

**MEETING MINUTES
MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
Friday, October 14, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Randy Bartlett, Stuart Funke-d'Egnuff, Nathan Varns, Steve Anderson, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Elizabeth Speith, Mindy Wilkinson, Lori Buchanan, Fern Duvall, Bob Hobdy, Jeremy Gooding, Darrell Aquino, William Midgley, Abe Vandenberg, Chris Candito, Mike Ade, Aaron Kogan, Elizabeth Anderson, Teya Penniman, Joylynn Oliveira, Shannon Wianecki

- The meeting was called to order by Randy Bartlett (ML&P) at 9:15am.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There are two HISC requests for proposals out right now. Public Outreach proposals are due on October 31st and the Research and Technology proposals are due on November 3rd.

UPDATES

Manager's Report

- Teya will be sending out an update on MISC Action Items soon.

Budget/Funding Updates

- Elizabeth: our last round of miconia funding from the National Park Service (\$269,000) came online in our Hana account last month. We really need to think seriously about the future of funding for the miconia program. Our FY05 Department of Water Supply grant is finally close to being available and we are waiting for our FY06 State and Forest Service funds to come in. Our cash flow may be a little tight in November, but we will be fine as soon as the new accounts come online. Teya: for FY06 we will be getting \$250,000 from the Department of Water Supply again and the Office of Economic Development bumped up our basic funding from \$200,000 to 250,000 for FY06. We will also be receiving an additional \$50,000 for BBTV and \$150,000 for coqui (\$100,000 of which is pass through from the State). Our FY06 total from the County will be \$700,000. From a big picture viewpoint MISC looks flush, but we will be losing ~\$300,000/year in funding from the NPS after this year and we are no longer eligible for NFWF funds. Our Fish and Wildlife allocation also went down this year. It's a balance.

Legislative Session

- Randy: the Legacy Lands Act passed last session, which means more money to the NAR fund. The Legislature will probably take at least \$2 million for HISC funding. Mindy: the ceiling, or cap, on what can be spent annually from the NAR fund will increase from \$3.3 to \$4.7 million. TNC is doing a projection of all the sources that use NAR funds, including invasive species. Randy: ML&P is going to be working on raising the ceiling even higher.
- Stuart: TNC is changing their bylaws and will not be doing grant processing for other organizations, which will impact organizations like the Watershed Partnerships. Mindy: the Ed Case bill would help recognize the special status of Hawaii and allow us to have higher local standards than Federal law allows. It would be a huge help. Randy: The Senate Ways and Means Committee was on Maui recently. I talked to them about invasive species and ML&P connections.

Staffing

- Teya: our four frog/BBTV/miconia crewmembers (Darrell Aquino, Chris Candito, William Midgley, and Abe Vandenberg) are with us for the meeting today. Chris, Willie, and Abe were in temporary appointments over the summer and are all poised to become regular employees. We're very happy to have them continuing with us longer term. Elizabeth: we have a field worker recruitment open until 10/26/05 if anybody knows of someone who would be interested. Lori: our new field worker, Kamalani Pali, just finished his probationary period.

PR/Education

- Joylynn: I've been working closely with the Maui Association of Landscape Professionals (MALP). I give a 5-10 minute invasive species report at each meeting. Next Friday is the deadline for nominations for our 3rd annual Malama i ka Aina award. If you have anyone in mind, please send their name in. There are flyers on the table by the door. The winner will be announced at the November 12th Lawn and Garden Fair.
- Joylynn: we had 7,500 BBTV flyers printed. I recently did a presentation at the Kihei-Wailea Rotary Club. We hosted a film crew from the United Kingdom out in the field during chameleon searches last week. They did get some chameleon shots. They are making a pilot to submit to the Discovery Channel.
- Joylynn: we had a well-attended booth at the County Fair with over 3,000 visits. We were like a mini-zoo with the live animals brought by Fern and Domingo. Stuart: it was very clear that a lot more people visited the booth when the animals were there. Fern: we did get some new information on sightings. Teya: I had mixed feelings about having the live animals. If we do it again, we need to really emphasize that the animals are illegal and emphasize the risks. Aaron: we should have a police line-up. Fern: for the most part, people were disgusted that the animals we had were things found on Maui. Joylynn: rotating staff assignments at the fair so nobody had to be there for long hours was great and having a pre-fair meeting about key messages was good. The new presentation board really gets across how hard our crews work.

