projects? What is the assessed beneficial impact? What's the plan to synchronize or deconflict fuel use and land use between Hawaii's two regulated energy utility sectors? How about between local production of feedstock versus ground-mounted solar versus importation infrastructure?

2:30

AFTERNOON BREAK | Exhibit Hall

3:00

CULTIVATING A ROBUST CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE

A session exploring the needs for recruiting, training and retaining, to facilitate the development of the diverse workforce needed for Hawaii's clean energy transition. Could include: union leaders, educators, utilities, young professionals panel

4:00

CLOSING

**4:15 -
5:45 PM**

PAU HANA | Founders Courtyard

Enjoy light appetizers as you network.

2026 Program Committee

- Beth Amaro** | Member Services and Communications Manager, Kauai Island Utility Cooperative
- Colton Ching** | Senior Vice President, Planning & Technology, Hawaiian Electric
- Michael Colón** | Director, Energy Sector, Ulupono Initiative
- Jacqui Hoover** | Chair, Conference Program Committee; Executive Director and COO Hawaii Island Economic Development Board (HIEDB); and President Hawaii Leeward Planning
- Damien Kim** | Business Manager/Financial Secretary, International Brotherhood Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1186
- Jonathan Koehn** | Director, Climate Initiatives Department, City of Boulder
- Doug McLeod** | Member, DKK Energy Services, LLC
- Robert “Rocky” Mould** | Executive Director, Hawaii Solar Energy Association
- Jennifer Potter** | Faculty Energy Specialist, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI)
- Joelle Simonpietri** | Owner, Simonpietri Enterprises LLC
- Wren Wescoatt** | VP of Development, Longroad Energy
- Jennifer Zelko-Schlueter** | Director, Government and Community Relations, Hawaiian Electric