HI Supreme Court Unanimously Rejects Big Island's Hu Honua Power Project

In a searing rebuke to Hu Honua, the Hawaii Supreme Court has denied the company's appeal of a Public Utilities Commission decision, saying the state was correct to reject the biomass project's bid to operate on the Big Island, Honolulu Civil Beat reports.

The court handed down a unanimous 5-0 ruling on Monday saying it found no error in the commission's conclusion that allowing Hu Honua to fire up would not be in the public's best interest.

Hu Honua's major shortcomings are the 8 million metric tons of air pollution it would emit over 30 years by burning eucalyptus and other trees, as well as the higher cost of energy consumers would be forced to pay, adding some $10.97 to their monthly bills.

The commission "has a duty to act in the public interest," and that's what it did last May by voting 2-1 to reject Hu Honua's long sought-after quest for a power purchase agreement to sell energy to Hawaiian Electric, the court found. Read more.

Amid Green Energy Boom, HECO Seeking More 'Firm' Renewable Sources

Hawaii's green energy boom has largely been fueled by the solar power and wind farms. But Hawaiian Electric Company is now seeking more "firm" renewable sources such as biofuels, geothermal, and trash-to-energy, Hawaii News Now reports.

Hawaiian Electric Vice President Jim Kelly said firm sources are less variable. "(If) you end up with 40 days of rain like we had in 2006, you're going to need that firm generation on the system to make sure that the lights stay on," Kelly said.
Unlike wind and solar, firm renewable sources can produce power around the clock. In a new request for proposals, Hawaiian Electric is calling for the construction of power plants that produce 500-to-700 megawatts of firm renewable energy by the year 2033. That's roughly the size of the company's largest power plants.

Currently, HECO's firm renewable energy sources on Oahu include the city's HPower Plant at Campbell Industrial Park — which burns trash to generate electricity — and its power plants at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport and Schofield Barracks, which use biodiesel. Read more.

**With 19K EVs, Hawaii Pushes to Make Charging Up Easier**

It's no secret electric vehicles are gaining popularity. You see them everywhere driving on the road, today. But, EV owners said finding a place to charge their car isn't easy.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO) are working to change that, according to a khon2.com report. There are about 19,000 registered electric vehicles in Hawaii and 5,200 plug in hybrids according to the state's energy department.

But, electric vehicle owner, Christiana Ponzani, said there are not enough places to charge them. "It's a rat race," Ponzani said. "One person pulls out; immediately, another person pulls back in. So, you're really lucky if you find one."

HECO currently has 32 charging stations in the state, with another 300 in the works. Ed Sniffen, HDOT's Deputy Director for Highways, said they're also pushing for more charging ports. "Our plan shows 12 locations throughout the state that we'd be putting these in," Sniffen said. "And, we're starting with eight starting in the summer." Read more.

**State Licensing Board Meeting**

The Hawaii Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors & Landscape Architects will hold its next meeting on **Thursday, April 13**. Access meeting information here.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](https://www.nspe.org/advocacy-center).

**TVA Engineer Named 2023 FEYA Winner**
Stephen Craven, Ph.D., P.E., was named NSPE’s 2023 Federal Engineer of the Year for his innovative work securing Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) substations and developing improved communication architecture. Now in its 44th year, the Federal Engineer of the Year Award is the only one of its kind to solely recognize outstanding engineers employed in the federal government. Federal agency winners were honored during a ceremony held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on February 24.

Stephen Craven is a third-generation TVA engineer, serving at the agency’s Power Service Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Among his accomplishments, Craven has helped secure substations against cyber-attacks, designing ways to keep critical equipment disconnected from external attackers and yet still be remotely monitored for anomalies. He was also instrumental in the development of a new communication architecture that is faster, more reliable, and less expensive than previous schemes. Read more.

FEYA ceremony photos can be accessed on the NSPE Flickr album.

WORKability Wednesdays Are Back!

NSPE offers a live webinar series free to members—“WORKability Wednesdays”—to support members with their professional development goals. The series covers topics impacting the industry and helps to enhance your competencies in the profession. The spring season sessions kicked off on March 8 with Understanding the New Requirements for Cybersecurity Insurance. Register now at NSPE’s PE Institute and invite a colleague to attend.

Upcoming webinars

- **March 22**—Using Construction Manager at Risk Project Delivery to Manage the Current Challenges in Constructing Projects
- **April 12**—Doing Bad Things for Good Reasons: An Examination of Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior Among Professional Workers
- Save the date for webinars on April 26, May 17, and May 31

Take the Milton F. Lunch Ethics Challenge!
Match your wits and knowledge of engineering ethics with experienced professional engineers and engineering students throughout the country! All current NSPE individual members and NSPE chapters (including student members) are invited to participate in the 2023 NSPE Milton F. Lunch Ethics Contest. Contest submissions are due by May 12. View past contest winner entries.

You received this e-mail because you are subscribed to PE Matters e-newsletter.

To update your e-mail address, visit www.nspe.org and login to manage your account.

If you do not wish to receive any more issues of PE Matters, click here to unsubscribe.

Share with your network

National Society of Professional Engineers | 1420 King Street | Alexandria, VA 22314