

ACT 117

H.B. NO. 2613

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation for He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The national estuarine research reserve system is a network of twenty-eight protected areas along America's coasts. According to the *National Estuarine Research Reserve System Strategic Plan 2011-2016*, the system is founded on the principle that long-term protection of representative estuaries provides stable platforms for research and education and the application of management practices that will benefit the nation's estuaries and coasts.

The legislature finds that the State has coordinated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to nominate He'eia estuary as a national estuarine research reserve. The site, located on Oahu's windward shore, includes He'eia state park, He'eia fishpond, and the He'eia community development district, as well as marine waters with patch and fringing reefs and Moku o Lo'e (Coconut Island). In 2012, the office of planning was designated as the lead agency to coordinate the selection for a Hawaii site to be designated as a national estuarine research reserve and nomination process for He'eia to be designated as a national estuarine research reserve. In 2014, He'eia was officially nominated as a national estuarine research reserve to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's policy to encourage expansion of the program in unrepresented areas of the country.

The He'eia site was chosen as the preferred site after a statewide solicitation period from interested communities. The office of planning supported the designation process through the development of the He'eia national estuarine research reserve system management plan. On January 19, 2017, the He'eia site was officially designated as the twenty-ninth site in the national estuarine research reserve system, which enables federal funding to support the implementation of the management plan.

The Hawaii institute of marine biology, which is part of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, is the lead agency for implementation of the He'eia national estuarine research reserve system management plan. The university's partners will include the Hawaii community development authority, department of land and natural resources, and several community organizations. For He'eia reserve to succeed in its function within the national estuarine research reserve system, funding for initial staffing is essential. Further funding is required to sustain them and to keep He'eia reserve fully functioning. The legislature notes that as funding or partnership opportunities become available, additional staff will be required within the first five years to meet management plan goals and objectives, and further notes that the federal government matches state appropriations on a seventy per cent (federal) to thirty per cent (state) basis.

The purpose of this Act is to support He'eia estuary in its designation as a national estuarine research reserve by appropriating funds to maintain the initial staff necessary to develop and manage He'eia reserve and its programs.

SECTION 2. Contractors and other third parties who receive funds under this Act may be subject to review and inspection by the University of Hawaii, the department of land and natural resources, the attorney general, and the auditor. Upon request by such agencies, the contractor or third party shall be required to submit for review all files, records, documents, and accounting related to the use and expenditure of funds received pursuant to this Act, whether the funds were received via contract, grant, or other agreement.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the hiring of 1.00 full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent position within the University of Hawaii to maintain the initial staff and operations necessary to develop and manage He'eia reserve and its programs.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

(Approved July 5, 2018.)