

**MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2001  
9:00 AM - 12:00 NOON**

ATTENDANCE: Don Reeser, Mele Fong, Fred Kraus, Philip Thomas, Lloyd Loope, Renate Gassman-Duvall, Forest Starr, Kim Martz, Les Matsuura, Pat Bily, Anne Carter, Fern Duvall, Christy Martin, Hans Schopen, Jack Peterson, Randy Bartlett, Elizabeth Anderson, Dr. Fern Van Sant, Glynnis Nakai, Ryan Stewert, Sharon Souza, Mike Richardson, Bob Hobdy, Mike Walker

? Call to Order by Randy Bartlett; MPC/Chair at 9:20am

VISITOR INTRODUCTION & PRESENTATION (Dr. Fern Van Sant)

- ? Dr. Fern Van Sant of Maui Animal Rescue and Sanctuary was introduced. Dr. Van Sant came to the meeting to give us an introduction to the Maui Animal Rescue and Sanctuary and discuss the parrot problems we have on Maui and how the Sanctuary might be able to help us. Evonne Austin is president of the organization; she lives on-site at the Sanctuary in Haiku. Dr. Van Sant is an avian veterinarian. She was approached by the Sanctuary to set up a rescue organization and sanctuary for companion parrots where the quality of life of the individual bird comes first.
- ? In the last 10 years a huge aviculture industry has developed. Common parrots tend to have a "limited shelf-life." Most owners decide to get rid of the birds at a certain point and this has resulted in parrot rescue becoming a significant problem. Dr. Van Sant's practice reaches out to the companion bird owner and attempts to find solutions for the abandoned birds. She hopes the development of this sanctuary will serve as a tool for education to hopefully put a dent in the problem. She has developed a fairly sophisticated method for caring for companion birds and recently published a standard of care for the Maui Animal Rescue and Sanctuary. Disease control is a high priority --- aviculture practices with overcrowding have allowed some really bad viruses to take hold in bird populations. She is also concerned with the issue of the wild capture of parrots for the pet trade.
- ?? The Sanctuary just recently became aware of the feral conure problem here on Maui and would like to offer some solutions to the problem. If it is decided that the feral parrots must be removed from the wild, the Sanctuary would like to offer some alternatives to taking them out by force. Dr. Van Sant is very familiar with the issue of feral parrots in other areas. California has given them resident alien status and has opted to let them stay in the wild. She realizes the situation in Hawaii is quite different because of the native species issues here. Small conures are phenomenally adaptable.
- ? Dr. Van Sant is aware that we are looking at the conures now because the numbers are small enough that we can realistically do something. She has contacted friends (Charlie Munn, Jamie Gilardi) who are parrot field biologists for advice. Jamie has offered to assist us in coming up with a plan. Conures are saps for free food, which makes capture possible. The Sanctuary is prepared to house the birds and allow them to live as a communal flock in a half-acre enclosure. They are staunch supporters of not breeding these birds and have the well being of the parrots at heart. The foundation is well funded and can easily support this project and offer us this option, which should be well received by the public.

