

**MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, June 25, 2004**

Attendance: Randy Bartlett, Bob Hobdy, Glenn Shishido, Art Medeiros, Elizabeth Speith, Jeff Burgett, Juan Chavez, Stuart Funke-d'Egnuff, Mike Ade, Bob Yonahara, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Lloyd Loope, Jeremy Gooding, Alex Michailidis, Kerri Fay, Fern Duvall, Teya Penniman, Aaron Kogan, Elizabeth Anderson, Mele Fong

- The meeting was called to order at 9:20am by Randy Bartlett; ML&P.
- The minutes from the April 30, 2004 meeting were approved. They will be posted on the web-site.
- A summary of progress on MISC actions items since the last meeting was distributed to everyone. The progress report only covers what is happening relative to action items. It is not a comprehensive summary.
- Juan Chavez, a guest from the Galapagos Islands was introduced. Juan is in Hawaii until September 10. He is part of an America fellows program and is working on invasive species issues in the Galapagos. Juan: we are looking at ways to involve everyone in the problem and exploring how each institution can help. Our problems are small in comparison to Hawaii. The island that I live on is 99% natural preserve. Only 1% is for humans. Almost the entire island is a protected area. Guava is one of the worst weeds we have. It is a big problem in Galapagos forests.

MINOR UPDATES

**Budget/Funding**

- Elizabeth: we are in the process of closing out our FY03 DWS account and we hope that the \$180,000 from DWS for FY04 will be available soon. The FY04 NAP account is closed. We are spending down the last of the FY04 State and Forest Service allocations with the exception of some State funds that we are holding in a helicopter purchase order to cover pampas grass flights. We are still spending FY04 FWS funds and the eradicable species funding. Current spending is primarily coming out of our FY04 OED account.
- Teya: OED took away \$50,000 from our original allocation earlier in the year. They have given the funds back to MISC with the stipulation that \$15,000 be used for banana bunchy top virus and \$35,000 for coqui frogs. We have hired a temporary employee to do the banana bunchy top work. The position will be for 14 weeks and will mostly be doing public relations work and conducting surveys in concert with Bob Yonahara.
- Mindy: the HISC funding currently stands at \$4 million. Thirty percent of this will be for response and control through the ISC structure. We still need approval by the full HISC council in July. We are working on the proposal for the funds to go into PCSU. The MISC portion will be ~\$231,000 plus roughly the same amount of state pass-through as last year.
- Teya: some of the HISC funding came out of the NARS fund so we won't get any NARS funding this year. We need to look at how the watershed partnerships are impacted by the NARS issue. Mindy: I have heard that impact may not be large this fiscal year, but there may be a bigger impact at the beginning of next fiscal year. We need to have a safety net for the watershed partnerships. We don't want to let other projects fail.
- Fern: will MoMISC get anything from the HISC funding? Teya: MoMISC is part of the Maui allocation. Maui County is treated as one.

- Alex: do the watershed partnerships need to change what we are doing to fulfill an ISC mission rather than a watershed mission? Mindy: the HISC funding is for invasive species. I don't think that means a change in the watershed mission. We want to make sure that your staff is funded. I would hope that the HISC funds for next year will come from another source and not be taken from the NARS fund. We need sustained independent funding for invasive species issues. There will be some funds left in the NARS. I don't know how much there will be, but there will still be some.
- Alex: I have ideas on how the East Maui Watershed Partnership can tap into the funding by supporting this kind of activity. We are concerned about species like ginger and tibouchina. They are widely dispersed on the island, but we look at keeping these species out of natural areas. Forest: we aren't stopping fencing funding for pigs are we? Alex: yes, we are losing funds for that activity. Lloyd: the important point is that the Legislature made this decision. The decision was not made by anyone in this room. Randy: the decision was made at the last minute in Conference Committee. Up until the last minute, everything was coming out of the general funds. Mindy: this was not meant to come at the expense of management action. I hope this will be a one year hiccup and there will be a fight to fund invasives work separately next year.
- Randy: Maui Land and Pineapple and The Nature Conservancy have agreed to make an increase in the NARS funds for natural areas and for the ISCs and watershed partnerships our top priority for the upcoming Legislature. We are beginning to put together a strategy. Alex: thank-you for doing that. We need landowners and other entities to support more funding. The Legislature needs to hear from other landowners in the partnership. Other people need to be pressing. We need more participation from the landowners and companies that are part of the partnership.
- Randy: in mid-September there will be a Maui County Agriculture Conference. Agriculture and the environment is the primary topic. The goal is to bring the agriculture and resource folks together. Also, the next statewide watershed meeting this fall will be hosted here at East Maui. Both of these meetings will provide opportunities to gain more support before the legislative session starts. We are not just looking at the conveyance tax, but we are also looking at a possible water user tax for conservation efforts. We need support and commitment from the major agricultural land owners. On Maui that means ML&P and A&B. We can get a start on Maui and then move to the other islands.
- Forest: how long is the conveyance tax secure? Randy: there are a number of bills out there. Some are aimed at increasing the conveyance tax and some are aimed at decreasing it. We aren't looking at increasing the tax, but we could get a higher percentage of what is collected. Right now the NARS fund only gets 25% and the remainder goes to housing and the homeless. We want to try to increase our share. Mindy: as far as other funding possibilities, we are working on Landowner Incentive Program options. More of that funding may be available. We have more leg work to do to get the landowners to come on board. Alex: I'm limited because so much of my work happens on State land.
- Alex: with hotel occupancy at current rates, a 50 cent per room tax could generate \$2.5 million just on Maui. That is the kind of funding we need to go for. Randy: we need to bring in the Hotel Association folks and the tourism community. We need their support. Our natural environment is the reason people come to Hawaii. Teya: we should have a smaller meeting to discuss creative funding ideas. Randy: if you have good ideas, don't be bashful.

