

MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
Meeting Notes
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2004

Attendance: Randy Bartlett, Fern Duvall, Nathan Varns, Mach Fukada, Mele Fong, Forest Starr, Rhyn Davies, Alex Michailidis, Pat Bily, Jeremy Gooding, Lance Tanino, Teya Penniman, Elizabeth Anderson, Kim Starr, Mike Walker, Mike Ade, Sam Akoi IV, Ian Bordenave, Greg Czar

- Randy Bartlett, ML&P, called the meeting to order at 9:15am.
- Minutes from the January 16, 2004 meeting were approved. They will be posted on the website.

ACTION ITEMS & SUMMARY OF STATUS

- A summary of progress on current action items was distributed before the meeting. Please let us know if you have any question or comments. In the future we will try to get the meeting materials emailed out a little earlier in the week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Teya: the Hawaii Conservation Conference this summer will focus on invasive species. Proposals for papers and workshops are due March 15. We may want to think about proposing a workshop on miconia and/or one on vertebrates. Fern: I think we should propose a vertebrate workshop. A symposium on incipient vertebrate populations would be good since they are so different from plants. Pat: that sounds like a great idea. We always focus on plants. It would be great to talk about incipient populations that are difficult and not really being dealt with. Forest: there are some success stories with vertebrates like the goats on Kahoolawe or rabbits. Pat: at least vertebrates don't set seed banks like plants do. However, there are so many more regulatory issues.
- Fern: Creighton Low, the DLNR invasive species person on Maui, has accepted a job as base-yard manager. Today is his last day. It is likely that the position will be frozen now that it is vacant. Most of our joint projects will be on hold as a result unless Glenn is able to pick some of them up. Mach: Glenn mentioned that there is a possibility they could do an emergency hire with the idea that it could be permanent later. Fern: I talked to Mindy and the \$5 million DLNR proposal does not contain any direct funding for DLNR positions. Teya: it sounds like it is all going to go for EEWf type positions rather than permanent positions. Pat: is this something for the HISC? Fern: the next HISC meeting is March 1st. Pat: the lack of enforcement from HDOA and DLNR is a problem. We really need to support the agencies. They need more staff.
- Randy: Ed Case is asking for talking points on invasive species for testimony to the U.S. House Resources Committee in the next week or so. Forward talking points for him through Teya.
- Teya: Bob Carroll has been very active in trying to generate funds for coqui control. He asked for a draft plan from us. He wants to request \$500,000 and wants to take the issue to a higher level as well, particularly to Ed Case. Ed has suggested that we ask for smaller pots of funding. They might be willing to fund a small piece of the plan (i.e. the PR section). We quickly pulled together a proposal last week. Fern: one of the talking points should be a reiteration that the coqui proposal is out there on the table. Teya: there are copies of the proposal on table by the door and I will send out electronic copies if anyone wants one.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Randy: Mark Fox forwarded a list of bills that TNC is targeting. The Legislature is trying to deal with the NARS fund. It seems unlikely that the \$5 million DLNR bill will be funded due to the politics between the Governor and the Legislature. Fern: there is a budget meeting going on right now. That is why Mindy isn't here. Randy: do we know what DLNR has targeted the \$5 million for? Fern: DOFAW is acting like it is a pretty certain thing that it will happen. There will be some funding related to DOT and the airport. The proposal includes 19 temporary positions for HDOA in plant quarantine. These would be long-term temporary positions. Prevention and inspection are included. Teya: there is a plan for how the funds would be broken out for different programmatic elements. Statewide there would be ten rapid response teams of seven staff each. There is also an attempt to start addressing aquatics and there is a public education and outreach component. Fern: Mike Buck also said that the DLNR role would involve rapid response because of our tie to the ISCs. He indicated that the general direction for this funding is from CGAPS and the HISC. On a side note, Mike Buck is retiring on June 1 this year.
- Randy: we don't have anyone actively tracking bills at the moment. Christy said she couldn't do it right now. Ideally the CGAPS PIO would serve this function, but there is no CGAPS Coordinator right now and Christy has her hands full as a result. Mark Fox did put out a list of bills, but we need someone to actively track. We are already at the second hearing for many of the bills. I'll follow-up with Mark Fox and Carol Russell or Alenka. Pat: TNC should be helping.

BUDGET/FUNDING/REPORTS STATUS

MISC/MoMISC Funding Updates

- Teya: at the last meeting we discussed the fact that this will be the last opportunity for HCF funding for the time being. Christy pulled together a combined proposal for MoMISC and BIISC. The proposal is for \$25,000 for MoMISC to increase their staffing and \$25,000 for BIISC for a volunteer coordinator.
- Randy: the request for DWS funding to be used for Karen Horita is not likely to happen.

Miconia Economics Proposal

- Teya: a couple of months ago Carol Ferguson contacted us regarding a project on the economics of invasives. She was looking for case studies. We put together a proposal with Ann Marie LaRosa on miconia economics. They are interested in funding the proposal for \$30,000. They are basically looking at having a graduate student do the work. I am committed to the concept of trying to get out some real numbers on the economics of miconia. We need to look at what it costs to do this work and what the cost is to natural resources. We also need to look at the data sets between the different islands and efficiency. Forest: what overlap would this have with the other graduate student that tried to do economics of miconia? We should get a copy of her work. I know Lloyd was skeptical of her results.
- Teya: the difficulty associated with working with the data is also a concern. I don't think we can expect someone to come in and independently work with the data set. Forest: is that something PBIN could help with? Fern: what about the NPS EIS? Doesn't that have to consider economics? Teya: there has been a huge amount of background work done. Alex: they didn't look at the economics in the EIS. Teya: I will meet with Carol and Anne Marie in Honolulu on March 10. I definitely want some control over the data and I want to make sure there is adequate funding to do something meaningful. I also had hoped to explore the degree to which management differs by island, attributes of decision making, decision criteria development, economic costs as related to the value of land output, and the value of the watersheds. There are hydrologic models that estimate output/value of watersheds. Pat: we don't know what the loss would be if we left miconia to take over the entire watershed. It is all speculation anyhow. You have hard figures on what was spent and then nebulous figures re: values. How will this help us do our job? I would contest the accuracy of the information generated. There is a huge margin for error and I'm not sure this will tell us anything that we don't know already. Randy: the information isn't for us as much as for potential funders. We need to show why we are asking for the money.

- Pat: have you seen the new publication “Last Stand?” It has a breakdown of values and some of the types of figures you are talking about. It was distributed to the Legislature and to decision makers. Do we really need to go forward with a finite species example? Teya: I wanted to use this as an opportunity to explore strategies and efficiencies between the different islands. This would be an important thing to understand, but we won’t get there without adequate resources for the project. Pat: the final figure in “Last Stand” is “What are Forests Worth?” Someone already familiar with Hawaiian economics could maybe do the project justice, but not a graduate student. Randy: it could end up being a waste of time and money. It is a great goal if we have the right person.

RCUH/PCSU/DPGU Update

- Teya: Elizabeth and I went to Honolulu on Monday for a meeting, sponsored by the Hawaii Conservation Alliance, to hear about upcoming transitions at PCSU and the new Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU). Hawaii is blessed with people who are willing to think outside the box and this has allowed us to accomplish a great deal. PCSU is the glue that holds employment in the conservation community together. The cooperative agreement with UH really only covers the NPS and USGS. In spite of that fact there are numerous non-federal projects that are running funds through PCSU. USGS has gone to Hilo and formed a new cooperative unit (HCSU). The new CESU that will be coming to UH-Oahu will only accept federal funds and will not provide administrative support for projects. There was a strong consensus that in some form or another PCSU (or an umbrella institute) needs to continue in order to support the non-federal projects and provide administrative support for “orphan” projects. We need to get in-line legally through the development of a new “master” cooperative agreement and there must be financial sustainability for PCSU. Overhead rates need to be evened out. A working group was formed to work towards a resolution. Elizabeth will send out summary notes from the meeting next week. Let her know if you would like a copy.

STAFFING / OPERATIONS UPDATE

- Teya: we will be conducting Field Worker interviews next Thursday and Friday. We have three positions to fill in Hana and one here. Jin-wah Lau has transferred to KISC. We have been through one round of recruitment/interviews for the Field Operations Leader. We have yet to find the ideal candidate. In the meantime, we are carrying on and trying to decide if we should recruit again.
- Mike Walker will be leaving us at the end of March. He has accepted an RCUH position on Oahu with TNC beginning April 1. Mike: I am really excited about the new position. I will have a chance to get out in the field and will be doing habitat restoration and out-planting work. I want to thank everyone here for the opportunities I’ve had. I have learned so much on Maui and I have really enjoyed my time here.
- Teya: we will be short-staffed in March and April with the vacant positions and a number of staff gone on vacation.

Kahoolawe

- Teya: the entire MISC staff is going to Kahoolawe in late March for three 3 days. We are expanding our Maui County operation. Forest: there is some fountain grass over there. We pulled some flowering plants over there last week. They were in the same area where we’ve found them before. It hasn’t gone crazy spreading all over yet.

Maui Nui Conservation Team

- Teya: there was a meeting on Monday at KIRC to bring together conservation agencies on Maui and explore how we can better work together. Mike W. attended since I was over on Oahu. Mike: people were really excited about the idea. We discussed providing cross-training between organizations to increase networking and give staff an opportunity to do different things and gain skills. There was considerable discussion regarding liability issues when entities with different guidelines work together. It was a very positive meeting. Teya: mixing things up a little will hopefully help with job retention and give crew broader exposure. We are starting to work together more with EMWP doing pampas sweeps, etc.

Volunteer Coordinator

- Teya: we have an intern coming to work with us starting March 29 for 2-3 months. We are interested in exploring ways to increase volunteer involvement. I would like to explore the concept of a part-time volunteer coordinator position. Is this something the Committee would be in favor of? Volunteers are a good way to leverage resources. Randy: I think you could do a full time position. It's a great idea. Mach: You could have the person do half volunteer coordination and half field work so there isn't a disconnect. Teya: there are different types of jobs for volunteers - one-day activities vs. longer-term projects. Coordinating could become a complex project. It could be a great way to get people involved and get more fieldwork done. I just completed a work analysis looking at what we have taken on. Assuming all vacant positions were filled we are still ~2.5 people short. Randy: you could have an entire range of assignments and tasks for them to do. Fern: you can use volunteer labor as matching. You need to be careful to have a clear job description outlining what you want them to do. Forest: on the mainland they base the early detection program on volunteers. It wouldn't hurt to test that as another method to use here. AmeriCorps is a good program. Their volunteers actually get paid and they get tuition help. Pat: based on my experience I'd have to say that volunteer labor is marginal when it comes to the real on-the-ground goals. You gain huge PR and education benefit. The problem is unless you have experienced people; you have to be walking with them. They need close supervision and there can be an issue regarding the quality of work done.

PR/EDUCATION STATUS REPORT (Mele Fong)

- Mele: a summary of activities since the last meeting was distributed via email. I went to Lahainaluna High School for their career day recently. The display I developed on careers in conservation is in the back of the room if anyone wants to look it over.
- I will be on radio tomorrow at 9am on KNUI AM 900 as a guest on the Healthy Hawaii Show. I taped a ten-minute interview on Wednesday giving a general broad-brush overview. Forest: could we put the interview on the web page?
- There are a few copies of an overview of this year's Malama award program. We have three basic goals this year 1) increase participation, 2) make it easier to apply, and 3) educate people that they can make a difference. I have two volunteers helping me – Norman Nagata from the Cooperative Extension Service and Elaine Malina from MALP. This year's award will recognize individuals or businesses that are helping to protect Maui County rather than just targeting landscape professionals. We added homeowners as a target audience this year. There are four categories 1) Landscapers (advisors/consultants, designers, contractors), 2) Plant Providers (retail and wholesale nurseries, garden shops), 3) Commercial/Agricultural Properties (hotels, shopping centers, condominiums, parks and gardens, etc.), and 4) Homeowners. The nomination form will have common questions and then a question specific to each category. It is very action oriented. We are looking at April being the publicity push month and nominations will be due July 1. The winner will be announced in November at the Lawn and Garden Fair.
- There are several community committees I have been working with lately – the landscaper award committee and I also I have a frog publicity committee. Both community committees have been a great way to involve people that wouldn't normally be involved. Teya: Mele is being very effective at networking and getting input and buy-in. It is making a big difference.

MOMISC UPDATE

- Tina was not able to come over for today's meeting. She sent the following update:

Outreach

- MoMISC Held a workshop for Kupuna at Hale Pumehana featuring all priority species.

Response Group

- Cat's claw: treated three acres of seedlings at the upper Kalamaula population; all mature plants are dead.
- New Zealand flax: surveyed and treated a new population at Kahanui, Molokai Forest Reserve with DOFAW and TNCH assistance.
- Barbados gooseberry: maintained all known Halawa populations (1.8 acres) with a small volunteer group.
- Fountain grass: two surveys were done. One was a roadside survey in a residential area where two plantings were controlled and one effort with assistance of DOFAW and TNCH. No new plants observed.
- Rubber vine: Bishop Museum confirmed identification as *Cryptostegia madagascariensis*. Three locations have been identified from roadside surveys.
- Roadside surveys: at the last MoMISC meeting it was decided that roadside surveys could be a valuable tool for detecting new invasive species. MoMISC will make or borrow a form and also request other agencies on the island to fill in the form for the areas on Molokai that they work in as a way of increasing survey area and getting the information into a central location.

Budget

- Christy Martin submitted a 2004 HCF proposal that includes a request for partial funding for a MoMISC Coordinator position. A letter from Congressman Ed Case was received concerning environmental priorities and projects for funding.
- **Next Meeting:** Date: April 26, 2004; Time: 10:00 to 11:30am; Location: The Nature Conservancy Office, Molokai Industrial Park
- Teya: they recently found rubber vine on Molokai. We will look at sending MISC crew over to help with the control. Mike A.: it sounds like there is a lot. One site is all keiki and the other site is planted specimens at a residence. Some of the plants exceed 50 feet in height and the population is spread over several acres. Lori is trying to get a handle on the total size and determine whether it is beyond incipient. Teya: we think rubber vine is pretty much under control here on Maui.
- Fern: I was on Molokai yesterday in the Forest Reserve just past the barracks. We saw a male shama singing to another male and then down-slope we saw a female. They are definitely well established. It is good that TNC is doing plant surveys up in that area as the shama could be moving things around. Pat: we need to make sure that the field crew knows the sounds of the birds we don't want to have here. On West Maui shama could easily go all the way to the top.
- Fern: for the Conservation Conference we need to work on a plan of establishing which vertebrates are where and which ones we don't really want to move around. Mike W.: if we do a vertebrate workshop at the conference, we may want to focus on birds. There is so much potential for detrimental effects and so little talk about actual control.
- Jeremy: the miconia crew has two sightings of large flocks of green parrots in the Keanae area. There was one flock of 70 birds. We think we saw the same flock twice. I'll get you a GPS point. They were slightly west of Keanae on the flats above the EMI roads. There is miconia in that area.

LAMISC UPDATE

- Pat: I was over on Lanai yesterday. The fountain grass is very visible now. I pulled about ten plants. There is a half-acre of fountain grass. We should have seen these plants last October when we did sweeps over there. Fern: Lanai will fall thru the cracks with Creighton gone. Pat: now would be a great time to deal and if we miss this window, it will be dropping seeds. Everything is green now. If we don't get it now, we might as well wait until the next drought. Forest: if you want to get fountain grass, you have to do re-visits. Fern: I will talk to Glenn. Was this in the core? Pat: yes. We really need to consider whether Lanai fountain grass is a back-burner issue or whether it should be a high priority. Teya: we do fountain grass on Maui every month. It is really a question as to how much more we can take on. Fern: this would be another good talking point for Mr. Case. Teya: one thing I want to propose is that we have a meeting where we just focus on the other islands. Pat: we could do a one-day trip on the ferry. Teya: is it meaningful to do a single day? Pat: I think there are bigger issues on Lanai. The real issue is of it getting carried to other islands from Lanai. Natural areas aren't really affected on Lanai, but hunters could easily vector fountain grass to other islands. Teya: we need a longer-term fix, but we could do a day trip soon. Pat: we would be protecting the other islands not really protecting natural areas on Lanai.

CGAPS / HISC / ISCS / NISC & ISAC UPDATE

- Teya: The next CGAPS meeting is April 28. They are in the process of hiring a coordinator.
- The next HISC next meet is March 1. The agenda includes a West Nile virus briefing and approval of the Invasive Species Strategic Plan and the Invasive Species Budget request. I can't attend, but Mindy will be there.
- The ISC coordinators met here at MISC last month. We spent two very productive days. It was a great opportunity to exchange information and expertise.
- The Invasive Species Advisory Council (ISAC) is meeting in Honolulu on March 2 & 3 with side trips on the 1st to Maui and on the 4th to the Big Island. ISAC is basically the national version of CGAPS. Just the folks that want to do side trips will be coming to the outer islands. We are expecting 17 on Maui. They will go up to the park first thing in the morning and then they will come here. There will be a series of presentations by Nathan, Alex, Mark Fornwall and Teya and then we will do a miconia over-flight. Pat: I am taking the Chairman on a hike in Waikamoi on Sunday.

FIELD WORK: PLANT CONTROL UPDATES

Miconia

- Teya: we are on target with our fieldwork - we have been doing roughly 80% plant work and 45% of that is on miconia. We are trying to get back up to our 50% time goal on miconia. We are doing more mixing of the crews and we had some of the Hana staff out here for a week recently.

Pampas Grass

- We spent 23% of our field time since the last meeting on pampas grass. Mike W.: we did a couple of flights in Waikamoi. One was short because of the weather, but on the second flight we sprayed a tank and a half. There is still a large population in Waikamoi. I brought up the idea of using one of TNC's old landing zones to get a field ground crew in and then sling in some herbicide.

Fountain Grass

- Teya: we are doing fountain grass roughly once a month. We need to go back about every 3-4 weeks to catch the flowering cycle. Mike A.: sometimes we can let it go six weeks in the summer when it is really dry. Teya: every time we go we find some. Pat: is it flowering? Mike A.: yes, there were 4-5 flowering last week, but it had been raining. Teya: we need to increase reconnaissance. Mike A: fountain grass is a good job for staff to do with volunteers. It is easy to learn the identification really quickly.

Ivy Gourd

- Mike A.: we found a new mother-load in Kapalua recently. Teya: ivy gourd is very labor intensive. We spend ~20% of our field time on it. Randy: there is a new CEO at Maui Land & Pineapple and I will be pushing the idea of having the Kapalua staff take care of it more on their own in order to free-up our crew. Teya: would it help to have us draft a letter? Randy: yes. Teya: in order to stop the spread they need to have a consolidated green waste place. We can work with them to train them on techniques. Alex: maybe the West Maui Watershed Partnership crew could help. Randy: that is worth follow-up.
- Mike A.: we found ivy gourd growing out of the dumpster at Canoes Restaurant in Kahului. Forest: the area in the Wailuku Industrial Park is infested and they run the dumpsters. Industrial sites that rotate equipment to other sites may be serving as vectors.

