

**MAUI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
Friday, February 25, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Stuart Funke-d'Egnuff, Forest Starr, Kim Starr, Jay Penniman, Kamalani Pali, Bob Hobdy, James Leary, Lloyd Loope, Lori Buchanan, Pat Bily, Chuck Chimera, Teya Penniman, Lissa Fox, Brooke Mahnken, Elizabeth Anderson, Mike Ade

ATTENDING VIA WEB-COM: Rob Hauff, Josh Fisher

- ◆ The meeting was called to order by Pat Bily (TNC/MISC Chair) at 9:15am.
- ◆ Introductions were made around the table.
- ◆ Minutes from the December 3, 2010 meeting were approved. They will be posted on the website.

BRIEF UPDATES

Staffing

- ◆ Teya: the beginning of 2011 has brought a lot of changes for MISC. Four staff have left MISC since the beginning of the year to pursue other career opportunities - three of our field staff (Tricia Rodriguez, Brad Ogle, & Dave McPherson) and Wendy who was in a combined Hoike/Outreach/Data position. For Wendy's position instead of hiring, we are back-filling with current staff. Stephanie Miller will be taking on the data responsibilities of the position and Abe Vandenberg will be assuming the Hoike/Outreach portion of the duties. Dave has accepted a temporary crew leader position with NARS, Brad has moved to Florida, and Trish is pursuing her interest in massage. Carl Polk has been reassigned from the Hana crew to Piipholo on a trial basis. We will be hiring one regular field position for Piipholo. Tanya Vasquez is now half-time in the field in Hana, in addition to her decon duties, and will be helping with data and PR.

Funding

- ◆ Elizabeth: our FY11 OED, DWS, State, and Forest Service funds are all in and available. We are solvent. Teya: we are still waiting to hear on a potential additional \$50,000 from the State. The FY12 county budget is in process. We are expecting flat budgets from OED and DWS, but also hearing that some programs may be cut. Today is the hearing on House Bill 808, which would take all funding from the NAR and put it in the General Fund. The NAR is where most of our State funds come from so that would be really bad. The bill would also cut the funds for the Legacy Land Commission.
- ◆ Rob: for FY12 Forest Service funding we are looking at a preliminary 10% decrease, but it might go up. I will submit a proposal for a larger amount and will keep you updated. Teya: the FWS has asked for proposals for this year and next year. There are no earmarks expected next year, which is how we got funding this year. We submitted information to Dan and Earl re: funding needs for the next two years. Josh (FWS): we are going over our discretionary funding proposals. The amount is half of what we had last year, but it is still vague. We will be pulling together information and prioritizing for a meeting next week. Teya: We are also waiting to hear about an OHA proposal we put in and we need to follow up with Cas on possible funds that need to be spent on LFA.
- ◆ Stuart: there was a letter circulated from Inouye indicating that there would be no earmarks at all. The President's budget has been drastically slashed and the House just passed a bill a few days ago slashing more funding for this fiscal year. The current Continuing Resolution goes through March 4. If the Senate and the House can't get together, the government will shut down except for essential services. There are 375 RC&Ds around the country and \$50 million in staffing (there is a coordinator in each RC&D). The RC&Ds would be cut to zero. For our work on Maui, the nonprofit part of Tri-Isle would continue to exist because we are funded by our projects, but the NRCS portion of Tri-Isle could be shut down, along with other RC&Ds around the country. There is a lot up in the air. Bob H.: there was a one-hour interview of Inouye on PBS last night following the vote on the earmarks. They spent a couple of days discussing the definition of an earmark. I have a feeling there will be ways found to get around some of it.

- ◆ Teya: MISC is hosting a fundraiser at Milagros on March 9 from noon to 10pm. We get 10% of all food revenue for the time period. Pat: can you put a card on the table so people know what is going on? Stuart, make sure they know to make the checks out to Tri-Isle RC&D.

