

DRAFT MINUTES
Hawaii Invasive Species Council
Public Outreach Working Group Meeting
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Department of Health, March 17, 2004

Meeting participants:

Laura Lott, Maile Sakamoto (DOH), Mindy Wilkinson, Jolie Wanger (DLNR-DOFAW), Randy Honebrink (DLNR-DAR), Deborah Ward (DLNR), Alenka Remec, Grady Timmons, Bruce Casler, (The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii), Pauline Sato (TNC and Malama Hawaii), Janelle Saneishi (HDOA), Jody Smith (College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources), Jay Deputy (CTAHR and Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii), Rita Beamish (journalist), Penny Levin, Christy Martin (Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species).

HISC Public Outreach Working Group background – Mindy Wilkinson

-Working group given a list of suggested tasks drawn from HISC legislation and from past work and recommendations by CGAPS (excerpted below):

HISC Public Outreach Working Group Tasks:

- Identify high priority messages to focus education efforts and develop outreach plans with the Department of Education.
- Develop a business round table of private sector transportation entities (e.g. airlines, shipping) to identify invasive species outreach opportunities.
- Develop or utilize an existing website for both in reach to HISC members and partners as well as outreach for the general public for pertinent invasive species issues.

Goals of HISC Public Outreach Project:

Public Outreach: Develop a Public Outreach program in cooperation with the public and private sector for visitors and residents to increase voluntary compliance of quarantine laws, avoid accidental introductions of invasive species, and establishing an effective pest hotline that delivers timely information to managers on the ground.

Outreach Objectives and Time frame:

- Identify high priority messages to focus education efforts and develop outreach plans with the Department of Education (2 years).
- Develop a business round table of private sector transportation entities (e.g. airlines, shipping) to identify invasive species outreach opportunities (2 years).
- Develop or utilize an existing website for in-reach to HISC members and partners as well as outreach for the general public for pertinent invasive species issues (1 year).

- Develop a Pest hotline available to the public that is integrated into a statewide geographical information system and interagency database that is accessible to field crews actively controlling terrestrial and aquatic invasive species (2 years).
- Develop a series of invasive species Public Service Announcements in cooperation with a variety of media outlets to encourage travelers and residents to not introduce or transport invasive species into and between islands (1 year and ongoing).

-Tasks open to debate, prioritization addition/deletion, etc.

-At most recent HISC meeting on March 1, the Interim plan and budget were approved.

-Administrative budget request for \$5 million this year.

-Note: the budget emailed with the announcement of this meeting has been slightly revised; for example, the most recent Interim budget includes a revised amount for computers.

-We tried to expand existing work by Christy and her program.

CGAPS outreach campaign – Christy Martin

-Funding has been secured for 4 PSAs and support materials.

-Timeline is dependant on RFPs for work, securing contracts, creative, etc.

-Two windows—before election season and after.

Message #1: Don't Pack a Pest

Pests arrive via airlines, ships, freight forwarders, and postal service, a large number of which are unintentional introductions of insects, animals and plant diseases and seeds. Items such as uninspected produce, soil, or other high-risk commodities are brought in mainly by residents (business imports or personal) and military personnel, not by tourists (HDOA 2000). Therefore, we need to reach a broad audience of residents with the concept of “Don't Pack a Pest,” to alert them of the pathways, the need to declare items that may carry pests, and the need to keep their shipped items clean.

Message #2: Don't Plant a Pest

A second major problem is the purposeful introduction of new invasive plants into the state and the availability of invasive plants in the horticultural trade. Of the plants that pose the greatest threat to native ecosystems, 91% were intentionally introduced as ornamentals, for crops or for forestry, while 9% were accidental introductions (Smith 1985). As mentioned previously, there are problems with the laws dealing with the import and sale of invasive plants, and they are not easily changed, although the responsible agencies are working together to correct these gaps.

One way we can immediately address this issue is to raise public awareness that they play a role in this process, as landscapers, nurseries and garden shops stock what the public asks for. We want to educate people to ask for non-invasive plants with the campaign, “Don't Plant a Pest.” People will be able to identify non-invasive plants in garden shops and nurseries by looking for signs or stickers that indicate a plant is safe for the environment. This portion of this campaign revolves around a highly effective new tool called the Weed Risk Assessment system (WRA) that identifies potentially invasive plants before they are planted. Nursery plants are currently being evaluated using the WRA, which employs a series of questions modified from the highly

successful New Zealand and Australian systems, which gives a plant a score based on biological and environmental information. This score is a predictor of whether or not a plant might become invasive in Hawaii. Plants that pass the WRA will be marked with a sticker stating that it is safe for the environment.

