

# Resolution

No. 22-7

## RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 2, 2022, AS WORLD WETLANDS DAY IN THE COUNTY OF MAUI

WHEREAS, February 2, 2022, marks the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, a treaty that internationally recognized the fundamental ecological, economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value of wetlands and resulted in the identification of more than 250 million hectares of wetlands around the world; and

WHEREAS, wetlands, both inland and coastal, are habitats for 40% of the world's species of flora and fauna, minimize flooding, are carbon-sequestration sites, and are sources for food and income for billions of people; and

WHEREAS, between climate change, industrialization, and sprawling development, wetlands around the world are being destroyed at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, Hawaiian culture is based on wai (water) that feeds the body and spirit and protects the perpetuation of our values; and

WHEREAS, County agencies continue to address related concerns by monitoring overdevelopment and mitigation proposals in wetland regions and are investigating new possibilities for wetland protection and management through an "Adopt-A-Wetlands" program; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources' website states: "Though wetlands constitute less than 3% of the State, they represent a significant economic resource to native Hawaiian communities and provide invaluable services like flood protection, sediment filtration, wildlife habitat, and recreation and education opportunities;" and

WHEREAS, recognizing that Hawai'i has lost tens of thousands of acres of wetlands, including an estimated 31% of the coastal wetlands, Maui County has been vigilant to fund wetland restoration efforts in recent County budgets; and

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WHEREAS, traditional Hawaiian management models recognize the key importance of fresh water and the opportunities to manage water resources in a basin-wide context called the ahupua'a, and we have a responsibility to honor the continued practice of nurturing and protecting wetland sustainability; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it recognizes February 2, 2022, as World Wetlands Day in the Maui County;
2. That it also recognizes the importance of our inland and coastal wetlands, celebrates wetland-conservation efforts in our community, and is determined to preserve the importance of wai to our Hawaiian culture; and
3. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Robin S. Knox, Project Manager, South Maui Save the Wetlands Hui; Scott Fisher, Director of 'Āina Stewardship, Hawai'i Land Trust; Martha Guzman, Regional Administrator, Region 9, United States Environmental Protection Agency; Suzanne Case, Chairperson, Board of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawai'i; Alec Wong, Chief, Clean Water Branch, Hawai'i Department of Health; and the Honorable Michael P. Victorino, Mayor, County of Maui.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Kelly T. King

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COUNTY CLERK