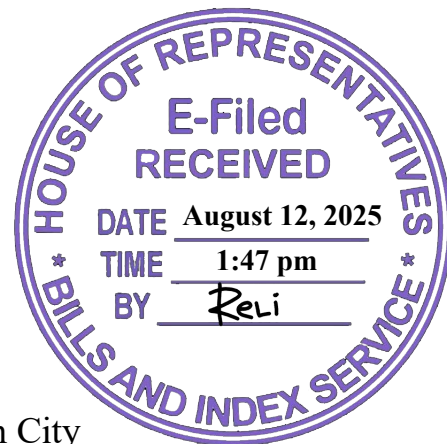




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Constitution Hills, Batasan Complex, Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3571**

Introduced by Representatives **ALFEL M. BASCUG** and **EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA**

AN ACT
DECLARING THE TUGONAN WATERFALLS LOCATED IN
BARANGAY SAN LORENZO, MUNICIPALITY OF
PROSPERIDAD, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR, AN
ECOTOURISM SITE

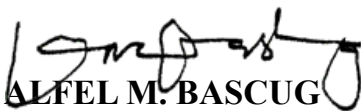
Explanatory Note

This bill seeks to declare Tugonan Falls, in Barangay San Lorenzo, Municipality of Prosperidad, Province of Agusan del Sur as an ecotourism site.

Tugonan Falls is a 28.86 ft high and 105.45 ft wide waterfalls situated in Barangay San Lorenzo, Prosperidad. The falls is 25 minutes trekking distance from the San Lorenzo Barangay Hall. Being situated in the midst of lush forest, the place is a home of various attractions such as towering trees, rare orchids and other wide variety of flora and fauna in which tourists can enjoy numerous common ecotourism related activities such as trekking, swimming, bird watching, picnic, camping, nature viewing and nature photography. The name of the falls is derived from the word “tugon” meaning “remind”—remind to protect the beautiful place. Truly, this pristine and beautiful place possesses an exotic enchantment of a jungle paradise which undeniably proves that it’s more fun in the Philippines. However, this hidden gem has been considered as a tourist attraction to locals but has never been publicly exposed to other tourists in the Philippines and the world. With the lack of needed development and promotion, the tourism potential of the place has been curtailed.¹

Thus, in order for this gem to be developed and become a fully grown tourism destination, it should be declared as an ecotourism site. The development of Tugonan Falls into an ecotourism site will not just enhance its aesthetic value but will also boost local government income and create employment opportunities for the people of Agusan del Sur.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ALFEL M. BASCUGO
1ST District, Agusan del Sur



EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA
2nd District, Agusan del Sur



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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of
the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. The Tugonan Waterfalls located in Barangay San Lorenzo, Municipality of Prosperidad, Province of Agusan del Sur, is hereby declared an ecotourism site. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism sites.

SECTION 3. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the municipal government of Prosperidad shall, in coordination with the DOT, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of appropriate infrastructure and facilities to enhance tourism in the area: *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area: *Provided further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the municipal government of Prosperidad.

SECTION 4. The DOT shall assist the municipal government of Prosperidad in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Tugonan Waterfalls in its national and regional promotion programs.

SECTION 5. The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Prosperidad. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.

SECTION 6. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the municipal government of Prosperidad shall, in consultation with the DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SECTION 7. If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. All laws, rules, regulations, presidential decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,