### **PR/Education Status Report**

- Mele: I've been busy producing PSAs. I did one for the malama award and another on the Hoike o Haleakala curriculum teacher's workshop. My last month has been mostly focused on getting the word out on the malama award. I've also been doing a lot of education programs. I did four presentations at Baldwin High School and met with staff at Kamehameha Schools. I made a refrigerator magnet with our phone number on it for the folks in the neighborhood where we do chameleons. A summary of other PR/Education activities was sent out prior to the meeting.

- Elizabeth: we are doing a poster session for the Conservation Conference on the invasive species related activities from the Hoike o Haleakala curriculum. There will also be a workshop for high school teachers on Maui the week of August 2 at MCC. The workshop will introduce teachers to the curriculum and explore inquiry based techniques for teaching science. DOE teachers can receive three continuing education credits for attending.
- Teya: MISC is also doing a presentation at the Conservation Conference as part of the Early Detection and Rapid Response panel.
- Mele: I attended my first HISC PR Working Group meeting on Wednesday. It is a very broad and diverse group. I was the only field person that attended. There are a lot of questions out there regarding how this is going to work, what it is we want, etc. Teya: for a lot of the HISC funding there is an existing structure, but for PR it is less well defined. Mindy: a first step is to develop a directory of what outreach is already available so we can identify the gaps. Fern: there is a gap between what needs to be done and how you present it to the public. The PR folks need answers that we don't normally think of. We need to make sure PR information needs are addressed. Chameleons are an excellent example. We've been back to the neighborhood to search 28 times now. The reason we've been able to go back is because we've had good PR. Mindy: it was great having Mele at the meeting. This group is chaired by the Department of Health. Christy and I are helping them. It is important to have the real world viewpoint there.

### **Staffing**

- Teya: Arnie Peterson is now officially on-board as our Field Operations Leader. Also, since our last meeting our Vertebrate Operations Supervisor moved on. We hope to be able to refill the position because there is obviously a need, but we need to look at priorities within our overall budget. The critical need right now is more people on the ground.
- Randy: I wanted to have a brief discussion on the idea of forming a MISC Executive Committee that could meet between meetings to assist with decision making. The West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership (WMMWP) has done this and it seems like a good model to follow. When decisions need to be made, the period between meetings is often too long. WMMWP formed a three-person Executive Committee with the Coordinator as a non-voting member. The committee assists the Coordinator with daily decisions and issues. Teya: I think it could be helpful. There are occasions when I need input and it would be nice to have an established group of people that I could call on. MISC is informally defined. It would help me to have a clear decision channel. Stuart: at Community Work Day we had a Board and a Program Committee. The smaller committees serve as good sounding boards and can be a valuable resource. Randy: maybe we can make a list of our members and who the representatives are from the different organizations. Teya: I want to emphasize that we don't want it to create exclusivity at MISC. Randy: I can get a copy of the WMMWP protocols to share with everyone. Fern: what would be the role of the subcommittees in relation to the Executive Committee? Teya: I don't think we need to create subcommittees at this point. We have ad hoc committees. This would be more of an on-call set-up than a committee that meets regularly. Alex: for our partnership it has been manifested as a supervisory tool for the Coordinator. Teya: we should look at what has been drafted for the other partnerships. Randy: I will send out a copy of the West Maui protocol.

