

BIISC Quarterly GENERAL Meeting Minutes: 29 April 2003  
DLNR - Hilo Forestry Conference Room

**Attendees:**

BIISC Staff: Greg Santos, Kim Tavares  
CGAPS: Christy Martin  
DLNR: Lyman Perry (DOFAW-Hilo), Mindy Wilkinson (Honolulu)  
HDOA: Patrick Conant  
KOEC: Julie Williams  
TNCH: Laura Nelson (BIISC Chair)  
UH-CTAHR: Debbie Ward  
USFS: Julie Denslow  
USGS-BRD: Kealii Bio, Jim Jacobi, Rick Warshauer

**Introductions**

Committee chair Laura Nelson (formerly Hillis) began the meeting with a warm welcome to everyone and special thanks to Christy Martin, who would talk about her role and CGAPS support for the ISC's, upcoming events, and publications discussion. Laura introduced Cheyenne Perry, the new field ops team leader. To accommodate latecomers who might not want to miss Christy's talk, Laura transitioned the floor first to Julie Denslow, for a Miconia steering group update.

**Report from the Field Operations Steering Group (Julie Denslow)**

Julie Denslow began with a brief summary of the steering groups' evolving course of action. Discussions were focused on the target project Miconia, recent field activities, and a proposal to quantify the projects' overall success. While the field crews continue to suppress Miconia along the East Hawaii high elevation perimeter, Julie has asked US Forest Service statistician Jim Baldwin to review the Miconia field data sets and to recommend a means to quantifying the projects overall success.

**Miconia Field Work Update (Cheyenne Perry)**

KMR: Crew worked with KMR/Army staff for one week. KMR will reimburse BIISC for the field crew time.

Makuu-Ainaloa: Primary worksite for the last several weeks. It is undeveloped forest land, adjacent to Ainaloa and Hawaiian Acres.

**Upcoming East Hawaii Miconia work (Cheyenne Perry)**

Haena: Cheyenne, Greg and Kim visited the Haena Miconia site with Shipman representatives, in preparation for upcoming work. The infestation core was monitored

and some mature sized trees were seen, but most plants at the core were immature. The objective is to find the northern-most extent of this infestation and to reduce it by conducting surveys and suppression away from the core. Haena work will be scheduled at about one day per week.

River drainage work is also planned, and will be conducted during dry weather. Next up for revisit are Akaka Falls, Kawainui (mauka), and the forests around previously killed mature Miconia trees at these sites.

Re-survey of the Ihope Road Miconia site is also being planned.

Rappelling: Preparations are being made to conduct rappel operations at Hakalau and Kapue. The National Geographic film crew is interested in filming these operations.

Cheyenne reports that he's also begun a Quality Assurance program to monitor herbicide efficacy and crew efficiency at recently completed sites.

### **LFA Activities (Pat Conant)**

BIISC crews are assisting more frequently now, to one or two worker-days per week. This makes it possible to suppress and possibly eradicate little fire ants at small populations where Amdro® can be used. The intent is to suppress the population to the point of non-existence at localized sites. It was recently discovered that the Amdro © label prohibits use in orchards, regardless of the season, as long as plants are of fruit-bearing age. This will adversely affect LFA suppression activities, so other approved options are now being explored.

The Hawaii Dept. of Health/Vector Control branch agreed to assist with Amdro© applications on the Big Island, but will not purchase the pesticide or conduct any surveys. HDOA papaya crews might be available to conduct much of the survey work on the Big Island, that needs to occur prior to applying Amdro © or other pesticides.

Pat reports that the ANT group is proposing a \$100K project to USFWS to conduct statewide Wasmannia surveys, and for suppression and eradication at select sites on the Big Island. If this project is awarded, full-time ant crews will be hired. This might change the current level of support BIISC is currently providing.

### **Upcoming West Hawaii Miconia and Bocconia plans (Greg Santos)**

Miconia: Honaunau and Honalo site revisits are pending.

