

Big Island Invasive Species Committee Meeting
June 16, 2000
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
DOFAW Conference Room, Hilo
Minutes

Agenda:

- Welcome and Introductions
- False Sakau, a threat to the environment, culture and economy of Pohnpei (Julie Denslow)
- BIISC Database and Mapping (Kealii Bio and Michelle Clapper)
- Proposal to USDA for alien species/rapid response funding (Joan Canfield)
- Funding for BIISC mapping of priority species near National Parks (Tim Tunison)
- State funding for Miconia control (Fred Kraus)
- Updates on other island invasive species committees (Duane Nelson, Joan Canfield)
- Biocontrol in Hawaii, results of workshop on Oahu (Joan Canfield)
- Little Fire Ant Update (Pat Conant)
- Coqui frog update (Earl Campbell)
- Report on First BIISC workday at Hale Pohaku (Duane Nelson)
- Reports from Working Groups
 - Education
 - Mapping/ Database
 - Miconia
 - Planning and Budget
 - Integrated Control Methods
 - Plant Materials
- New/Other Business
- Next Meeting and location

Attending: Duane Nelson, Joan Canfield, Julie Denslow, Jerry Konanui, Ed Johnston, Laura Hillis, Jeremy Gooding, Stephen Hight, Lisa Hadway, Francis Pacheco, Fred Kraus, Dave Broyles, Steve Skipper, Gary Kam, Joan Yoshioka, Robert Yamanoha, Tim Tunison, Heather Cole, Earl Campbell, Jeri Ooka, Karen Blue, Kealii Bio, Michelle Clapper, James Glynn, Baron Horiuchi, J.B. Friday

False Sakau in Pohnpei (Julie Denslow)

- Jim Space, the retired head of Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, has made a data base of invasive species in the American affiliated Pacific Islands. The report is available on CD and can also be accessed through the HEAR website. The report includes lists of invasive species found on the islands of Micronesia (mostly natural areas).
- In producing this report Jim and Julie became aware that the citizens of Pohnpei were concerned about the introduction of False Sakau (*Piper auritum*) to the islands. An action committee was formed to address this threat. A report was produced to assess the likely impact of this introduction and a cost benefit analysis was conducted.
- *Piper auritum* (False sakau) is in the pepper family and native to the neotropics.

- In its native range it can be found from sea level up to 1500m.
 - It has a “weedy” characteristic exploiting disturbed forest (gaps) and forms monotypic stands.
 - *P. auritum* will sprout from rhizomes and nodes.
 - Spikes of flowers are easily pollinated and dispersed by bats in its native range. Birds and mice will also disperse the fruits.
 - It is uncertain if the plants introduced to Pohnpei are setting seed.
 - Flowers and fruits have been observed in Pohnpei but no seeds have yet been recorded.
 - *P. auritum* contains safrole (smells like rootbeer) and does not contain the kavalactones that *P. methysticum* does. Safrole is considered a carcinogen.
- Those that introduced *P. auritum* to Pohnpei thought it would be more productive than the awa (*P. methysticum*) grown there at the time. Growth of false sakau is much faster than awa and farmers are planting it in mixed species tree farms but again it is important to note that it does not contain the kavalactones that awa does which produce its desirable effects.
- In the last 2 years in Pohnpei the awa industry has grown to 15% of the economy with 50% of the people involved in the market (also includes other economically important Pipers: *P. nigrum*, black pepper; and *P. betel*, Betel nut).
- Conservation concerns of false sakau in Pohnpei include:
 - With dense vegetative growth, false sakau will be difficult to control
 - *P. auritum* is shade tolerant and will establish under the canopy of native forests. Recently much of the agriculture in Pohnpei has been shifting up slope into these forested areas and poses a great threat for the spread of this plant.
 - The habitat range of False sakau is huge with every habitat invaded on the islands except for the mangroves.
 - A weed risk assessment (AQIS) was performed and it received a score of 19....anything above a 6 is considered a conservation threat.
 - *P. auritum* could serve as a host for other Piper pathogens.
 - The local awa industry could suffer if the product is adulterated with *P. auritum* decreasing the quality...and threatening the export reputation of awa from Pohnpei.
- Eradication was suggested for Pohnpei but there are very strong landowner rights there.
- The cost benefit analysis of control demonstrated that it will be more expensive to eradicate as time goes on. Presently there are only 20 populations. A great expense in the eradication will be following up to ensure no seeds have germinated.
- In Hawaii it is found in Waipio, Kauai, Maui and Oahu. It is often sold in nurseries as Hawaiian golden awa or Hawaiian red awa.
- Ed Johnston was concerned that some of the smaller growers in Hawaii may not know they are growing false sakau.
- It was unknown if the plants in Waipio valley are setting seed...if it does produce seed it could put “miconia to shame”....and end up being a great conservation threat to Hawaii and its awa industry.

Proposal to USDA for alien species/rapid response funding (Joan Canfield)

- A summary of the project proposal was handed out to the group.

- A \$4.9 million over 4 yrs proposal was submitted to the USDA for alien species prevention and rapid response.
- The proposal was an inter-agency collaboration that will feed into the IISCs.
- An extension position will be established to ensure the information on control methods is getting out and being used by the public.
- News of funding should be in by August.

State funding for Miconia control (Fred Kraus)

- A bill was passed for \$500,000 for Miconia control statewide.
- The governor is expected to sign the bill.
- More of the funding is expected to go towards biocontrol as eradication on Maui and the Big Island seems unlikely.
- The lobby for funds was very strong this year and will need to continue in the future...there is a concern the legislature will become tired of hearing about it in years to come.
- Julie stressed that it is important that people be reminded that biocontrol efforts often take a long time to show results....and the legislature will have to be reminded of this when it comes up for funding again.

