
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FERAL ANIMALS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that populations of feral
2 goats, sheep, and pigs have been growing exponentially in the
3 State, creating a wide range of problems for farmers, ranchers,
4 property owners, users of transportation infrastructure, and
5 many others. The legislature further finds that goats, sheep,
6 and pigs are not native to Hawaii. Therefore, like many other
7 non-native organisms, they have disrupted native ecosystems that
8 evolved for millions of years without these species present.

9 Since goats and sheep were introduced to Hawaii in 1778,
10 the populations of these species have grown to harmful levels.
11 Along with feral pigs, these species have destroyed native
12 habitats by eating endangered and endemic plants. This also
13 disrupts the many species of native wildlife that rely on those
14 native plants. Goats, sheep, and pigs have also destroyed large
15 proportions of native dryland forests, allowing invasive,
16 non-native grasses to overtake the landscape. Some of these
17 invasive grasses, such as Guinea grass, molasses grass, and



1 buffelgrass, become highly flammable when dry and helped fuel
2 the intense and fast-spreading 2023 Maui wildfires.

3 Feral goats, sheep, and pigs also cause dangerous impacts
4 beyond native forests. Due in part to overpopulation, these
5 animals have steadily ventured closer to highways and other
6 roadways to find food and water. These species frequently cross
7 busy roads and even linger on highways to graze on grasses that
8 protrude along cracks in the asphalt. These behaviors pose
9 significant dangers to drivers, who must quickly swerve or stop
10 their vehicles to avoid collisions. However, large trucks,
11 especially those hauling trailers or carrying heavy loads, are
12 often unable to make quick stops. Similarly, motorcycles and
13 scooters, which have a much longer stopping distance than cars
14 and trucks, are prone to accidents caused by feral goats, sheep,
15 and pigs. Motorcycle and scooter operators are also more likely
16 to suffer severe injury or death due to collisions.

17 The legislature also finds that, as populations of goats,
18 sheep, and pigs increase, individual animals become more likely
19 to venture onto land where people live, work, and play. This
20 increases the likelihood of interactions with humans. This is
21 concerning because feral animals may attack humans who get too



1 close, creating a risk to human life and welfare, particularly
2 on residential properties adjacent to large, open areas such as
3 fields and golf courses.

4 The legislature further finds that feral goat, sheep, and
5 pig populations negatively impact land, water, and marine
6 resources. For example, overgrazing exposes loose dirt, which
7 can easily become airborne during periods of high winds. The
8 resulting dust storms are detrimental to the health of
9 residents, especially those with asthma and other health
10 conditions. Similarly, debris and soil on overgrazed land
11 easily run off into streams, causing slopes to lose stability
12 and increasing the likelihood of landslides. The runoff also
13 damages downstream properties and nearshore waters and harms
14 coral reefs and other native ecosystems.

15 The legislature finds that populations of feral goats,
16 sheep, and pigs may be managed by coordinated trapping. A
17 state-led coordinated trapping program would create safer roads;
18 protect dryland forests from overgrazing; help feed
19 underprivileged families and individuals; provide property
20 owners, ranchers, and farmers with an ecologically friendly and
21 herbicide-free method of removing weeds and wildfire fuel; and



1 provide a humane and pro-active way to manage populations of
2 feral animals. The legislature further finds that the
3 department of land and natural resources, which is the agency
4 with the most experience in managing public lands and preserving
5 native ecosystems, is the most appropriate agency to manage a
6 trapping program.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 8 (1) Establish a program within the department of land and
9 natural resources to coordinate the humane trapping of
10 feral goats, sheep, and pigs in the State; and
11 (2) Designate the department of land and natural resources
12 as the primary agency with responsibility for the
13 trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 183D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
16 and to read as follows:

17 "§183D- Trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs. (a)
18 The department, within its available appropriations, shall
19 develop and maintain a program to humanely manage populations of
20 feral goats, sheep, and pigs in the State by trapping. The
21 program shall include:



- 1 (1) Partnerships with agencies and private entities to
2 increase the availability of and access to trapped
3 feral goats, sheep, and pigs to be sold, donated, or
4 consumed as wild game meat;
- 5 (2) Partnerships with state and county agencies to
6 mitigate hazards from feral goats, sheep, and pigs on
7 highways and other transportation infrastructure;
- 8 (3) Partnerships with state agencies and private entities
9 to mitigate hazards from feral goats, sheep, and pigs
10 on dryland forests and other public and private lands;
- 11 (4) Where appropriate, the use of trapped feral goats,
12 sheep, and pigs to graze and browse for the purpose of
13 grass and weed control; and
- 14 (5) The establishment or expansion of programs to educate
15 property owners, ranchers, and farmers about services
16 offered under the trapping program and benefits of
17 allowing access to property for the trapping of feral
18 goats, sheep, and pigs.
- 19 (b) The department shall serve as the primary agency with
20 responsibility for the trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs



1 in the State and shall coordinate with other agencies for the
2 trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs on public lands.

3 (c) As used in this section, "feral goats, sheep, and
4 pigs" means goats, sheep, and pigs that are living in a wild or
5 feral state and are not under domestication."

6 SECTION 3. Section 183D-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 "§183D-2 Powers and duties of department. The department
9 shall:

- 10 (1) Manage and administer the wildlife and wildlife
11 resources of the State;
- 12 (2) Enforce all laws relating to the protecting, taking,
13 hunting, killing, propagating, or increasing the
14 wildlife within the State and the waters subject to
15 its jurisdiction;
- 16 (3) Recognize that:
- 17 (A) Game mammals and game birds provide a sustainable
18 food source that merits high-quality habitats
19 with sufficient food, water, and refuge to
20 support viable populations sufficient for
21 hunting;



1 (B) Proper management of game populations in
2 appropriate areas minimizes the impacts of these
3 populations and provides benefits to important
4 watershed areas, including weed control and the
5 reduction of grass fire fuel; and

6 (C) The State's unique relationship with the ocean
7 requires careful consideration and management of
8 land and ocean activities that prioritize the
9 public trust responsibilities of the State,
10 including the conservation of natural resources
11 for future generations and the protection of
12 native Hawaiian traditional and customary
13 practices pursuant to article XI, section 1, and
14 article XII, section 7, of the Hawaii State
15 Constitution respectively;

16 (4) Establish and maintain wildlife propagating facility
17 or facilities;

18 (5) Subject to the provisions of title 12, import wildlife
19 for the purpose of propagating and disseminating the
20 same in the State and the waters subject to its
21 jurisdiction;



- 1 (6) Distribute, free of charge, as the department deems to
2 be in the public interest, game for the purpose of
3 increasing the food supply of the State; provided that
4 when in the discretion of the department the public
5 interest will not be materially interfered with by so
6 doing, the department may propagate and furnish
7 wildlife to private parties, upon any reasonable
8 terms, conditions, and prices that the department may
9 determine;
- 10 (7) Ascertain, compile, and disseminate, free of charge,
11 information and advice as to the best methods of
12 protecting, propagating, and distributing wildlife in
13 the State and the waters subject to its jurisdiction;
- 14 (8) Gather and compile information and statistics
15 concerning the area, location, character, and increase
16 and decrease of wildlife in the State;
- 17 (9) Gather and compile information concerning wildlife
18 recommended for release in different localities,
19 including the care and propagation of wildlife for
20 protective, productive, and aesthetic purposes and



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1 other useful information, which the department deems
2 proper;

3 (10) Have the power to manage and regulate all lands
4 [which] that may be set apart as game management
5 areas, public hunting areas, and wildlife sanctuaries;

6 (11) Pursuant to section 183D-65 of this chapter, destroy
7 predators deemed harmful to wildlife;

8 (12) Pursuant to section 183D- of this chapter, serve
9 as the primary agency with responsibility for the
10 trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs;

11 ~~(12)~~ (13) Formulate, and from time to time recommend to
12 the governor and legislature, any additional
13 legislation necessary or desirable to implement the
14 objectives of title 12; and

15 ~~(13)~~ (14) Preserve, protect, and promote public hunting."

16 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
17 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

18 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

19

INTRODUCED BY: *Wesley M. Roberts*



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Report Title:

DLNR; Trapping of Feral Goats, Sheep, and Pigs

Description:

Designates the Department of Land and Natural Resources as the primary agency for the trapping of feral goats, sheep, and pigs. Requires the Department to establish a program to humanely manage populations of feral goats, sheep, and pigs in the State by trapping.

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