

## MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

### Meeting Notes

Friday, April 30, 2004

Attendance: Pat Bily, Elizabeth Speith, Lissa Pusey, Aaron Kogan, Stuart Funke, Nathan Varns, Mike Ade, Kerri Fay, Bob Yonahara, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Fern Duvall, Mindy Wilkinson, Teya Penniman, Randy Bartlett, Bob Hobby, Elizabeth Anderson

- Randy Bartlett, ML&P, called the meeting to order at 9:35am.
- Minutes from the Feb. 27, 2004 were approved. They will be posted on the web-site.
- Teya: A summary of progress on current action items was sent out in advance. The summary covers activities and accomplishments since the Feb. 27, 2004 meeting. If an item is on the list and not covered in the update, the assumption is that it is pending or in progress. One important note - the conure property did not change hands. It still belongs to Tavares. Randy: under budget/ non-profit, the phrase "MISC Committee" is redundant.
- Fern: I wanted to bring up some new information regarding the white-rumped shama on Molokai. A recent study on feeding habits done by graduate students here in the islands shows that shama are ground foragers on insects only. This should de-escalate their importance if they make it to Maui. There was no evidence that they are foraging on fruits here in Hawaii. They are evidently not behaving like a typical thrush here. We don't need to be so concerned if they make it to Maui. They are on Oahu, Kauai, and Molokai. They are not as much of a red flag as we had previously thought.

### MINOR UPDATES

#### **HISC Funding (Mindy)**

- Mindy: the HISC budget has been approved by the House and Senate and is waiting for the Governor. The Governor will very likely approve it. There is two million in general funds and two million from the Natural Area Reserve System (NARS). There was a choice made between putting the money in general funds vs. designating it for invasive species. There is still some question as to whether the funds will be transferred out as a lump or be billed. Thirty-five percent will be block transferred to HDOA for prevention and detection. It will be completely up to them how they deal. They may hire aids for inspectors or temporary hires.
- The response and control portion of the funding is based on the Emergency Environmental Workforce (EEWF) model. Senator English is still pushing a separate EEWF bill. There is no allocation tied to it, but it is a funding bill. It would be used as a mechanism for State to hire temporary labor. He is looking for funds to attach to it. Those funds may come out of the HISC funding. In the long run it doesn't really matter whether it is part of the HISC or not. The legislation is for miconia, coqui frogs, fire ants, and fireweed, but it is not limited to these species. If his bill passes, there will be more constraints. Teya: is there any potential for added funds for EEWF outside of the HISC funding? Mindy: I don't know.
- Fern: there is talk that Senator Inouye is working on an added six million for invasive species. If substantial Federal funding comes in, there would be pressure for Governor Lingle to veto the NARS transfer. Mindy: there are still five days left - this isn't all done yet. Fern: Mark Fox is lobbying Lingle to veto the two million transfer. Mindy: regardless of whether we get two or four million, it will be more than we have and we can do good things. Fern: the two million transfer wouldn't be needed if there is six million coming from the Federal government.

- Mindy: there will be a research and technology granting program in the HISC funding (30% of the total). Applicants will be required to identify their own match - cash or in-kind. These funds will be for new methods of control, new applications of technology, research on the biology of invasive species, etc. Another 30% will go for rapid response and control and 5% is allocated for public relations.
- There was an aquatic invasives management plan published recently. It is expected that some of these funds will go to fund that plan. There will be new players at the table. The aquatics folks aren't to the point terrestrial programs are yet. They are still in the detection and research phase of things. The focus of the plan is on harbors. There will be a small aquatics crew hired with some of the control funds. They will work off of Sand Island. They will have big challenges and a lot to learn. Fern: will they do stream work? Mindy: there will be some, but the political clout is always on coral.
- Forest: is this one-time or ongoing. Mindy: it is a pilot program. There is a hope that if we do a good job, it will be ongoing for four years. Fern: the Governor knows there is a groundswell for invasive species work. Governor Lingle is the keynote speaker for the Conservation Conference. It will be good for her to be in a room full of invasive species folks. Teya: we should acknowledge the hard work by Mindy and Mike Buck at the state level to move the HISC funding forward.

