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Environmental Center

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SB 1132

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR FIRETREE RESEARCH AND CONTROL

Senate Committee on Agriculture

Public Hearing - February 11, 1993
1:00 P.M., Room 405 SOT

By

John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Charles Lamoureux, Lyon Arboretum
Cliff Smith, Cooperative Parks Unit

SB 1132 would appropriate \$233,820 over the next biennium for research and control of firetree.

Our statement on this bill does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Firetree is one of the major exotic plant pests in Hawaii, established on all major islands except Molokai, and covering an estimated 100,000 acres of forest and rangeland, mostly on the big island and Kauai. Because of its invasive and persistent character, it has been the subject of extensive research and control efforts mounted by state and federal agencies and extending internationally. The requested funding would match federal commitments and National Parks Service support for the vigorous ongoing research and management program.

A great deal already has been learned about this organism, and, as detailed in the prior testimony of Dr. Smith, there is a better than average prospect for development of a successful biological control program. Given the broad support which this effort has received from the ranching and conservation community, and given the acknowledged threat which alien species pose to our irreplaceable native forest habitats, we strongly support the continuance of this research.