
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Farmers are required to have an approved
2 conservation plan in order to access federal farm bill funds and
3 to be in compliance with local grading/grubbing ordinances.
4 However, the number of people qualified to write conservation
5 plans in Hawaii is not sufficient to meet the demand. This can
6 leave many Hawaii farmers, who may have relatively small
7 operations as compared to the mainland, waiting two to four
8 years to receive a conservation plan. Without an approved
9 conservation plan, farmers are technically out of compliance
10 with local regulations, leaving them subject to significant
11 penalties if those rules are enforced.

12 Data from the 2013-2014 fiscal year indicates that just one
13 hundred seventy new conservation plans were developed in Hawaii,
14 accounting for roughly 2.5 per cent of the seven thousand farms
15 operating in the State. Based on a five-year effective period,
16 just 12.5 per cent of the State's farms have a current
17 conservation plan. Furthermore, larger landowners are more
18 likely to have a conservation plan; the 12.5 per cent of farms



1 with conservation plans control approximately forty per cent of
2 agricultural acres in Hawaii.

3 The current conservation plan application system is
4 available only to United States Department of Agriculture
5 Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employees and
6 individuals working from local NRCS offices. The national NRCS
7 policy prioritizes applications from farms seeking federal farm
8 bill funding. A limited number of farmers, roughly one hundred
9 forty, actively seek federal funding in any given year,
10 resulting in ninety-eight per cent of Hawaii farms with limited
11 planning support unable to obtain a conservation plan in a
12 timely manner.

13 The development of an online interface for farmers and
14 other agricultural professionals to input much of the data for a
15 conservation plan will save time and money for all parties
16 involved. The State of Idaho developed a similar online program
17 for conservation plans called the Idaho One Plan.

18 The legislature finds that Hawaii could benefit from a
19 similar program, to be called the "Hawaii one program".

20 If such a program is implemented, the wait time to process
21 a conservation plan would be reduced substantially. A full and



1 comprehensive conservation plan, which currently requires
2 approximately fifty hours of staff time to analyze, could be
3 built modularly, thereby giving basic plans to those that need
4 it or more comprehensive plans to other farms that require it.
5 If the Hawaii one program is successful in setting up and
6 rolling out the basic foundational pieces, focused primarily on
7 soil erosion measures, the amount of technical staff time needed
8 to process the application can be reduced to an estimated
9 fifteen hours. Furthermore, through the creation of a focused
10 and streamlined Hawaii one program conservation plan application
11 system, farmers should be more likely to participate in
12 obtaining a conservation plan. The Hawaii one program will help
13 the roughly 87.5 per cent of farmers, farming sixty per cent of
14 agricultural land, who do not have a conservation plan to obtain
15 one.

16 The Hawaii one program would be based on existing standards
17 and practices for soil conservation. The goal for the Hawaii
18 one program is to build the software modularly with the
19 potential to add topics like wildlife and pesticide management
20 in the future.



1 Previously, there was progress between the department of
2 agriculture and department of land and natural resources to
3 develop an online conservation application; however, sufficient
4 access to server space became an issue, and the subsequent
5 recession of 2008 created funding cuts for both departments.
6 The department of agriculture now has the capacity to house a
7 host server, if required. Other non-governmental organizations
8 have garnered financial and in-kind support from local partners,
9 which could be used to complete the fundraising needed to
10 develop and deliver the Hawaii one plan.

11 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 12 (1) Provide for the establishment and encouragement of the
13 Hawaii one plan as a primary computer-based
14 conservation planning process for all natural resource
15 concerns to be accomplished through a steering
16 committee containing private and state representation
17 and inviting federal representation;
- 18 (2) Deem the information provided by those using the
19 Hawaii one plan to be trade secrets, production
20 records, or other proprietary information and keep the



1 information confidential and exempt from disclosure;

2 and

3 (3) Appropriate funds for the implementation and operation
4 of the Hawaii one plan program to provide conservation
5 plans online.

6 SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by
7 adding a new chapter to title 11 to be appropriately designated
8 and to read as follows:

9 "CHAPTER

10 HAWAII ONE PLAN

11 § -1 Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the
12 context requires otherwise:

13 "Department" means the department of agriculture.

14 "Hawaii one plan" means a primary computer-based soil and
15 water conservation plan application system for farmers and other
16 agricultural professionals.

17 "Steering committee" means the Hawaii one plan steering
18 committee.

19 § -2 Hawaii one plan steering committee; established.

20 (a) There is established the Hawaii one plan steering committee
21 within the department for administrative purposes. The purpose



1 of the steering committee shall be to assist with the design of
2 the Hawaii one plan, identify the appropriate location to host
3 the Hawaii one plan's server, and implement the Hawaii one plan.

4 (b) The steering committee shall:

5 (1) Consist of the following members:

6 (A) The executive director of the Hawaii Association
7 of Conservation Districts or the executive
8 director's designee, who shall serve as chair of
9 the steering committee;

10 (B) The executive director of the Oahu Resource
11 Conservation and Development Council or the
12 executive director's designee;

13 (C) The State chief information officer or the chief
14 information officer's designee; and

15 (D) The chairperson of the board of agriculture or
16 the chairperson's designee; and

17 (2) Invite the following individuals to become members:

18 (A) The president of the Hawaii Farm Bureau
19 Federation or the president's designee;

20 (B) The president of the Hawaii Farmers Union United
21 or the president's designee;



- 1 (C) The managing director of the Ulupono Initiative
- 2 or the managing director's designee;
- 3 (D) The president of the Hawaii Cattleman's Council
- 4 or the president's designee;
- 5 (E) Three representatives of the farming community to
- 6 be chosen by the executive director of the Hawaii
- 7 Association of Conservation Districts; and
- 8 (F) Members of the United States Department of
- 9 Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation
- 10 Service.

11 (c) The steering committee's members shall serve without
12 compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses, including
13 travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

14 (d) In the performance of its duties, the steering
15 committee shall consult with appropriate private, nonprofit,
16 community, and government stakeholders.

17 § -3 **Proprietary information; confidentiality.** The
18 information provided by a user of the Hawaii one plan shall be
19 deemed to be trade secrets, production records, or other
20 proprietary information and shall be confidential and exempt
21 from disclosure pursuant to chapter 92F."



1 SECTION 3. The Hawaii one plan steering committee shall
2 submit a report of the funding status and implementation
3 progress of the Hawaii one plan to the legislature no later than
4 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of
5 2016.

6 The steering committee shall also submit a follow-up report
7 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
8 convening of the regular session of 2017.

9 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 for
12 implementation and operation of the Hawaii one plan program to
13 provide conservation plans online.

14 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
15 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Department of Agriculture; Hawaii One Plan; Conservation Plan;
Steering Committee; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Hawaii one plan steering committee.
Appropriates funds to develop and operate the Hawaii one program
to provide conservation plans online. Effective 7/1/2050.
(SD2)

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