- ? They are also aware that there are some cockatoos in the wild --- they would likely be much easier to capture. If we choose to accept the Sanctuary's help, they are willing to expand their efforts past Maui.
- ? Fred asked how many birds the Sanctuary could accommodate. Dr. Van Sant replied that the Sanctuary is planning to lease an adjacent parcel of land on which they could build large enclosures. They are investigating both zoo mesh and phantom mesh to see if they will work for the enclosures. They have already negotiated the lease of a 1/4 -1/2-acre area specifically for the conures. The Sanctuary has roughly 70 birds right now and could probably accommodate approximately an additional 50 birds. We are invited to come out and see the facility.
- ? Fred then asked for details on the type of education programs they are focusing on. Dr. Van Sant indicated that their primary goal is addressing the issue of the burgeoning unwanted parrot industry. They hope to address the folks that don't have parrots yet. Most birds are purchased on an impulse by people who know very little about caring for them. They hope to get information to consumers before they buy birds. They are also trying to address change in the industry, especially retail and marketing. The parrot-owning public can become a vehicle to promote conservation in the wild. Dr. Van Sant also gave an evening educational program for parrot owners at Dr. Kehler's veterinary office in Kihei. Everyone attending received a coupon for a free exam for his or her bird. She spent two days doing one-on-one education with the owners.
- ? Fern brought up the issue that our real concern is an alien species in the Hawaiian ecosystem. The conures are long-lived and difficult to capture. We have an expanding population and there is serious concern regarding the potential interaction of the birds with miconia. Our end goal is the removal of most/all of the birds from the wild. We need to evaluate what avenues are available, what the best method of control is, etc. If they can be conservatively controlled that is good, but there is a lot of urgency to the issue. We need to really assess how many birds the Sanctuary could accommodate. We need to see a proposal from the Sanctuary and timeliness is important. The education and future prevention plans are great, but we need to deal with the situation now.
- ? Renate brought up a question regarding quarantine. There are special rules for filtering air. Mitered conures can range up to 3000m elevation. Does the Sanctuary have quarantine in place? Dr. Van Sant responded that the birds would be in effect in quarantine in situ forever. Renate countered that some viruses are airborne and this could be a risk to native species, to the other parrots at the Sanctuary, and to the poultry industry. Dr. Van Sant replied that if they were able to capture the birds, they would screen them. Renate asked how many birds they would be able to take in and Dr. Van Sant replied that they had so far been working with a round number of 50. She has been out in the area talking to people and so far it sounds to her like there are no more than 40 birds.
- ? Anne asked about the Sanctuary funding and potential longevity. The birds are long-lived. What sort of guarantee is there that the Sanctuary will continue? Dr. Van Sant answered that the Sanctuary is set up to be privately funded into the foreseeable future and also set up to take directed donations. There is an endowment that is fairly substantial and their operating budget for the last fiscal year was \$1 million. All the birds are in her name. There is a limit of course to the number of birds and if we find there are more populations we would have to be creative.

- ? Philip added that it is nice to hear that the Sanctuary understands the native species issues. He asked if they do work with us, would they be committed to eradication of the wild population. What would happen if it becomes difficult to catch the last few birds? He also expressed concerns regarding the potential for the birds to escape if there was a severe storm or related event. Dr. Van Sant responded that she is here to offer any help possible. The decisions are ours to make. They would make every effort to capture all the birds. This is a point she needs to run by Bruce and Evonne. Escape is definitely an issue of concern. They think the phantom mesh is excellent and would minimize this concern.

#### PARROT UPDATE (Renate Gassmann-Duvall/Anne Carter)

- ? The final report is not finished yet. It should be finished in two weeks. Anne and Renate had hoped to wait until Mike Avery came so they could discuss some issues with him before completing the report. They have a poster accepted for the July Conservation Conference in Hilo.
- ? Future recommendations for parrot work on Maui include conducting a parrot survey in Hana proper and West Maui, a mitered conure stakeout with a large group of people in Huelo to really get a handle on the numbers (150-200 is the current estimate), getting a clearer picture on the breeding season, mapping the cliff area where the conures are and hiring someone to rappel down and get closer to the roosting area, production of an educational film, creation of a flyer for pet trade owners, and development of a poster for schools on the parrot issue.
- ? The new handbook on alien species under production by the Bishop Museum will have a section on the conures.
- ? Anne visited the APHIS office in Colorado recently and met with Mike Avery. She was able to ask him some questions. Hopefully Mike will be coming to Maui in early May to meet with us. His experience could be very helpful.
- ?? Renate and Anne are no longer employed by MISC --- their term has expired. We need to make some decision regarding finishing up the parrot work and their future employment. Anne and Renate need to be compensated for the work they are doing. We need a specific idea of amount of time, cost, etc. and then it was agreed we will look into doing a contract with them this time.
- ? Renate raised a concern regarding confusion in the community with various parties coming around asking about the conures. They might close off and say enough is enough --- we need to be very careful. Dr. Van Sant asserted that the people she has spoken to have been very open and that she is being very low key and just asking for information on where the birds are.
- ? Fern reiterated that we need to get a proposal from the Sanctuary that can be reviewed by Mike Avery. We need to be careful that whatever we do doesn't splinter the birds and we need to move on this as soon as possible. We will ask Dr. Van Sant for a proposal by the end of April. We want methods of control outlined, how long it would take them, etc.
- ? It needs to be very clear in the public eye that this is a joint mission between MISC and the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary could be a good long-term ally.

