

2026 DEPARTMENT OF WAR ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY – INDIVIDUAL
MR. PATRICK D. CRILE

INTRODUCTION

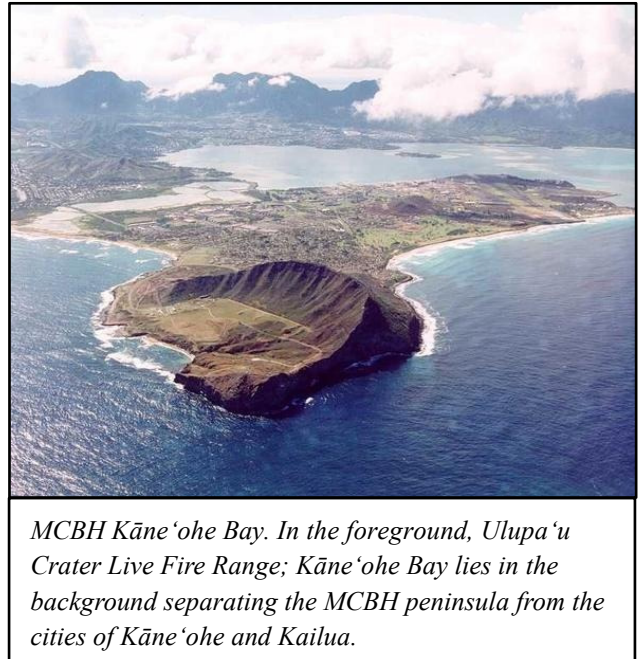
Marine Corps Base Hawai‘i (MCBH), established in 1994, is a critical power projection platform in the Indo-Pacific. The installation consists of the 2,951-acre Mōkapu Peninsula (MCBH Kāne‘ohe Bay); the 220-acre Camp H. M. Smith; 137-acre Pu‘uloa Range Training Facility (PRTF); the 27-acre Pearl City Warehouse Annex; the 63-acre Manana Housing Area; the 187-acre Waikane Valley, and the 1,074-acre Marine Corps Training Area-Bellows (MCTAB), all on the Island of O‘ahu. On Moloka‘i, MCBH controls a 12-acre training facility. This diverse landscape is the backdrop for MCBH's vital mission: to sustain combat readiness for its operating forces while providing for the well-being of nearly 18,000 personnel, including service members, their families, and dedicated civilian employees. The base's strategic location, combined with its

unique operational environment of dramatic tropical landscapes and sensitive ecosystems, necessitates a profound commitment to environmental stewardship as a core component of mission success.

The Mōkapu Peninsula, where MCBH Kāne‘ohe Bay is located, is a place of immense cultural and historical significance, rich with archaeological sites and sacred to Native Hawaiians. This context, coupled with the presence of numerous threatened and endangered species and the increasing challenges of climate change, demands a delicate balance between a high operational tempo and the preservation of the natural and cultural resources entrusted to the installation’s care. MCBH has embraced this responsibility by developing a forward-thinking, integrated approach to environmental management that recognizes the deep, intrinsic connection between the health of the environment, community partnerships, and the sustainment of the military mission.

BACKGROUND

Mr. Patrick Crile joined the Marine Corps Base Hawai‘i Environmental Compliance and Protection Division (ECPD) in 2022 as the Lead Environmental Engineer, bringing with him nearly 20 years of prior experience and a technical foundation that includes a B.S. in Geology and an M.S. in Environmental Science and Engineering. He arrived during a period of significant organizational change and immediately proved to be a mission-essential and stabilizing force. With the arrival of a new ECPD Director and near simultaneous departure of the Deputy Director in 2025, Mr. Crile selflessly volunteered himself to assume responsibilities normally assigned to a higher-graded supervisory position that was perpetually left vacant due to staffing shortages. His ability to perform these critical tasks



resulted in him serving as the Division’s acting Compliance Branch Chief for over two years. Serving in this dual-hatted role placed him at the nexus of both high-level operational planning and day-to-day tactical execution. The expertise he brought to the ECPD team was instrumental to the incoming Director, providing critical continuity that was necessary to ensure unavoidable impacts caused by leadership turnover resulted in the least possible impacts to ECPD’s ability to support MCBH’s mission.



Mr. Patrick Crile, Lead Environmental Engineer for MCBH ECPD, receives a Certificate of Commendation from Commanding Officer Col. Jeremy Beaven.