Legislature

- ◆ Teya: there are some interesting bills that didn't make it very far. One would have required the HISC to update the list of invasive species by 2012. There was also a bill to establish a board for designating restricted plants. There is a bill allowing HDOA to bump the cargo fee up from 50 cents to \$1. This would help them restore and retain positions. Stuart: I am meeting with Senator Baker tomorrow morning if there are any bills you need to know about. Teya: there continues to be a struggle between DOT and HDOA and conflicting legal opinions. Is it a DOT responsibility to be concerned about invasive species? If so, the federal funds that go to DOT could be used and would help with shared inspection facilities. Lloyd: the Maui inspectors are all federally funded and that was an earmark. According to Carol, 80% of the pests come in through airports. Mark Fox is on top of this issue and I am confident he will do whatever possible. Stuart: did the feral cat bill get passed? Teya: I know it is moving forward.

Public Relations

- ◆ Lissa: we have a teacher workshop scheduled on March 5 to encourage teachers to test the new Invasive Species Module activities. I am continuing to work with the reactivated Hawaii Environmental Education Alliance (HEEA). We will have our official launch at the Conservation Conference this year. We did one Winterim trip with Seabury Hall this year. We had 11 students and two teachers working with the Hana miconia crew for a couple of days. We will be participating in the Keiki Eco-Conference at Whale Day. The Molokai edition of our newsletter came out the first of the year. Recent Maui News articles have covered bulbul and BBTV. We received a lot of calls on the BBTV article – more than we have ever gotten from an article. Our next article will be about not releasing caged birds.
- ◆ Pat: it would be good to have some outreach emphasis at the upcoming biocontrol conference on the Big Island. This should be coordinated with Darcy and could be wrapped around the sponsoring agencies (HDOA and the Forest Service). It could be an after hours, evening session where we discuss Hawaii-specific issues with public perception on biocontrol, social marketing, etc. Rob: there will be a specific day dedicated to Hawaii issues and Hawaii resource managers are invited. Teya: I think people doing biocontrol research should be concerned about public perception. We did have a day-long, statewide outreach workshop on biocontrol. I'm not sure what came out of it, although there was a good flyer as a result. Stuart: there is an Oahu public relations firm that has put a request out for submissions for HEEA. They will donate \$25,000 in public relations materials.
- ◆ James: fireweed bio-control is delayed indefinitely. Forest: in the last test they discovered that it did live on sunflowers. Neil is working to try and resolve this, but it won't happen anytime soon. It is held up on the federal side. James: anytime there is a food crop impacted there is a large red flag. There isn't even a time-frame on the delay. In the meantime, everyone is getting overrun by fireweed.

Facility Update

- ◆ Teya: the CTAHR site review committee visited us recently. They are looking at all CTAHR off-campus facilities. We hosted the Vice Chancellor and several high-level CTAHR staff. The outcome was very positive – they concluded we should have a 10-20 year long-term lease.

ISLAND UPDATES: LANAI - MISC

- ◆ Brooke: our last Lanai update was done in August 2009. Of note, we have added two new fountain grass areas since then. One site was found by Ed Morimoto from the Lanaihale project (Ed's Island). There was one mature plant. We have surveyed 33 acres in the vicinity and found nothing else. We will continue to survey the area. There was a new point found by Mos Masicampo, also from the Lanaihale project, on the flats by the road that comes up from Manele. Thirteen mature and thirteen immature plants were controlled. He was hunting when he found the plants. We need to fill in coverage in this area. There have also been another 4-5 mature plants found in areas not previously surveyed.

