

NOVEMBER 1, 2022

REFORMING U.S. SANITATION POLICY

Decentralized Wastewater Innovation Cohort



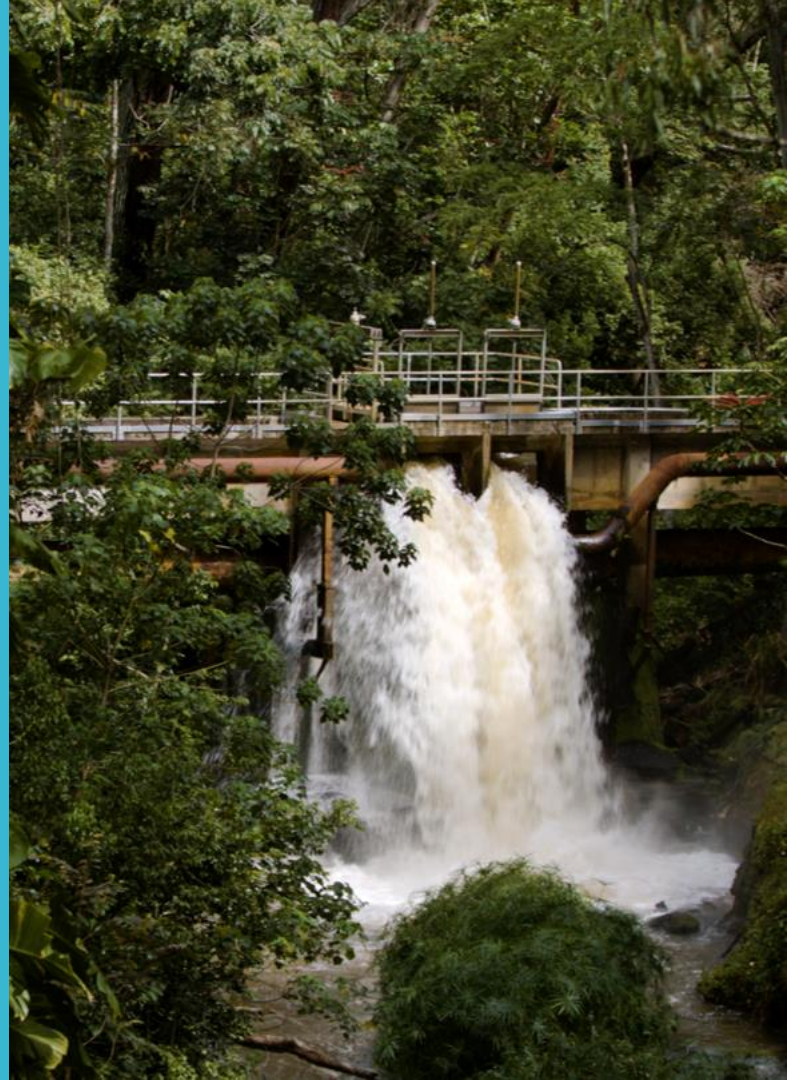
SPEAKER INFORMATION



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2.2 MILLION

2.2 MILLION+ AMERICANS LACK ACCESS TO BASIC PLUMBING

DWI COHORT

Decentralized Wastewater Innovation Cohort



1

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)
Anchorage, Alaska

2

Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations (WAI)
Honolulu, Hawaii

3

DigDeep's Navajo Water Project (NWP)
Navajo Nation

4

Black Belt Unincorporated Wastewater Program (BBUWP)
Montgomery, Alabama

5

New York State Center for Clean Water Technology (NYS-CWWT)
Stony Brook, New York





What if...

communities and households
received the same resources
available to larger, more visible
entities?



And what if...

opportunities
existed within current and
emerging federal programs to
solve this problem once and for
all?

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Decentralized Wastewater Innovation Cohort

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2. Expand and improve **outreach programs** to impacted communities and households to reduce access barriers to funding mechanisms.
3. Prioritize regulatory support and funding for **alternative technologies** to improve access to affordable and effective decentralized wastewater systems.