### **Other Funding (Teya)**

- Teya: NFWF has officially awarded us \$50,000 for our fifth and final year. We requested \$75,000, but we should be pleased as they funded only 50% of the proposals they received this year. They did not fund our \$32,000 request for MoMISC. David Bruner from NFWF was here for the House testimony on April 15. He spent a day on Kauai with KISC and got a good overview. He was impressed with what is happening in Hawaii and they are interested in supporting the ISCs.
- Christy put a Hawaii Community Foundation proposal together for BISC and MoMISC. It was not funded. The Hewlett Packard funds for conservation in Hawaii have dried up.
- On the County level, today was the last day of hearings. We are in for \$250,000 from DWS and \$300,000 from OED. This will be an increase. Bob Carroll wants to put in a provision for frogs. We also got back the \$50,000 the County withheld earlier this year. The funds are to be used for banana bunchy top and frogs.
- There was an email circulating recently regarding a bill before the US Senate for the Federal Noxious Weed Act for \$100 million a year for five years. There is definitely increased Federal attention.

### **PR/Education Status Report (Mele)**

- Mele: I am starting to advertise the annual landscaper award. There is downloadable information on the web. The deadline for applications is July 1. The winner will be announced on November 13 at Maui Association of Landscape Professionals (MALP) Lawn and Garden Fair. The Mayor has offered a Mayor's trophy if we would like.
- A group of Haiku of neighbors, including Ann Fielding and Bob Hobdy, has formed a frog squad to try and deal with frogs in the Kokomo Road area. A writer from National Geographic magazine, Susan McGrath, was on Maui recently. We were able to take her out on a frog hunt in Haiku and show her the impacts first-hand. The article probably won't come out till next spring. Fern: National Geographic is planning on taking an international look at invasive species. Pat: there is a one-hour video being produced in tandem with the magazine article. They want to include a lot human interest stuff. Mele: Susan was pleased that we were able to get homeowners together.
- I have been talking to more high schools regarding careers in conservation.

- We are increasing our branding in terms of our name. We have new PR and field shirts and a new display board. We are also working on updating the HEAR web-site with help from Elizabeth Speith.
- Mindy: I was reminded that the Koolau hunters group is on the action item list. All positions in that program were cut and it was transferred to DOFAW. We have a proposal in to add invasives to the curriculum. We are making progress and will have a package to go out with hunter education materials.

### **Staffing (Teya)**

- Teya: we have an excellent candidate for our Field Operations Leader position. The Data Associate position has opened and closed. We have one candidate – Aaron Kogan. We hope to have approval soon. The transition should be seamless given Aaron’s experience with the project.
- Our new Field Worker, Melissa Pusey, started in Hana this week and we have another Field Worker, Stephanie Seidman, starting with the Piihola crew on Monday. We will be hiring two more crew members for Hana within the next month. We are close to being fully staffed.

### **Other News**

- Teya: BIISC is restructuring. The staff has been laid off with the exception of the Coordinator and Kim Tavares. They will be on for a couple of months to do planning and then will be laid off as well.
- Elizabeth S.: I brought a couple of pages with the URL of a web mapping service for a PBIN website that was created as the result of a request for ISC data. The information came out of the Heritage Program. Fern: this raises issues of liability. For example, veiled chameleons are shown. They are the same as snakes legally. What are the implications of showing their locations if people are moving them? Who decides what gets put on? The Freedom of Information Act would make the information public, but we may not want it to be so available. There have already been complaints of trespassing.
- Elizabeth S.: the other side is that you want to be able to download the information for analysis. The TMKs are being taken off. Mele: when this was originally discussed, the idea was that we could limit the information made available to the public. Elizabeth S.: that is not where we are right now. Right now there is only one product. Fern: there was one reporter I talked to who wanted specifics and I wouldn’t give them to him. This is a legal question. Mindy: if it goes too far in the open direction, we may lose participation of the public. If you give out too much information, you will be shutting doors. Randy: members of the Committee should look at the site and send in comments.

### **FIELD WORK: NON-MICONIA PLANT CONTROL UPDATES**

#### **Pampas Grass**

- Teya: basically we are revisiting all known sites. Access for control continues to be an issue. There are at least two sites with large, seeding infestations where we don’t have permission. Mike: the one site off Waipoli Road is a real problem. Forest: they are intentionally spreading it around their property. They are planting both *jubata* and *selloana*. What is up with the legislation? Mindy: the update was submitted and Christy is pursuing it. We can also propose that it goes on the HISC list for access. Forest: this is critical. Teya: what would be the most effective way of going to the HISC? Mindy: what I think was envisioned was that requests would go through the established Pests Working Group first so the debate wouldn’t be at the HISC level. The next working group meeting is June 17.
- Teya: we found a lot of pampas on West Maui during aerial surveys. We think it could be fertile *selloana* with *jubata* mixed in because this is what was planted at the source at Sandalwood Golf Course. It would be get good to get a firm identification. Pat: some of those plants are on the West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership transects. They could be accessed. Forest: get us a specimen and we will process it.

