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GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND**

**Friday, February 9, 2018
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2198
RELATING TO WATERSHEDS**

House Bill 2198 proposes to establish a watershed task force to define the term “watershed.” **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure and offers the following comments.**

The Department looks forward to partnering with the Legislature and various Federal, public, and private entities to discuss how the actions taken within each watershed can provide benefits for freshwater availability, carbon dioxide absorption, erosion reduction, habitat for rare plants and animals, cultural values, public health, and economic and recreational opportunities. This discussion should be expanded to include ways to further support these beneficial actions, continuing the efforts of the Watershed Protection Board established by Act 152, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2000.

The Forest Reserve System was created by the Territorial Government of Hawai‘i through Act 44 on April 25, 1903. Widespread deforestation due to land use change and introduced grazing animals, resulted in an alarming decrease in water supply. Territorial foresters and agricultural water users recognized the need to protect the mauka forests to provide the necessary water requirements for the lowland agriculture demands and surrounding communities. As recorded in the numerous reports of the early territorial foresters, hundreds of thousands of acres, of both public and privately-owned lands were designated as forest reserve for the purpose of watershed protection. Although the management of the Forest Reserve System under the State of Hawai‘i is now focused on the public lands in the Forest Reserve System, the primary purpose has not changed since its inception, and it currently protects 650,000 acres of Hawai‘i’s publicly-managed watershed.

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Watershed is defined in the *Atlas of Hawaiian Watersheds & Their Aquatic Resources* as a catch-basin or drainage for rain that is funneled into stream beds and terminates at the edge of the ocean. In Hawai‘i this is traditionally understood as an ahupua‘a. The Department recognizes 558 watersheds across the State based on surface water hydrologic units as defined by the Department’s Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM).¹ Section 183-31, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS), defines “watershed” to mean (1) an area from which the domestic water supply of any city, town or community is or may be obtained, or (2) an area where water infiltrates into artesian or other ground-water areas from which the domestic water supply of any city, town or community is or may be obtained.

The importance of planning and collaboration within watersheds is demonstrated by the wide array of Federal, State, County, and private watershed plans with definitions, goals, prioritization, and project descriptions and budgets that range mauka to makai. A sampling of those watershed plans is detailed below. For example, to focus efforts on portions of the watershed most important for water recharge, the Department has delineated “priority watershed areas”² – which receive the most rainfall and are essential for sustaining the State’s fresh water resources, cultural and biological diversity.

In 2000, Act 152 established a seven-member Watershed Protection Board, to develop a watershed protection master plan to provide for the protection, preservation, and enhancement of important watershed areas. This included the goal to establish a dedicated source of funding for watershed protection projects. A phased approach to the development of a Watershed Master Plan was proposed, and due to the importance of native forests in areas of high rainfall, the mauka areas were prioritized, with new watershed partnership areas proposed across the State. Most of these recommended partnerships have since been established, and now there are ten individual partnerships statewide, covering 2 million acres. Indeed, many of the recommendations for watershed protection in the mauka areas are being carried forward through members of the Hawai‘i Association of Watershed Partnerships (HAWP), which was established in 2003 through an agreement between six existing watershed partnerships and the State of Hawai‘i. Due in part to the recommendation of the Watershed Protection Board, Section 247-7, HRS, was amended to authorize a portion of the Conveyance Tax to be paid into the Natural Area Reserve Special Fund to support watershed management activities. Act 84, SLH 2015, replaced these special funds with general funds which transitioned into the base budget of the Department.

The Department recommends establishing a task force to continue the work of the Watershed Protection Board created under Act 152. Specifically, the new watershed task force could continue the follow-up actions identified in the Act 152 legislative report, including securing new sources of funding for watershed protection in Hawai‘i.

1 Surface water hydrologic units were established based on the *Hawaii Stream Assessment (1990)*, *State Definition and Delineation of Watersheds (1994)*, and *Refinement of Hawaii Watershed Delineations (1999)* reports.

2. Priority areas are based on climatic conditions (elevation, moisture zones including fog and rainfall levels), land cover types that provide high recharge and fog capture (native wet and mesic forest), and the threat of conversion that would generally result in less recharge function, soil retention, and an increase in runoff.

As cited in the Act 152 report to the Legislature, “a healthy watershed forest is no accident. It is the result of the investment that was made in good watershed management many decades ago.” The Department continues working toward the realization and implementation of integrated watershed protection and management mauka to makai.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Example Mauka to Makai Watershed Plans and Initiatives in Hawai‘i

