
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the coconut
2 rhinoceros beetle, scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*,
3 is an invasive species that threatens coconut palms and other
4 vegetation. The beetle bores into the crowns of coconut trees,
5 feeding on the sap and causing severe damage. The beetle's
6 appetite is not limited to coconut palms, and it threatens other
7 tropical plants such as hala, sugarcane, taro, banana, and
8 pineapple. From reduced property values and loss of tourism due
9 to dying palms to increased costs for pest control and tree
10 replacement, the economic consequences are vast and significant.

11 The legislature further finds that the coconut rhinoceros
12 beetle endangers the State's cultural heritage by damaging
13 plants, including hala and taro, that are integral to native
14 Hawaiian practices. The protection of these plants is essential
15 for preserving local traditions and maintaining a balanced
16 ecosystem. Wreaking havoc since it was discovered in 2013 at



1 Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, the beetle has spread across
2 Oahu and to the islands of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a two-year
4 community-based incentive pilot program under the department of
5 land and natural resources to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros
6 beetle in Hawaii.

7 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this Act:

8 "Coconut rhinoceros beetle" means the invasive species in
9 Hawaii that is scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*.

10 "Community member" includes residents, military personnel,
11 farmers, cultural practitioners, golf course staff, green waste
12 and compost facility workers, retailers, landscape
13 professionals, botanical garden staff, and maintenance
14 personnel.

15 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department
16 of land and natural resources a two-year pilot program to
17 incentivize community members to collect and submit to the
18 department the beetle and its larvae. The Hawaii invasive
19 species council shall oversee the pilot program and ensure the
20 participation of stakeholders, including community members.



1 (b) The department of land and natural resources shall
2 compensate community members for the collection and submission
3 of beetles and larvae. The compensation shall be determined by
4 the department in consultation with the Hawaii invasive species
5 council.

6 SECTION 4. The department of land and natural resources
7 shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
8 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later
9 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session
10 of 2026.

11 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
13 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
14 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
15 year 2026-2027 for a two-year community-based pilot program to
16 eradicate the coconut rhinoceros beetle in Hawaii, including but
17 not limited to:

- 18 (1) Compensation to community members;
- 19 (2) Program administration;
- 20 (3) Community engagement, workshops, and training events;
- 21 (4) Digital and social media campaigns;



1 (5) Media advertising; and

2 (6) Educational materials and outreach.

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

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



Report Title:

DLNR; Hawaii Invasive Species Council; Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Invasive Species; Pilot Program; Report; Appropriations

Description:

Establishes a two-year pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle and its larvae for compensation. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

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