

## 2023 ACO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

JULY 2025

### **1. Q: So, the Red Hill Shaft is not always on? How often is it pumping?**

A. In the spring of 2024, the Navy reduced the pumping rate of the Red Hill Shaft from to an approximate average of 1.8 million gallons per day (MGD). This change was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Hawaii Department of Health following a successful flow optimization study that demonstrated the lower pumping rate will continue to produce an acceptable groundwater capture zone in the Red Hill Shaft. The current pumping rate is achieved through operating the pump several days each week.

### **2. Q: What protects the workers when entering the tanks?**

A. The workers are protected by **confined space entry procedures** and **lifelines for fall protection**, as highlighted by Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSF) and contractor safety programs. These safety measures ensure that when entering tanks—considered confined spaces—workers are safeguarded from hazardous conditions and potential falls. Confined space entry protocols include monitoring air quality, ensuring proper ventilation, and using safety equipment, while lifelines provide critical fall arrest or retrieval capability in case of an emergency. We also ensure all personnel working in the tanks or elsewhere in the facility follow all OSHA standards for personal protective equipment and other precautions as appropriate for the work being performed.

### **3. Q: What is the status of the groundwater flow model?**

A. NCTF-RH submitted a comprehensive groundwater flow model update to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) in September 2024. This Updated Groundwater Flow Model report and additional information is available to the public on the recently established Groundwater Model webpage located on the Navy's Safewaters website. The Navy's groundwater flow model is a living document that will continue to be updated as more data and information becomes available. NCTF-RH continues to work closely with the EPA and DOH to identify areas to further improve the groundwater model and has plans to incorporate data from the University of Hawaii's independent groundwater flow model once published, into another comprehensive flow model update, scheduled to be submitted by 2027.