

After 44 days, hearings end for giant telescope in Hawaii

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Long-running hearings for whether a giant telescope can be built atop a Hawaii mountain have wrapped up.

State Department of Land and Natural Resources spokesman Dan Dennison says testimony ended Thursday after 71 people testified over 44 days on the Big Island.

The hearings officer will recommend whether the land board should grant a construction permit for the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea.

Testifiers included Native Hawaiians who believe the project will harm cultural practices and Native Hawaiians who believe it will provide educational opportunities.

The state says it spent \$225,000 on the hearings.

This round of contested-case hearings is necessary after the state Supreme Court invalidated an earlier permit issued by the board.

Telescope officials plan to build in the Canary Islands if they can't build in Hawaii.

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