

DBEDT Contracts with UH to Survey Ocean Floor for Interisland Electrical Transmission Cable

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HONOLULU—The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) has contracted with the University of Hawai'i School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology (SOEST) to conduct an intensive survey of the ocean floor between the islands to determine the best possible routes for an interisland electrical transmission cable.

"This cable is one of the major components of the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative," said Ted Peck, the State's energy program administrator. "It entails the installation of a high voltage interisland cable system to integrate the electrical systems of the islands of O'ahu, Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i. This is the first step in the development process that will help make this project 'shovel ready' so that it will qualify for Federal stimulus funds."

The interisland cable will be at least 30 miles in length with a rating of at least 400 megawatts that would be capable of integrating the proposed 200 megawatt wind farm on Lana'i and the 200 megawatt wind farm on Moloka'i with the electric transmission systems on O'ahu, Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i.

The immediate objective of the contracted surveys is to characterize the seafloor in order to recommend preferred routes to lay the cables.

Data collected from this survey will become part of the environmental impact statement for the interisland cable.

The State received approval from the U.S. Department of Energy to use Federal Petroleum Violation Escrow funds to cover the cost of the \$1.5 million survey. The Department of Energy partnered with the State of Hawai'i in January 2008 to develop the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative, which has a goal of having 70 percent of Hawai'i's energy come from clean sources by 2030.

"We wanted to get these funds to Hawai'i and circulating in the local economy as quickly as possible," Peck said. "DBEDT selected the UH School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology as the organization with the most local ocean floor data and the necessary equipment on hand to execute the project quickly and effectively."

The contract was executed using an intergovernmental professional services contract.

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