- Teya: this year we want to try helicopter drop-offs for large sweeps in the upcountry area. We need to do aerial operations earlier this year and spend more time on West Maui. Mike: our West Maui reconnaissance was hampered by sedges, but we hit more than 100 plants even with the minimal amount of survey time we got in - not good news.

### **Fountain Grass**

- Teya: we need to conduct Velpar trials soon. We have a potential vectoring problem at Maui Lani given the active construction. We need to follow-up with the construction company and find out where they will be moving to next. It would be good if we could get compelling pictures of infestations from the Big Island for public relations work. Pat: I bet NARS on the Big Island or Hawaii Volcanoes National Park have documentation.
- We still need to deal with the RCUH rappelling/training issue so we can control the Kahakuloa population. Jeremy and Elizabeth will be working on this.
- Bob Hobdy: I was on Lanai recently and pulled up a couple plants on the Koele Golf Course site. Teya: we need to address the Lanai issue and there is fountain grass on Kahoolawe. We were trying to decide if we should dispatch a crew to Lanai. Fern: Glenn and Bob Yonahara were over there just after our last meeting and pulled up 75-80 plants. Bob Y.: it is hard right now because everything is green. Some were still small. As we were leaving we found some close to the fence along the road. There were five flowering plants. Pat: we might be over there next week and I will take a look and let you know.
- Forest: we have pulled on Kahoolawe and trained the crew over there in identification. Fountain grass is in their protocols now. What about Molokai? Is it too late? Teya: no, there is only one site and it has been dealt with and there is continued follow-up by MoMISC.

### **Ivy Gourd**

- Teya: we are still finding new sites. We have a possible new site in Old Wailuku Heights near a natural area. Randy sent a letter to the CEO of Maui Land and Pineapple to encourage good practices in green waste disposal. Much of our work is on the golf course. The manner in which they dispose of green waste is spreading the ivy gourd. We are still finding green waste all over, but the crew there does have the identification down and is reporting new locations. Randy: I will be working with the supervisor on this issue. Mike: we have new locations in Kapalua. We find new sites all over. They are isolated but usually near previous sites. We have had flushes in Kapalua after all the rain. We are seeing some evidence of bio-control, but the plants are doing fine. Teya: ivy gourd control is very labor intensive. The plants have nodes every 6-8 inches and we treat every node.
- Bob H.: I saw one in Olowalu by the store growing up a monkey pod tree. When ivy gourd started moving around in Kihei, there was assumption that it had been planted. There continues to be vectoring from Oahu in potted plants. They pull it out before shipping, but there is enough left for it to resprout.
- Teya: we need compelling photos from Oahu.
- Pat: I controlled one plant on Lanai last year. I think it was a female and with no male there was no fruit or seedlings. We need to keep an eye on Lanai City where it could be intentionally planted. We should send more flyers on ivy gourd to Darryl Stokes.

## **Giant Reed**

- Teya: we have been trying to address the need to continually retreat. We are trying a cut-stump treatment with Aquamaster and following up with Arsenal on the regrowth. This strategy seems to be working well, but it is too early to tell for sure. Mike: we need to do the cut-stump first because the plants are big. We are using 5% foliar Arsenal for the follow-up and it seems to be keeping them from regrowing. We can't use the Arsenal near water or ornamentals. Pat: Arsenal has a bad reputation for spreading to non-targets. Mike: we are using the lowest rate. Pat: if 5% works, you could even try less in the future and the translocation would become a non-issue.
- Teya: we still have some permission issues to resolve. Mike: there are plants up to 4,200 feet elevation in Waiakoa Gulch. It goes all the way to where the gulch ends. We start at the highest point and follow it down. The upcountry gulches are dry so we can use Arsenal. We are having trouble with the one across from Kihei Nursery. It is the only outlier in Kihei, but there are isolated spots all over. There is also a site at Waldorf School and one on Copp Road. We have two sites with bamboo mixed in and we can't use the Arsenal. The airport site is bad because they keep moving it around. It continues to come up from the old rhizome mass.

