
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that *Oryctes rhinoceros*,
2 or the coconut rhinoceros beetle, can have devastating impacts
3 on palm species that are foundational to the State's
4 agricultural economy, cultural heritage, and ecosystems. Native
5 to Southeast Asia, adult coconut rhinoceros beetles feed on
6 emerging palm fronds, causing damage that can often be severe
7 enough to kill the plant. The coconut rhinoceros beetle was
8 first detected in the State in 2013 and is currently confined to
9 Oahu. However, beetle detections have increased in the last six
10 months and have spread across the island.

11 Coconut rhinoceros beetle response is a coordinated
12 partnership among the University of Hawaii, United States
13 Department of Agriculture, Hawaii department of agriculture, and
14 other key organizations. Coconut rhinoceros beetle response
15 provides tools for community members to minimize their risk and
16 trains businesses to become compliant with department of
17 agriculture requirements to minimize the risk of spreading



1 coconut rhinoceros beetles and other invasive pests. Compliance
2 agreements are signed by businesses that work with coconut
3 rhinoceros beetle host palms and materials to continue operating
4 with decreased risk of causing new coconut rhinoceros beetle
5 infestations.

6 Coconut rhinoceros beetle response has a field crew that
7 services more than three thousand coconut rhinoceros beetle
8 traps across Oahu and a canine crew trained to sniff out coconut
9 rhinoceros beetles. Coconut rhinoceros beetle response responds
10 to public reports, assesses trees for damage, searches for
11 breeding sites, and applies treatments. The University of
12 Hawaii at Manoa lab investigates new control methods and best
13 practices. A data team analyzes information from traps, mulch
14 surveys, and tree damage. An outreach team provides information
15 to the public and professionals while supporting community
16 response efforts.

17 The legislature finds that funding for core services
18 includes staff vital to the research, response, education, and
19 investigative work needed to maintain a successful and effective
20 program. Funding for coconut rhinoceros beetle response has
21 primarily been through federal partners, with the United States



1 Department of Agriculture and United States Navy being the
2 largest contributors. However, allocating stable year-to-year
3 funding to the University of Hawaii to support key positions
4 within the core coconut rhinoceros beetle response program would
5 assist in leveraging additional federal funds.

6 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support
7 existing coconut rhinoceros beetle response positions and
8 activities.

9 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
12 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
13 year 2024-2025 to be allocated as follows:

14 (1) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
15 permanent junior researcher to serve as the deputy
16 incident commander under department of agriculture
17 leadership;

18 (2) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
19 permanent administrative professional/technician for
20 program administration and maintenance;



1 (3) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
2 permanent data collection, management, and geographic
3 information system analysis supervisor;

4 (4) \$ for three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE)
5 permanent data technicians;

6 (5) \$ for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)
7 permanent outreach and education specialists;

8 (6) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)
9 permanent canine supervisor for the coconut rhinoceros
10 beetle response canine program;

11 (7) \$ for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)
12 permanent canine handlers for the coconut rhinoceros
13 beetle response canine program;

14 (8) \$ for administration and other related costs
15 for the coconut rhinoceros beetle response canine
16 program, including kenneling and veterinary support;
17 and

18 (9) \$ for supplies for maintaining research
19 colonies and potential biological control agents.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
21 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Prevention; University of Hawaii;
Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for positions and activities related to
coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation control. Effective
7/1/2050. (SD1)

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