



# Friends of Maha'ulepu

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Groups Petition State to Protect Kauai's Most Polluted Stream

*Waiopili Stream average pollution levels 275 times higher than State and Federal bacteria limits*

**Kaua'i, HI—May 8, 2015**—Friends of Maha'ulepu and Surfrider Foundation Kauai Chapter have jointly filed a Petition with the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) asking it to list Waiopili Stream in the Maha'ulepu Valley as an Impaired Water of the State. The petition also seeks to have appropriate signs posted immediately to warn the public of the health risks. The Surfrider Foundation has engaged in regular water quality testing in partnership with DOH. Over the past year, the Waiopili Stream test results have shown average pollution levels 275 times higher than the bacteria limits set by both the State and Federal government.

Test results from the nearby ocean beach waters have also registered extensive contamination with pollution levels at nearly 17 times greater than State limits after the stream waters have been mixed with sea water.

"Surfrider is concerned about each of the four streams on Kaua'i – Waiopili, Waikomo, Hanamaulu and Nawiliwili – that are polluted nearly 100% of the time," said Carl Berg, Ph.D., chair of the Kauai Chapter of Surfrider Foundation. "We chose to join Friends of Maha'ulepu with a petition to list and post warning signs at the Waiopili Stream because it is the *most* polluted stream on Kauai and poses a serious threat to human health. We do believe that the DOH should also place warning signs at each of the other three streams on Kauai with chronically high bacteria counts."

Private and public land owners Grove Farm and the County of Kauai have been informed of the excessive bacterial contamination of the waters on their properties. To date, they have failed to post warning signs. This despite the fact that residents and visitors – regardless of the source of the waste – currently swim in waters contaminated with fecal wastes.

"We need to protect our waters from extreme pollution and the public has a right to know of the danger," says president of Friends of Maha'ulepu, Bridget Hammerquist, who was born in Hawaii and raised with her family at Kaumakani. "Grove Farm and the County of Kauai know there is a serious public health risk and that something has to be done to clean it up. It is only *pono* to warn people of the contamination by posting signs and listing the streams, as has been done on the Hanalei River."

The full text of the petition is available upon request.

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**Friends of Maha'ulepu** is a group of concerned citizens (local and beyond) who are contributing their time and talents to protect the natural beauty of Kauai's pristine Maha'ulepu Valley. For more about Friends of Maha'ulepu, please go to [www.friendsofmahaulepu.org](http://www.friendsofmahaulepu.org).

**Surfrider Foundation** is a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our world's oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the Surfrider Foundation now maintains more than 250,000 supporters, activists and members worldwide. For more on the Surfrider Foundation Kauai Chapter go to <https://kauai.surfrider.org>.