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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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RELATING TO MARINE LIFE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS.

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

1       SECTION 1. The marine life conservation program  
2       established in chapter 190, Hawaii Revised Statutes, has  
3       provided the State with some of its most ecologically,  
4       economically, and culturally valuable environmental assets. The  
5       comprehensive habitat protections authorized for marine life  
6       conservation districts have resulted in the unparalleled  
7       preservation of its nearshore reef ecosystems, presenting  
8       visitors, residents, and researchers alike with a unique  
9       opportunity to appreciate this relatively pristine marine area.  
10      In addition, the abundant marine life found within marine life  
11      conservation districts provides additional ecological and  
12      fishery services by the movement of fish and marine life to  
13      adjacent areas, the recruitment of marine life offspring  
14      throughout the State, and the ready availability of food stock  
15      for transitory predators and game fish.

16      Furthermore, the increasing popularity of marine ecotourism  
17      requires greater measures to ensure the continued health of the



1 State's marine ecosystems. The broad range of recently  
2 documented anthropogenic impacts to the health of marine life  
3 conservation districts' ecosystems, including coral bleaching,  
4 vessel groundings, anchoring and mooring, diving activities,  
5 poaching, land-based and water-based pollutant discharges, and  
6 other direct and indirect uses of the State's resources,  
7 indicate that the department of land and natural resources may  
8 need a more consistent and reliable source of funding to manage,  
9 protect, and restore marine resources throughout the State. A  
10 sustainable funding source is especially critical during these  
11 current times of economic difficulty due to the impacts of the  
12 COVID-19 pandemic.

13 The purpose of this Act is to:

14 (1) Establish the marine life conservation district  
15 special fund allowing for the collection and use of  
16 moneys for the management, protection, restoration,  
17 and enhancement of the State's marine life  
18 conservation districts and the resources contained  
19 within; and

20 (2) Except for the Hanauma bay marine life conservation  
21 district, authorize the department of land and natural



resources to collect fees for the use of marine life conservation districts and the resources contained within.

SECTION 2. Chapter 190, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**"§190- Marine life conservation district special fund.**

(a) There is hereby established in the treasury of the State the marine life conservation district special fund, which shall be administered by the department of land and natural resources.

(b) The following shall be deposited into the marine life conservation district special fund:

(1) Except as set forth in subsection (c), relating to the Hanauma bay marine life conservation district, moneys collected as user fees or fees for permits issued pursuant to section 190-4;

(2) Revenues due to the State derived from leases of any lands, facilities, equipment, and other property owned by the department of land and natural resources and used for or dedicated to the management, research, restoration, and enhancement of aquatic resources;



- 1        (3) Moneys collected as fines, bail forfeitures,  
2        attorney's fees, and administrative costs for  
3        violations of subtitle 5 of title 12 or any rule  
4        adopted thereunder, other than:
- 5        (A) Informer's fees authorized under section 187A-14;  
6        (B) Fines or bail forfeitures for sport fishing  
7        violations of this chapter and chapters 188  
8        and 189, as authorized under  
9        section 187A-9.5(b)(3); and
- 10       (C) Fines, bail forfeitures, or administrative fines  
11       for violations of chapter 189, as authorized  
12       under section 189-2.4(b)(3);
- 13       (4) Moneys collected for the purposes of compensatory  
14       mitigation from federal or state permitted impacts to  
15       the environment or resources contained within the  
16       marine life conservation districts;
- 17       (5) Grants, awards, donations, gifts, transfers, or moneys  
18       derived from private or public sources for the  
19       purposes of subtitle 5 of title 12, other than:
- 20       (A) Monetary contributions or moneys collected from  
21       the sale of non-monetary gifts to benefit sport



fish or sport fishing, as authorized under  
section 187A-9.5(b)(5);

(B) Monetary contributions or moneys collected from  
the sale of non-monetary gifts to benefit aquatic  
life used for commercial purposes or fishing for  
commercial purposes, as authorized under  
section 189-2.4(b)(5); and

(C) Monetary contributions to the Hanauma bay marine  
life conservation district; and

(6) Moneys derived from interest, dividends, or other  
income from the above sources.

