

GM 607

DAVID IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
CARTY S. CHANG
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Tuesday, April 07, 2015
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 607
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY COMMITTEE, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, ERIC VANDERWERF, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2019**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) expresses its strong support for Governor's Message 607 on the confirmation of Dr. Eric VanderWerf as a gubernatorial appointed member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC).

Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 195D, the ESRC reviews all applications and proposals for habitat conservation plans, safe harbor agreements, and incidental take licenses. The ESRC makes recommendations, based on a full review of the best available scientific and other reliable data and at least one site visit to each property that is the subject of the proposed action, and in consideration of the cumulative impacts of the proposed action on the recovery potential of the endangered, threatened, proposed, or candidate species, to the Department and the Board of Land and Natural Resources as to whether or not they should be approved, amended, or rejected.

Dr. VanderWerf's background is in zoology, ecology and conservation biology. He is currently the president and co-founder of the Pacific Rim Conservation organization and is an expert in Hawaiian ecology, with specialized knowledge of Hawaiian birds. He has produced over 90 scientific papers, book chapters, government documents, and technical reports and serves as the leader of the Hawaiian Forest Bird Recovery Team. Dr. VanderWerf has an exceptional understanding of issues and conservation goals related to threatened and endangered species in Hawaii which makes him an ideal appointee for the ESRC. The Department strongly supports and recommends Dr. VanderWerf's confirmation for the ESRC.

CARTY S. CHANG
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**Conservation Council
for Hawai'i**

Hawai'i's voice for wildlife

Kō Hawai'i leo no nā holoholona lōhiu



Testimony Submitted to the
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2015 2:45 pm Room 225

In Support of GM 607 Eric VanderWerf

Aloha, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Green, and Members of the Committee. The Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports GM 607 and the nomination of Eric VanderWerf to serve as a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

Dr. VanderWerf is one of the world's leading authorities on Hawaiian bird conservation. He has committed his life to saving native Hawaiian species and ecosystems. His expertise and background are needed, and he will serve the resource and the people well.

Please support GM 607. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Ziegler

Conservation Council for Hawai'i is a nonprofit, environmental membership organization dedicated to protecting native Hawaiian plants, animals, and ecosystems for future generations.

Established in 1950 and based in Honolulu, CCH is one of the largest and most effective wildlife organizations in Hawai'i with more than 5,000 members and supporters, including concerned citizens, educators, scientists, government agencies, and elected officials.

Through research, education, service, organizing, and legal advocacy, CCH works to stop the destruction of native wildlife and wild places in Hawai'i.

Since 1973, CCH has served as the Hawai'i state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation.

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P.O. Box 2923 | Honolulu, HI 96802 | Office: 250 Ward Ave., Suite 220 | Honolulu, HI 96814

President: Hannah Kihalani Springer | Vice-President: Julie Leialoha | Treasurer: Bianca Isaki | Secretary: Wayne Tanaka
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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting GM 607 Gubernatorial Nominee Eric Vanderwerf
for Confirmation to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Tuesday, April 7, 2015, 2:45PM, Room 225

For more than 35 years, The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i has been working closely with government agencies, local businesses, private landowners, non-profit partners, and interested communities across the state to preserve the lands and waters upon which all life in these islands depends. The Conservancy is a private non-profit conservation organization that has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 35,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i, and support 19 coastal communities seeking to co-manage marine resources in partnership with the State of Hawai'i.

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i supports the confirmation of Dr. Eric Vanderwerf to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

We believe Eric has the necessary qualifications and expertise to be an essential contributing member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee. Our prior work with Eric occurred when the Conservancy managed the Honouliuli Forest Preserve in the Wai'anae Mountains. Eric helped us with successful strategies to minimize predators and maximize nesting success of 'elepaio. Eric has had a long relationship with 'elepaio, our native flycatcher, a bird perhaps most famous for being the presence that indicates the quality of a koa tree to be made into a voyaging canoe. It is an endangered species, as are so many of our native forest birds these days, and Eric has worked intimately and successfully to help protect this and other endangered species and their habitat across the state.

We heartily support his nomination to serve on the Endangered Species Recovery Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to support this nomination.

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To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: tsuneyos@lycos.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM*
Date: Thursday, April 02, 2015 10:29:49 PM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/2/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy Tsuneyoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Cc: annettesadventures@juno.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Friday, April 03, 2015 4:20:17 PM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/3/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Annette Kaohelaulii	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I would highly recommend that Eric Vanderwerf be confirmed for the Endangered Species Recovery Committee. He is a well-known and highly regarded scientist in this community and would be very protective of the many endangered species in Hawaii. The Governor made an excellent choice for this position.

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To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: jessicahallmanbehnke@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Monday, April 06, 2015 11:43:53 PM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/6/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Behnke	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Eric VanderWerf is a leader in endangered species conservation in Hawai'i, and I wholly endorse his nomination to serve on the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

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Cc: justinehura@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Friday, April 03, 2015 12:34:44 AM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/3/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justine Hura	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Dr. VanderWerf is an excellent candidate, and always brings a considered, science-backed, logical, environmental & reasoned perspective to the table. Thank you for confirming him.

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To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: kristie.brachmann@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM*
Date: Saturday, April 04, 2015 7:34:30 AM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/4/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristie Reilly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Cc: labehnke@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Monday, April 06, 2015 11:56:19 PM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/6/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lucas Behnke	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I have worked closely with Dr. Eric Vanderwerf. He has proven his commitment to conservation of Hawaii's endangered species through years of on-the-ground research and management. His ability to effectively collaborate with colleagues across the islands to develop and implement effective conservation strategies will serve the wildlife and the people of Hawai'i well. I believe that he has both the ingenuity and passion that we need in order to save some of our most endangered, and the world's only, species from extinction.

