

Ad. 9/7/94

Voluntarily, the operators administered by the FAA.

Beach monitoring

An important first step

Disturbing reports in The Advertiser in the last couple of years have detailed a serious deterioration of Hawaii's beaches. In the past 70 years, eight to nine miles - 15 percent - of Oahu's beaches have been lost.

We have been disappointed that government - which is concerned, but mired in bureaucratic confusion - isn't getting its act together.



Because of the fact that we're a tourism-dependent island state. "The people of Hawaii have not yet taken responsibility for this resource," laments University of Hawaii geologist Charles Fletcher.

We have pointed out that several East Coast states have combined beach and shoreline responsibilities into single, effective agencies. They have tough, unambiguous state laws

that protect their shorelines both from unwanted erosion and inappropriate development.

Hawaii has also failed to match those states' monitoring efforts. Florida, for example, has been sending teams of surveyors to beaches around the state several times a year for decades, amassing a data base that enables reliable shoreline management decisions.

The usual setback from the shoreline for building in Hawaii is 40 feet. In the Carolinas, it ranges from 60 to 120 feet depending on the history of the shoreline in question.

So it's good news that the U.S. Geological Survey is collaborating with the University of Hawaii to survey Hawaii beaches over the next five years, as well as study whether the state's reefs are still capable of producing sand at a healthy rate.

The feds are footing the bill, about \$100,000 a year. We hope the state and counties will be quick to capitalize on that modest investment.

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