Bocconia: Wood Valley, Honomalino, Manuka  
BIISC is working in partnership with Hawaii Volcanoes NP David Benitez, who has funds to begin mapping surveys for Bocconia. Most of the HAVO funds will go to helicopter surveys, and BIISC is contributing funds to hire temporary field workers to assist David. Surveys will be done in May and June. Isolated plants will be treated during the course of

the surveys, but in areas where many plants are found, surveyors will mark the populations and continue without treatments. It is still too early to check herbicide test sites. Greg and Phil Motooka will follow up. BIISC will report on survey results.

### **Personnel update (Greg Santos)**

The remaining three vacant positions were announced. Resumes were recently received, but some that were expected were not received.

### **Current Budget Status (Greg Santos)**

Greg circulated two sheets reflecting monthly costs for BIISC operations. One sheet reflects balances at current staffing levels, and the other with the three recently announced positions included. Both start with RCUH BSR balances from 31 March, 2003, and extend balances out until depletion, assuming no new infusions of funds. Figures not included are those that have not cleared RCUH yet, such as: the due reimbursement by the KMR project (the value of one crew-week), and the proposed HAVO Bocconia appropriation (not determined).

The BSR balance as of 31 March 2003 is \$274,069.66. This current money, with NO changes in staff, will last through October 2003. With the three new hires, dollars will last one month less, or through September. From there on, as the table reads, monthly overhead expenses including 11 personnel, some vehicles, supplies, etc. will average \$43,772 /month, beginning July 2003. It should be noted that this is a preliminary figure. An itemized budget should be produced prior to calculating the actual monthly expense figure.

Greg also distributed the latest ISC/CGAPS budget "By Source", for 2003. Questions related figures in this table were answered by Mindy, Christy, and Greg. Figures on this table are expected to vary in some cases, so it is too early to plan on the outcome.

Budget discussion moved to other current or projected needs. Vehicles were briefly discussed. USGS GSA Tahoe will soon be up for replacement, and part of the budget needs to be reserved for repair charges. The BIISC budget needs a way to reimburse USGS-BRD for GSA repairs to the Tahoe, since Jim's budget will ultimately be charged with the bill. About \$5K should be set aside for this purpose, and available to Jim when he needs it, say in helicopter time or other costs normally incurred by BRD and BIISC/OPMIC projects.

In all, it seems that the vehicle crisis is over for now, and there are even enough for the new team. Not enough to be able to turn back the GSA without a replacement, since there is always at least one or two in the shop for repairs. Mechanically sound vehicles would save a lot of time and money spent in fixing worn down equipment.

Office and baseyard space was discussed briefly. HDOA continues to provide space, but not without sacrifice. We're running out of room. BIISC needs new baseyard and

storage space for field crews, gear, and vehicles. Having BIISC admin and GIS staff working out of the HDOA plant quarantine facility is mutually beneficial, and should continue. Two 20-foot shipping containers belonging to HDOA are in Kona, and were offered to BIISC. One container will be moved to Hilo.

Resource requirements for Miconia containment were discussed. How, when will we know when there are enough resources? What size increase would make a difference? Kim offered that there are six districts on the island and that Miconia exists in three: Hilo, Puna, and Kona. Having a team for each district would be enough to suppress Miconia effectively, and then some. Discussions reverted back to funding needs and potential new sources.

Christy offers that Earl Campbell says there might be double the funding in upcoming FWS budgets that could accommodate BIISC rapid response needs. Pat asks whether FWS would fund the necessary pre-treatment surveys. Mindy replies, probably not since its purpose is to control incipient species. Actually, what gets funded will be determined after the proposals are in.

Greg asked for comment on whether the rest of the group supports requesting FWS to fund some of the mapping. Jim replied that perhaps new sources with different objectives be sought. Kamehameha Schools has an invasive species budget, and some of those funds may be qualified as match on some of the federal money. An internet link to a list of potential funding opportunities was discussed (and later distributed by Greg via email).