Confronted with a complex web of legacy systems operating under increasing stress, an increasingly demanding regulatory landscape in Hawai‘i, and a compliance program in need of modernization, Mr. Crile drew upon his extensive experience to conceptualize and champion a transformational solution: the “One Water” Program. This was his innovative vision for strategic program consolidation. He personally spearheaded the overhaul of MCBH’s clean water compliance by conceiving and implementing this holistic initiative, which integrates drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and beach water quality into a single, cohesive system. Drawing inspiration from the Hawaiian concept of *ahupua‘a*, his strategy acknowledges water

(*wai*) as an interconnected life force, resulting in a more resilient, efficient, and culturally aligned environmental posture for the base. From the outset, Mr. Crile recognized that regulatory buy-in was paramount to the success of this new paradigm. He proactively initiated a series of introductory and strategic discussions with key personnel at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Hawai‘i Department of Health (HDOH), building a powerful coalition around a shared vision for environmental excellence.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The sustainment of MCBH’s strong war-fighting posture through masterful environmental management is a paramount accomplishment driven in part by the vision and relentless dedication of Mr. Patrick Crile. His ability to translate complex challenges into mission-enabling successes is evident across every facet of his work, from strategic program development to hands-on community engagement.

“One Water” Program Development

The “One Water” Program is the signature achievement of Mr. Crile’s tenure at MCBH. This was his innovative vision for strategic program consolidation, personally conceived and implemented to overhaul the installation’s entire clean water compliance posture. He transformed a series of fragmented and reactive programs into a single, cohesive, and proactive system. By fostering a culture of collaboration among the different water program teams, he created a synergy that has allowed the base to not only meet but exceed complex requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act.

The impetus for this integrated program arose from the necessity of operating within one of the world’s most sensitive ecological regions. The Hawaiian Islands are home to a quarter of all endangered species

in the United States, and MCBH is bordered by living coral reefs, threatened green sea turtles, the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, and numerous threatened and endangered bird species. Faced with these challenges, along with heightened regulatory scrutiny and the community's deep cultural connection to the land and water, MCBH recognized that a conventional, siloed approach to water management was insufficient. A new strategy was needed to protect the base's water resources comprehensively, ensuring the sustainability of its mission for future generations.



Mr. Patrick Crile (center) congratulates U.S. Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 24, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing for being the first recipients of MCBH's Environmental Unit of the Quarter award for their commitment to environmental stewardship after organizing nine cleanup events.

The One Water Program was therefore developed to manage these systems collectively, striving to protect *wai* as a living entity. This framework goes beyond mere regulatory compliance to proactively safeguard the drinking water that sustains base personnel, mitigate stormwater runoff to prevent pollution of the surrounding ocean and streams, and diligently treat wastewater to preserve the delicate marine ecosystem. By managing the entire water cycle with a unified vision, the program ensures that MCBH can continue its critical training mission while honoring its role as a responsible steward of Hawai'i's precious resources.

The development of the One Water Program was also a direct response to the increasing pressures of an aging infrastructure and the growing impacts of climate change. MCBH's water and wastewater systems, some of which date back several decades, required a more integrated and strategic approach to maintenance and modernization. The One Water framework provided a mechanism for prioritizing investments, optimizing resource allocation, and building greater resilience into critical infrastructure.

Furthermore, the program was conceived as a means through which MCBH could build and strengthen relationships with regulatory agencies and the local community. By adopting a management philosophy that resonated with the cultural values of Hawai'i, MCBH was able to foster a more collaborative and trusting relationship with its partners. This has been particularly important in the wake of the Red Hill fuel storage facility incident, which increased public and regulatory scrutiny of all military operations throughout the state. The One Water Program has allowed MCBH to demonstrate its unwavering

commitment to environmental protection and to position itself as a leader in sustainable military installation management.

Wastewater Program

Mr. Crile’s leadership was pivotal in turning a significant regulatory challenge in the Wastewater Program into a model of High-Visibility Regulatory Success. He collaborated with base leadership to successfully settle outstanding Notices of Violation and Orders with the HDOH. The centerpiece of this approach is the new, state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility, a \$300M+ military construction project. Mr. Crile has been key throughout the design process and obtaining necessary regulatory approvals. As the key subject matter expert, he personally represented MCBH at multiple high-profile neighborhood board meetings to present the findings of the project's Environmental Assessment. His expertise was instrumental in securing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), clearing the critical regulatory hurdle. This far-reaching project will reduce potable water consumption by 500,000 gallons per day and significantly reduce, while simultaneously improving the quality of the effluent discharge into Kailua Bay.

