

MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Friday, January 16, 2004

Attendance: Pat Bily, Fern Duvall, Lloyd Loope, Mach Fukada, Nathan Varns, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Teya Penniman, Mike Walker, Lance Tanino, Randy Bartlett, Elizabeth Anderson, Mike Ade, Jin-wah Lau, Rhyn Davies, Elizabeth Speith

- Randy Bartlett called the meeting to order at 9:20 am.
- Minutes from the December 12, 2003 meeting were approved. They will be posted on the website.
- Teya gave a brief overview of the progress made on MISC's action items since the last meeting. During past meetings we have gone through each category in the agenda and addressed the relevant action items. This approach has been limiting our time for discussion. We are trying a new strategy and will be sending out a summary of where we are on the different items prior to our regular meetings. Please let us know if this new tactic works. Feedback and suggestions for making our meetings more productive are appreciated.

BUDGET/FUNDING/REPORTS STATUS

MISC/MoMISC Budget Updates (Teya Penniman/Elizabeth Anderson)

- Elizabeth: our new FY04 Forest Service/State allocation is in and available for use. We are almost finished spending down our 4th year NFWF grant and FY03 OED funding and the NPS frog account closed out at the end of December.
- Teya: our FY04 OED grant was finally assigned a number and we are moving forward on having that money become available. We will initially be getting \$150,000 out of the original \$200,000 award. An additional \$35,000 may become available in March. They are definitely going to hold \$15,000 for banana bunchy top work on Maui. Randy: the money will be going to HDOA. Forest: they could eradicate bunchy top, but they said there was no industry on this island. Lloyd: it is important for us to understand where the bunchy top money is going. More information on the activities and progress of the fireweed project would be helpful. Nathan: Monnie said they will probably fund fireweed again next year but will do it separately from MISC. Forest: fireweed is not eradicable, but bunchy top could be contained or eradicated. Mach: if it became an eradication program, we could gain access.
- Lloyd: if the \$15,000 were given to MISC, would MISC be willing to do the bunchy top work? Mach: the person we really need to talk to is Bob Yonahara. He is doing the follow-up work now. Teya: it doesn't sound like enough funding to do the job - \$15,000 is not enough to even hire an additional person. Mach: my guess is that the funds will go to CTHAR. Forest: biologically we can get the bunchy top, but it is an HDOA issue and not really part of MISC's mission. Lloyd: in Maui County MISC is regarded as the group that does this sort of thing. Randy: we need to make it clear that we are not a clearing-house for every little thing that shows up. Teya: this is a bigger focus question for MISC. We set priorities within the plant and vertebrate groups. We haven't made a statement that we are non-agriculture. Agricultural land is just as likely to experience invasions. Fern: the mandate for HDOA to deal with banana bunchy top is clear. The fact that they are not doing it is not a MISC issue. Forest: MISC was created because there were mandates that were not being fulfilled within HDOA and other agencies. I believe people want to call one number no matter what the problem is. Fern: the role MISC could play is to funnel issues like this out to CGAPS. MISC could resolve to contact CGAPS. Randy: historically our bias is towards invasives that threaten natural areas. Informally we do serve as advisors to Maui County. Teya: we will have an opportunity to clarify our role soon. We need to do a general presentation to the County.
- Pat: how is the fireweed funding spent? Teya: there is one contractor, Mid-Pacific Pest Control, hired by the Cattlemen's Association. Pat: wouldn't it be good for MISC to talk with the contractor? Teya: we

have invited them to meetings. Elizabeth: we did have a meeting with them a little over a year ago. There are summary notes from the last meeting available. Teya: we should invite them to our next regular meeting so we can get an update before we go before the County Council. Pat: there really hasn't been a lot of publicity regarding fireweed.

Funding Updates (Teya)

- Teya: we submitted a proposal for \$100,000 to CDBG. We won't know for a while if we are awarded anything. We need to do a couple of updates for them. A big Thank-you goes out to Nathan and Tri-Isle for their help with CDBG.
- There has been a great deal of publicity regarding the \$5 million DLNR request for invasives funding. They have a specific budget going forward. It is not clear how much would funnel through to the ISCs. At this point we have no idea what it would actually translate into on the ground.
- County Councilmember Bob Carroll has taken a very proactive approach in attempting to generate funds for coqui work. He will be going to the State and County trying to put together \$500,000. This would be separate from the DLNR package. We are working on a proposal for him. Fern: there were coqui in Hana twice near the church. Both times they were taken care of. Randy: Ed Case is doing a community meeting on Maui on January 31. We need to ask him for frog funding as well.
- Teya: I've also spoken with HCF. There is a natural resource grant program proposal deadline at the end of this month. I ran the hunter education idea by them and they weren't thrilled. They are interested in more on-the-ground activities. This is the last shot at HCF funding for now since Hewlett and Packard have pulled out their funds. We are looking for creative ideas. There will not be a lot of funding available – maybe the \$20-30,000 range. They want to see something that translates into on-the-ground accomplishments. It is worth going for a last bit of funding from them. Our past HCF funding has been for support of the Data Specialist position. They are willing to look at separate ISC proposals now that the old grant is pau.
- Elizabeth: the park is also working on a new Cooperative Conservation Initiative (CCI) proposal. CCI money is partially funding the Hana miconia operation right now. They are looking at putting in another request for ~\$250,000 with MISC as the non-Federal match.
- We also have five proposals out to private foundations for funding for the Hoike o Haleakala high school environmental education curriculum. The proposals are going out through Tri-Isle and we are very grateful for their support. The park is not able to fully support the project at this time so we have formed an informal steering committee (MISC, NPS, USGS) to try and continue to move the project forward. If funding is secured we hope to hire an Environmental Outreach Liaison to work with the curriculum in Maui County schools and to coordinate field opportunities for high school students.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (Randy)

- The Legislative session will start in a week or so. The big thing to watch will be the \$5 million DLNR proposal. I don't think we should hold our breath. It is unlikely we will see much out of it. The environment is not a high priority item and the bill will be coming from a Republican administration through a Democratic legislature.
- There is one bill for the Natural Area Reserves (NARs) conveyance tax. This could increase funding for the Watershed Partnerships and the NAP program. This is not directly MISC related, but there could be some possibilities. I will be following up. Pat: who is lobbying? Randy: Mark Fox from TNC.
- Lloyd: presumably the administration supports the DLNR bill. My interpretation is that this administration is good for the environment and is supportive. I am impressed with what I see. Randy: it is an interesting flip-flop on priorities politically. The Democrats in charge of the money are sworn

enemies of the Republicans. The NARs thing has a better chance of getting through than the DLNR \$5 million. We will be keeping an eye out. We will focus on the NARs bill and keep an eye out for competing bills.

PR/EDUCATION STATUS REPORT (Teya)

- Mele wasn't able to be with us today. A summary of activities since the last meeting was distributed. Recently, Mele has spent a lot of time planning a community meeting on frogs. We previously decided that MISC's efforts on coqui frogs would focus on outreach. We have been running with that approach for now and hoping that the funding will catch-up. If not, we will have to pull back.
- Next week there is a CGAPS meeting on Wednesday and on Thursday and Friday MISC is hosting the ISC's Coordinators meeting. As part of that meeting we will continue discussions on the website. We have a draft design concept ready for review and then we are ready to start deciding if we should continue to proceed based on what the cost might be. We are still looking at having HEAR host the site. A CD is available to view the current design.

STAFFING UPDATE (Teya)

- We are going through the hiring process for our Field Operations Leader. Pat, Jeremy, Mike A. and I did interviews all day yesterday.

FIELD WORK: PLANT CONTROL UPDATES

Miconia (Summary of Informal Miconia Meeting) (Teya)

- We want to spend some time at this meeting focusing on miconia rather than trying to touch on all the plant species. We had an informal miconia meeting last week. We are trying to meet more regularly in order to look at details like data, missing pieces, our continued merger of operations, etc. A copy of the notes from the miconia meeting were distributed and summarized. We want everyone's input – feel free to contact us with your thoughts.
- Mike Ade: we have finally gotten permission for Lower Nahiku between Nahiku Landing and Alii Gardens. I have an appointment to meet with one landowner who has done all the legwork and contacted the other owners in the area for us. This gives us permission for a substantial number of acres. The area is predominately hau and therefore very difficult to work in. Pat: how easy is it to sight miconia by air in the area? Mike A.: this is all groundwork, not air. Teya: do we have good aerial information on that area? Mike A.: we don't have permission for aerial work. Mike W.: we have flown that area in the past. Mike A.: that was high and fast and we saw 100's. Pat: how about Hanawi? Mike A.: we had someone bring in a bag of seeds from that area. Our crew was just there this week and they are finding plants.
- Pat: has anyone gone back to the thin-line trees to see about re-sprouts? If it is used according to label, there may not be enough volume. If you are within label and really using a thin-line, it may not translocate. Mike A: it is not really a thin-line. The trunk is wet. Pat: that may be out of label. Randy: maybe we should go to 20-30% dilution in oil. The oil is hard to handle, but you can do a wider line. We need to look at the concentration and amount used per acre. Mike A.: is crop oil OK where there is water? Pat: no, it can't be used directly in water. Mike W.: the thin-line application is never going to remain a thin line. It will always run down the tree. I am confident that we are within label. Randy: there is a financial balance if we can use less herbicide. Elizabeth: the money for herbicide is minor in comparison to the labor costs. Randy: aren't we covered if the use is considered research? I think the research category for pesticide applicators is 10 or 11. Pat: to stay within label you should be using 1 ½ teaspoons (or 8 ml) per trunk. Mike A.: I can test that right away. I will check and make sure we are within label. We pull when we can. Randy: we should look into someone on the staff getting the Category 10 certification.
- Teya: Our re-visit goal biologically is every 4 years. Realistically it would be better to get in there every 2-3 years.

- Mike's progress on getting permission in Nahiku is excellent news. Ideally we may want to look at hiring someone local to deal with miconia permissions and education. Tanya may be able to help out in the Hana area. Mike A. is taking care of a lot of the permissions now, but he is overloaded. Hopefully, when a new Operations Leader is hired, they can help out. Pat: a rural based East Maui person would be great.
- Lloyd: there may be someone to help us with bio-control monitoring. There is an individual I know of that is moving from California to Hawaii soon who may be a possibility. Randy: David Duffy may be able to give us some leads on a graduate student to take on the project. It would be a great project. Pat: would we be reinventing the wheel in regard to what has already been done on the Big Island? We don't want to repeat. Teya: it would be good for us to have some idea if the bio-control is working soon. It will take awhile to get something set up and we don't have the expertise. Mach: it is not difficult to identify that a leaf is infected. Finding sites may be an issue because a lot of them have been sprayed. In Hilo they set up a control and the control got infected.
- Forest: is there any discussion regarding future bio-control research? It is the only way we are going to win. Chemical/mechanical just isn't going to do it. Randy: they are still working on new agents in Costa Rica. Several things are being looked into. Lloyd: in 2002 Cliff Smith stated that we have failed in that the original purpose of MISC, from his perspective, was to facilitate bio-control of the melastomes. With Cliff gone, nobody is really pushing for bio-control. The Forest Service and USGS just don't have their hearts in it. We need to consider how can we get the message across that this is important and needs to happen. We should be pushing harder. Randy: I agree we should push this at the CGAPS level and get it up to the HISC level. We need to put more energy into it. Fern: we have always said we need to do what we can until bio-control becomes a reality. Lloyd: we have created the illusion that it is possible to eradicate miconia. We need to keep working until the bio-control comes along. Mach: it is working well in Tahiti, but the conditions are very different. They have monotypic stands of miconia and the rainfall is much higher.
- Randy: we should have small miconia meetings like this at least quarterly. Teya: we brought in the crews for this meeting and got good input. We also made a list of what we are doing well and there were a lot of good things identified.
- Lloyd: a nice presentation idea would be to analyze what would happen if we hadn't done anything. Randy: we could also show the amount of known miconia over time and juxtapose it against the funding and the number of acres treated. Is the funding keeping up with the population? Fern: another analysis would be to look at the number of kills and analyze how many would be fruiting today if you hadn't killed them and what the consequences would be.