Data Management

- Aaron: the majority of our field staff are now doing their own maps and data entry. We've really progressed with staff computer/data training. Brooke has jumped in to work on ivy gourd management units and is doing a really good job. Adam C. has been doing the same with pampas grass. Erica has become our "data czarina" and has really streamlined the data entry process. Three people (Brooke, Elisse, and Imi) have taken responsibility for Hana miconia data. Everyone has been working together. Teya: it's great for professional development of our crew also.
- Aaron: all the ISCs have been getting together to talk story about data. We've created a data geek community to share ideas, etc. We had a good data meeting on Molokai uninterrupted by Internet or telephone. Randy: next time I'd like to send Greg. Teya: the initial purpose of the data hui meetings was to standardize our data fields for statewide reporting. Fern: you might want link into the DLNR data reporting system eventually too. There may be paper records predating MISC that I have. Some animals that showed up early on have never been entered electronically. Aaron: the coqui system has been working for us. OISC is using it now and the other ISCs will probably follow. We sent a copy to Bob Sugihara and he may be coming up with a statewide coqui system. Forest: an online form with standardized reporting fields would help those of us not in the loop.

County Council Presentation

- Teya: on Thursday, October 20, at 1:30pm there will be a presentation before Joanne Johnson's Parks and Economic Development Committee by all the organizations working on invasives. I will give an overview of MISC's work and also show how the different organizations work cooperatively.

MOMISC REPORT

- Lori: things are going well with all of our targets. Work on the Australian tree fern is ongoing. Arundo is gone and so are pampas grass and fountain grass. We found papaya mealy bug. I have USDA staff helping to survey for ohia rust, papaya mealy bug, and BBTV. Our next meeting will be November 1, 2005. Fern: what about vertebrates? Lori: we're still getting bulbul reports that turn out to be shama. Teya: next month Mike and I will be going over to Molokai to assess the rubber vine situation.

LANAI

- Teya: almost the entire MISC staff including Lori (26 people total) spent three days on Lanai in late June. We did sweeps for fountain grass and cat's claw. We controlled more than 2500 fountain grass plants. We found the mother-lode on "Gary's Island" at Koele Golf Course. Elizabeth: we hope to get back to Lanai on a quarterly basis. We'll alternate large and small crews every other trip. Mike's crew of seven will be going over for four days later this month. Steve: the cat's claw is "old growth" in the area we swept. I recommend we do not take it on at this time. It is 100 feet up in the canopy and the seed bank must be huge. The population is thickest up at the top of Y-shaped gulch/survey area and spotty further down. Elizabeth: are we going to control the arundo we found in the same area? Teya: we need to better define the status of arundo on Lanai first. Bob: that gulch was the out-planting site for a lot of company plants in the old days. There is native cat's claw nearby. Mike: our one ivy gourd site hasn't re-sprouted. Teya: we do have funding support for aerial fountain grass surveys on Lanai and we hope to couple aerial surveys with our next ground trip in January/February. We covered most of Lanai City surveying for BBTV. One voucher was taken. We're definitely having more of a presence on Lanai. We need to find more cost-efficient and convenient housing for our Lanai trips. Mindy: we stayed at a dorm in the community center once. Fern: I'm going over to Lanai to try to verify brown anole reports.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Evaluate status and distribution of arundo on Lanai for possible control*
- *Find less expensive, conveniently located accommodations for crew working on Lanai*

PLANTS

Miconia - Peripherals

- Jeremy: our crew has been hit by weather, gall wasps, etc. but they have logged 187.5 hours in peripheral areas this summer and swept 932.55 acres. It is encouraging that we haven't found much. Pat's work all these years has really made a difference. Teya: extensive on-the-ground peripheral coverage is new for us. It was one of our priorities for the HISC funding this year. It is also important public relations work. Darrell: there are one or two residents who don't want us on their property. Willie: we did find a new ivy gourd site while surveying for miconia.