Drinking Water Program

Under Mr. Crile’s oversight, the MCBH Drinking Water Program has become a cornerstone of the One Water initiative. He directed the implementation of a comprehensive asset management plan to proactively manage the risks of aging infrastructure, showcasing his long-range planning skills by prioritizing critical repairs and ensuring the long-term reliability of the water distribution system. He championed a policy of radical transparency, working diligently to keep the community informed about water quality and making all technical data publicly available to foster a culture of trust.

Stormwater Program



Mr. Patrick Crile (right), ECPD Lead Environmental Engineer, and a volunteer apply a “No Dumping, Drains to Ocean” marker over a storm drain during Operation Clean Water ‘Ohana, MCBH.

Mr. Crile assisted in transforming the MCBH Stormwater Program from a compliance liability into a nationally recognized leader in sustainability. Following a 2020 EPA audit, he used the resulting Federal Facilities Compliance Agreement (FFCA) as a blueprint to completely revamp the program. He worked with additional ECPD engineers and scientists to implement robust construction oversight, evaluating

over 168 projects and conducting 157 inspections in two years. Under his guidance, the base now diverts an estimated 6.4 million gallons of polluted runoff annually. His proactive strategy proved its validity in November 2023 when a pre-deployed containment boom was instrumental in preventing a potential environmental disaster. MCBH's stormwater program is now firmly established as a leading example of responsible, proactive stormwater management in Hawai'i, and as a result, Mr. Crile is regularly invited to present MCBH as a case study in success at regional conferences.

Beach Water Quality Program

Mr. Crile's One Water framework provides a critical protective shield for personnel through the Beach Water Quality Program. He ensured a proactive and vigilant stance was adopted to monitor off-base threats, such as regional Brown Water Advisories or spills from the adjacent municipal treatment plant. Under his leadership, the program's effectiveness hinges on its close collaboration with the HDOH Clean Water Branch and a robust public notification system he helped establish. Most importantly, Mr. Crile instituted clear and decisive protocols for beach closures during off-base pollution events, prioritizing the health of warfighters above all else.



Ms. Katy Smith (left), ECPD environmental engineer, and Mr. Patrick Crile, ECPD Lead Environmental Engineer, collect soil samples from the shoreline of the Pu'uloa Range Training Facility, MCBH.

Pu'uloa Range Soil Investigation

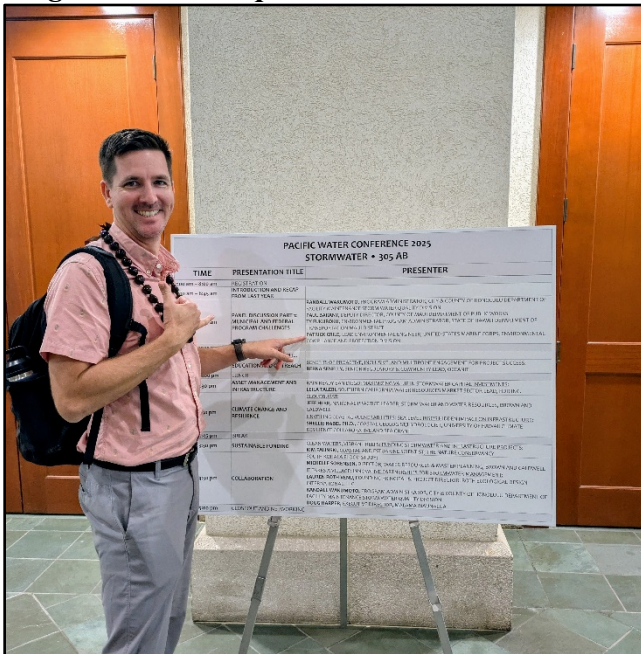
A sterling example of Mr. Crile's leadership is his ownership of the lead sampling initiative at PRTF. This high-visibility initiative, carrying Indo-Pacific Command- and Assistant Secretary of the Navy-level interest, fell outside his direct portfolio but was a challenge he willingly assumed under his duties as ECPD's acting Compliance Branch Chief. Understanding the immense public and regulatory sensitivity surrounding the issue, Mr. Crile personally took charge of developing a path forward. He worked closely and nurtured a positive relationship with HDOH, engaging in several iterations of technical writing and conferencing to create a Sampling and Analysis Plan that would satisfy all parties. His expert negotiation and technical credibility resulted in a testing plan that was formally approved by HDOH, a significant achievement and a major community relations win in the face of intense scrutiny from local groups. In 2025, Mr. Crile saw the project through to completion, authoring the final Site Investigation Report, meeting with DOH to discuss the findings, and working with the Navy and Marine