Plan	Agency	Link	Notes
Watershed Partnership Management Plans	Hawaii Association of Watershed Partnerships (HAWP)	www.hawp.org	10 Watershed Partnerships across the State. Regional plans developed for individual partnerships available at goo.gl/8wEyNr .
DOFAW Forest Reserve (FR) and Natural Area Reserve (NAR) Management Plans	DLNR-DOFAW	http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/frs/reserves/management-plans/ http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/ecosystems/nars/	Plans for individual Reserves on State lands.
Hawaii Forest Action Plan	DLNR-DOFAW	http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/info/fap/	Statewide plan.
Natural Area Partnership Program Long-Range Management Plans And Forest Stewardship Management Plans	DLNR-DOFAW	http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/ecosystems/napp/ http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/forestry/lap/fsp/	Plans for individual preserves and stewardship areas on private lands.
Hawaii Water Plan	DLNR-CWRM	http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/cwrp/planning/hiwaterplan/	Water Resource Protection Plan http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/cwrp/planning/hiwaterplan/wrpp/ a component of overall Water Plan
Ocean Resource Management Plan (ORMP)	DBEDT-OP	http://planning.hawaii.gov/czm/ocean-resources-management-plan-ormp/	Management Priority #3: Watershed Management
Oahu Water Master Plan	Honolulu Board of Water Supply	https://www.boardofwatersupply.com/water-resources/water-master-plan	Includes hydrological conditions and recommendations for capturing freshwater.
Oahu District Watershed Management Plans	Honolulu Board of Water Supply	http://www.boardofwatersupply.com/water-resources/watershed-management-plan	Provides short-, mid-, and long-range guidance for the sustainable management and use of Oahu's

			surface and ground water resources.
Hawaii Watershed Guidance	DBEDT-PO CZM	http://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/files/2013/05/Hawaiis-Watershed-Guidance.pdf	Intended to help guide the development and implementation of watershed plans that improve water quality.
Nonpoint Source Management Plan (2015-2020)	DOH-CWB Polluted Runoff Control Program	http://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/files/2013/05/2015-Hawaii-NPS-Management-Plan.pdf	Focuses on Total Maximum Daily Loads to reduce non-point source pollution.
DOH 319 Watershed Management Plans	DOH-CWB Polluted Runoff Control Program	http://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/clean-water-branch-home-page/polluted-runoff-control-program/watershed-plans/	Approved plans that meet EPA's nine requirements for watershed plans.
Atlas of Hawaiian Watersheds & Their Aquatic Resources	DLNR-DAR	http://www.hawaiiwatershedatlas.com/	Baseline data on hydrology, land use, and aquatic life.
Initiative	Agency	Link	Notes
Act 152 (SLH 2000)	State	https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9DCLCZINC2XdnhwMTfSk5JZkU	Established Watershed Protection Board. Legislative report identified recommendations and prioritized mauka watershed protection. Established criteria for watershed management plans. Noted importance of dedicated funding source.
State of Hawaii Watershed Initiative	DLNR-DOFAW	https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7FBWuiHeTQOZXNKamRHbDNKYzA/view	Aka: Rain Follows the Forest (2011)
Sustainable Hawaii Initiative (2016)	State	https://governor.hawaii.gov/sustainable-hawaii-initiative/	Protect 30% (253,000 acres) of Hawaii's priority watersheds by 2030. https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/30x30-Watershed-Forests_FINAL.pdf The regional and statewide watershed plans associated with this goal are available at: goo.gl/8wEyNr
Hawaii Fresh Water Initiative (2015)	Hawaii Community Foundation	https://www.hawaiicomunityfoundation.org/strengthening/fresh-water	Goal to create 100 million gallons per day in additional, reliable fresh water capacity for our islands by 2030.

Aloha+ Challenge	Hawaii Green Growth	https://dashboard.hawaii.gov/en/stat/goals/5xhf-begg/4s33-f5iv/wtjm-96jt	Same as SHI. Protect 30% (253,000 acres) of Hawaii's priority watersheds by 2030.
Promise to Pae'āina (P2P) Mālama Honua	Polynesian Voyaging Society		Commitment #2 "Our Island Home" Increase restoration in wao akua (upper watershed) through enhanced acreage of native forest under protection and policy support.
West Maui Ridge 2 Reef Initiative	Multi-agency	https://www.westmauir2r.com/	Multi-agency approach to address adverse impacts to coral reefs in West Maui
Ala Wai Watershed Project	Multi-agency	http://www.alawaichallenge.org/awwp.html https://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/files/2013/05/Integrated_AlaWai_CanalWatershed2a.pdf	Examples of various efforts to design solutions for threats to the Ala Wai.
Resilient Lands and Waters Initiative	NOAA	https://www.habitatblueprint.noaa.gov/landscape-scale-conservation/resilient-lands-waters-initiative/west-hawaii/	Priority watersheds = West Hawai'i, West Maui, and He'eia (O'ahu)
U.S. Coral Reef Task Force – Watershed Partnership Initiative	NOAA	https://www.coralreef.gov/watershed/	Created watershed planning strategy and checklist https://data.nodc.noaa.gov/coris/library/NOAA/CRCP/other/USCRTE/uscrtf_watershed_strategy_final_draft.pdf



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
Friday, February 9, 2018 — 10:00 a.m. — Room 325

Ulupono Initiative Supports HB 2198, Relating to Watersheds

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better management of waste and fresh water. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

Ulupono supports HB 2198, which establishes the watershed task force to define the term “watershed,” because it aligns with our goal of preserving Hawai'i's water resources.

Watersheds play a critical role in capturing and filtering clean potable water. To protect watersheds, resources must be allocated to its protection as well as to other water saving initiatives. By creating a common definition across stakeholders, we can develop better coordination and strategic thinking between the various stakeholders that manage Hawai'i's water resources.

As Hawai'i's water issues become more complex and challenging, we appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that protect our water resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta
General Partner

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

HB-2198

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 9:58:28 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/9/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2198

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 2:36:45 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/9/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Isaac Moon		Oppose	No

Comments: