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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE KAHO‘OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that through Act 340,  
2 Session Laws of Hawaii 1993, the island of Kahoolawe was of  
3 significant cultural and historic importance to the native  
4 people of Hawaii. The legislature also found that, due to  
5 extensive erosion and other ecological problems, the presence of  
6 unexploded ordnance, the existence of archaeological and other  
7 cultural and historic sites, and the presence of native and  
8 endangered flora and fauna, a new management regime was needed  
9 to effectively meet the unique challenges of restoring,  
10 preserving, and determining the appropriate use for Kahoolawe.

11           The legislature finds that the Kahoolawe island reserve  
12 commission was funded predominantly by a dwindling trust fund  
13 created in 1994 during the federal cleanup of unexploded  
14 ordnance on Kahoolawe. Although the funding was a considerable  
15 amount at the time, the federal appropriations totaling  
16 approximately \$44,000,000 over a period of several years was not



1 substantial enough to establish a sustainable endowment for the  
2 long-term restoration of Kahoolawe.

3 As stated in the federally mandated Kahoolawe island  
4 conveyance commission final report to Congress in 1993, "In the  
5 short term, federal funds will provide the bulk of the program  
6 support for specific soil conservation projects and related  
7 activities. In the longer term, however, state revenues will be  
8 needed to continue and enhance those activities initiated with  
9 federal funds."

10 From 1994 until 2016, federal funding allowed the Kahoolawe  
11 island reserve commission to establish many innovative programs  
12 that emphasize ancestral and traditional knowledge, use a  
13 cultural approach of respect for and connectivity to the  
14 environment, and integrate ancient and modern resource-  
15 management techniques.

16 The legislature finds that in 2004, the management and  
17 control of the Kahoolawe island reserve was transferred from the  
18 United States Navy to the State, with the Kahoolawe island  
19 reserve commission designated as the state agency to oversee the  
20 use and restoration of the reserve. During the years since  
21 taking responsibility for the reserve, the Kahoolawe island



1 reserve commission has been able to develop innovative  
2 restoration projects that are effective in Kahoolawe's extremely  
3 harsh conditions and will serve as the foundation for the future  
4 restoration of the island.

5 The legislature notes that a fiscal audit of the Kahoolawe  
6 rehabilitation trust fund was performed by the office of the  
7 auditor in 2013, which reported two key findings. First, and  
8 more importantly, the trust fund would be depleted by 2016.  
9 Second, the Kahoolawe island reserve commission lacked a  
10 comprehensive and quantifiable restoration plan with performance  
11 measures to gauge whether objectives are being met.

12 In 2013, the Kahoolawe island reserve commission embarked  
13 on the development of a 2026 strategic plan for Kahoolawe,  
14 marking fifty years of occupation of Kahoolawe by the people of  
15 Hawaii and laying out a pathway for the future use and  
16 management of the Kahoolawe island reserve. After a two-year  
17 effort that engaged Hawaii's residents through numerous  
18 community meetings and focus-group sessions held on multiple  
19 occasions on each of the islands, the multi-organizational  
20 Kahoolawe strategic planning working group developed an island-  
21 wide, community-based strategic plan, entitled "I Ola Kanaloa",



1 or "Life to Kanaloa", that addresses the future restoration,  
2 management, and uses of Kahoolawe for the State, the people of  
3 Hawaii, and a possible future sovereign Native Hawaiian entity.

4 The legislature also finds that Act 49, Session Laws of  
5 Hawaii 2017, provided general funds and authorized fifteen  
6 positions for fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. These funds  
7 allowed the Kahoolawe island reserve commission to continue its  
8 mission in the near term, but was only enough to support  
9 staffing, Maui-based facilities, and limited Maui-based  
10 operations. Some additional funding was appropriated in Act  
11 140, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which provided additional  
12 general funds for Kahoolawe island safety and operations.

13 This funding allowed the Kahoolawe island reserve  
14 commission to make great strides in the restoration of  
15 Kahoolawe's natural and cultural resources, but in order to  
16 continue and protect the accomplishments already made,  
17 additional funding is needed to support Kahoolawe island  
18 operations, safety, and infrastructure. In addition, funding is  
19 needed to restore the Kahoolawe island reserve specialist II and  
20 Kahoolawe island reserve specialist III positions, two critical  
21 positions necessary to support safety and logistical functions



1 and on-island restoration efforts and sustainability field  
2 projects while on Kahoolawe and to act as boat crew while on  
3 Kahoolawe island reserve commission vessels.

4 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate  
5 funds to the department of land and natural resources for the  
6 Kahoolawe island reserve commission to effectively meet the  
7 unique challenges of restoring, preserving, and determining the  
8 appropriate uses of the Kahoolawe island reserve for the people  
9 of Hawaii.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 in  
13 natural and physical environment (LNR906) for the Kahoolawe  
14 island reserve commission.

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

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to  
20 fund two full-time equivalent (2.00 FTE) permanent positions in



1 natural and physical environment (LNR906) for the Kahoolawe  
2 island reserve commission.

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

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



**Report Title:**

Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission; Appropriations

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission and to fund two full-time equivalent permanent positions for the Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission. (SD1)

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