Corps Force Health Protection Command to develop a site risk assessment. Capping off this transparent process, he helped organize and participated in a community open house to present the findings directly to the public.

Regulatory Partnerships

Mr. Crile’s most profound impact has been his complete transformation of the installation’s relationship with its regulators. He serves as the key command interface, directly managing MCBH’s relationships with the EPA and HDOH. He is also a key environmental point of contact for both Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Command. He masterfully uses his position to move beyond a traditional, check-the-box compliance model and foster a genuine partnership built on mutual trust, technical respect, and open communication. He initiated regular, recurring meetings with regulatory counterparts, creating a forum for proactive problem-solving rather than reactive crisis management. This open channel of communication allows for early identification of potential compliance issues and collaborative development of solutions. By fostering this environment of trust, Mr. Crile has provided the installation with invaluable flexibility, enabling smoother navigation of complex permitting processes and allowing MCBH to adapt to evolving mission requirements without regulatory friction. His superb attitude, resiliency, and professionalism make win-win scenarios a frequent occurrence. As stated by the EPA’s lead enforcement officer for the FFCA, Andrew Zellinger, *"MCBH has made significant strides in improving its stormwater management program through collaboration with the U.S. EPA and by adhering to the FFCA. This commitment to environmental sustainability ensures the protection of our valuable natural resources and the well-being of our community."*

Program Leadership



Mr. Patrick Crile represents MCBH at the 2025 Annual Pacific Water Conference, presenting successes and challenges of the installations Stormwater Management Program.

Mr. Crile’s leadership extends across the full spectrum of environmental compliance. As a mission-essential stabilizing force, his willingness to serve as the acting Compliance Branch Chief for over two

years demonstrates his unwavering commitment to mission success. He expertly manages a diverse portfolio of core programs beyond the One Water initiative, serving as the subject matter expert for Solid Waste, the Qualified Recycling Program, and the Installation Restoration Program. In these roles, he oversees substantial budgets and provides the technical oversight necessary for long-range planning. He weighs in expertly on command courses of action that help manage public relations and mitigate risk of permit violations. Furthermore, Mr. Crile provides direct, high-level support to installation command by drafting formal correspondence for the Commanding Officer to state and federal regulators, a function that is paramount to sustaining mission readiness and articulating the command's commitment to environmental excellence. His initiative to step up and provide stability during significant leadership vacancies showcases his strategic approach to problem-solving and his readiness for greater responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the success of the One Water Program is a powerful demonstration that mission readiness and environmental excellence are mutually reinforcing, a principle brought to life by the singular vision and leadership of Mr. Patrick Crile. Through his culturally-informed, holistic management approach, he personally turned the significant challenges of operating in a sensitive ecosystem with aging infrastructure into a story of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering compliance. His initiative to step up as a mission-essential stabilizing force during significant leadership vacancies showcases his strategic approach to problem-solving and his readiness for greater responsibilities.

Mr. Crile's work in building authentic, trust-based relationships with state and federal regulators has created a climate of cooperation that directly benefits the warfighter. He has secured the stability and flexibility MCBH needs to focus on its core mission without fear of regulatory disruption. His leadership serves as a model for the Department of War, proving that a deep, personal commitment to stewardship is a strategic imperative that sustains the mission, protects our personnel, and honors our relationship with the lands we are sworn to defend.



This logo for the MCBH "One Water" Program visually merges the commitment to Marine Corps Mission Readiness with the profound traditional Hawaiian value for wai (water). It embodies the program's holistic approach and guiding principle: "From Mauka (Mountain) to Makai (Ocean), if we each do a little, we all can do a lot."