Biocontrol in Hawaii, results of workshop on Oahu (Joan Canfield and Julie Denslow)

- The Secretariat for Conservation Biology held a by-invitation forum focusing on Biocontrol.
- International experts were brought in to present and discuss their findings.
- The hope of the group was to find methods to get safer more effective agents on-line more quickly.
- The results of the forum will be published as proceedings in a US Forest Service technical report.
- Some of the recommendations that came out of the forum include:
 - The need for better post release monitoring
 - More and better experimental work in the country of origin
 - Publication of results

Funding for BIISC mapping of priority species near National Parks (Tim Tunison)

- The National Park Service has received funds (\$750,000 statewide) for inventory and monitoring of alien species.
- Tim Tunison has received \$30,000 of these funds for mapping incipient and invasive species in and around the National Parks on the Island of Hawaii.

- Weeds can be anywhere on the Island as long as they are a threat to the National Parks.
- Tim would like the funding to be funneled through BIISC
- Target species would be identified from the BIISC list and systematic surveys would be conducted.

Frog Update (Earl Campbell)

- Jim Nakatani from the Department of Agriculture is supportive of the frog issue and has removed some of the obstacles for controlling the problem.
- Research results have demonstrated that the frogs are resistant to chemicals that are registered for pest control (ie insecticides etc.).
- Promising results have been found using caffeine and more field trials on a larger scale will be conducted in the near future using affected nurseries.
- There is a proposal in to the US Fish and Wildlife Service that may be funded
- The next step will include getting caffeine registered for control of frogs.
- Many calls have come in since an article was published in the Honolulu Star Bulletin and Posters have been put up
- 40 sites are now known where the frog occurs.
- 3 colonies are in Volcano...which pushes the populations beyond the elevations they have been found in their native range.

Fire Ant Update (Pat Conant)

- Pat needs help with baiting and surveys!
- The Alulike program will be assisting Pat later in the month
- Most of the control work has been concentrated in the nurseries that sell potted plants at the expense of work in the flower farms and the residential lots.
- Absentee land owners pose a problem for control
- A new bait will be tested, "Extinguish", in the mac nut farms.

Update from other invasive species committees (Joan Yoshioka and Joan Canfield)

- Joan Yoshioka is the chair of the newly formed OIISC
- The group stems from the Oahu fountain grass initiative
- Their first meeting was in June and Duane from BIISC and Randy Bartlett from MIISC attended the meeting to

help them move forward quickly.

- They will be looking to coordinate with other IISCs
- They have not prioritized their invasive species yet but will likely use the BIISC Strategic Plan as a model.
- MIISC had a “Miconia think tank” meeting as to how to use the funding best now that they feel eradication may not be practical.
 - Pampas grass is a big priority on Maui
 - It looks like MIISC will get some publicity at the next Hula Bowl held on Maui.
- CGAPS is the coordinating group for alien pest species
 - they have a new project to identify in a comprehensive way the alien species prevention and control program.
 - Their vision of success will include education, control and rapid response.
 - They will also be looking for sources of funding including proposals to various private foundations

BIISC Database and Mapping (Kealii Bio and Michelle Clapper)

- The results from the last meeting's “group mapping” were displayed
 - *Rubus ellipticus*, *Buddleia madagascariensis*, *Cortaderia spp.*
- Four more species were presented to the group for mapping
 - Rose myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*) is causing problems in Florida and is known to be found in Hilo.
 - Firethorn Bush (*Pyracantha angustifolia*) known from Volcano
 - Plume Poppy (*Bocconia frutescens*) known from Wood Valley and Waieka
 - Mysore Raspberry (*Rubus niveus*) Kulani, Nursery in Kona.
- The group is asked to fill out a BIISC Mapping Committee Report Form and return them to Kealii and or Michelle.

Reports from other BIISC Committees

- **Education Committee (Michelle Clapper)**
 - The ID cards are almost complete and a sample was passed around the group.
 - 17 priority species are included in the card set.
 - Production of the card set took 3 hours.
 - The EQUIP workshops were funded and BIISC will help coordinate the workshops with the various Soil and Water Conservation Districts.
- **Integrated Control Committee (Pat Conant)**
 - Pat passed out a report from the committee.
 - Phil Mootoka will not be retiring until 2003
 - Cooperative work on Maile Pilau with Bob Pemberton in Florida is assured
 - German Ivy control coordination is moving forward
- **Alternative Plant Materials**

Still no meeting or leader yet
- **Budget and Planning (Duane Nelson)**
 - Still waiting to hear about the NFWF funding

- **Miconia (Duane Nelson)**

- The meeting in Maui stressed that eradication on Maui and Hawaii Island does not seem likely. The Maui population is much larger than they originally thought.
- The group is strategizing as to how to contain the populations. Energy will likely be shifted to the edges of the populations.
- Biocontrol is going to have to be an important aspect of control
- They are on a 2 year schedule to revisit areas that have been eradicated as seeds can persist in the soil for up to 6 years.

Results from BIISC work day (Lyman Perry, Jeremy Gooding)

- A summary was passed out to the group
- There was generally good kill of the California Poppy at Hale Pohaku, but some follow-up treatment is needed
- There are approximately 25 plants left
- There is a population below Hale Pohaku on Parker Ranch that could be eradicated with the approval of the Ranch.

Other Business

- Francis Pacheco head of the Big Island Soil and Water Conservation Districts(SWCD) felt that they could look into funding sources for BIISC.
 - He felt the SWCDs would be a good avenue for the dissemination of information
- Duane needs help with Chairing BIISC and is looking for someone to volunteer as Vice-Chair

NEXT MEETING

August 25, 2000 Kona Ag Extension Office, Kainaliu (9:00 am -12:00 pm)