

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GUY H. KAULUKUKUI
FIRST DEPUTY

WILLIAM M. TAM
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE**

**Wednesday, February 01, 2012
8:00am
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1747
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

House Bill 1747 proposes an appropriation of general revenues to fund three full-time dog detector positions within the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to enhance capacity for detecting invasive brown tree snakes and preventing their entry into the State. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) supports the intent of this measure with the addition of language requiring the dogs to be cross-trained for multispecies detection and defers to DOA on the specific language required to adequately create, fund, and maintain dog detector positions.

A previous canine inspection program at DOA was discontinued in recent years due to funding cuts, exposing the State to increased risk of introductions of environmentally damaging species such as the brown tree snake. DLNR recognizes the severe impacts that a brown tree snake introduction could have on the State's wildlife, including native bird populations, as well as impacts to human health and safety. DLNR welcomes the restoration of a canine inspection program and the enhancement of invasive species detection and prevention capacity and defers to DOA on the fiscal and operational requirements.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 1747 Relating to Invasive Species
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 8:00AM, Rm. 312

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawaii's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 10 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.

The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 1747 and its purpose to provide support for State Department of Agriculture to reinstate its dog detector program. We defer to HDOA as to whether this measure or H.B. 1943 would better serve this purpose.

Invasive weeds, insects, diseases, snakes, and other pests are one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of its people. The HDOA has developed a multi-faceted Biosecurity Program to enhance its invasive species prevention efforts at air and sea ports with more inspectors, more efficient and effective inspection systems and services, improved inspection facilities, and agreements with importers and producers for improved sanitary protocols before items are shipped to Hawai'i.

Having an operational canine inspection program is an important means of detecting snakes in cargo, particularly brown tree snakes that may stow away in cargo coming to Hawai'i from Guam. Evidence from Hawai'i and around the world shows that preventing new pest establishment is exponentially more economical than eradicating a pest or, even worse, controlling it indefinitely once it becomes established. This is especially the case with brown tree snakes that have caused enormous ecological as well as economic harm to Guam.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

S. Haunani Apoliona Christopher J. Benjamin Anne S. Carter Richard A. Cooke III Peter H. Ehrman Kenton T. Eldridge
Thomas M. Gottlieb James J.C. Haynes III J. Douglas Ing Mark L. Johnson Dr. Kenneth Y. Kaneshiro Bert A. Kobayashi, Jr.
Eiichiro Kuwana Duncan MacNaughton Bonnie P. McCloskey Bill D. Mills Wayne K. Minami Michael T. Pfeffer James C. Polk
H. Monty Richards Chet A. Richardson Jean E. Rolles Scott C. Rolles Crystal K. Rose Dustin M. Shindo Nathan E. Smith Eric K. Yeaman

Chair: Kenton T. Eldridge *Chair Emeriti:* Samuel A. Cooke (co-founder; chair 1980-1991), Herbert C. Cornuelle (co-founder),
Bill D. Mills (1991-1995), Jeffrey N. Watanabe (1995-2004), David C. Cole (2004-2008), Duncan MacNaughton (2008-2011)

Testimony for AGR 2/1/2012 8:00:00 AM HB1747

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Kristine Lesperance
Organization: Oahu Detection Dog Services, LLC
E-mail: sardogs@gmail.com
Submitted on: 1/30/2012

Comments:

Oahu Detection Dog Services, LLC

Kristine G. Lesperance, Ph.D.

Master Trainer

sardogs@gmail.com

Providing canine detection services to find invasive as well as endangered species.

Professional Profile and Accomplishments

As a multifaceted professional, I train both detection and search and rescue canines in addition to teaching doctoral level leadership courses. I also teach a variety of search and rescue curriculums nationally and in Asia. A small business owner, I am dedicated to providing sustainable, highly trained local professional detection dog services, particularly in the area of conservation detection.

Current and past actions include:

- Contracted to assist in population density study of Hawaiian Petrels utilizing canine detection in pilot approach
- Conducted pilot program with Army Natural Resources in canine detection of *Euglandina rosea* (Rosy Wolf Snail)
- Master Trainer, Hawaii State Civil Defense US&R Canine Unit 2003-2008
- Provided search and rescue training and national certification evaluations to Makati Rescue and Philippine K9 SAR Association 2006-2008
- Responded for HPD Missing Persons, NCIS, and the AG's Cold Case Task Force 2004-2006
- Developed established canine responder groups in Washington and Hawai'i
- Archeology/Historical Remains Detection Canine Handling, Lincoln County, Washington
- Certified mission ready human remains detection dogs in California, Washington, and Hawai'i
- Responded to over 100 live and human remains detection cases in Washington, Idaho, and Montana (mission reports available upon request for closed cases, most notably the Valerie Jackson Case)
- Education Committee Chair, National Search Dog Alliance 2008
- Education Chair, Canine Section, National Association for Search and Rescue 2004-2007
- Contra Costa Sheriff's Department Level IV Reserve Officer and SAR canine handler
- Responded to over 100 live and human remains detection searches with Contra Costa County SAR and California Rescue Dog Association 1990-1994 including the Oakland Hills Firestorm and the Polly Klaas Search

Rationale

In less than two weeks in summer of 2011, **13 illegal reptiles** were seized in our state, 11 on Oahu:

Since June 29 the state Department of Agriculture has taken custody of 13 illegal animals: a ball python, two boa constrictors and two albino Burmese pythons, along with eight lizards — three bearded dragons, a blue-tongued skink, a tegu lizard, an iguana and two leopard geckos. (Jinbo, Star Advertiser, 23 July, 2011)

More have been found since, representing a much larger population of illegal pets and feral animals.

The Brown Tree Snake is a current threat, having devastated Guam's bird population, along with several native lizard populations. The snake also has a mildly toxic bite, sending infants and small children to the hospital. More frightening, the Brown Tree snakes' costs due to **power outages** is estimated at \$4.5 million annually on Guam, and predicted to **exceed \$400 million annually in Hawai'i** should the snake become established (Stanford, 2012). Other reptile and amphibian species have become established in Hawai'i, some, such as the coqui, with potentially devastating costs to the economy.

Military flights from Guam to Hawai'i are expected to increase, further raising the possibility of Brown Tree Snake incursion and establishment.

Proposal

Given the expense and limitations of a Department of Agriculture canine program (\$180K plus canine facilities, care, maintenance, procurement, as well as civil service contract requirements) trained for the detection of the Brown Tree Snake, the state may wish to contract with private professional detection services trained to detect multiple invasive species thus increasing application throughout multiple state agencies.

Oahu Detection Dog Services can provide dogs cross trained on several invasive species targeted for detection. These dogs and handlers can respond at any hour to search cargo, planes, vehicles, luggage, residences, yards, parks, roadsides, and even wilderness areas. New scent (odor) targets can be trained by the Oahu Detection Dog Master Trainer when the need arises.

Oahu Detection Dog Services provides highly trained dogs and handlers and absorbs training time and costs, all maintenance and facilities costs, charges no night nor holiday differential, and can respond on call if so contracted.

Estimated Contract Factors

Contract Length

Number of Dog and Handler Teams

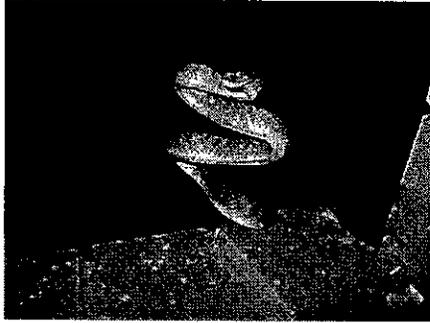
Minimum 4 hour deployment per team

Maximum 8 hour deployment per team

Type of search (wilderness, urban, industrial)

Rates: \$50-\$100/hr

Our resources deserve protection, our citizens deserve protection, our 'aina deserves protection!



Brown Tree Snake

Stanford, J. (2012). *Stalking snakes: Days and nights in the life of a Brown Tree Snake rapid responder*. USGS.
Retrieved from: <http://www.fort.usgs.gov/stalkingsnakes/>.



House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 1, 2012
8:00 a.m., Conference Room 312
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 1747

Aloha Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **strongly supports HB 1747, *Relating to Invasive Species***. The 2009 CGAPS Vision and Action Plan lists the re-establishment of HDOA's detector dog program as one of the ten most important actions we must take to protect Hawai'i. The Guam build-up and increase in importance of Asia in trade and military matters means that we are increasingly vulnerable to invasion by brown treesnake and other pest species. Although USDA Wildlife Services conducts searches and trapping for brown treesnakes in cargo and areas around ports of exit on Guam, they do not inspect 100% of cargo and conveyances that are bound for Hawai'i. Additionally, there are recent examples of snakes that have made it past these interdiction measures. We must take responsibility for protecting our shores, and detector dogs with trained handlers are the most effective tools available. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Christy Martin
Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)
Ph: (808) 722-0995