### **KAHOOLAWE**

#### **Current Knowledge Regarding Incipient Invasions**

- Forest & Kim: there is a good list of what is present on the island. Paul is an excellent botanist and can identify anything weird that shows up.

### **Current Effort and Resources**

- Forest & Kim: we go over once a month and check for fountain grass. The crew pulls fountain grass now and then. Most of their efforts are in the summit region; however, the incipients are scattered across the island.
- Fern: what is the protocol for introduction of additional things? Forest: the protocol remains the same - no new introductions.
- Randy: with four full-time people in the field, they ought to be able to deal with incipients. Forest: their funding is dedicated for restoration.
- Forest: we have the GPS coordinates for Kahoolawe. I will get them to Aaron.

### **Need for Additional Resources**

- Forest: with one FTE focused on control and identification of incipients for the next five years they could get a lot done. Stuart: any idea of how much funding would be required? Forest: ~\$100,000 per year. Stuart: has anyone looked into the possibility of OHA funding?

### **Prioritization**

- Forest & Kim: fountain grass is the highest priority. After that the second priority would be to map, assess, and control incipients. They have a good crew on Kahoolawe, but we would like to see one person specifically working on incipients and not doing restoration.
- Mindy: since the entire area wasn't cleared of ordinance, is there any point in doing incipient work? There are areas that couldn't be visited. We don't want to fail because there are chunks that are not visitable. Forest: a third of the island is cleared and for the rest of the area you need a trained UXO person with you. There are a lot of winnable battles on Kahoolawe. Kim: with the removal of the goats, the island is revegetating quickly. The time to act is now.

### **MISC Role**

- Forest: I see the MISC role as helping to find additional funding, keeping track of the fountain grass, and continuing to do cross-training trips. Teya: we should ask Paul if these are things for which he wants MISC's help.

### LANAI

#### **Current Knowledge Regarding Incipient Invasions**

- Mindy: has there been a botanical survey done on Lanai? Pat: there have been surveys done for different specific sites. We knew of one ivy gourd plant at the harbor. I believe it was a female plant. We don't know what people in Lanai City might have in their yards. Teya: we know there is fountain grass on Lanai.
- Randy: we need to know what is over there before we can prioritize actions. Pat: it would be a good idea to go around and knock on doors and to do a literature search. Bob Hobdy knows a lot of what was and is on Lanai. Randy: let's compile available information and then go to our experts.
- Fern: there has not been a holistic look at birds on Lanai since the original forest bird surveys. We should enlist the help of the FWS, etc. and put together a vertebrate checklist for Lanai. Pat: are there reptiles? Fern: I have had reports. There was a coqui frog found once and removed. Mindy: there are probably brown anoles.

### **Current Effort and Resources**

- Teya: DLNR and TNC have been attempting to deal with the fountain grass and MISC has helped out now and then. Glenn: we go over every two months for a couple of days with one or two people. I am not entirely confident regarding our transects.
- Glenn: we have a weather station just down wind of where the fountain grass is located. I've been able to correlate rainfall with the number of plants we find. We should look at timing our trips with the rainfall. We pulled 70 plants right after the rain stopped. Rainfall went up again in May so it may be time to go back. Forest: fountain grass recruitment is a year round issue. It requires diligent persistence. Mike: we did a 20 x 20 foot test plot on Maui using Velpar foliar at 5%. There was no recruitment after six weeks.
- Pat: it took a long time to detect fountain grass during the drought period when we visited in October. In February when it was flowering, we were able to move a lot faster. The total fountain grass acreage on Lanai has not really been determined. In October we followed the wind direction. We might want to consider doing a fly-over during the flowering season to get a better idea of the range. Jeremy: Kanaio was surveyed using a combination of ground and aerial searches. Mindy: are the people that did the aerial surveys in Kanaio still around? How hard is it? Jeremy: there is a lot of potential to miss fountain grass from a helicopter unless you have mature, flowering individuals.
- Pat: when we did the sweeps, we yanked the plants out by hand. A small handpick would have been helpful. An herbicide tank really doesn't make sense because the plants are so scattered. There seemed to be a pattern of plants coming up on the lee side of rock outcrops.

### **Need for Additional Resources**

- More baseline information is needed before resource needs can be assessed.

### **Prioritization**

- Glenn: we go over because we know there is fountain grass, but we aren't setting the priorities for what should be done. There is no priority list. Pat: before assessing priorities we need to analyze what it is we are really trying to protect on Lanai. After that we can work with the conservation folks on the island (e.g. Darryl Stokes).

### **MISC Role**

- Compile background information.