- ◆ When we look at the Koele area overall, we are seeing a good trend line going down. There are a few puka areas in Gary's Island where we need to take a closer look, but overall we are seeing a good trend here. This is a classic example of what you want to see - mature plants declining overall. Forest: it will be interesting to see how things look after this wet winter. Brooke: at the Hole 10 fountain grass site, we haven't found any plants in awhile. We are continuing to survey. At the Honopu site, which was found by one of the State guys in August 2009, we are seeing an ideal graph. We are covering more acreage and we are seeing a steady decline in mature plants. Fountain grass has been in Kanepuu for over 75 years. This site is also on the decline. There have been no new points found outside of the known areas. Jay: the Honopu area is where Castle & Cooke is looking into putting in pump storage. Excess power from the windmills will be used to pump water. The project will bring construction into that area. Brooke: at the Mikis site, we can't survey inside the solar array. Mike: you can see from the fence. The site is super maintained. We have permission to enter if we need to. Brooke: the site is under control.
- ◆ Mike: there was a bingabing site at the nursery reported by Wendell from Castle & Cooke. There was only one plant and we killed it. Brooke: in 2007 there were two immature bingabing controlled at Manele. In 2008, Darrell found three at the nursery – these were controlled. In 2009, one mature individual (16 feet tall) was found in the middle of nowhere east of Gary's Island. It was also controlled.
- ◆ There is also a rubber vine plant that was owner controlled. We haven't seen anything new there. Bob H.: there were a lot of odd things planted in that gulch back in the 1930s. James: there is fireweed all over the place on Lanai. I am interested in looking at the fireweed distribution on Lanai and Molokai. Both islands are underserved. Kaupo Ranch, Lanai, and Molokai are still considered incipient for fireweed. Molokai is less far gone than Lanai.
- ◆ Brooke: regarding ivy gourd at Manele, last year there were only 34 mature plants found. The plants were found around the rough on the edges of the golf course. The locations were totally correlated with water. Mike: we did recently find fruit in the residential area. There have been mature plants on the course, but not in fruit. The site seems to be under control. The first ivy gourd we controlled on Lanai was at the barge harbor. That site is finally pau.

ISLAND UPDATES: LANAI NATIVE SPECIES RECOVERY PROGRAM

- ◆ Jay: the Lanai Native Species Recovery Program is the largest program of the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project. The project is conducted in association with DOFAW, Tri-Isle RC&D and PCSU. Originally we went over to Lanai to see if there were any petrels (uau) there. We found the 2nd largest known colony in the state/world. We try to be more than just a single species program. We attempt to involve the community in our monitoring work and we try to be the eyes and ears for MISC on Lanai. One of the primary goals of the project is to remove alien forest and re-establish native lowland wet forest. The greatest threat to the uau and to the watershed is guava. We have community and Castle & Cooke support for release of the biocontrol for guava on Lanai. MISC has assisted with our guava control project on several occasions. We received a grant from OHA that allowed us to purchase a good chipper.
- ◆ We put up fences around native plants left on the restoration site after we cleared. There are ungulates there despite the fact that we are within a fenced area of the watershed. We had a lot of naupaka came up as soon as we cleared. Mamake also came up on its own. There was none on the site before we cleared the guava. One of biggest disappointments is that the ungulates are still there. There is no natural regeneration outside of the fenced area. We have to cage everything we out-plant. Kids from the local high school are raising plants for us and they help with the out-planting. Uluhe is expanding. It has been slow with the drought. It will be interesting to see what happens with wet weather. We left whatever was there - even bare sticks which have leafed out now. The end goal is uluhe ground cover with an open canopy native forest. We had a water buffalo donated and we rehabilitated it. Combined with a catchment, we have water for the plantings. To date, we have cleared approximately 4.5 acres. We are doing incipient control in areas where the guava is not as dense.

- ◆ Castle & Cooke is ultimately responsible for getting the deer out of the area. DOFAW is working with us closely. Lisa Ferentinos and Jennifer Higashino have been working with Bryan to establish a watershed partnership. We are working to make a multiple agency and local residents' partnership that will include members of the community. There is a good possibility it will be a functioning watershed partnership within a year. When all the fences are completed, there will be three large units and a total of 4,000 acres fenced.
- ◆ We also have problems with feral cats. We continue to trap them up on Lanaihale. Last year we removed over 60 cats in just the area we trap. With the dry weather last year, they moved up from the lowlands. We don't have mongoose or pigs on the Hale. There is a small population of goats on the west end that doesn't appear to be expanding.
- ◆ Our goal is to hire on-island. Chris Costales is our crew supervisor, education person, and all around do everything person. Mos Masicampo is the crew leader. Chris has an education program going. We had an HYCC high school crew last year. They worked hard. Their leaders were especially interested in having them learn plant identification and ecological concepts. We also have outreach to the Manele homeowners. The "Island Club" provided funding for us to buy parts for the chipper and they have volunteered on the site. They are all retired. Fern and Chris are the backbone of the project. We couldn't do this without them. DOFAW provides seed money for the project and we have received funding from OHA and HISC. We are exploring other grant sources. Funding is very tight. We have a new website up and running: lanainativespeciesrecoveryproject.org. We would like feedback.