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2. Expand and improve **outreach programs** to impacted communities and households to reduce access barriers to funding mechanisms.
3. Prioritize regulatory support and funding for **alternative technologies** to improve access to affordable and effective decentralized wastewater systems.
4. Invest in **long-term relationships** with impacted communities and households to improve compliance, ensure longevity, deepen cultural integration, and improve public health outcomes.

WHAT IF...

Accurate data on sanitation access existed?



THEN...

U.S. households experiencing sanitation deficiencies could be identified and prioritized.



Lowndes County, AL

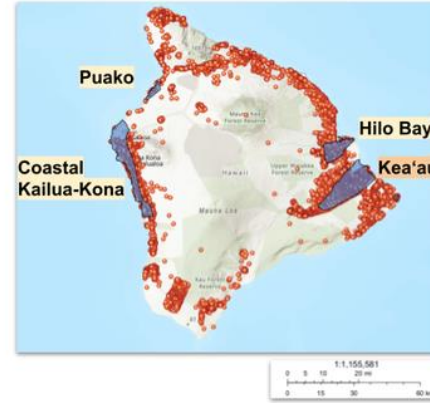
- 60% of households discharge 2.5 million gallons of sewage to ground surface daily.
- Accurate data on these discharges is either inaccurate or non-existent



Hawai'i

- Could provide model for data collection
- 53 million gallons of sewage discharged to groundwater and near-shore waters everyday

Hawai'i Priority Areas



49,300 cesspools

27,300,000 gallons per day of effluent discharge

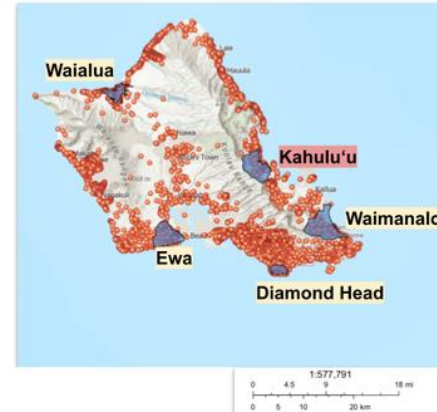
Priority 1: Significant risk, known impacts to water resources

Priority 2: Potential impacts to drinking water

Priority 3: Potential impacts to ecologically sensitive waters



O'ahu Priority Areas



11,300 cesspools

7,500,000 gallons per day of effluent discharge

Priority 1: Significant risk, known impacts to water resources

Priority 2: Potential impacts to drinking water

Priority 3: Potential impacts to ecologically sensitive waters



WHAT IF...

The barriers to households to access available funding and technical resources were lowered?



THEN...

U.S. households experiencing sanitation deficiencies could access available federal funding and technical assistance programs more easily.



- **Affordability** MUST be addressed for programs to be successful.
- Technical assistance programs should fund **“direct service”** provision in addition to existing programs.



WHAT IF...

Alternative technologies and innovative regulatory approaches allowed for “right-sized” sanitation solutions for communities?



THEN...

Communities could access effective, affordable, and appropriate sanitation services where centralized wastewater systems are infeasible.



- **Regulatory flexibility** by agencies is vital in helping underserved communities
- Best practices and regulatory strategies can be **shared and adopted**
- Alternative and innovative solutions should be **identified and prioritized** by the regulatory community



WHAT IF...

Programs directly engaged and listened to impacted communities, and assisted individuals with applying to assistance programs?