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Testimony in Support of GM 607

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee,
Gubernatorial Nominee, ERIC VANDERWERF, for a term to expire 6-30-2019.

Dear Senators Mike Gabbard and Josh Green,


I support the nomination of Eric Vanderwerf to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

For the past 18 years I have been hiking to remote parts of the Hawaiian Islands to photograph the native plants and animals of Hawaii, many of them rare and endangered. I have a blog – HawaiianForest.Com which documents some of the biological treasures of Hawaii.

While I have not met Eric Vanderwerf in person, I know him through numerous publications he has authored on the elepaio – the monarch flycatcher (*Chasiempis sandwichensis*) – an endangered forest bird. I also know of his latest endeavor to re-establish a breeding colony of moli – Laysan Albatrosses (*Phoebastria immutabilis*) – on the north shore of Oahu where they have historically been known to nest but no longer do so.

His qualifications and passion speak for themselves. I have no reservations in supporting the nomination of Eric Vanderwerf to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

Respectfully yours,



Nathan Yuen

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To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: twothylacines@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Friday, April 03, 2015 10:52:50 AM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/3/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nick Holmes	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Eric Vanderwerf would make an invaluable addition to the ESRC

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Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM607 on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM*
Date: Monday, April 06, 2015 8:12:44 AM

GM607

Submitted on: 4/6/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 7, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randal T. Bartlett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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April 2, 2015

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, President,
And Members of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

SUBJECT: RE: Eric VanderWerf Field Biologist with Expertise in Conservation Biology Endangered Species Recovery Committee Expiration Date: June 30, 2019.

I am writing to voice my support for the nomination of Eric VanderWerf for the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

For the past 5 years I have been one of the coordinators for the Manoa Cliff Native Reforestation Project. I have also recently worked at Papahana Kuaola, native environmental and cultural non-profit. I was also part of the team to help describe a new species of *Cyanea* (genus of shrubs only found in Hawai'i) discovered here on O'ahu.

I've known Mr. VanderWerf through the Manoa Cliff restoration. His work with the endangered O'ahu 'Elepai'o was exemplary of his knowledge, passion, and vision. He has also done much for the Hawai'i birding community. I feel that his expertise from being on the front lines of endangered species conservation will serve him well as part of the recovery committee.

Thank you for your time. Respectfully,

Sebastian Marquez/ Manoa Cliff Liaison

GM607

ESRC information for Dr. Eric VanderWerf

April 3, 2015

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? I

would like to be a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee because I believe this is an opportunity in which I can serve the people of Hawaii by helping to protect our natural resources. The ESRC provides an important function to the government of the State of Hawaii, and I believe my knowledge and experience conserving endangered species and other resources will be a valuable addition to the ESRC.

2. How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? I

believe the role of the ESRC is to advise the Hawaii State government in making sound environmental decisions, and to evaluate and recommend actions that can be implemented to protect and recovery endangered species.

3. Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

I am qualified to serve on the ESRC because of my long-term experience with endangered species and my knowledge about the specific life history needs of all native wildlife in Hawaii. I completed a Ph.D. at the University of Hawaii in 1999, focusing my research on an endemic forest bird. From 2001-2008, I worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the position of Hawaiian Bird Recovery Coordinator. That work involved writing endangered species recovery plans, endangered species listing packages, and working with a variety of stakeholders to design and oversee numerous projects aimed at recovering endangered birds. I have also worked for the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife and I have extensive experience throughout the Hawaiian Islands. I have written over 90 scientific papers and technical reports since 1988, most focusing on endangered Hawaiian birds and their recovery. I serve as a scientific editor for the Cooper Ornithological Society and I am regularly asked to review papers and reports to assess their validity and suggest improvements. In 2008, I formed my own business dedicated to studying and managing natural resources in Hawaii, called Pacific Rim Conservation. My goal in starting this organization was to more effectively implement real, on the ground, conservation actions aimed at protecting and recovering birds and other resources in Hawaii. This has required a practical and efficient approach to assessing problems and finding solutions.

4. What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service? During my term of service on the ESRC I hope to provide information that can be used to more effectively and efficiently assess proposed conservation actions, and to improve the performance of the committee by adding scientific rigor in assessing projects aimed at recovery endangered species.

5. Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? Three qualities that characterize me and that would benefit the ESRC are that I am: 1) practical; 2)

knowledgeable, and 3) reasonable. My previous work has demonstrated that I not only have knowledge that would be important to the ESRC, but also that I can apply that knowledge in useful and realistic ways that directly improve management of endangered species.

6. Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How this benefit the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? During my employment with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, I was tasked with helping to decide on a recovery strategy for the Po'u-uli, an endangered bird species that was found only on Maui and had only three remaining individuals. Choosing the best strategy was a complex and at time acrimonious process, but I introduced a structured, scientific approach that facilitated the process, helped stakeholders understand various aspects of the decision process, and eventually reached a decision acceptable to all parties.

7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest? One potential conflict of interest is that I may be asked, through my business, by government agencies, businesses, and other organizations to assist with implementing conservation projects in which the ESRC might also be involved. Several of my previous projects have involved such work, such as construction of predator-proof fences to protect endangered birds. If a project comes before the ESRC that could involve an action that I might be asked to work on, I would recuse myself from ESRC discussions related to that project. This would be an infrequent occurrence, and I do not think it would significantly affect my ability to serve on the ESRC.