

MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 20, 2014

ATTENDANCE: Kerri Fay, Jeremy Gooding, Bob Hobdy, Lloyd Loope, Fern Duvall, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Chuck Chimera, Teya Penniman, Mike Ade, Lissa Strohecker, Elizabeth Anderson

- The meeting was called to order at 9:10am by Lloyd Loope, Chair.
- Minutes from the Feb 25, 2014 meeting were approved. They will be posted on the website.

FIREWEED UPDATE

- Starrs: the fireweed biocontrol really kicked in this quarter. Mach has a “*Secusio* watch” posted on Facebook. The adults are attracted to light. Teya: Mach has been getting a lot of calls from people who are concerned that the moth is eating things other than fireweed and getting into houses. There is a lot of misidentification. The ranchers contacted MISC to see if we could help with outreach on the issue. We had a meeting with a group of ranchers, Rob Parsons, and HDOA. Lissa pulled together talking points. As a result of these meetings, there will be an update on the HDOA website and the Cattlemen’s website and we will do a Maui News article on the issue. Lissa: the testing was very thorough and showed that 78% would reach adulthood on fireweed. It is a good host. They knew in advance that it would eat cape ivy. Forest: there was a host plant that they didn’t test – Okinawan spinach. The larvae may be on a non-target plant, but may not actually be eating it. We see the caterpillars on other plants and we aren’t sure if they just happened to crawl onto the plant and chew it by accident or if the damage was caused by a slug or snail. There are unintentional consequences. The *Senecio* caterpillar is black. The adults look like cabbage butterflies.

PROPOSALS AND BUDGET UPDATES

- Teya: as a general overview MISC personnel costs are ~\$1.4 million per year and other costs are ~\$182,600 per year (other costs average ~\$13-15,000 per month). We average \$125,000 for citric acid and \$350,000 for heliops. To maintain the status quo, we need ~\$2.34 million a year. If the grants that have been submitted to DWS, HISC, etc. are all funded, we would be in good shape and could restore some lost positions. The above figures do not include a cost of living increase for staff this year. There is \$5.75 million for HISC this year and \$10.4 million in requests from 61 proposals. The watershed partnerships submitted proposals to HISC this year since they didn’t get the general funds they expected. There is also a large proposal for coconut rhinoceros beetle. Decisions will be made June 25 when the Resources Working Group meets for discussion and then the proposals will go to the HISC for final decision. There is a request for \$130,000 for outreach that includes a statewide LFA video. We put in a proposal for an internship program for the Hana core including bulldozer and grid access and a joint proposal with Cas for LFA detector dogs. There are proposals for the Maui Axis Deer Working Group, WRA and HBIN. James submitted an HBT auto data logger proposal that includes funding for paint balls.
- Teya: we have talked for a long time about establishing a non-profit specifically for MISC. Tri-Isle has been our fiscal sponsor for many years and they have done a great job. There have been some challenges with the transition to new leadership and new policies that include a 10% overhead charge on all donations. A lot of donors may not be very happy about that. Another downside is that under the current system people need to write checks to Tri-Isle rather than to MISC. This results in a branding problem. I would like to move in the direction of establishing our own non-profit. As UH employees, we can’t deal with the non-profit as part of our day to day work. It will cost money to start a non-profit. We have \$500 in seed money to start with. We need to decide how broad we want to be – should it be just MISC, or all-ISC, or Maui County? Jeremy: I would keep it tight. Teya: we need to see if we can have an overarching non-profit and then subsidiaries for sub-projects. We have not really tried to tap into private donors and there is potential on Maui. I’d like everyone to be thinking about how we would structure it. We need to expand and we need to make up the gap in the Federal funding that we have lost. This is something we need to pursue.

SNIPP ROADSIDE SURVEY PROJECT (funded by Hawaii Department of Transportation)

- Forest: this project is basically a road survey project on state highways on East Maui. SWCA has a contract with the state for the surveys. We have driven all the state roads on East Maui (except inside the security gate at the airport) looking for MISC and HDOA targets. We found a new cat's claw infestation in Kula. It is in fruit. We are also looking for coconut rhinoceros beetle and little fire ants around ports and new landscaping. We will cover Molokai in August. Teya: another component of this project is doing cooperative weed management. We picked tumbleweed as the species to work on. We will need to get together with the affected landowners and cooperators. There may be separate DOT project funding for surveys at harbors and ports. We need to do control work on the SNIPP funding in the next couple of months. This may end up being a multi-year project with funding for West Maui next year. Forest: we used a survey area of 50 meters from the edge of the road. The DOT right-of-way is variable.
- Forest: we found new state records in our ATST surveys. We are surveying the observatories and park roads and parking lots every six months during the construction. We have new records from the mountain west of North America especially on the leeward sides of the parking lots in the summit and Haleakala Visitor Center areas. We have about half a dozen new records. Kerri: what is your experience on trails? Forest: things definitely follow the trails.
- Teya: Matt Brown from Haleakala NP has asked if MISC might be able to weigh in on the idea of a PATH trail coming into Haleakala from the Ranch in terms of weed spread. Kerri: TNC is keeping our ears and eyes on the topic as it could impact Waikamoi. Teya: the park is hoping for a letter from MISC saying we have concerns about this because of the potential impact with invasive species. Lloyd: I am against the trail, but the politics are difficult unless we have very specific concerns. I am not sure we should just jump in and write a letter. Fern: it seems like it would be hard to justify opposing it if we are talking about transport of species that are already on the island. Hunters and hikers aren't checked. Jeremy: we should push for weed-free feed for the horses. It would be a good opportunity to educate people.