- ? Renate added that it would be good if we could get a computer simulation on how the population could increase in “x” number of years. Fred suggested that if we have the basic data we might be able to get David Duffy to do this for us.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

- ? Minutes from the January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved. They will be posted on the HEAR website.

### **BUDGET/FUNDING REPORTS**

#### **Coordinator's Status Report (Jack Peterson, MISC)**

- ? We haven't heard anything new regarding the NFWF 2001 proposal since the last meeting. NFWF may not have the funds to give us this year. It is very unlikely we will get funding from them. They will be looking at smaller proposals. The decision should be made by end of March. While Steve and Jeremy were in Denver last month they met with someone on the NFWF committee who had our proposal in hand and wanted to see our letters of support. NFWF has been happy with our progress reports and work. The final report is due and we are almost ready to send it out.
- ? The MISC Action Plan for 2001 has been completed. Vertebrates have been added and copies were delivered to the legislature. The plan will be available on-line soon.
- ? New funding became available in our RCUH accounts in February (including \$70,000 from the Forest Service, \$46,000 from FWS, and \$117,000 from the State). We currently have approximately \$309,000 available in various accounts. We had some cash flow issues the last couple of months. The funds we had available were in accounts dedicated to specific purposes (i.e. PR and data technician salaries and salary pay-back from other projects), but we ran short on money available for supplies, gasoline, the phone bill, etc.
- ? We are still anticipating a shortfall in funding this year of approximately \$100,000.
- ? The Forest Service has agreed to give us \$60,000 as long as we can make the match (we put in for \$110,000). If all we receive from the Legislature is \$60,000, we have just about enough to continue at our current level controlling plant targets. We can't be effective at stopping miconia or frogs at this level. We need an estimated \$100,000 for vertebrate work - our plant work will suffer accordingly if we use existing funds for vertebrate work.

#### **Hana Crew Budget Status Report (Sharon Souza, RC&D)**

- ? Christy and Sharon went to testify before the County Council regarding the CBDG block grant. We are still being considered for funding this year. Lloyd also testified at the County Council. There were some sympathetic people on the council.
- ? Last year we received \$100,000 from the County Council, which will last us until June. We still have \$50,000 from The Water Department and we are hoping for another \$100,000 from them this year.
- ? Crew management and working conditions are much better through the support of Bob and Glenn.

The construction of a two-vehicle garage for the truck and supplies is just about done and we've had no recent Workers Compensation cases.

- ? The question about MISC becoming a 501(c)3 organization was raised again. Randy said that we are still considering the possibility, but want to wait and see how the West Maui Watershed Partnership one goes first
- ? There was a discussion about the possibility of moving the RC&D funds to the MISC PCSU operating budget. This would consolidate miconia efforts on east Maui and give better benefits to crew. The management is becoming too much for RC&D. Sharon mentioned that the idea still needs to be presented to their board.
- ? Randy questioned Bob regarding his thoughts about having the Hana crew managed out of MISC. Bob responded that they would need to think through all the changes that would mean and what level of support DOFAW would continue to supply they if they weren't directly involved. Randy countered that the support could be considered part of DOFAW's in-kind match. Bob will report back on this issue by next meeting.

#### **Legislative Update** (R. Bartlett, MPC Chair)

- ? None of the bills we are concerned with have gone past the finance committees and they have all ended up coming down to the last days of the conference committees. We have some support, but not with the people that control the money. They can't do anything unless we have more public support.
- ? There is \$400,000 total in the Governor's line item budget. Half line item in the Governor's budget is for four new DLNR employees to help the ISCs. This will only leave \$200,000 statewide to cover everything else.
- ? There is still an outside chance to bump up some funding. It is going to be tight, but it always is. We need to bump up the legislative acknowledgment of invasive species issues and we need more public support. By mid-April we need as many letters to the editor as possible. Christy and Randy have gone door to door --- we've done what we can at the Legislature. The Legislature pays a lot of attention to the media so we need a flood of individual letters as tax-payers and citizens. We especially need to flood the Honolulu newspapers. Randy is putting together talking points that will go out next week.
- ? We have an ISC-wide proposal together for FWS.
- ? The CGAPS coordinator should be hired soon and half of the person's job will be grant-writing for the ISCs.