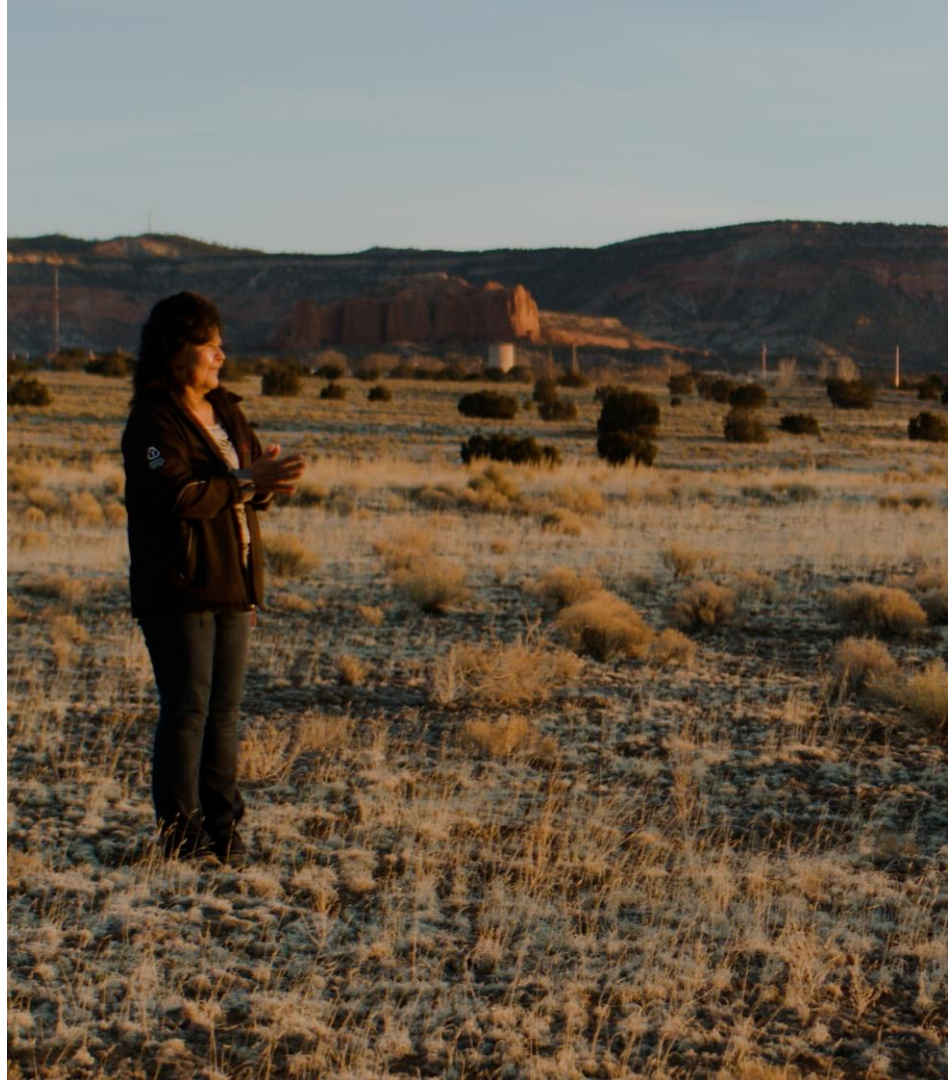


THEN...

Sanitation interventions could be holistic, sustainable, and create cascading benefits.



- Provide **concierge-like service** to help under-resourced communities.
- Develop **long-term relationships** with impacted communities.
- Take **community-identified needs** into consideration.
- Adopt **international WASH BMPs** to support community outreach programs



RECENT SUCCESSES

Decentralized Wastewater Innovation Cohort



Released a Federal Agency Policy Brief:
Reforming National and State Policies to Reduce Inequity of Safely Managed Sanitation in the United States.



Co-hosted a Federal Agency Roundtable to share the recommendations of the Cohort and discuss the opportunities to address current and future policy gaps.



Assisted the USEPA and USDA in developing a “concierge-style” technical assistance program. On Tuesday, August 2nd, 2022 the USEPA and USDA announced a new, joint effort called *Closing America’s Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative*.

Special Thanks

Technical Advisory Board

- **National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association**
- **International Association of Plumbers and Mechanical Officials**
- **Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Testing Center**
- **Rural Community Assistance Partnership**
- **National Rural Water Association**
- **Global Communities**
- **Rogue Water**
- **Swiftwater Solutions**

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