

Hawaii Native Species Conservation and Recovery Act of 2025

Native species are the foundation of a thriving ecosystem. Healthy ecosystems are more resilient to extreme weather, support food production, and provide clean air and spaces for natural enjoyment. The Hawaiian Islands are home to over 10,000 native plant and animal species that exist nowhere else on the planet. This is the highest degree of endemism in the world – even higher than the Galapagos Islands. Hawaii’s native biodiversity is unique and increasingly fragile. Significant additional investment from federal, state, local, and private sources is needed to protect Hawaii’s native biodiversity, promote a healthy ecosystem, support our local economy, and steward our environment for generations to come.

The *Hawaii Native Species Conservation and Recovery Act* would help protect a national treasure of great cultural, environmental, and economic importance. The bill would establish a program under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fund projects in Hawaii to help protect its biodiversity and support the recovery of native species’ populations.

The bill would:

- Provide funding through cooperative agreements and grants to the State of Hawaii, local governments, Native Hawaiian organizations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education.
- Support coordinated, evidence-based conservation and recovery projects addressing:
 - Invasive species
 - Ecological consequences of climate change
 - Native species’ habitats
 - Population recovery
 - Scientific research
 - Data collection, monitoring, and management
 - Public outreach and education
- Require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to coordinate with other federal and state government agencies to develop the program’s annual funding priorities and criteria for ranking project proposals.
- Require a 25 percent non-federal match for most projects.
- Encourage applications for high impact, small dollar value projects, projects carried out by Native Hawaiian organizations, and projects promoting youth workforce readiness by waiving the non-federal match requirement for such projects.
- Authorize \$30 million annually, subject to appropriations, for ten years.