#### **PR/EDUCATION STATUS REPORT** (Christy Martin, MISC)

##### **News Media**

- ? There will be a press release coming out from CGAPS soon on the miconia situation. Yesterday a press release went out on the coqui frogs on Oahu.

- ? Christy had the opportunity to go on a hike with TNC and folks from NFWF (including the new director for NFWF) and Washington D.C. Senate staff at Hosmer Grove. They had a quick chance to plug invasive species.
- ? The Hula Bowl played our PSA early during the hula show at the stadium. The miconia spot showed up at a good time and we've gotten comments on it. The 30-second commercial was aired on National/International ESPN. We ended up with three PSAs we can use again. This is not something we would consider doing again.
- ? Renate mentioned that there was an excellent article on frogs in Hawaii in a premier German paper. She read excerpts to the group --- it was very well written.
- ? A tape of our Alien Species Forum will be aired on Akaku starting today at 1pm. It will also aired on April 5 at 11am, April 9 at 9pm, April 19 at 8:30pm and on a regular basis after that.
- ? Christy, Steve, and Jeremy gave a presentation for the Kula Community Association. They had an excellent response and we can be on their agenda any time we want.
- ? Fred and Christy spoke at The Hotel Engineers Association meeting. Philip and Christy gave a presentation at the Maluhia Ranch Acres Homeowners Association meeting.
- ? Christy set-up a booth at the Haiku Flower Festival and gave out a lot of miconia and frog fliers.
- ? Philip noted that The Maui Association of Landscape Professionals offered a native plant landscaping tour at Wailea Point. The tour was well attended by a statewide audience of landscapers.
- ?? Philip also added that there was Arbor Day tree giveaway meeting. Hawaiian Electric Company has produced a publication called "The Right Tree in the Right Place." The trees given away at Arbor Day this year will only be those listed in the book.

EPA FIRE ANT FUNDING PROPOSAL (Lloyd Loope, USGS/BRD)

- ? We asked for \$206,000 statewide and received \$155,000 effective July 1.
- ? California is still aiming for eradication of fire ants. The recent invasion (discovered February 2001) of Australia by the red imported fire ant (RIFA) in the Brisbane area (probably from a shipment from the southern U.S.) gives Hawaii an idea of the capacity needed for rapid response in such a crisis. Within a month after the discovery, the authorities had responded to over 5000 phone calls and confirmed 80 sites with RIFA through on-the-ground visits. Eradication, though a long shot, is being attempted aggressively. An excellent website allows one to keep up with what is happening: <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/health/3125.html>
- ?? New Zealand also discovered (and destroyed) a RIFA nest at the Auckland airport in February 2001. They may have been successful in eradicating them for now.

## OTHER NEW BUSINESS

- ?? Fred informed the group that as part of continuing effort to educate nursery folks on plant screening there will be a one day workshop on the threats posed by invasive landscaping plants in Honolulu in late June. Speakers will be needed.
- ?? Randy indicated that it is be time for another Statewide Miconia Think after the legislative session is over --- sometime in early June. We should discuss this in detail at the next meeting. Maybe we should have it on Maui this year.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

