

Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC)

Approved Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 15, 2004
HDOA Conference Room
10:00 am to 12:00 noon

I. Introduce Guests/New Members

- New field Tech – Jin-Wah Lau – formerly of MISC
- Rob Hauff – DOFAW, Forest Health Coordinator – Honolulu
- Mark Imlay – visiting from Maryland

II. Review Agenda Items

- Keren is in Honolulu testifying for a congressional subcommittee.
- Add Marc Imlay to agenda.

III. Review and Approve Minutes from January 15 Meeting – Unanimously approved.

IV. Species Focus: Fountain Grass – Sarah Newton

Fountain grass is an ornamental bunch grass native to Africa. It is an aggressive invader, fire adapted, with wide elevational ranges. It is on the Hawaii State Noxious Weed list, and has been declared 'one of Hawaii's Most Invasive Horticultural Plants'. It spreads via wind blown seeds. It is not good fodder, damaging to pasture lands. Even goats don't eat fountain grass. It occurs on Maui, Big Island, and Oahu, and on Kauai in Kalaheo and Hanapepe. The Kauai infestation is about 30 acres, much of it is cliff on State land leased by Gay and Robinson, as well as some A&B land. It is spreading. We need to educate workers on Robinson land about fountain grass so they can look; herbarium specimens at NTBG could be helpful for that. It can be controlled by spraying with Roundup when there is green growth on the plant. Weed-eating and spraying is effective on at least one site on Big Island. [TF: Possible presence of T&E species on the infested cliff may introduce hurdles to control fountain grass.] [PM: question about introduction of erosion controlling plant on cliff], [CK: need to be careful about introductions, fireweed found in koa seedlings grown on Big Island moved to Oahu for outplanting], [TF: There were three new island plant records in hydro-mulch at Halfway Bridge that the fireweed came to Kauai in.] [SN: KISC and HDOA need to get going on fountain grass eradication because if it moves further west we are in trouble.]

V. Mark Imlay – Guest speaker representing KRCP Hui O Laka, Board Member of the Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council, Vice President of the Maryland Native Plant Society, Chair of the Biodiversity and Habitat Stewardship Committee for the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club. Also involved in FICMNEW (Federal Interagency Committee for the

Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds) a committee of seventeen federal agencies that cross budget, share information, work effectively together. Share national perspective: Site based vs. weed based approach, people have different focus. Need to have both approaches, if you remove one weed, another will come in. If you are trying to protect an endangered species, you need to control important invasives in that site. PREVENTION very important, NZ has done a great job with biosecurity and PREVENTION, screening between continents so as never to introduce invasives, EARLY DETECTION RAPID RESPONSE: Florida eradicated African Snail. EARLY PROTECTION, a new concept of protecting new areas of introduction from already well established (elsewhere) weeds.

S144 Craig Daschle bill: equally supported by environmental and economic interests. TNC is the prime mover on bill. This bill provides federal matching funds, run through states, for public and private lands. It provides \$800 million each year (\$100 million in first year). In-kind contributions would count \$15 for every hour of volunteer work. Hearing in committee, is April 29th. Need to support bill and get House support so bill will pass and Bush will sign. If passed, the fund would be in next fiscal year. Similar to NFWF Pulling Together. [PM: How much lobbying is being done by chemical companies?] [MI: Part of the bill is use of IPM (Integrated Pest Management); a combination of chemical, mechanical, biological controls. Four pronged spade fork helps pulling up seedlings, pulls up all the root fragments. [PM: So there is no requirement that you use chemicals?] [MI: You have to be effective and prove effectiveness using IPM, which may include the careful use of biodegradable, non-migrating herbicides.] Probably will pass, need to be prepared.

VI. Updates:

- KISC Activity Update and discussion –*Sarah*
Miconia – still number one target for KISC. We have been working in upper Opaeka'a drainage and found five large plants, one seeded, not spotted from helicopter. The newest seeded plant was found just off the East Kauai Irrigation co-op trail to the flume, among the hau bush. Many keikis are in the area. Entire Opaeka'a drainage will need transecting, and the terrain is extremely thick with hau and air yam. KISC wants to ramp up efforts on seed decontamination, purchasing clothing to be dedicated to Miconia since we will be working in new seed bank areas.

Arundo – Making good progress with the help of our new field crew. New method of cutting with power trimmer, then spraying the re-growth with Aquamaster appears to be effective. New populations discovered at Lawai, Omao, and Kekaha 1st ditch.

Ivy Gourd – Working away at periphery, and just starting into core, where the ivy gourd is very dense. Keikis discovered across highway near Anahola store.

Cattails – All small populations have been treated. Mapped population in Huleia NWR that USFWS is treating. Makaweli valley operation is coming up when weather dries out.