Giant Spanish Reed

- Mike A.: we find and destroy and then we find more. There was a gulch population in Kula that we treated where we didn't go far enough down the gulch. Pat: do you think it is spreading on its own? There has been very little evidence of naturalized arundo. This really changes the picture. Mike A.: Waldorf School in Kula has one and it is hard to control with the kids around. There is also a planting down the street from the school that we have permission to control. At Waldorf we are trying out a new chemical – Arsenal. Pat: Arsenal does have tendency to leech. Be careful with the application. The uptake is through roots and there may be some impact on adjacent trees. Keep an eye on it and make sure you are using a low rate. Teya: we are interested seeing how this new product works. We talked about concentrating on peripheral areas where there is more potential impact on natural areas and also near wetlands. Randy: it is good to prioritize and focus near natural areas.

Eradicable Species

- Mike A.: we've done the cat's claw and the bully tree at Ulupalakua. We need to go back and check on them. We used Garlon 4 foliar on the cat's claw and basal Garlon 4 on the bully tree. A lot of the target species are on private land and we need to get permissions. Teya: we have permission to do the plants on the property here, but we need to borrow the chipper back from the NPS. It is out in Kipahulu right now.

VERTEBRATES

- We will hold a Vertebrate Subcommittee meeting on March 11.

Conures

- Lance: I have done 11 conure surveys and I am getting more contacts and permissions. We have seen where they have been staging and nesting on the cliffs below Waipio Nui Stream. We are still seeing the flocks of 100 and we now know there are two separate nesting sites. Pat: in Waipio if you see pink and black flagging you are in a miconia site.
- Teya: there is a Wildlife Services proposal by Marni Koopman to work on the Maui parrots. Fern, Lance, and I had a meeting with her and Earl and Jeff joined us by phone. Notes from the meeting are available.

Other Parrots

- Lance: I've done 12 other parrot surveys – eight in Maliko and four in Kula. I haven't seen or heard any other parrots. There was a report from East of Maliko of a red-fronted macaw that was bugging the resident's pet macaw. The people were able to catch it.

Chameleons

- Teya: there has been no fieldwork since the last meeting. We have draft plan in the works that we will send out for review before the subcommittee meeting. Forest: we heard about a report of a veiled on Maile Trail. It was reported by the AmeriCorp volunteer working with Pat. Pat: I would speculate there were mix-ups in conversations, but I will talk with him about it.

Frogs

- Teya: there are copies available of the draft plan we put together for Bob Carroll's office. We would like comments. The plan was for \$500,000. In reality we now have little or no dedicated funds for vertebrates. We need to set priorities. We are getting a lot of pressure to do frog work, but the resources haven't followed. Frogs did not rise to the top of the list at our vertebrate strategy meeting in August. We do want to try a citric acid spray at the nursery in Kihei because they are spreading from there.
- Lance: we've spent 18 nights and >200 hours verifying and surveying since the last meeting. We have three new confirmed sites (two from new reports and one from follow-up on an old report).
- Fern: Mindy reported that Guam has verified greenhouse and coqui frogs in plant shipments from Hawaii. This is a serious issue for their snake population because frogs could provide a prey base.

Rabbits

- Lance: I did go visit the area where the folks had a rabbit flush on Crater Road above the eucalyptus trees. Their dog flushed it out. I found scat of different ages. Pat: I found a dead rabbit in that area a couple of months ago at the 2nd grove. Fern: let me grab Bill and I will meet you up there sometime.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Teya: we'd like to discuss the potential for regular bi-monthly meetings with specific focus. Traditionally we meet roughly every six weeks. We could go bimonthly on a set schedule (i.e. the first Friday of the month) and have a more specific focus. The focus wouldn't be all we would talk about, but it would be a focus goal and the action items would continue to cover everything. Proposed schedule was approved:

February:	Vertebrates
April:	Other Plants
June:	Other Islands
August:	Miconia
October:	Strategic Planning
December:	Budget

Next Regular Meeting: RESCHEDULED TO April 30, 9am-12pm.