**See the attached Activity Summary for an overview of the MISC crew's schedule since the last meeting.**

## PLANT UPDATES (Jack Peterson)

### **Miconia Peripheral Populations**

- ? We hope within the next two weeks to have a Maui Miconia Think Tank meeting here at MISC.
- ? The miconia situation is much worse than we thought. We have been focusing on the Hana area recently and the more we look the more we find. The results of two aerial recons (one at Moomoonui and one mauka of the Hana core) were displayed on maps distributed to meeting attendees.
- ? The crew spent 13 days including 2 helicopter operations on miconia since the last meeting. We have another week of work planned with the park SWAT team and we have two spray operations scheduled. We continued sweeps in upper and lower Nahiku and Hana Ranch (mauka). The Moomoonui area is badly infested and about 1/3 are flowering. We hope to hit all the Moomoonui seeding trees from a helicopter as the terrain is very steep and rugged.
- ? We did some data gathering and control transects (see map) above the Hana core. Two transects mauka/makai with sampling stations at regular intervals yielded 54 seeding trees (129 plants total). One day of sweeps in the upper reaches of old Hana Ranch pastures yielded 52 seeding trees.
- ? Pat offered some good news on Miconia. He checked out Iao Valley and found nothing

### **Miconia Hana Crew** (Bob Hobdy; DOFAW)

- ? From October 23 to January 31 the Hana crew treated 43 acres of Miconia. In the last four years 1766 acres have been treated. They have been averaging about 400 acres a year.

### **Pampas Grass**

- ?? The crew spent 7 days working on pampas grass since the last meeting. One final helicopter spray operation for this season controlled all the known pampas in the Honomanu watershed. GPS navigation by waypoints took us back to all plants we knew of.

### **Fountain Grass**

?? Three days were spent on fountain grass since the last meeting. The crew revisited Maui Lani and found 61 plants in Waiehu Dunes. They also did one rappel and spray operation at Kahakuloa. Hans was on the rope for two hours.

### **Ivy Gourd**

?? The crew spent 7 days working on ivy gourd since the last meeting. They revisited sites in Kapalua and have permissions pending for new sites in Kahului.

?? Christy went on an ivy gourd field trip in Kihei with Lloyd, Forest, and Kim. MISC has been going door-to-door and checking backyards. The front-yard surveys have only documented about a tenth of the total ivy gourd found through the more intensive surveys.

### **Other Species**

?? The crew spent one day on rubber vine in the Hana area.

?? Hans looked into some parrot reports in the Hana area (Koki Beach and Uluiho Road), but didn't find anything.

### VERTEBRATE UPDATES

#### **Caribbean Frogs (F. Kraus)**

? Things have been stalled for the last month and a half because there was nowhere to conduct the caffeine field trials. The landowner with the largest infestation on the Big Island has decided to cooperate so hopefully the trials will start soon. If all goes well, we should have EPA registration of caffeine as a ranicide by Aug/Sept.

? Lloyd and Steve put together an NPS proposal for regional funding for frog work. The project was approved for one year with funding of \$85,000. We should be able to hire two people to start as soon as we have EPA registration of caffeine as a ranicide.

? There is a population of coqui on Oahu. Five of six known individuals have been caught.

#### **Saffron Finch (F. Duvall)**

? Nothing new to report. Fern could use some assistance. Forest agreed to help set-up and monitor mist nets.

### OTHER BUSINESS

? Philip mentioned that Friends of Haleakala is donating \$500 worth of copies of "Nature out of Place." We need to come up with a list of legislators and other key people to deliver the books to.

**Next Meeting Date/Time: Friday, 5/11/01, 9am-12noon (NOTE CHANGE)**

## **M.I.S.C. Activity Schedule**

## Jan. 12 to March 23, 2001

- 1/12: MISC Meeting
  
- 1/15: HOL: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday  
TNC/NFWF/Senate Committee/MISC hike: Hosmer's Grove
- 1/16: Data/Decon., Planning/Errands
- 1/17: Pampas: Residential - Kula Revisit (Dig/Haul)  
Heli-Ops: Spray - Honomanu Pampas
- 1/18: Fountain Grass: Kahakuloa Rappel
- 1/19: Pampas: Residential - Kula Revisit (Dig/Haul)  
Heli-Ops: Recon - Moo Moo Nui Miconia
- 1/20: HULA BOWL
  
