

Restoring the Beauty

Across the street from my house lived an elderly lady, and she didn't come out very often. It was the perfect spot to dump a car. Next thing I know there is an old truck parked right in front of her house. It was ugly and rusted over, and it took a long time for the tow company to pick it up. As we were driving around the island one day, it dawned on me that there are abandoned vehicles almost everywhere, and I thought to myself, "Why do people abandon their cars, and why don't the cars get towed away?"

The land is terribly littered with junky, old, abandoned vehicles. People's cars get old, and broken down so they just leave them on the side of the road or in a parking lot. Cars on the side of the road can be very dangerous. They could catch fire, or someone could crash into them. Also, an abandoned car has the potential to cause groundwater pollution. According to Hawaii Groundwater & Geothermal Resources Center, "Groundwater provides 99% of Hawaii's domestic water." The fluids from the vehicles seep into the groundwater. It is dangerous to drink polluted groundwater, so the vehicles must be removed as soon as possible. According to a police officer that my family knows, a third problem with abandoned cars is "the broken window theory" in which the disorderly sight of abandoned cars leads to more serious crimes.

City and state officials know about this issue, but they have yet to find a complete solution. Hawaii News Now did a report that describes why these vehicles aren't being removed. There is no more room for these cars, so tow companies that are called to pick up the abandoned vehicles have to put them in storage facilities, and that costs money. Unfortunately, the abandonment of vehicles is only increasing, so efforts by state and local agencies are limited.

I can only imagine what the islands would look like and the effects this problem would pose to the land in fifty years if we don't come up with a lasting solution. The roads would be

riddled with junky, rusty, busted up vehicles, our drinking water would be polluted, and the number of crimes would elevate. As the abandonment of vehicles increases and the space availability decreases over time, the effects of this problem will multiply.

I believe I have a solution to fix this problem that will also help resolve another local problem--declining reefs. It seems we all agree the reefs are dying in many places around the islands. My proposal is to take the abandoned vehicles that are on the side of the road and create an artificial reef. We should begin by recycling any useful parts. Then, to protect the marine life, we should sandblast all the paint off and drain all the oil and fuel from the car. Finally, take it out to sea. Coral will then start to grow on the vehicles, and soon we will have created an artificial reef. It solves the abandoned vehicle problem because we will start having fewer cars on the side of the road, and we'll have a beautiful, healthy reef. The sooner we get started the sooner we can **restore the beauty**.

Mr. Ching seemed to have a heart for the local people, and I believe he would be pleased with efforts to make the life for the local people cleaner and healthier.