

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII
2021 REGULAR SESSION

RELATING TO PUBLIC LAND LIABILITY
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
TASK FORCE ON BEACH AND WATER SAFETY



PREPARED BY THE:

DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

In Conjunction with the
Task Force on Beach and Water Safety

IN RESPONSE TO:
Section 171-8.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes

December 2020

**RELATING TO PUBLIC LAND LIABILITY AND
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
TASK FORCE ON BEACH AND WATER SAFETY**

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

Section 171-8.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), provides for a Risk Assessment Working Group (RAWG) that is comprised of state and county officials, and a person knowledgeable in signs. Recommendations are periodically made to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) as needed that authorizes the strategic placement of warning signs, devices, and systems on improved public lands. The signs are designed to warn the public of the potential exposure to inherent risks and hazards associated with natural conditions on public lands.

Chapter 13-8 Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) was promulgated in 2006 and a process was created for warning sign design and placement that warns the public of potential danger related to exposure to five natural occurring conditions: flashfloods, falling rocks, submerged objects in streams, cliffs, and at a site specific geographic location on Maui – falling trees. Chapter 13-8-9 to 13-8-11, HAR directs the Department of Land and Natural Resources to design and place warning signs to warn the public of the potential danger and risks of the natural conditions on public lands. Locations across the State are periodically evaluated for potentially hazardous natural conditions and related exposure in both state and county parks and along Na Ala Hele trails.

CONCLUSION

There continues to be a critical need to inform the public on exposure to natural hazards in authorized areas and deter the illegal transiting and occupation of park land and trails. The continued vigilance by staff to post, maintain and manage warning, closure and regulatory signage is an essential element of management.

Since the promulgation of the HAR which clearly describes the legal signs standards, the process is now a fundamental and institutional action by staff and as such there is no need to convene a working group or task force to determine locations. Legislation was introduced in the 2020 Regular Session, but due to COVID-19 did not complete the hearing process. **The Department is currently working to streamline the approval process including potential repeal of Section 171-8.6 HRS, *Risk Assessment Working Group*.**