(c) Fees and any other moneys collected from or in  
connection with the Hanauma bay marine life conservation  
district shall only be used for the benefit of the Hanauma bay  
marine life conservation district.

(d) Subject to subsection (e), the marine life  
conservation district special fund shall be used to:

(1) Fulfill the purposes of this chapter, including but  
not limited to marine life conservation district  
monitoring, research, regulatory measures, enforcement  
actions, educational activities, or any other measure



1 intended to conserve, supplement, and enhance the  
2 resources within any marine life conservation district  
3 established under this chapter or rules adopted  
4 thereunder;

5 (2) Provide management, monitoring, and support for public  
6 fishing areas, community-based subsistence fishing  
7 areas, fisheries management areas, and other areas of  
8 localized management;

9 (3) Develop and carry out any compensatory mitigation  
10 measures for impacts to the marine environment,  
11 including impacts to the marine environment from  
12 federal or state permitted actions, or violations of  
13 this chapter or any rule adopted thereunder; and

14 (4) Develop and carry out research projects, educational  
15 programs, management initiatives, and any other  
16 activity intended to conserve, supplement, and enhance  
17 the marine environment throughout the State.

18 (e) The fund shall be held separate and apart from all  
19 other moneys, funds, and accounts in the department of land and  
20 natural resources; provided that any moneys received from the  
21 federal government, through federal programs, from counties, or



1 from private contributions shall be deposited and accounted for  
2 in accordance with conditions established by the agency, county,  
3 or private entity from whom the moneys are received; provided  
4 further that twenty per cent of all funds collected under  
5 subsection (b)(1) shall be payable to the office of Hawaiian  
6 affairs as ceded lands revenues. Any balance remaining in the  
7 fund at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward in  
8 the fund for the next fiscal year.

9 (f) The proceeds of the marine life conservation district  
10 special fund shall not be used as security for, or pledged to  
11 the payment of principal or interest on, any bonds or  
12 instruments of indebtedness.

13 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit  
14 the use of general funds or the funds of other programs and  
15 activities to implement or enforce subtitle 5 of title 12 or any  
16 rule adopted thereunder, concerning management and protection of  
17 marine life conservation districts and the resources therein."

18 SECTION 3. Section 190-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
19 amended to read as follows:

20 "**§190-4 Permits[-] and user fees.** (a) The department of  
21 land and natural resources may, in any conservation district,



1 prohibit the taking of marine life or the engaging in activities  
2 prohibited by this chapter and rules adopted thereunder, except  
3 by permit issued by it for scientific, education, or other  
4 public purposes on such terms and conditions deemed necessary to  
5 minimize any adverse effect within the conservation district;  
6 provided that the department shall provide written notice of any  
7 change in permit conditions ninety calendar days prior to the  
8 effective date of the change, except, as determined by the  
9 department, when an immediate change in permit conditions is  
10 necessary to protect or preserve the conservation district. The  
11 department may revoke any permit for any infraction of the terms  
12 and conditions of the permit. Any person whose permit has been  
13 revoked shall not be eligible to apply for another permit until  
14 the expiration of one year from the date of revocation.

15 (b) The department of land and natural resources may adopt  
16 rules pursuant to chapter 91 to establish fees or require  
17 permits for entry into the boundaries of any marine life  
18 conservation district established under this chapter to which  
19 public access is managed by a county with a population of  
20 500,000 or more and for which a fee is charged for public  
21 access. Except for fees set aside for use at or for the Hanauma





1 bay marine life conservation district pursuant to  
2 section 190- (c), fees collected under this section or any  
3 rule adopted thereunder shall be deposited in the marine life  
4 conservation district special fund."

5 SECTION 4. The marine life conservation district special  
6 fund established by section 2 this Act shall be abolished and  
7 repealed on June 30, 2026, and any unencumbered balances shall  
8 lapse to the general fund.

9 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
10 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Marine Life Conservation District Special Fund; Fees

**Description:**

Establishes the marine life conservation district special fund for the collection and use of moneys for the management, protection, restoration, and enhancement of the State's marine life conservation districts and the resources contained within, and authorizes the department of land and natural resources to collect fees for the use of marine life conservation districts and the resources contained within, subject to certain conditions. Sunsets the marine life conservation district special fund in five years. Effective 1/1/2050. (HD2)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

