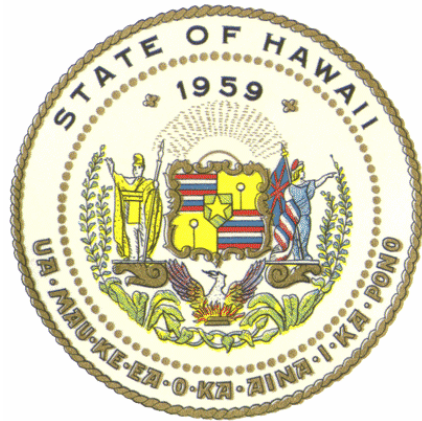


REPORT TO THE TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
2006 REGULAR SESSION

REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN A FEDERAL PROGRAM
TO ASSIST STATES IN OBTAINING SCRAPPED FEDERAL SHIPS
TO USE AS ARTIFICIAL REEFS IN THE WATERS OF THE STATE OF HAWAII



PREPARED BY

DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
STATE OF HAWAII

IN RESPONSE TO
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 143
REGULAR SESSION OF 2005

NOVEMBER 2005

REPORT ON
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 143, Regular Session of 2005

Requesting Participation in the Federal Program to Assist
States in Obtaining Scrapped Federal Ships to Use as
Artificial Reefs in the Waters of the State of Hawaii

PURPOSE

This report is submitted in compliance with Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) No. 143, adopted by the Twenty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session 2005. SCR 143 requested the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to report to the Legislature on its actions to participate in the Federal program to obtain scrapped ships for use as artificial reefs.

BACKGROUND

In 1950, the Dingell-Johnson (DJ) Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program was created. DJ funds for this Program are derived from a surcharge on fishing equipment and motorboat fuels. The purpose of the Sport Fish Restoration Program is to support fishing opportunities for recreational fishermen in the United States.

DLNR is responsible for the establishment, management, and regulation of artificial reefs in the waters of the State of Hawaii. Starting in the early 1960's, DLNR used DJ funds to establish five artificial reef locations with four of them off of Oahu (Maunalua Bay in 1961, Waianae in 1963, Kualoa in 1972, and Ewa in 1987), and one off of Maui (Keawakapu in 1972). DLNR is researching potential locations to establish additional artificial reef sites around the Hawaiian Islands. These locations include: Lawai, Kauai; Wahikuli, Maui; Makena, Maui; Kawaihae, Hawaii; Keauhou, Hawaii; Ewa Beach, Oahu; Waimanalo, Oahu; and another location off Waianae, Oahu.

The artificial reef monitoring surveys, conducted by DLNR, have shown that the State's artificial reefs increase species diversity (up to 5 times compared to a barren area) and fish biomass (up to 20 times compared to a barren area) in the artificial reef location. DLNR believes this program has been successful in increasing the fishing and diving opportunities for the residents and visitors of Hawaii.

Over the years, DLNR has deployed various types of material including 18 derelict vessels and barges, with the majority (10) from the United States Navy (Navy) and scuttled them at various artificial reef locations. There are two different Federal programs that transfer vessels to states for use as artificial reefs. These are the Navy's Ship Disposal Program and the Maritime Administration (MARAD) Obsolete Vessel Transfer Program. The Navy program deals with navy vessels and the MARAD program

deals with all Federal agency vessels over 1,500 gross tons of merchant design or capable of conversion to merchant use.

RESPONSE TO SCR 143

Of these two programs, DLNR has only participated in the Navy's Ship Disposal Program because the Navy vessels were here in Hawaii, thus they were easier to inspect and, more importantly, they were provided free of charge to DLNR with the Navy absorbing the costs for cleaning, towing, and scuttling the vessel. The MARAD vessels are on the mainland and DLNR would be responsible for some of the costs.

The Navy's Ship Disposal Program and the MARAD Obsolete Vessel Transfer Program had entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in 2003, whereby MARAD was the lead agency for the advertisement, solicitation, and evaluation of donation transfer applications, for both MARAD and Navy vessels for use as artificial reefs. Currently, the MOA is in abeyance. The Navy is working on revising the application process and expects that future applications for Navy ships will be submitted directly to the Navy.

Because the Navy will complete all of the shipboard preparation work (cleaning, towing and scuttling) free of charge, DLNR will be participating in the Navy's Ship Disposal Program instead of the MARAD Obsolete Vessel Transfer Program as requested in SCR 143.

SCR 143 is very specific about the Waianae Coast on the Island of Oahu as being designated the initial location for sinking any acquired scrapped Navy ship for the purpose of establishing an artificial reef. In 1963, DLNR established an artificial reef in Waianae, which is approximately two miles south of the Waianae Small Boat Harbor and one mile offshore. It is approximately 141 acres in area and its depth ranges from 50-100 feet.

In August 2005, a 120-foot steel barge was scuttled in 80 feet of water, bringing the total number of vessels sunk at the Waianae artificial reef to six (three barges, two landing craft units, and a minesweeper). While the addition of the barge complies with SCR 143, this was purely coincidental.

The Waianae artificial reef is suitable for only certain types of ships, due to water depth, the size of the vessel, etc. Depending on the type of vessel DLNR obtains from the Navy program or private donations, we will continue to add appropriate vessels to the Waianae artificial reef as they become available.

DLNR believes this Navy program is a good example of a Federal/State partnership that can continue to be a win-win situation for both parties.