LITTLE FIRE ANT DETECTOR DOG PROGRAM: STATUS

- Teya: we had the Australian dog trainers here for a week. They looked at sites on three islands: Maui, Kauai, and Oahu. It was interesting to actually look at sites like Young Brothers on Kauai. Staff at Young Brothers are very open to the idea. On Oahu, we went to the Waimanalo site and also held an informational meeting that was attended by quite a few Legislators and/or their representatives. There is a woman on Oahu who has been contacting Legislators and says she has already trained a dog to detect coconut rhinoceros beetles, little fire ants and coqui frogs. We are still waiting to see what is happening with the Maui Quarantine funding. We should hear any day. For \$60,000 we can get a trained dog and training for the handler. It would be at least six months from when funding is available to when we would have a dog team ready to go. The focus of the work would be nurseries and new plantings. We are still working on the revised video project. We are striving to set up appointments with HDOA and Maui inspectors for interviews. Another population was found at a nursery on Oahu by OISC. Just like on Maui, it was the third survey at the site.

ORDINANCE

- Teya: the County Council may be interested in an ordinance that would include certification for LFA for anyone doing business in Maui County in high risk situations. The county can't regulate things outside their borders, but they can tell businesses on Maui what they can do. Don Guzman, who is responsible for the Agriculture Committee, has drafted a bill. I will be meeting with him on June 27. The bill creates definitions of who is affected. People don't get dinged if they are trying. There are a lot of details yet to be determined. The program would be rolled out under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Management. They have never done anything like this before. We don't know how many businesses would be affected by this. It would need to be determined whether they are importing or exporting. The burden for treatment is on the owner.

- Chuck: I know this was specifically meant to address LFA and coqui frogs. Do you see this being used for other invasive species? It is pretty broad. Teya: it is broad in that it includes any species designated by the Hawaii Revised Statutes or by the Department. If the Department designates a species, it will need to be done by rule making. It may be limited to coqui and LFA, with any other species subject to rule making. . Bob: the Forestry baseyard in Hilo is overrun with LFA. This isn't going to be just about agricultural products. There are all sorts of things that may come into play. Lloyd: Australia has something like this where a citizen is obligated to report. Lissa: it should include soils or materials that could harbor LFA. Jeremy: it specifies living frogs. Do we need to add eggs? It also defines an infested area as 25 acres

INVASIVE SPECIES WORK ON LANAI: STATUS

- Teya: I checked in recently with Chris Costales to let them know we still care. They have been doing some ivy gourd and fountain grass work. She requested help with best management practices for LFA and coqui. Bob: they are starting to reach out to get information. I know Hank has been consulted and so have I. They are looking for information on where things are and trying to protect things that need help now. They have the personnel and the funding and are trying to do it themselves. Fern: apparently they are trying to work the angle that they don't need to give a right of entry if we are working with them. They haven't done any permitting. We are still trying to get permission to go back and remove transmitters from birds. The second week of August is the ideal time to do the removal. Teya: they did have LFA in hapuu on Lanai. DOA did the control. Kerri: TNC is allowed on Lanai because they have a conservation easement. We are still working there and putting up more fences.

PARTNER UPDATES

- Fern: there is a building mouse plague on the leeward side of Maui, which will result in an increased chance of typhus. The Department of Health is getting ready to use pesticide. They will probably use poisoned oats because the mice are so widespread. Maui is also the last known place where there was bubonic plague, which is also mouse spread.
- Fern: I am in contact with USDA regarding the Kauai mongoose. They are trying to figure out where it came from. They need to get island-wide samples from Maui. They are particularly looking for mongooses that have been run over. To get a sample, just clip part of the ear.
- Chuck: there is a new attempt underway to revise the restricted plant list. A person has been contracted to research possible additions. The effort is now called the "Offshore and Incipient Plant Project." It is a CGAPS project. I attended a meeting on Oahu in May. A draft document has been produced. The goal is to come up with 100-200 plants to add to the list. Hopefully it will actually go somewhere this time.
- Chuck: Amanda Skelton, the Plant Pono outreach person, and I visited a nursery that was selling a Tasmanian tree fern. They were growing it as an alternative since they knew Australian tree fern was invasive. It turns out that this one is invasive in the Azores and is being found all over the place. It is temperate and could get established at high elevations. It is slow growing, but can live 100 to 1,000 years. The nursery thought they were doing the right thing. There is a new Weed Risk Assessment database. It is entirely web-based. In concept it is a good idea, but in practice it is dependent on high speed Internet access. Currently UH Maui College library is the only place that has fast enough access. There are 1,500 species that have been screened so far. The new Plant Pono website is more user-friendly and is being updated. There is a new contract to add information.
- Kerri: high resolution imagery from Kauai has been posted. You can find tree fern and African tulip and you can see how many other people pinned the same ones. It is a crowd-sourcing project. Anyone from the public can go on and try to find the species. The data that comes in will be compared with our data. Kerri will send out a link to the site.

- Jeremy: we are getting ready to ramp up on miconia helicopter operations again. We have been getting through some of the administrative challenges. We will also be ramping up to treat pines on the crater walls in November. Kerri: we just finished treating pines on Hana Mountain, outside the park. We treated 400 plants. Jeremy: I looked at the literature on invasive pines and it is hard to find a consistently effective chemical. We will look at TNC's results from their recent work and if it is being effective, we may copy it in the winter application. The thought is that Monterey pine will be the hardest to kill. If we can kill Monterey, we can kill any of them.

Next Meeting – September 19, 2014