<http://www.epa.gov/watershedfunding>

A few suggestions for the eradication 1yr/100ac hit list were briefly discussed, i.e. rubbervine & Myrica cerifera. Laura said that about one day is all it needs right now. Pat suggested Myrica cerifera, since it exists naturalized on the new road above Komohana and no reported anywhere else. California poppies on Mauna Kea need to be monitored. A few other species could use a few field days for suppression. A process for quantifying resource needs must be worked out, but until it is, some carefully selected control work alternatives could make a substantial difference.

Mindy commented that for now, maybe BIISC could step back from control activities for incipient species and request that its share of rapid response funds be used toward a statewide need. Perhaps a proposal such as: “Due to the lack of distribution data BIISC has not defined any targets for eradication, therefore BIISC requests X-dollars be used instead to run species through the weed risk assessment process (WRA).” The committee could propose funding for one or two persons full-time to run species either found by surveyors or requested by BIISC members through the WRA, and share the list and results with invasive species managers statewide and the public. BIISC is also interested in reviewing the assessment questions, and compiling a list of suggested additions.

## **Diversification, New Species Resource Needs (All)**

The BIISC steering group recognizes an urgent need to inventory invasive species on the island. The challenge before BIISC is in securing the funds necessary to conduct thorough mapping surveys. Data from the surveys will help identify the islands' incipient invasive species, and separate them from the naturalized, or widespread problems that are beyond mechanical control, and provide a baseline of information for future funding proposals and actions.

Julie commented that another approach might be to look at buffering protected or special areas instead of individual plants or species. Another suggestion was to ask CGAPS to host a workshop to develop a statewide identification and selection process for eradication and suppression hit lists. Statewide invasive species programs could benefit by inviting colleagues from Australia or New Zealand to speak on the selection of action list (hit list) species in their countries. Jim Jacobi commented that while holding a statewide invasive species workshop would be a good thing, we don't have the resources to do it.

Laura noted that alternatively, BIISC might think about adopting an area qualification for eradicable species, say 100 acres or less to start. For example, eradicable targets could be those that can be completely surveyed and suppressed in 12 months or less. Pat Conant said that eradication really means suppression to the point of non-detection, and suggests "localized eradication" so that clearly defined sites (of 100 acres or less?) are rapid response, while bigger populations are suppression activities. The Ant group's FWS funding proposal is a model for this approach.

As a baseline for prioritizing targets during the interim, Laura asked BIISC members to examine the current suggested top 20 list. This list was compiled by Kealii Bio and Laura and derived from data collected during the highway weeds surveys. This list will go to press soon, as weed-ID cards and in the BIISC brochure, so the comment period on this draft will soon close. Pat Conant also suggested that BIISC evaluate each species on the target list individually for current status with regard to desired, proposed, or ongoing actions including comparing the current list to the most recent WRA results (attached). Jim agreed. Control action on these species depends on funding to expand on the initial surveys.

Jim noted that the highway weed survey is an important first step, but far from what needs to occur. It was designed to aid in the development of a spatial model, not a comprehensive island-wide inventory. The inventory is important data to pursue, and requires additional funds to support a team. Pat reiterated that it will probably require additional staff. Julie noted that having distribution information to report will help justify funding requests in the future. Laura will talk with Earl about the chance FWS funds could support some survey work.

Mindy acknowledged the Big Island need for additional mapping funds, in order to make good management decisions. She does not expect the FWS funding allocations to happen before the end of next month. \* Proposals for expanding rapid response capability for

incipient species and incipient populations of *Miconia* were submitted to Earl by Laura and Greg.

### **ISC Media Plan / Big Island Needs Discussion (Christy Martin)**

Christy introduced herself and explained her role and CGAPS role in ISC outreach and public information. The Big Island is the latest of stops in her statewide agenda to gather information and develop a plan to assist the ISC's with localized outreach and public information needs. Some goals are to attend quarterly BIISC meetings, promote ISC website development, and to design outreach media that is island-based and locally presentable, such as: presentation boards, posters, flyers, including some printing and materials costs. She spends a lot of time designing and providing outreach for various events. Conferences, species campaigns such as Brown Tree Snake, and person to person and legislator education.