Other Plants

- Mike A.: I ran into the owner of the property in Kula Glen where the *Verbascum* is while the crew was doing Arundo. There are ten plants and the owner wants to control them himself. He was hesitant, but he did let me GPS the site. It is easy to see the plants so we can monitor his progress. I did tell him he was the only person on Maui with these plants. He suggested someone probably brought them in to make tinctures.

VERTEBRATES

Conures

- Teya: there is a woman from Wildlife Services in Hilo, Marni Koopman, who is putting together a proposed protocol to work with the conures on Maui. We need to have her proposal reviewed by people who have done work on conures on Maui, especially re: the idea of luring them in for capture. She is interested in trying to bring resources to bear on the problem. Fern: I have looked at the proposal, but I haven't had a chance to talk to her. She will be on Maui in early February. I am not sure if she is aware

that the luring in for capture idea has been tried and failed. Lloyd: is it a proposal to MISC? Teya: no it is a proposal to USDA Wildlife Services. It is actually a protocol from within for the project. Fern: it was for internal review at USDA. Teya: the objective is to find a place that will take the birds. We will meet with Marni in early February. We are interested in having anyone who wants to provide feedback attend the meeting.

- Lance: we conducted two conure surveys on January 7 and 8. The first morning we counted 120 birds flying high mauka. The second day we saw 103, mostly around Huelo along the highway. Fern: were they in cohesive flocks? Lance: there were 2-3 distinct flocks with one flock of 60-70 birds. Mike W.: in the bigger flock there seemed to be a lot of paired birds. Lance: there was one other parrot species with them. It had a short tail but was bigger with a larger body. Mike W.: on the second morning the 60-70 bird flock landed in the ironwood stand for 10-15 minutes before heading mauka.
- Lance: one resident mentioned he sees them on his property in the ironwood trees. Another person said that they are spreading out farther west. Angela Kepler, who lives almost to Huelo, will contact us whenever she sees them coming back into her property and we are welcome on her property. Pat: a note of caution - there is a miconia core on the property next to Kepler. Lance: one person we talked to mentioned that there are people in Huelo trying to shoot them and he is concerned that the activity is scattering them.

Other Parrots

- Lance: we have confirmed at least one Goffin's in the Seabury Hall area. Fern: there have been numerous sightings of two birds in that area. Lance: there has also been a flock of 50-70 green parrots reported in Kula. We haven't seen them yet. We went door-to-door to get information and did find a woman who had seen them in her avocado tree within the last month. She will call us if they come back. It sounds like they are about the size of an African grey, but we have no additional description. We still need to confirm what they are. The report is from just north of Waipoli Road. Fern: it is worth looking again. Teya: what is the best use of our resources? I assume they will move around. Fern: parrots like to go to a particular tree. You should go back soon.
- Fern: did you follow-up on the report from Maliko Gulch? It may be an Amazon-type group that has been seen in that area on and off for the past two years. If it is mitted conures, we need to know. This needs to be checked out soon.
- Teya: what is our strategy for control? We identified these small populations as a high priority. After we verify the reports, what do we do? Fern: we should discuss this in a smaller Vertebrate Subcommittee meeting and then bring a recommendation to the larger committee. All parrots are now on the HISC list. I'm not sure how that will work exactly. The next HISC meeting is in February.

Other Birds

- Lance: I have been corresponding with MoMISC regarding shama. It looks like they are throughout Molokai all the way to Halawa Valley. Fern: the MISC priority for shama will be West Maui. It is important that anyone working on West Maui be alert and listening. There have been no further bulbul reports from Molokai.

Snakes

- Nothing new to report. Fern may be going to Guam in February, but the date might be pushed back.

Chameleons

- Lance: we tried morning surveys for three days in December. We didn't find any live chameleons. We found one dead cat-kill.