## **Rubber Vine**

- Teya: we have controlled all sites where we have permission. We still have several sites we need permission for.
- MoMISC needs help with rubber vine. Mike: they have a population covering two acres. If you use cut-stump and 100% Garlon, there is no need for retreatment. Teya: Lori has done roadside surveys for rubber vine on Molokai. Eight populations are known with the largest population at Kamalo (over two acres).

## **Eradicable Species**

- Teya: we have begun working on a number of the eradicable species. The *Verbascum thapsus* has been controlled and we are monitoring it. The Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) is in process. Mike: it is a 300 foot long hedge. The plant has huge, nasty thorns – it is like barbed wire. We have taken half of it out and we will take out another quarter of it on Monday. The owner doesn't want us to take out the last section until he takes the container behind it away. The Osage orange is in a high traffic area and we've had safety concerns to address. We've purchased additional safety equipment and we were able to borrow a truck from the state base-yard to haul it away. It is our biggest challenge on the eradicable species project.
- Mike: we had permission to control the *Morella cerifera*, but we did a property sweep and we can't find it. Forest: we will recheck that one. Mike: we controlled the cat's claw (*Caesalpinia decapetala*) in Ulupalakua and we need to revisit it.

## VERTEBRATES

### **Frogs**

- Teya: when we held our summer vertebrate strategy meeting, frogs were not rated as our top priority. We recognized that it would take a lot of resources to deal with them and they ended up as our #4 priority. We decided that it would be best if we could empower homeowners and condominium associations. We had a community meeting and although folks were supportive, they were not enthusiastic about taking it on. Recently a group of homeowners (including Bob Hobdy and Ann Fielding) living near Howard's Nursery has begun to take action. The frog population is continuing to spread in the area.
- Bob H.: with all the rain this winter they have expanded their range. We ended up with two in our yard that we were able to catch by hand. At night we can hear them from the Kokomo Road side. They have been in Beason's yard for three years now. A couple of nights ago we caught three at the Beason's house. There is a family above us that will let us do their yard this week sometime. We are trying to hold the line east of Kokomo Road. I went with Fern and Mele to the bottom of the gulch. It is pretty spooky.

- Fern: I think there were 10,000 down there. The nursery is for sale. The rain we've had was enough to move them. Teya: we knew Maliko Gulch needed to be addressed, but this was an eye and ear opener. It is a Big Island situation in terms of density. We have one willing landowner and the adjacent owner has 17 acres of coffee and doesn't appear willing, but we are working on gaining access.
- Forest: we really need to focus on prevention. Bob Y.: we inspect interisland shipments and the mainland shipments are stamped because they have a certification. Teya: it is my understanding that certified nurseries are inspected twice a year. Fern: it is hard to determine how much manpower to expand if frogs are being moved around still. Lowe's had calling frogs again just ten days ago. The prevention system is not good enough. For the Flints we need to go back in the daylight and get a better sense for the area. It looks like a worst case scenario as there is a lot of plant material that we wouldn't have permission to chop down and spray. I suspect we would not get good control on the site. Maybe we should go to Big Island and see if they can teach us anything. Mindy: there is a high level of expertise in some people, but their large project was a demonstration only. There really wasn't an eradication goal. They are now encouraging communities to be proactive. I don't think there is a success story anywhere of community-based eradication.
- Fern: on Maui all we are going to do is maybe try to keep them out of certain areas. We may not be able to get rid of them, but we need to look at containment. We need to sit back and reassess what our goal is. There is a lot of cost involved and if we are only going to knock them down, does that make any sense? Mindy: there are tools you can offer landowners. I would like to encourage suppression at sites that have a high probability of interisland spread.
- Teya: we need to consider if we are going to try to do anything at Maliko. We need to get a handle on the lay of the land and get a feel for what the magnitude of the task is and whether we can tackle it. We did do a spray operation on one parcel at Castleton's in Kihei. It was very successful. The second piece is much larger and more overgrown. We need to decide if we can do the second half of the property. We borrowed the HDOA sprayer for the operation. Pat: did you see phytotoxicity? Teya: Scott took pictures before the spray and Lance took follow-up photos. Mindy: Scott's impression was that not much was harmed. Teya: the impact was very low. We did hose everything down after 40 minutes. It took five people for two nights to cover the half acre site. Mindy: I talked to Wildlife Services and they were going to try a citric trial at Maunuka NAR.
- Teya: Mindy can you work up a cost for us on the ten acres you are doing on Oahu? Mindy: one of the main lessons is you must soak everything - not just mist. Lab tests show that the eggs treated succumb to a fungus. It does reduce the viability of the eggs as well. Fern: these frogs guard eggs and do brood care. There may be an inoculation of fungal repellent. The impact may be the result of fewer or no males to guard the eggs. Mindy: a real horror on Oahu is the local spread on the island from nurseries.
- Teya: Mele is continuing to do public outreach. We had previously decided there wasn't enough funding for us to move forward. We are moving forward and filling a role in hopes the funding will catch up, but we don't have the resources. We need to evaluate where we should be with frogs given that they weren't our highest vertebrate priority. Pat: who else is going to do it except MISC?
- Bob Y.: the Plant Pest Control Branch of HDOA was tasked with research on compounds, but later on the question comes up regarding who will spray. Our boss told us to stop spraying as we don't have legal authority to control vertebrate pests. As it is now, the Plant Pest Control Branch has no authority. Randy: it would be nice if we could shut down a nursery if they have frogs. Fern: Lowe's isn't growing the plants themselves. They may be continually getting frogs from their suppliers. Randy: just the mere fact that they have them should be enough to shut them down. Fern: maybe the HISC can help, but will it be soon enough?