ISLAND UPDATES: MOLOKAI

- ◆ Lori: the goal for our target species is eradication. In 2010, we surveyed 331 acres for Australian tree fern. Two immature plants were manually controlled. We are currently waiting for a final aerial imagery report from Resource Mapping. Tree ferns were probably initially planted in the state park and now are popping up in residential areas where they were not planted. Forty acres were surveyed in Halawa Valley for gooseberry in 2010 and forty immature plants were controlled. We surveyed 27 acres for New Zealand flax and manually removed 12 mature and 53 immature plants. In December 2010, TNC lost staffing and we decided to start controlling flax in the preserve. TNC on Molokai doesn't have a field staff anymore and as a result, MoMISC will now be going into the Preserve and doing more early detection surveys for flax.
- ◆ Tumbleweed is not found island-wide. It is primarily in the landfill and the quarry. We surveyed 107 acres and controlled 622 mature and 341 immature plants. On the recommendation of James Leary, we are starting to use Milestone for tumbleweed control. It acts as a pre-emergent and worked well in the quarry because there are no other plants in the area. Fifty-three acres were surveyed for rubber vine in 2010 and two mature and 107 immature plants were controlled. We are seeing native akulikuli naturalizing in the core infestation site. We believe rubber vine does have longer seed viability than has been written up. We are on year six of control and are relying on passive restoration.
- ◆ In 2010, 26 acres were surveyed for albizia. Four mature plants and 130 immature plants were controlled. There is a lot of dead material in the control area. We are trying to cut a trail into the middle. We have completed four re-treatments using a foliar method. Prior to control work, we spread native seeds from the Plant Materials Center on the area. They did sprout, but the deer came in and hammered the seedlings. For both giant reed and gorse, old populations were surveyed and nothing was found.
- ◆ Prevention: our zero detection species move to prevention/early detection status. With help from MISC, 1,263 acres were surveyed for BBTV. We controlled 118 mature and 357 immature infested plants. For fireweed, we surveyed 322 acres and controlled four mature and 10 immature plants. It is all over the place. We are looking up near the forest ridge. It is in remote areas at higher elevations in the middle of nowhere. We are using manual removal on the Ranch because they area certified organic.

- ◆ We intercepted a coqui frog arriving from the Big Island in a shipment of trees earlier this year. It looks like we need to intercept another shipment on Monday. To date, we have had three successful interceptions of coqui on Molokai. For the one earlier this year, Kama got the call that a frog was seen jumping out of a shipment of plants. He sprayed with citric and then they put the plants back on pallets and put them in the warehouse. Kama went back for two nights and listened. We put stickers on the plants to say that this plant came from coqui-infested areas and listed our phone number. We also put information on little fire ants on the plants. Lloyd: a rule that requires anything from the Big Island to have a sticker saying that it could be infested would be a good idea.
- ◆ We continued work this year on upside-down jelly fish. We surveyed nine acres and controlled 10 mature and 58 immature. The influx of fresh water seems to diminish the population. We are only controlling this species along the stretch of public access beach. We surveyed 42 acres for bodhi tree and controlled three mature and two juvenile trees. We are working to obtain permission to control the last four mature trees. They are seeding. We will need to bring in heavy equipment. The seedlings are coming in. Bodhi tree started to spread after the pollinator wasp showed up on Molokai. During our 2010 aerial miconia surveys, we also tried to look for New Zealand flax. We have a running list of five other targets that we look for during miconia surveys and we take points on them.

Next Meeting: April 15, 2011