



Undersea Electrical Transmission Cable Policy

This policy statement is scheduled to be reconsidered at the 2010 second quarter meeting of the Executive Committee.

Policy Statement

It shall be the position of Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, to oppose the undersea electrical transmission cable project which is planned to transmit 500 megawatts of geothermal generated electricity from Hawai'i to O'ahu.

Supporting Statements

1. The geothermal well-fields for the cable project are upwind of the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and Kahauale'a Natural Area Reserve. Large scale industrialization would have adverse impacts, such as noise, air and light pollution, on park wilderness values.
2. Planned geothermal well-fields for the cable project could have adverse impacts on the former Puna Forest Reserve and Wao Kele o Puna Natural Area Reserve, both of which have high natural value and are important for biodiversity.
3. The geologic and volcanic hazards in the vicinity of the cable routes and power plant areas are too prevalent to risk such a large portion of the electrical generating capacity for the State.
4. The at-sea cable is vulnerable and is subject to disruption and damage by undersea landslides, rough sea bottom conditions strong currents and the crushing pressures of 'Alenuihaha Channel.
5. The proposed electrical transmission land route on Maui is adjacent to the Cape Kinau Natural Reserve Area and could have adverse environmental impacts. Nearshore impacts could adversely affect the reefs and Class AA waters at the landing sites on O'ahu. On Hawai'i, Maui and O'ahu, the overland transmission routes have the potential to create visual impacts, electro-magnetic interference (250 kv) and land use conflicts along the entire corridor.

6. A long term commitment to a geothermal/cable form of energy development would be taking away resources and opportunities for energy conservation and less environmentally damaging alternative energy options.

7. The first action taken by State government should be to implement full scale energy conservation on O'ahu. Large scale application of solar water heating, efficient appliance/tool retrofitting, efficient architectural design and co-generation should be implemented prior to any cable project.

This Undersea Electrical Transmission Cable Position Statement was approved by the Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter Executive Committee at its quarterly meetings held February 5-7, 1988.