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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE SAND ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Sand Island  
2 state recreation area is one of few readily accessible urban  
3 beach parks in Honolulu that provides a panoramic view from  
4 Diamond Head to the Waianae mountains. The one hundred forty  
5 acre park hosts a variety of historic and scenic resources while  
6 also offering a unique combination of recreational facilities  
7 and opportunities for both land-based and ocean recreation,  
8 including picnicking, camping, remote control car operations,  
9 BMX bicycling, softball, beach activities, swimming, surfing,  
10 fishing, and canoe paddling. The park is also adjacent to a  
11 boat ramp maintained by the division of boating and ocean  
12 recreation. The division also offers parking and a wash-down  
13 area for ocean recreation users, enabling ocean access for a  
14 variety of boats including sailboats and jet skis. The  
15 University of Hawaii's maritime training and education center  
16 also has its facilities near the park, from which the revered  
17 Hokule'a ocean voyaging canoe is based.



1           The legislature also finds that the Sand Island state  
2 recreation area comprises a developed section and an undeveloped  
3 section, roughly splitting the park in half. The developed  
4 section includes infrastructure, facilities, and utilities that  
5 were built in the 1970s to support park day-use, camping, and  
6 ocean recreation access. However, the infrastructure and  
7 facilities have deteriorated over the years from age, heavy use  
8 and misuse, and hostile environmental conditions caused by  
9 saltwater exposure. The deterioration has been exacerbated by a  
10 lack of sufficient operating and maintenance funds. Due to this  
11 deterioration, the developed portion of the park is currently  
12 underutilized in comparison to its capacity. Further, the park  
13 is considered unsightly, due to its deteriorated state, and  
14 unsafe, due to its heavy use by non-recreational patrons.

15           The undeveloped section of the park abuts the Honolulu  
16 wastewater treatment plant and contains abandoned military  
17 berms, long-thorn kiawe, and illegally dumped rubbish and waste.  
18 The historic military infrastructure that remains in this  
19 portion of the park reflects the park's use during World War II  
20 as an internment camp and prisoner-of-war detention facility.  
21 Currently, this portion of the park is consistently occupied by



1 a fluctuating homeless population that inhabits the shoreline  
2 area. This population and the prevalence of long-thorn kiawe  
3 create management challenges and deters park users from using  
4 this portion of the park for recreational purposes.

5 The legislature further finds that residents and visitors  
6 are seeking additional outdoor recreation opportunities and  
7 deserve and are attracted to safe and maintained park units,  
8 especially those adjacent to the beach and ocean in Honolulu.  
9 Public surveys conducted for the 2020-2021 statewide  
10 comprehensive outdoor recreation plan identified the public's  
11 desire for additional outdoor and ocean recreation access and  
12 opportunities, well-maintained infrastructure and facilities,  
13 and the protection of cultural and historic resources. Sand  
14 Island state recreation area has the potential to be developed  
15 into a "people's park" to meet these needs. The undeveloped  
16 portion of the park also provides opportunities for open grass  
17 fields that can accommodate a variety of sports and games,  
18 walking and biking paths, and additional space for picnics and  
19 family gatherings.

20 The legislature is cognizant that, due to the park's  
21 proximity to the ocean, any future development must factor in



1 managed retreat and development that is resilient to the future  
2 impacts of sea level rise. Future development must also  
3 acknowledge and transparently honor the historical mistreatment  
4 of the host culture and the area's role in World War II, both of  
5 which are unfortunate mistakes of the past.

6 The legislature further finds that the legislature  
7 appropriated \$5,000,000 during the regular session of 2019 for  
8 park improvements, including the removal and clean-up of remnant  
9 debris from World War II. To date, \$3,000,000 has been expended  
10 to improve park infrastructure, including improvements to the  
11 park's aging and failing sewage system. The remaining  
12 \$2,000,000 will be used to clear and clean unsafe debris and  
13 materials from the park's shoreline.

14 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of  
15 land and natural resources to prepare a master plan for the Sand  
16 Island state recreation area.

17 SECTION 2. The department of land and natural resources  
18 shall prepare a master plan for the Sand Island state recreation  
19 area that develops the concept of a "people's park." The plan  
20 shall:



- 1 (1) Incorporate community and stakeholder participation
- 2 and address improvements for developed and undeveloped
- 3 portions of the state recreation area;
- 4 (2) Assess current and future environmental conditions
- 5 such as climate change and sea level rise;
- 6 (3) Propose improvements to existing facilities and
- 7 infrastructure;
- 8 (4) Propose the addition of new facilities and
- 9 infrastructure;
- 10 (5) Preserve and interpret significant historic features;
- 11 and
- 12 (6) Make other recommendations to expand opportunities for
- 13 outdoor recreation.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
 15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
 16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for  
 17 the department of land and natural resources to prepare a park  
 18 master plan pursuant to section 2 of this Act.

19 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
 20 land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

21 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.



**Report Title:**

Department of Land and Natural Resources; Sand Island State  
Recreation Area; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural  
Resources to prepare a master plan for the Sand Island State  
Recreation Area. (SD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