### **MOLOKAI**

#### **Current Knowledge Regarding Incipient Invasions**

- Fern: we need to look at the vertebrate list for Molokai. Vertebrates tend to be short-changed on Molokai because there isn't anyone there to pay attention. If I do training for MISC, we should include what is and could be on Molokai.

#### **Current Effort and Resources**

- Tina: MoMISC has one full-time field technician and one AmeriCorps worker. We use a lot of volunteers for field work. Two-hundred and fifty-nine volunteer hours were contributed in FY04. Different partner agencies (especially DOFAW and TNC) also help with field activities. Our partner agencies also attend our quarterly meeting although we don't get a lot of feedback from them. With more participation from the NPS, there has been more discussion lately.
- Tina: TNC contributes my time for oversight, budget, training, etc. and TNC also provides data support. Teya supports MoMISC in the statewide budget process and Elizabeth provides administrative support and budget tracking.

- A table was distributed quantifying MoMISC accomplishments by species for the past fiscal year. Some of the species listed are not priority species, but they are monitored during other activities.

### Need for Additional Resources

- Tina: our AmeriCorps position ends in December and we will be back down to one person. Stuart: would a team of AmeriCorps workers help? You could have a large workforce for a period of time. Tina: right now we have empty AmeriCorps slots. Forest: there is a national program and the workers come from all over for a nine week period. Tina: right now we have a lot of summer programs. A large workforce is not so much of an issue.
- Tina: I compiled a quick list of additional needs – things that won't be accomplished unless we receive added funds. 1) Rubber vine eradication; 2) Bulbul survey on Molokai east end; 3) Nanday conure eradication from Kaunakakai; 4) Australian tree fern survey and eradication; 5) Species Response Plans (snakes); 6) Grade-school curriculum workshop for teachers; 7) Tibouchina/melastome survey for the east Molokai mountains.
- Tina: we have had more potential bulbul reports. Fern: that is a species that I can get state support on. Do you have a list of locations? Tina: yes. The Nanday conure is still around and we don't have the expertise to deal with it. We have estimated there are approximately 50 Australian tree ferns in backyards. As far as we know there haven't been any found in the wild yet. We also need a snake response plan. Fern: that would fall under Maui DOFAW. If you had a report, we would be on the next flight over. That brings up the question of what vertebrates you have. We need to pull together a list of what has been reported. Mindy: for snakes there should be a section in the Maui plan regarding deploying traps to Molokai. Fern: for each vertebrate that we might respond to we need to have a rapid response plan on Maui that includes response for Molokai.

### Prioritization

- Tina: we have six current objectives:
  - o *Objective 1.* Eradicate three invasive plant species from Molokai: Barbados gooseberry (*Pereskia aculeata*), giant reed (*Arundo donax*), and New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*).
  - o *Objective 2.* Monitor locations of three Hawaii State Noxious Weed species on Molokai to ensure that prior eradication efforts have been effective: fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), and pampas grass (*Cortaderia jubata*).
  - o *Objective 3.* Inform affected landowners of the impacts of invasive plant species growing on their land and facilitate management activities to control invasive plant species: cat's claw (*Caesalpinia decapetala*).
  - o *Objective 4.* Educate the public about invasive species impacts, prevention and eradication, and encourage the public to become involved in MoMISC's ongoing efforts.
  - o *Objective 5.* Coordinate the efforts of MoMISC partner agencies, as well as other organizations, to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of response to invasive species incidents.
  - o *Objective 6.* Conduct localized survey of reported new locations of invasive species on Molokai: *Cryptostegia madagascariensis*, *Tibouchina herbacea*, *Sphaeopteris cooperi*.
- Tina: we have three species targeted for eradication and three species that have been eradicated that we continue to monitor and keep finding. We have been doing roadside surveys and looking for other invasive species. We need to make a decision regarding doing off-road surveys. We would like to be able to train staff at other agencies to look for invasive species where they are working. We want to pull together a packet that they can take out with them and report back to us.
- Tina: we would like input from MISC on whether we should take on rubber vine. The more Lori looks, the more she finds. The seed viability is short compared to some other species. Mike: we treat it basally with Garlon 4 and there is no re-growth. We cut it and then drip right away.

**MISC Role**

- Tina: we need funding to add an additional staff person and we need continued MISC administrative support. We also need continued support from the MISC Manager for grant and proposal writing and oversight.
- Tina: we also need MISC assistance for rubber vine and fountain grass. Lori needs assistance with fountain grass identification.
- Fern: Molokai needs a vertebrate survey and consistent MISC involvement in vertebrate operations. We need to make sure that MoMISC is included when any vertebrate related training is conducted.

**Next Regular Meeting Dates**

- August 27, 2004
- October 22, 2004
- December 10, 2004