
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO COLLABORATE WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS; LANDOWNERS; AND STAKEHOLDERS TO PROTECT, RESTORE, AND MANAGE THE WEST MAUI WETLANDS AND WETLANDS STATEWIDE.

1 WHEREAS, wetlands help improve water quality, increase
2 groundwater flows, provide habitats for native species, act as
3 natural firebreaks, and greatly benefit coastal water quality;
4 and

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6 WHEREAS, the State's wetlands were historically a public
7 trust and provided habitats for waterbirds, wetland birds,
8 brackish water fish, invertebrates, and native wetland plants;
9 and

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11 WHEREAS, Mokuhinia wetland on the Island of Maui was
12 located on the Lahaina floodplain and was used as a fishpond and
13 taro patch; and

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15 WHEREAS, the Clean Water Act no longer protects certain
16 bodies of water, including wetlands, leaving these areas
17 vulnerable to development and pollution; and

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19 WHEREAS, over time, the State's wetlands, including
20 Mokuhinia wetland, have been covered over with commercial or
21 residential developments; and

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23 WHEREAS, the ongoing recovery efforts in Lahaina and West
24 Maui after the devastating wildfires provide an opportunity to
25 rebuild and restore Mokuhinia and other historic wetlands; and

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27 WHEREAS, many wetlands across the State fall under the
28 jurisdiction of both state and county land management agencies;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, a statewide effort to restore wetlands would help
31 restore green spaces, protect against wildfires, and conserve
32 wetland ecosystems; and



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2 WHEREAS, the cooperation of federal, state, and county
3 governments; non-governmental organizations; and the community
4 will be critical to the success of the State's wetland
5 restoration efforts; now, therefore,

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7 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
8 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024,
9 that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested
10 to collaborate with federal, state, and county governments;
11 landowners; and stakeholders to protect, restore, and manage
12 West Maui wetlands and wetlands statewide; and

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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
15 Resolution be transmitted to the Administrator of the United
16 States Environmental Protection Agency, each member of Hawaii's
17 congressional delegation, Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
18 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Mayor of
19 each county, and Chair of each County Council.

