Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10032



Introduced by: Hon. Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan

AN ACT
DISESTABLISHING THE LOPEZ WATERSHED FOREST RESERVE (LWFR) AS INITIAL COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7586, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 1992", AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11038, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 2018"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to disestablish or withdraw the Lopez Watershed Forest Reserve (LWFR) as the initial component of the National Integrated Protected Areas System.

The LWFR was established under Presidential Proclamation No. 411 which was later amended by Proclamation No. 566 on June 20, 1940. The 418-hectare watershed encompasses portions of five (5) barangays within the municipalities of Calauag, Guinayangan and Lopez namely, barangays Yaganak, San Roque, Dungawan Paalyunan and San Pedro 1 and Pisipis.

Since its inception, the 418-hectare LWFR was beset by the problem of the change in land use. Migrant farmers from the surrounding barangays and other areas converged into the area to establish coconut plantations and plant agricultural crops. With the absence of the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) and a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) for years, the entry of migrant farmers into the watershed was unmitigated. By 2010, when the first PASA was conducted, almost 77% of the total proclaimed area was dominated by agricultural land use and built-up areas.

This brings about negative consequences on the ecological health of the watershed, such as, decrease in biodiversity in terms of flora and fauna, and susceptibility to natural hazards like flooding, soil erosion, and drying up of natural springs, just to mention a few.

Thus, the results of the recent Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA) are blatant proof of the devastation brought about by land conversion. Based on the criteria set by BMB Technical Bulletin No. 2016-04, the LWFR garnered a net average

rating of 37%, failing to meet the qualifications and standards of a protected area to be established under the ENIPAS.

In view thereof, early approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan
4th District, Quezon

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SECTION 1. The Lopez Watershed Forest Reserve (LWFR), established under Proclamation No. 566 in 1940, is hereby disestablished or withdrawn as Protected Area.

SEC. 2. Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall, in consultation with the municipalities of Guinayangan, Lopez and Calauag, the provincial government of Quezon, and concerned national government agencies, issue the corresponding rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 2. All laws, decrees, letters of instruction, proclamations, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed of modified accordingly.

SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,