Christy told the group about other statewide projects with which she is involved, such as seeing the WRA become regularly used to support ISC action planning and new legislation. It will obviously cost money to have one or two persons screening species as requested by the ISC's. Julie adds that three separate lists are planned: 1) Known invaders to environments found in Hawaii, 2) Potential threats, flagged species to continue monitoring, and 3) Cleared species, or those not considered potentially invasive. The objectives of the assessment still needs buy-in from the plant industry and the general public.

Christy also plans to spend time with field crews on each island to gain experiences that will be shared with legislators to justify requests. (On the day after this meeting she went out with *Miconia* crews in Hilo, to the low elevation isolated site "Haena"). Jim opened a discussion on the legislative strategy of this session. Several questions were addressed, such as: What is legislative education? How many bills were useful and what was supported? How were they chosen, what do they do? Which ones passed and what does that do for us?

Christy says that educating the legislature is at a very basic level. Biologically and economically, it's an uphill climb. She contacts them individually and frequently by telephone. She has been working on volumes of reports from each island, and recently completed a twenty-something page compiled summary on Hawaii Invasive Species Committees progress that will be distributed to legislators, chairpersons and supporters. The July to December 2002 report is complete, and she is already looking for more current data for the next report, January to June 2003. The constant contact and information sharing seems to be working. It's slow but it seems to be making a difference.

It was reported that Mark Fox (TNC) sent email out to the lists that began this year's legislative shuffle. It contained about 40 query results on the legislative web site for invasive species related proposed legislation. Christy mentioned that the encouraging thing about the length of the list was that most of it was self-generating legislation, by

concerned individuals, outside the ISC/CGAPS contact network. Greg, Mindy, Christy, and others got involved with consolidating some of the bills to match or include additional ISC requests. Some of the legislation came from non-managers and individuals desperate for solutions to pest problems and threats. These demands worked effectively to support ISC justifications. Support for invasive species management is in demand.

Mindy noted that the bill relieving property owners from liability while ISC crews, state employees and volunteers access property to conduct surveys and suppression had passed. This suggested legislation originated in the BIISC Hilo office, suggested by Greg Santos. Kim Tavares and others provided justifications and specific examples where this law would help operations. Mindy kept everyone up to date with hearings and testimony deadlines, and Christy keeps legislators and the Governor informed and educates them about management objectives and funding needs.

Christy remarked that this year CGAPS got a late start on the legislative trail, because she was hired when they were just about going into session. Next year she will have had time to prepare in advance, and new legislation could be proposed by CGAPS/ISCs.

### **BIISC PR and Educational Products (Christy Martin, Laura Nelson)**

Christy began by showing a color copy of the BIISC brochure produced by Laura. She remarked on the excellent format, and asked if she can use it to help the other island ISC's develop a similar product. Christy also noted that CGAPS has a budget for printing outreach publications. Laura is happy to have the format be used statewide, and urges committee members to provide comment on the currently listed species. Debbie Ward will work with Laura to see if the brochure species have been ranked by the WRA and add that qualification to the text before printing. As soon as the choices are agreed upon, they can be printed. It would be good to have them done before the annual Hawaii Conservation Conference.

Next discussion was about public display booths and portable display boards. Christy suggested she develop similar displays for all presenters to test out for functionality. After they are used and modified to perfection, then more permanent boards can be designed. The design would highlight statewide concerns along the perimeter, and center on each island's specific targets of concern. Kim offered that working pockets for literature into the design would be a plus for those outdoor, wind-blown events that occur from time to time. Christy will work with Kim on photos and text for the Big Island display.

Powerpoint presentations and other digital materials Christy produces will be updated and distributed quarterly or so. Island ISC's are encouraged to use them whole or in pieces, whenever they can be useful. Christy will send updates to Kim. Christy will also help island ISC managers prepare presentations for County councils and local government officials, and assist in presenting it if desired.