- 1/22: Data, maintenance
- 1/23: Errands, facility repairs, maintenance
- 1/24: Ivy Gourd: Lahaina  
MoMISC meeting (Molokai)
- 1/25: Fountain Grass: Waiehu Sweeps, Kahakuloa Prep, Errands/Gear
- 1/26: Fountain Grass: Spray - Waiehu and Maui Lani, Errands
  
- 1/29: Miconia: Hana Core Filming
- 1/30: Heli-Ops: Recon - Mauka Hana Core/Moo Moo Nui Miconia (LZ's)  
Ivy Gourd: Residential Haiku  
Discovery Channel Filming: Frogs at Howards (pm)
- 1/31: Ivy Gourd: Kahului, New sites GPS and ID Landowners  
Planning/Errands  
Discovery Filming (MISC baseyard)
- 2/1: Miconia: Lower Nahiku Sweeps  
Interviews for new Field Crew position
- 2/2: Miconia: Lower Nahiku Sweeps
  
- 2/5: Alien Species Forum Prep, Data/Decon.
- 2/6: Interviews for new Field Crew position, Maint./Errands  
Alien Species Forum P.M.
- 2/7: Ivy Gourd: Pua Mana and Kapalua Sites
- 2/8: Ivy Gourd: Kapalua "Iron Wood Rd"
- 2/9: Office/Maint./Decon./Errands
  
- 2/12: Wilderness First Aid Training (HALE)
- 2/13: Wilderness First Aid Training (HALE)
- 2/14: Miconia: Cancelled (weather)  
Errands/Decon./Maint.
- 2/15: Rappel Refresher Training  
Kula Community Association Meeting (Christy, Steve, Jeremy)
- 2/16: Crew on AL, Jack on AL until 3/22
  
- 2/19: HOL: George Washington's Birthday

- 2/20: Pampas: Rice Park, GPS Kula Locations, Errands
- 2/21: Ivy Gourd: Kapalua w/Hank O.  
Hotel Engineers Association meeting (Fred, Christy, Teryl Vencel, etc.)
- 2/22: Miconia: Nahiku - J. Eliot's Sweeps
- 2/23: Miconia: Lower Nahiku Sweeps
  
- 2/26: Bronco/Van Work, Data/Decon., Errands
- 2/27: Miconia: Upper Nahiku Sweeps w/Eddie Olivera and Wolfgang
- 2/28: Miconia: Upper Nahiku Sweeps  
Maluhia Ranch Acres Association meeting (Christy, Philip)
- 3/1: Miconia: Lower Nahiku Sweeps
- 3/2: Bronco Work, Prep for Miconia Trip
  
- 3/5: Rubber Vine: Hana Residential  
Set up Camp at Kipahulu
- 3/6: Miconia: Hana Ranch Mauka, 1<sup>st</sup> leg of Transect Completed
- 3/7: Miconia: Weather bad for Transect-Worked Hana Ranch Seed Trees  
Hans-Parrot Survey: Koki Beach/Uluino Rd. - None seen
- 3/8: Miconia: Weather bad for Transect-Worked Hana Ranch Seed Trees/Cinder Pit  
Christy, Hans-P.R. work on Kipahulu Pampas and Hana/Nahiku Miconia
- 3/9: Miconia: Crew & Christy Hana Ranch Seed Tree Recon.  
Break Camp
- 3/10: Haiku Flower Festival: MISC booth by Christy
  
- 3/12: Miconia Decon.  
Pampas: Residential - Kula (B. Johnson)
- 3/13: Pampas: Residential - Crater Rd. Revisit; (Dig/Haul)
- 3/14: Ivy Gourd: Kihei w/Christy
- 3/15: Helicopter Water Ditching Training-Kihei Aquatic Center
- 3/16: Data/Decon., Prep for Hana Trip  
Ryan Stewart official start- Field Crew member
  
- 3/19: Prep/Plan for Hana Trip, Set up in Hana
- 3/20: Miconia: Hana Ranch Mauka, 2<sup>nd</sup> leg of Transect, Recon.
- 3/21: Break Camp and Return, Data/Decon.  
Hans GPS Pampas/Ivy Gourd Sites
- 3/22: Data/Decon., Planning  
Jack Back
- 3/23: M.I.S.C. Meeting

