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## Local News

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Posted on: Saturday, January 6, 2007

### Kuhio Beach wider and better

 Video: [Kuhio Beach replenishment nears completion](#)By [Andy Yamaguchi](#)  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Waikiki residents Jim and Rosemary Jordan sat at their regular spot next to the 'ewa lifeguard tower at Kuhio Beach yesterday, watching surfers at the Queen's and Canoes breaks.

"Water used to come up to the board," Jim Jordan said, pointing to the rescue surfboard parked nearby. "Now the beach is twice as wide."

State officials yesterday completed a monthlong demonstration project to broaden Kuhio Beach, pumping back sand that wave action had carried to sea.

The \$475,000 project restored an estimated 9,500 cubic yards of sand to Kuhio Beach, along about one-third of a mile of shoreline between the Duke Kahanamoku statue and the Kapahulu groin. Some parts



Daniel Leger of contractor American Marine uses an earth loader to level a portion of Kuhio Beach, looking diamondhead and showing the last of the recovered sand piled at left. The piled sand was spread out yesterday near the Duke Kahanamoku statue.

BRUCE ASATO | The Honolulu Advertiser

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of the beach are now as much as 40 feet wider, said Dolan Eversole, a University of Hawai'i coastal geologist involved in the project.

And how long will that last?

"Three to five years, perhaps," said Peter Young, chairman of the state Department of Land and Natural Resources, which headed the project.

Young and others said such beach replenishment projects are never permanent fixes, but should be considered periodic maintenance.

"The point is you can't do it once and walk away," UH coastal geologist Charles "Chip" Fletcher said. "You need to commit to it and regularly maintain our beaches."

The particular value of this job, Young said, was to test the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of restoring a beach by pumping sand from offshore deposits, instead of the old way of trucking in sand from a remote site.

"We consider it a success," Young said. "This is brand new for us. What we've shown is the ability to bring a beach back rather than truck sand in from somewhere else."

Eversole said this method cost half as much as trucking in sand.

The next step, Young said, is to look at using this beach-replenishment method elsewhere, such as other stretches of Waikiki and at Ka'anapali on Maui. Young said he would encourage owners of beachfront property to consider it, saying some condominiums already do their own beach restoration.

UH scientists have estimated that 25 percent of the sandy beach on O'ahu and Maui has been lost in the past 50 years. At an iconic spot such as Waikiki, Hawai'i's most famous beach and the center of its tourism industry, "a project like this is an excellent example of the importance of ongoing beach maintenance," said Rick Egged, president of the Waikiki Improvement Association.

"These beaches were pretty much denuded of sand," Egged said. "There's at least twice as much sand now."

Beginning Dec. 4, sand was pumped from a sand bank about 2,000 feet offshore that a UH survey identified as having plentiful, clean sand. Some surfers initially were apprehensive that the work could affect wave conditions, but "there's been absolutely no change in the surf break," said city Ocean Safety Lt. R.J. Sloane, who works the area.

Zach Smith, a 16-year-old surfer from Kapahulu, is a regular at Queen's and said he's noticed a slight change for the better. "It breaks a little farther out now, maybe 20 yards," he said. "It's still good, barrels a little more if there's a south swell."

On the beach, Jim Jordan said he noticed that the project made the protected swimming area behind the Kuhio Beach breakwater shallower. Swimmers who once had chest-deep water were in thigh-high water yesterday.

"If you're in the tourism business and you want more beach, it's good," said Jordan, a retired commodities trader who moved to Waikiki 10 years ago. "If you want to swim, not so good. There's good and bad to everything."

"It's a baby pool now," Rosemary Jordan said.

"Great beach. Still a great beach," her husband said.

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