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Agenda Item: C. 2. Section 2.2 Safe Livable Communities for All

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Testimony for December 14, 2022 CPAC Meeting

Another major problem I forgot to mention is the **degradation of near shore ocean water along the south Maui coast from Maalaea to Big Beach**. The approximate 60,000 - 70,000 Axis deer living above the community are a significant contributor of dirt, debris and excrement washing into the ocean.

As one who used to swim regularly at Wailea beach the past 18 years, I no longer do so as a result of what is now turbid, debris-filled water, sometimes brownish in color and accompanied by floating debris fields. This new development poses a *significant threat* to the health of those who enjoy our beaches, to the quality of the environmental for aquatic life and will undoubtedly impact south Maui's core economic engine: tourism.

The December 5-6, 2021, Kona storm that caused massive amounts of mud and deer excrement to wash into our shores should not be seen as a one-off event given the what the deer have done to upcountry soil and flora. Every material rainstorm hereafter is destined to produce more ocean bound waste and further the decline of our shores. The deer population is unmanaged, increasing exponentially from numbers assessed 10 years ago into the massive herd recorded last year. No effective measures are in place to mitigate the threat. No clear ownership for results exists in the executive branch. No plan avowed plan to rectify the situation is in place. No visibility into the workings of a taskforce (one of a succession) formed last year to address the herd exists. The likely outcome is therefore questionable at best.

Given this, I strongly believe this situation needs to be mentioned in the section calling for illumination of major problems.

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