

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2015

RE: S.B. No. 545

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred S.B. No. 545 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO NATURAL RESOURCES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for:

- (1) Watershed management projects;
- (2) Fire, natural disaster, and emergency response equipment; and
- (3) Forest and outdoor recreation improvements.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Oahu Invasive Species Committee; Big Island Invasive Species Committee; Department of Water, Kauai County; Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; The Nature Conservancy; Nu'u Mauka Ranch; Hawai'i Green Growth; Conservation Council for Hawai'i; Princeville Utilities Company, Inc.; Hi'ipaka LLC; Kaupō Ranch; Grove Farm Company; Lihue Land Company; Haleakalā Ranch; Ulupalakua Ranch; McBryde Sugar Company, LLC; The Kauai Watershed Alliance; Leeward Haleakalā Watershed Restoration Partnership; Ben Dyre Family Limited Partnership; Leeward Haleakalā Watershed Restoration Partnership; and fifteen individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from The Society for Hawaii Heritage Animals and Hawaii Hunting Association.



Your Committee finds that forests help to increase resilience to drought conditions and natural disasters. The islands have experienced decades of reduced rainfall, changes in trade wind patterns, and higher temperatures. The quality, quantity, and sustainability of Hawaii's water supply depends upon healthy forested watersheds. Protecting forested watersheds is one of the Department of Land and Natural Resources' top priorities and an ongoing effort. With climate change accelerating a long-term decline in rainfall, forest protection has never been more urgent.

Your Committee further finds that additional resources are necessary for emergency response and preparedness for natural disasters. Events such as flooding, hurricanes, and wildfires are expected to increase in frequency and severity as climate change accelerates.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife is responsible for wildfire preparedness and response as well as assisting federal, state, and county agencies in emergencies and natural disasters. Hawaii's responders need access to new technologies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of detection and response to these types of natural disasters that affect natural environments as well as public safety.

Your Committee further finds that outdoor recreation, including use of trails and beaches, is central to Hawaii's visitor industry and valuable to Hawaii's residents. Statewide improvements are needed to address deteriorating conditions on trails, particularly high-use trails frequented by visitors. Development, particularly in rural areas, can restrict access to public lands for hiking, gathering, and hunting. Infrastructure improvements are necessary to improve access to allow people to connect with Hawaii's natural environment.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 545 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Water and Land,



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LAURA H. THIELEN, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Water and Land**  
**WTL**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 545</b>	Committee Referral: <b>WTL, NAM</b>	Date: <b>02-04-15</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
<b>Members</b>	<b>Aye</b>	<b>Aye (WR)</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Excused</b>
THIELEN, Laura H. (C)	✓			
GALUTERIA, Brickwood (VC)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les	✓			
RIVIERE, Gil				✓
RUDERMAN, Russell E.				✓
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.	✓			
SLOM, Sam				✓
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>3</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original                      Yellow                      Pink                      Goldenrod File with Committee Report    Clerk's Office            Drafting Agency        Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes