A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FORESTRY.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that under the Hawaii sustainability initiative, the State of Hawaii has committed to integrated sustainability goals, including increasing the State's climate resiliency, as well as supporting and increasing local food production.

The legislature finds that numerous sources, both internationally and nationally, have recognized the importance of healthy soils as a critical resource for supplying food security, diverse habitats, water storage, and climate resiliency. For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, nations around the world, and other agencies including the United States Department of Agriculture, celebrated 2015 as the International Year of Soils to highlight the necessity of healthy soil for food security and ecosystem resilience against climate change. Similarly, recognizing the importance of healthy soil to climate resiliency and food security, many states around the country have launched
initiatives to incentivize building soil organic matter and improving soil health.

The legislature finds that trees have an important function in improving soil health and building climate resiliency for Hawaii's environment, including its agricultural landscapes.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, a division of the United States Department of Agriculture, has identified agroforestry as a unique land management approach that intentionally blends agriculture and forestry to enhance productivity, profitability, and environmental stewardship.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the strategic planting of trees in agricultural landscapes may increase crop yield, improve soil health, provide habitat for wildlife, and provide a variety of other benefits.

The division of forestry and wildlife of the department of land and natural resources manages a state tree nursery that aims to provide high quality native, endangered, and windbreak trees and plants for the public and department of land and natural resources plantings and reforestation projects.

The legislature further finds that there is a need to update and expand the resources available to the state tree
nursery, including by increasing the available selections of
trees and plants that provide beneficial functions in
agricultural production.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for the
forest stewardship program to increase the existing plant
stocks, invest in public outreach, and renovate the equipment
and facilities of the state tree nursery.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so
much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
the forest stewardship program to:

(1) Work in collaboration with appropriate stakeholders,
including but not limited to the greenhouse gas
sequestration taskforce, researchers from the college
of tropical agriculture and human resources of the
university of Hawaii, and the United States Department
of Agriculture National Resource Conservation Service,
to expand and increase the existing plant stocks of
the state tree nursery to include a wider range of
native trees and plant species identified by the
division of forestry and wildlife to be beneficial in
agricultural settings for improving agricultural
productivity and improving soil health;

(2) Renovate and update the equipment and facilities of
the state tree nursery to expand its capacity to
provide clean planting materials for a variety of
public and private projects; and

(3) Use for public outreach and education regarding the
benefits of trees and plants in providing soil health
and the appropriate uses of trees and plants in
agricultural settings.

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

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.
Report Title:
Forestry; Tree Nursery; DLNR; Appropriation

Description:
Appropriates funds for the forest stewardship program of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to increase plant stocks, invest in public outreach, and renovate the equipment and facilities of the state tree nursery. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

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