The statewide "Garden Thugs" media campaign is being developed and will include TV spots and other media. Mele Fong of MISC has been working hard with the web page

development committee to bring the ISC's to the public via the internet. The site design might be contracted out to a professional designer, then later updated by the ISC's, but none of this is finalized yet. Request updates from Christy via email. Christy is considering conducting a market survey to quantify the effectiveness of the various outreach media types and events. Lyman Perry suggested examining the Lake Wilson/Salvinia story more closely for tips on effective outreach strategies.

Laura began discussion about the BIISC weed identification cards. They are a product of USGS-BRD, Kealii Bio and the BIISC education committee, and are ready to be printed and distributed. Jim Jacobi would like to pass the file on to CGAPS for printing, but no funds were committed by Christy or CGAPS to produce the cards. Laura noted that three photos are needed to complete the full set, but that none of the missing photos are in the top-20.

Debbie Ward asked if it is possible to produce sets of the top-20. Mindy noted that the purposes and target audiences for the cards vary from island to island and even within island committees, the top-20 could mean different things to different audiences. The ID card sets could be more effective if mixed and matched to the target audiences. Eliminating non-applicable cards from the distribution of sets will save money in printing costs.

Jim suggested the group discuss who the first run of cards should be distributed to. Laura offered that most of that discussion was completed some time ago. Agriculture and forestry professionals, students and others who frequent roadless areas are among the target audience for the first printing run of top-20 targets. Debbie said it's possible for CTAHR to provide the printing of the cards, and may also be able to post them to the internet. She explained that there might be ownership issues, and Jim Jacobi is not opposed to UH taking lead credit, if that's what it takes to get them out. Laura will match the ID card species to the WRA list, and add text to the cards of species that were already screened. She will work with Kealii and Debbie to get them printed and posted to the internet.

A discussion began with comment on press coverage for the Big Island. Julie commented that more Miconia coverage would help draw attention to big ISC projects. Having more press coverage on BIISC would help the ISC's and BIISC partners like Kamehameha Schools gain recognition and support for projects that further ISC goals. Greg noted that BIISC could benefit by having an outreach position that develops and implements a comprehensive outreach plan.

Greg announced the National Geographic inquiry he recently received. A film crew is interested in producing a documentary on invasive species and biodiversity in Hawaii that will be done for National Geographic. Christy will take the lead on this, and coordinate logistics with Greg for the Big Island segments. The film crew is interested in Miconia control, rappelling, and helicopter observations. They might charter two helicopters so that one can follow and film the other. Debbie offers that perhaps DBEDT should also be contacted.

**Database update: (Kim Tavares)**

Kim reported that the database is improving all the time, but that getting it caught up and in a useful form will take special planning. It is impossible for Kim to do this without making some schedule changes. The issue was deferred, again.

**Direction of the Committee and future meeting agendas (Laura Nelson)**

Since very few people outside the steering group were actually present at this general meeting, it progressed much like a steering meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting the group discussed the differences between the BIISC general meeting and the steering group meeting, to see how they can be more clearly defined. Kim suggested taking budget talks out of the general meeting, because that seems to be the lead-in for ground work and steering decision discussions.

Laura asked the group for thoughts on membership drives. Do we want more partners at the table? Would it be good to invite community organizations, plant industry related folks, the general public concerned with invasive species? What is our objective when it comes to aquatic pests? Beating the bushes to find more meeting participants will take time, which no one seems to have at the moment.

**Next Meeting:**

Laura proposes holding quarterly BIISC general meetings, at locations revolving between Hilo, Kona, Waimea, and maybe Volcano. The next meeting will take place during the summer in Waimea. No date was set.

Jim recalled that there is a scheduled steering group meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, and suggested that it be cancelled since much of the business was discussed during this meeting. His suggestion was followed and the meeting was cancelled.