- Fern: we really need to evaluate what we going to do. I thought this was primarily a hotel and nursery problem and I felt it was beatable. I no longer have that feeling about Maliko. Randy: we need to take a field trip down there. Fern: what is the point of establishing a perimeter there? What is the benefit of perimeter establishment? Teya: to protect the property value of local homeowners. Teya: we need a site management plan for Maliko. We need to do additional reconnaissance during both day and night. Pat: how far mauka up the gulch do they go? Bob H.: going down the gulch is really the issue as the gulch is running. Randy: we need more information and we need to follow-up with the new Howard's Nursery in Kula.
- Fern: we need to get everyone on the Committee to weigh in on what they what to do. What is the goal of frog control? If we receive funding, what would the response be? Do we just try to keep them out of natural areas? Mindy: policy-wise the Big Island is looking at IPM. On Oahu and Kauai we have drawn a line of eradication. Maui is a big question mark. We just don't know. Fern: I wish Rob was here. What might be most productive is for the Mayor to declare an emergency. Mindy: a second declaration on a County level won't hurt and might make funds more flexible with Wildlife Services. Fern: I think an emergency declared here could actually have an impact. Randy: we need to get Rob down there and have him get a look so he will talk to the Mayor. Fern: one hour after dark is the best time. Randy: we need to set up a field trip. Fern: the emergency declaration needs to be a Committee decision. Teya: we need to look at options and what it would take to implement the various options. We need to determine priorities. We will address this topic more thoroughly at the upcoming Vertebrate Subcommittee meeting.

### **Conures**

- Teya: Lance has been surveying in Huelo with our crew. Marni is still interested in assisting with the control process. We need to purchase radio collars. We may try putting out food and we could use baited fruit with a toxicant. Marni will be over for the next Vertebrate Subcommittee Meeting. We have some landowners that are willing to work with us. Tavares still owns the cliff and is still unwilling to grant access. Fern: we need to explore the HISC option. Teya: Marni has been working with the Patagonian conures at Hualalai on the Big Island. Fern: when Bob and I were at the Ulupalakua Thing, we heard a conure-type bird. It didn't sound like a mitred, but we definitely need to check it out.

### **Snakes**

- Teya: Sam Akio IV is in Guam for three weeks of snake training. Two Maui HDOA staff are also attending. Fern will be going to next round of training. Thank you to DOFAW for their support in funding the travel.

### **Veiled Chameleons**

- Teya: there has been a lot of recent press regarding chameleons and we have been getting a lot of calls as a result. We knew that we needed to do perimeter surveys and now we are positive. One was picked up crossing Apana Road. That is a big jump from the three acres we have been covering. Fern: the gulch in that area is wooded all the way down. It is habitat they would like.
- Randy: the coffee plantation on West Maui has sold and they have cleared out between the rows. The harvest is scheduled for October and they have agreed to let us have someone from MISC there to look for chameleons during the harvest. We should train everyone who is going to be involved in the harvest in identification. We need to remind Kimo in September and then have Mele go out to do training.

### Next Regular Meetings: Dates/Times

- June 25, 2004: Other Islands
- August 27, 2004: Miconia
- October 22, 2004: Strategic Planning
- December 10, 2004: Budget and Christmas Party!