

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 15, 2012

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK FOR HONOLULU RAIL PROJECT AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

HART CEO and executive director Dan Grabauskas announced at today's HART board of directors meeting that archaeological inventory survey work for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project continues ahead of schedule, and that all the fieldwork is now slated for completion in early December.

As of Wednesday, HART had 27 trenches left to excavate as part of the archaeological work, having completed 205 of 232 trenches in the city center portion of the rail route between Middle Street in Kalihi and Ala Moana Center. Another 166 archaeological trenches were completed earlier along the route between East Kapolei and Middle Street.

"In addition to completing the archaeological work ahead of schedule, our cultural monitoring program is also going well. The monitors, who include descendants with ties to the area, are watching over all of the trenching work to ensure it is being done correctly," Grabauskas said.

As for the recent discoveries of iwi kupuna during the archaeological survey work, Grabauskas said HART "continues to work closely with the State Historic Preservation Division, the Oahu Island Burial Council and other stakeholders to ensure that iwi kupuna are treated with sensitivity and great respect."

To date, remains have been found at five sites, all in the City Center section. In anticipation of potentially finding iwi in the Honolulu area, HART has set up a protocol for the treatment of such finds in coordination with SHPD, OIBC and other stakeholders.

When the fieldwork is completed, an extensive archaeological inventory survey report will be drafted and submitted to the State Historic Preservation Division for its approval.

"This archaeological survey is being done years in advance and provides ample time to make any necessary design changes that may be needed," Grabauskas said.

Media Contact: Scott Ishikawa cell: (808) 227-2350, office (808) 768-6172.