

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 297

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 13, 2021

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources

AN ACT

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study on the establishment of, and the potential land that could be included in, a unit of the National Forest System in the State of Hawaii, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. HAWAII NATIONAL FOREST STUDY.**

2 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
4 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
5 Chief of the Forest Service.

6 (2) STUDY AREA.—The term “study area”
7 means the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai,
8 Oahu, and Kauai in the State of Hawaii.

9 (b) STUDY.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct
11 a study—

12 (A) to determine the suitability and feasi-
13 bility of establishing a unit of the National For-
14 est System in the study area; and

15 (B) to identify available land within the
16 study area that could be included in the unit
17 described in subparagraph (A).

18 (2) COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.—In
19 conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Sec-
20 retary shall—

21 (A) coordinate with the Hawaii Depart-
22 ment of Land and Natural Resources; and

23 (B) consult with the Hawaii Department
24 of Agriculture and other interested govern-
25 mental entities, private and nonprofit organiza-
26 tions, and any interested individuals.

1 (3) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under
2 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

3 (A) consider unique vegetation types that
4 occur in the study area and that should be tar-
5 geted for inclusion in the unit of the National
6 Forest System described in paragraph (1)(A);

7 (B) evaluate the ability of the Secretary—

8 (i) to improve and protect forest areas
9 within the study area; and

10 (ii) to secure favorable water flows
11 within the study area;

12 (C) determine whether the unit of the Na-
13 tional Forest System described in paragraph
14 (1)(A) would expand, enhance, or duplicate—

15 (i) resource protection; and

16 (ii) visitor-use opportunities;

17 (D) consider parcels of an appropriate size
18 or location to be capable of economical adminis-
19 tration as part of the National Forest System
20 separately or jointly with the other land identi-
21 fied under paragraph (1)(B);

22 (E) evaluate the willingness of landowners
23 to sell or transfer land in the study area to the
24 Secretary;

1 (F) evaluate the suitability of land in the
2 study area for potential selection and designa-
3 tion as a research natural area or an experi-
4 mental forest;

5 (G) identify cost estimates for any Federal
6 acquisition, development, operation, and main-
7 tenance that would be needed to establish the
8 unit of the National Forest System described in
9 paragraph (1)(A); and

10 (H) consider other alternatives for the con-
11 servation, protection, and use of areas within
12 the study area by the Federal Government,
13 State or local government entities, or private
14 and nonprofit organizations.

15 (c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section authorizes the
16 Secretary to take any action that would affect the use of
17 any land owned by the United States or not owned by the
18 United States.

19 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
20 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to
21 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the
22 Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the
23 House of Representatives a report that describes—

24 (1) the results of the study; and

