

I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Adopted	Date Referred	Referred to	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE AUTHORS REPORT FILED	NOTES
546-37 (LS)	Sabina Flores Perez	Relative to recognizing and commemorating Guam's annual observance of "Arbor Month" throughout October 2024 and "Arbor Day" on October 8, 2024, and commending the Guam Department of Agriculture, its Forestry and Soil Resources Division, organizations, and community members for their ongoing dedication towards the conservation, protection, and enhancement of Guam's forests and trees.	10/2/24 12:43 p.m.	10/8/24 12:00 p.m.						

I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2024 (SECOND) Regular Session

Resolution No. 546-37 (LS)

Introduced by:

Sabina Flores Perez /SFP

Relative to recognizing and commemorating Guam’s annual observance of “Arbor Month” throughout October 2024 and “Arbor Day” on October 8, 2024, and commending the Guam Department of Agriculture, its Forestry and Soil Resources Division, organizations, and community members for their ongoing dedication towards the conservation, protection, and enhancement of Guam’s forests and trees.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN***
2 ***GUÅHAN*:**

3 **WHEREAS**, Guam’s limestone and tropical forests comprise trees essential to
4 the welfare of our island’s ecosystem. Native trees such as *fadang* or cycad (*Cycas*
5 *micronesica*), *paipai* (*Meiogyne cylindrocarpa*), *mapunao* (*Aglaia mariannensis*), and
6 *langiti* (*Ochrosia mariannensis*), *pagu* or sea hibiscus (*Talipariti tiliaceum*),
7 *lemonchina* or limeberry (*Triphasia trifolia*), and *trongkon niyok* or coconut tree (*Cocos*
8 *nucifera*) all contribute to forests’ vital role in maintaining our environment; and

9 **WHEREAS**, healthy forests maintain a unique biodiversity and provide critical
10 habitat for our native flora and fauna, including several endangered and threatened
11 plants and animals such as *fanihi* or Mariana fruit bat (*Pteropus mariannus*), the
12 Mariana eight-spot butterfly (*Hypolimnas octocula marianensis*), and *akaleha* or the
13 Guam tree snail (*Partula radiolata*); and

1 **WHEREAS**, in southern Guam, forests can prevent and mitigate flooding and
2 erosion, which impacts our unique riparian habitats and invaluable coral reef
3 ecosystems. In northern Guam, porous limestone forests collect and filter groundwater
4 that aids in the recharge of our sole-source aquifer; and

5 **WHEREAS**, according to the University of Guam’s study “Forestry on Guam,”
6 forests comprise fifty-three percent (53%) of Guam’s land area, with fifty-nine percent
7 (59%) of these forests located in Mangilao, *Talo’fo’fo*, and the Northern watersheds.
8 Twenty-six percent (26%) of the island’s forests are in reserved or protected areas such
9 as refuges and conservation areas; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Guam’s trees and forests are a keystone of sustainable ecotourism
11 for Guam. In the process of fostering our island’s environmental and ecological health,
12 the custodianship of our trees and forests attracts visitors from our neighboring regions
13 and provides a naturally beautiful and refreshing environment that promotes overall
14 physical and mental well-being; and

15 **WHEREAS**, our island’s forests are intrinsic to the identity of the CHamoru
16 People, whose sustenance and culture is dependent on the resources forests provide.
17 Historically and contemporarily, forests are integral to the creation of food, traditional
18 medicine, clothing, cultural adornments, housing supplies, building materials, fishing
19 equipment, and other items used by CHamorus as means to thrive and flourish. The
20 CHamoru People’s profound relationship with forests and trees are a cornerstone of
21 CHamoru language, values, and spirituality demonstrated through legends, chants,
22 environmental stewardship, customs, and other practices; and

23 **WHEREAS**, Guam’s history can be traced from the evolution of our trees and
24 forests, which have been shaped throughout millennia of ecological developments,
25 including those punctuated by the arrival of the CHamoru People and the eventual
26 contact with colonial powers. Indigenous plants brought by the CHamoru People such
27 as *lemmai* or breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*), *gâgu* or ironwood (*Casuarina*
28 *equisetifolia*), and *ifit* (*Intsia bijuga*) connect us to our identity as Pacific Islanders and

1 continue to be integral to our island’s ecosystem, cultural heritage, and sustainability;
2 and

3 **WHEREAS**, trees and forests locally and worldwide are essential to mitigating
4 the effects of increased greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to the current global
5 climate crisis, which poses numerous consequences to our island such as coastal
6 erosion, coral bleaching, heightened temperatures, sea-level rise, and strengthened
7 typhoons. Meanwhile, deforestation causes an increase in greenhouse gas emissions,
8 can disrupt the water cycle, and lead to higher ambient temperatures; and

9 **WHEREAS**, threats such as unsustainable development, military expansion,
10 wildfires, environmental contamination, and the proliferation of invasive species
11 continue to pose major challenges to the enhanced welfare of Guam’s forests and native
12 species that enrich our island’s ecosystems; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Department of Agriculture (DOAG) was established to
14 sustain and enhance the agricultural resources and related economy of Guam via
15 research, quarantine, control and conservation efforts. As the leading agency for the
16 protection and management of Guam’s forests, the Department’s Forestry and Soil
17 Resources Division is fundamental to the stewardship of our island’s arborous
18 resources; and

19 **WHEREAS**, this year’s theme “Planting Today, Sustaining Tomorrow,”
20 encapsulates the idea that long-term sustainability and growth starts with us and the
21 efforts we make every day towards forest protection, conservation, and enhancement
22 for a greener future; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the long-term prosperity of Guam’s trees and forests are
24 inseparable from the pursuit of environmental and social justice efforts including but
25 not limited to the full recognition of the CHamoru People’s rights to their lands,
26 territories, and resources, including Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC),
27 sustainable economic development, self-determination, and demilitarization. Such
28 efforts are not mutually exclusive, and have been found to collectively mitigate
29 destruction and contamination of our island’s forests per research conducted by

1 environmental experts and custodians, Indigenous communities, and environmental
2 justice organizations; and

3 **WHEREAS**, our island’s continued efforts to protect our trees and forests among
4 community members, organizations, and government agencies are a pillar of
5 environmental stewardship for Guam and contribute to the holistic welfare of our island
6 community; now therefore, be it

7 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'trentai Siette Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby,
8 on behalf of the people of Guam, recognizes and commemorates the month of October
9 2024 as “Arbor Month,” and October 8th, 2024 as “Arbor Day,” in accordance with our
10 island’s rainy season and the arborous growth it promotes. *I Liheslatura* commends the
11 Guam Department of Agriculture, its Forestry and Resources Division, and their
12 partners for their commitment and meaningful service to the conservation of our
13 island’s trees and forests; and be it further

14 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the
15 adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the Chair of the
16 Island Beautification Task Force, Lieutenant Governor Joshua Tenorio; Director of the
17 Guam Department of Agriculture, Chelsa D. Muña; Deputy Director of the Guam
18 Department of Agriculture, Roy Gamboa; Chief of the Guam Department of Agriculture
19 Forestry and Soil Resources Division, Christine Camacho Fejeran; Program
20 Coordinator at Smart Trees Pacific for the Guam Department of Agriculture’s Urban
21 and Community Forestry Program, Peter “PJ” San Nicolas; Chairman of the Northern
22 Guam Soil and Water Conservation District, Joe Santos; Chairman of the Southern
23 Guam Soil and Water Conservation District, Michael Aguon; and to the Honorable
24 Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE DAY OF OCTOBER 2024.

THERESE M. TERLAJE
Speaker

AMANDA L. SHELTON
Legislative Secretary