- Fern: there are continued reports of people saying they are MISC, DLNR, or FWS and taking chameleons out of the population. This is a serious concern. Teya: there is also talk about populations in Hana and Lahaina. Fern: we do have a license plate number that has been referred to HDOA. Federal law enforcement is also concerned because they are impersonating FWS agents. This is something MISC should take to CGAPS. Teya: we need a response plan for dealing with impersonators. The police will only come if the property owner says they are trespassing. Fern: DOCARE is leery of doing anything on private land even though it is illegal to move the chameleons around. Also, the private landowner is afraid of retribution. Teya: the time to get them is after they get out to the street. Lloyd: what if you got a picture of someone. Fern: that would be good. Teya: the person whose property they are on is willing to have us on his deck. Randy: have the landowners been told we will always show identification? Teya: we should be showing an id not just saying who we are. Mike W.: there is a leak in the neighborhood - they are showing up a day or so before we do.
- Randy: can we get the Maui News to do an article? That might push DOCARE and HDOA to do something. Teya: yes, that is a good idea. Pat: how often is this happening? Fern: it has been brought to my attention five times. Teya: we don't have any recent reports, but it may be he just isn't calling anymore because nothing is happening. Randy: that is why a camera would be helpful. Lloyd: is there any reason why the police couldn't assist? This seems like one place where the HISC could be effective. Fern: the police will come for trespassing if there is a complaint, but there are concerns of retribution. Teya: the police are willing to come if there is an agency person there. Lloyd: the mayors are members of the HISC. There should be a way to make this work. This could be a good message. Fern: it should be something that CGAPS could talk to the HISC about. Pat: it would be a good example to actually fine someone. Teya: should we draft a response SOP for the agencies first? Fern: Domingo is very interested. If he were here, he would stake it out, but there are no personnel trained on Maui for this sort of thing. He would love to catch someone and prosecute.

Frogs

- Lance: we are still surveying to reconfirm sites. Castleton in Kihei and the Ritz Carlton are interested in having help to spray. Fern: do you have dates when the various reports originally happened? It might assist you on when to go back if you knew in what month they were originally heard. This information could help you with prioritization and timing.
- Teya: we held a meeting last night at Maui Community College for community and homeowner's associations. Thirty people attended including some folks from the Bug Company and 7-8 related staff. Mele did a slide presentation and we had the map to show locations. Mike W. put a lot of work into updating the map for the meeting. We also had a map with frog locations relative to room accommodations on Maui to show the economic impact link. Lance talked about fieldwork and Mele and Bob Yonahara did a demonstration on control methods. Bob Carroll spoke about efforts to obtain funding and Rob spoke about the County role. We tried to target representatives from community associations in hopes that they would take action within their communities and form frog squads to listen for frogs. The response did not lead me to believe we are going to be successful with the frog squad formation idea. There wasn't much enthusiasm. People care but for the most part they just want us to take care of the problem. They aren't likely to get energized until there are a lot of frogs out there and when we get to that point it will be too late.
- Fern: it does mean there is a role for MISC. Mach: I have heard that the Department would primarily provide support but would not do the actual control. Teya: Bob wants to help but evidently he can't go out and do the control. He can only stand by and offer support. Forest: there has to be certification and enforcement. On the Big Island, agricultural interests determine the HDOA response. Fern: there definitely needs to be a change in enforcement.

- Teya: a question for the Committee - Bob Carroll is forging ahead to try and secure funding. If the funds come through, is MISC willing to take this on? Randy: yes, if the funds are there. Forest: do we have legal muscle to help us deal? I don't think it would be successful as a voluntary program. Fern: the frogs are covered under HISC, so the answer is yes. Teya: the Maui Coqui Working Group is the place to deal with the legal end. Lloyd: I'm in favor of MISC taking it on, but it would be a waste if we don't have property access. Teya: PR and education would be essential.

Big Cat

- Fern: there are no credible Wailea sightings. None of the people from the Maui Weekly articles have been in contact with DLNR, HDOA, or MISC. The reporter took what the one person said and convinced them it was the big cat. The reporter is driving the thing - he is trying to generate revenue. Randy: are we going to respond? Fern: No - a response would just validate the stories.

Next Regular Meetings Dates/Times:

- February 27, 2004 from 9am to noon
- April 23, 2004 from 9am to noon