Fireweed – Still monitoring at Halfway Bridge, moved up to weekly surveys in section 5 since we were finding a lot of seeding plants. Craig found 17 plants in Kalihiwai the last time he was there.

Hiptage – KISC has surveyed in Kipu area, Grove Farm land makai and mauka of highway and Rice Ranch. The infestation area could be upward of 500 acres. [TF: populations at Olopua gardens and Omoe peak in Poipu. It is in full seed right now. Flowers are pale cream, yellow, or white.] Hiptage is labor intensive and hard to kill. Rice Ranch has tried several methods, none of which were particularly effective. It is spreading into pastures and old cane lands now that there is no more harvest. Need to map outliers.

Little Fire Ant - Big Island was awarded USFWS Incipient grant money to address LFA problem there. They found that the problem was already beyond eradication on BI, so the grant has been transferred to Kauai. About \$70K is left in grant. One field technician will be hired to conduct surveys and treatment of LFA populations on Kauai, and do outreach and education. The surveys involve distributing either vials of SPAM or peanut butter dipped chopsticks to attract ants. These baits are left out for an hour or more, then re-collected. If LFA are suspected, the ants are sent to Honolulu for ID. KISC and HDOA will be working with the field tech, providing admin support and possible data management. Mike Howell at CTAHR will be supervisor of this position. There is just one currently known population of LFA on Kauai, in Kalihiwai. The populations are coming from the Big Island in nursery shipments. [AR: only bare-root shipments of plants should be allowed. “Red Ant Free” certification is not likely as nurseries are fighting the “Coqui free” certification. We should look at getting more locally grown of landscape plants for Kauai, to avoid these inter-island pest-shipping issues. This could be a great opportunity for local growers.]

Mongoose – On Feb. 23rd, a mongoose was reported on Kauai. This report was publicized and several more mongoose reports came in. KISC set trap-lines at two sites, and caught no mongoose. KISC also enlisted the help of a dog specially trained to hunt mongoose, but inclement weather and a lack of really fresh sightings impeded progress. We will try this tool again if given the opportunity. Mongoose management is an issue on Kauai and there needs to be a plan in place.

- Coqui Control in Lawai – *Craig*
Population in Lawai: 25 frogs calling, but hard to count because the call echoes. Don't want people going down there on their own, moving frogs around. Females lay clutches of 30-40 eggs. Most will hatch. Craig

thinks that a clutch of eggs hatched in February and those are the frogs we are hearing now. Before treatment last year there were at least 200 frogs. Now, a frog crossed the road, 200ft. away from the rest of the frogs. Eric caught the frog, but perhaps there was a female and she laid eggs. They have heard seven different calls that the frogs make. In 2001 someone reported a coqui frog population on the north shore, but nobody seems to have heard them since then. Another report in Kalihiwai has come in; we need ears to listen for frogs in these areas. Goal is to eradicate frogs in Lawai. Right now 50 – 80% of Craig's job is corn certification. There was supposed to be another position for corn in commodities, but there is no funding right now for that position. Craig and Eric are working on weeds, bio-control, frogs; they have a full plate of activities. [AR: Has this Lawai nursery been affected?] [CK: Nursery is not moving any plant material right now.] KISC is buying citric acid for operations. USDA funds ran out, so just HDOA and KISC are working on this pest.

VII. New Items:

- Mongoose report – *Sarah* – see above for summary
- Expanding capabilities with HISC funding – *Allan*
HISC asked for \$5 million a year for four years for invasive species. The House approved it for \$4 million, but raided NARS fund for \$2million, with the other \$2 million coming out of the general fund. This could mean a large crew for KISC.
- New home for KISC – *Sarah* – KISC is outgrowing our current home at KCC and base-yard space at HDOA. We need to find a new facility. We are currently looking at the Papaya Disinfestation Plant on Ahukini Road, near the airport. This facility would be perfect for KISC.
- LRFA funding to Kauai/ new tech position – *Sarah*- see above for summary.

VIII. Announcements:

- Garden Fair April 24th
- Earth Day Fair April 24th
- Display at Princeville Library month of May
- Conservation Conference June 29-30
- KRCP is hiring a field technician, one full time, and possibly one part time. Also looking for six interns for the summer. Housing provided.

IX. Next Meeting – Thursday, July 15

Attendees: Allan Rietow (KISC Chair, TNC), Rob Hauff (DOFAW), Tim Flynn (NTBG), Jin-Wah Lau (KISC), Bobby Gomez (KISC), Jeri Ooka (CTAHR-UH), Paul Massey, Jan Surface (Hanalei Watershed Hui), Ellen Coulombe (KRCP),

Kekoa Aana (KISC), Craig Kaneshige (HDOA), Mike Hawkes (USFWS), Sarah Newton (KISC), Mark Imlay (FICMNEW).

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