Miconia - Hana

- Jeremy: our helicopter contract closes January 1, 2006 and we're only halfway through it. We'll be using every hour we can between now and then. We are working under the gun helicopter-wise. Data entry is getting cleaner. We're still pursuing repeatable management units. It's time to revisit some of our first Kerry-era management units. Teya: we're focusing on learning how effective we are by returning to management units within a meaningful time frame and evaluating our treatment efficacy. Fern: if mature plants are likely to be seen from a helicopter, can you gauge efficacy from the air? Jeremy: this management unit type of system has been used successfully in Hawaii for 25 years. The trick is to amend your revisit schedule or the areas if you're not finding success.
- Teya: there is a PhD student at Manoa looking at genetic diversity in several plants including miconia and fountain grass. He wants to collect samples and we will assist. He's discovered zero genetic variability in fountain grass on the Big Island.
- Teya: we have two yurts in Hana now and steps leading to the windows on both. The second yurt will need some work to become functional as a cooking facility. The "Love Shack" is tight quarters for crew trying to get out the door in the morning. Jeremy: the new yurt has a purple floor and will have a plumbed sink and electricity.

Pampas Grass

- Teya: Adam C. has been working on management units for pampas grass. We concentrate on pampas during the fall because that is peak of flowering. This year we set aside September to focus almost exclusively on pampas. Mike: we found older plants in places we didn't expect, between 3500 and 4500 feet elevation. We're finding hundreds of targets in Waikamoi. We went to Hanaula in West Maui in July. We found a lot of plants flowering even that early. We haven't gotten back to West Maui this year because of weather. Elizabeth: the combination of weather and lack of helicopter availability has made things difficult this year. Windward has fewer helicopters than in the past. Mike: otherwise, we've been getting permission to kill everything we find. Our biggest problem has been weather. Teya: every year we try to do a big front-country sweep on the slopes of Haleakala in conjunction with partner organizations. That was hampered by weather as well. We have tentative dates in January to work by the flume trail with EMWP. Mike: we're finding variable flowering times. Jeremy: the cops have been bringing Big Island helicopters over. It might be wise to call Volcano Heli-tours to see if we can piggyback on some of those operations.
- Mike: we found *C. selloana* keiki and plants with pollen and sent samples to UC Davis. Forest: we know *C. selloana* has been reproducing. Steve: there are reports that it can be hermaphroditic. Teya: we do have at least one recalcitrant owner. A question I wanted to pose relates to this situation Mike is describing where we've controlled all the plants around this one property, but we can't get permission for the remaining site with a lot of plants. If this is *C. jubata*, is this something the Committee would support us getting help from HDOA on? (general agreement) Mike: other than that, we're nailing pampas this year. Shannon: what about the lady who sells pampas plumes in her baskets? Mike: we do not know the species of her plants.
- Forest: on the maps can we make plants that are controlled a different color dot than plants that aren't controlled. It is confusing to see so many dots when many of them have already been taken care of. Aaron: we could rate the different locations according to which are likely to have a big seed-banks and which are completely controlled.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Modify pampas grass maps to distinguish between controlled and uncontrolled locations*

Fountain Grass

- Forest: the Mokulele Hwy site was new for us. Mike: Goodfellow Brothers is doing landscaping now too. Jordan found a flowering plant by the Maui Baseyard sign. They are using fill that came from Maui Lani. Mindy: do you have a builder's fair here on Maui? Fill is a big issue. All sorts of other things can be transported via fill - ants, pampas grass, etc. Forest: their staff is good and they help us out a lot.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Explore the possibility of having an educational booth at a builder's fair*

Ivy Gourd

- Mike: we have made great strides on ivy gourd. The maintenance person from Lahaina Center wants to bulldoze the really bad Kenui Rd. site and spray for ivy gourd. Hank gave us a new Napili site. We surveyed and found more. Puanani Nursery is also a new site.

Giant Reed

- Teya: we are only treating high value wetland areas.

Eradicable Species

- Teya: we had a meeting recently to review what we have accomplished. In the case of some species (e.g. *Pittosporum*) we found more than we anticipated. Forest: we've spent the money. We had 14 species on the project list, four of which were localized eradications (e.g. cat's claw in Ulupalakua). For some species, the more MISC looked the more they found. Landowners can refuse access since these plants aren't on the State Noxious Weed List. We've been synthesizing the work that has been done to come up with a template for future eradication work. We were successful with basically four species for \$40,000. That is a bargain. Steve: there are different pittosporums. We know four sites of *Pittosporum undulatum* that we might want to add. Forest: at this point it is doable. Teya: we've spent the money, but we still owe some hours on the project. That is why we're considering adding pittosporums.
- Fern: I collected a voucher specimen that looks like kiawe from Beach Rd. I am waiting for verification on the identification. I killed the plants present at Olowalu. The thorns can be twice as long as kiawe. It is so cryptic, it will be hard to detect. I've heard it is on the other islands. It is thought to be highly invasive. Mindy: It grows in mats on dunes and can grow partially submerged in saltwater.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Evaluate the addition of *Pittosporum undulatum* to the eradicable species project*

Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV)

- Willie: we started with the original HDOA sites logged in 2003 and immediately found BBTV. The homeowners have been very friendly. We only had one individual who thinks her plants will recover by themselves. We've covered all of Pukalani and it has gone well. Teya: now we'll revisit the Makawao areas initially covered by Bob Yonahara. There has been a 74% reduction shown in the areas first visited by HDOA. We've covered 2094 properties since June 2005. We don't know yet if BBTV is up in Kula.

VERTEBRATES

Coqui Frog

- Teya: the crew has been focusing on small populations that they can knock off. We're looking into "frog loggers" to monitor some sites so that we don't actually have to sit there for an extended period of time. Mindy: you can tie the logger to a temperature and humidity recorder. Teya: the crew has done habitat modification as well. We continue to get calls about the Kihei nursery. The owner is not returning calls. The Mayor's office is drafting a letter to encourage him to cooperate. We're developing standards for a "coqui-free" nursery certification program. HDOA surveyed certified nurseries and we're waiting on their results. There have been recent reports of frogs at Lowes and Home Depot.

Veiled Chameleon

- Teya: we are finding fewer chameleons during our surveys. We're moving forward on the research project. We need to get IACUC approval. Mindy: the chameleon contract came back Wednesday and still needs to go through several hoops before getting to PCSU.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Get IACUC approval for the veiled chameleon research project*

Conures

- Teya: Doug Runde is continuing his work. A new owner reported conures landing on their property and wanted to know if they can control them. Fern: I can give them a permit. Teya: ideally we'd like to net the birds ASAP. We hoped to do a boat trip along the cliff, but we had to cancel due to weather.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Follow-up on allowing owners to control conures found on their property*

Vertebrate Training

- Teya: a very useful vertebrate training was conducted on Maui in mid-July. Thanks to Fern and Mindy for their efforts.

Cockatoos

- Fern: I've been visiting the Haiku site. One of the birds is dead.

Brown Anoles

- Fern: we have a number of voucher specimens. We have a confirmed photo of one on Lanai. Abe: we went to Kihana Nursery in Kihei and found tons.

INVERTEBRATES

Erythrina Gall Wasp

- Aaron: PBIN is taking over the job of being the repository for data. Fern: I was asked whether MISC is going to be a fridge site for seed collection. Forest: Art is doing that. We're sending genetically diverse samples away and storing big bulk collections on-island. Mindy: USDA was enthusiastic about storing even large amounts. Steve: we will be getting ~\$20,000 in Federal funds through the National Park Service. Most of the work will be centered in Kalaupapa. If MISC is not going to be a data repository, will we survey or are we done? Forest: I think we're done.

Hoike Ant Project

- Shannon: the Hoike student ant survey is resulting in our ability to log "none found" for *Wasmannia* at participating students' residences. The MISC crew will be trained to respond to fire ant reports. Fern: are we identifying all of the ants collected? Forest: that would be impossible. The difference between *invicta* and *geminata* is a tiny little ruffle on the head.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- *Schedule fire ant training for the MISC crew*

MISC COMMITTEE RETREAT

- Teya will send out a list of potential dates.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

- Friday, December 9, 2005 from 9am to Noon with a holiday potluck lunch to follow immediately after the meeting.