Message #3: Report a Pest

A third problem that hampers efforts to protect Hawaii is that we are not utilizing the public as our eyes and ears in reporting known and unknown animal and plant pests. It has been documented that 94% of people would call “authorities” if they saw a snake (TNC 1997), but it has also been seen that people do not know who to call, what the number is, or that they need to call immediately. One recent example of this fact occurred where a snake was seen at close proximity, yet the homeowners waited two weeks to call authorities. They then called one agency and were referred to another. After several more days, a team responded, though the snake was never recovered. Additionally, people are not in the habit of reporting unknown animals or plants, as was the case with coqui frogs statewide. People thought it was a new bird calling at night, but many did not think or know to call the pest hotline on Oahu or their local HDOA or DOFAW branches.

Tactics and key points

Maile: Public outreach always receives the least amount of funding, yet is considered one of the most important needs. We really need to do more. We need to start by asking for double. (Note: HISC funding requires a 1:1 non-State match)

Laura Lott: We also need to discuss created V. paid advertising. I think news stories make a bigger difference than a PSA

Christy: The CGAPS plan is fairly set for certain areas. It is being used by the HISC to show a match and as a program that the HISC public outreach working group can augment. We’ll need to talk about the messages the HISC needs to target. There may be messages that should be continued, and there may be others we’ll need to add, such as messages and materials on West Nile Virus.

Bruce: Have the group going to act as a clearinghouse for consolidating and coordinating efforts?

Penny: Is there any way we can look at pooling existing resources and logging in-kind services?

Jody: At the Fostering Sustainable Behavior Workshop, they discussed one way to get people to change their behavior—having people commit to something. If people say they’ll do something, like on a commitment card, then if they share their commitment with others, then they will be much more likely to follow through.

Penny: One issue that people have brought up is training. It appears to be missing in the plan, particularly if we are going to have other go out and talk about the issues, we need to think about

training the trainers. Also train more people to participate in groups like Sierra Club outings, etc. to be more effective.

Maile: Would it be reasonable to get people together in an event to give information and resources? Like an environmental health fair where they can get all the information at once.

Jannelle: There is a target audience with the port of entry workers about invasives, which is not listed in the plan. The KARA shows that cargo is the main way pests arrive. We should conduct outreach to these people most likely to come into contact with new pests.

Grady: When we did the 1996 campaign we worked with the travel market. The idea was that we would work with visitor industry to alert people to the problem, train the flight attendants, getting the airlines to show the videos, getting information on the AG form. Also billboard signs for the air terminal...it was all worked out, yet each time the DOT would find a way to scuttle. Then they saw the potential to make money with advertising space instead. Years of work went into it, it can be revived but we need to get people to do it and work together. However, the work is mostly completed. We can try to get the project rolling again, but we'll need to get the DOT onboard.

Randy: You talked about trying to hit visitors. Hawaii has an official travel site. Can we get it on the main sites? Also, AG forms. Is there a statute that requires them? It may be that the only way you can get information to people on airlines is by statute. Is there a way to come up with a list of information that people need when they arrive in Hawaii and can we work together to find a way to do this?

Penny: There are foreign language folks out there that need to be reached.

Proposed Changes to the HISC Strategic Plan

Page 13 (current)

Outreach - Measures of Effectiveness

- Number of callers on pest hotline
- Number of education materials produced and distributed to target audiences
- Number of volunteers who assist with invasive species management stewardship
- Number of hits on invasive species web page

Page 13 (proposed)

Outreach - Measures of Effectiveness

- Number of callers on pest hotline
- Number of education materials requested and delivered to interested groups
- Volunteer hours that assist with invasive species management stewardship
- Number of hits on invasive species web page
- Number of commitment cards or individuals that sign up for updates via email

Tasks

All:

- ❑ Gather what is being done
- ❑ Rank/prioritize/add objectives to those listed in the HISC Strategic Plan
- ❑ Revise measures of effectiveness (see proposed revision to page 13 above)
- ❑ Prepare a contact list of invasive species experts for distribution to the media.

HISC Co-Chairs:

- ❑ Encourage participation by the HDOE and HDOT

Next Meeting tentatively scheduled for:

Wed., May 5

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

HDOA Plant Quarantine Facility

1849 Auiki Street - Sand Island

Directions: From Nimitz Highway, take Kalihi Street makai, go all the way down and make a right on Auiki. Go one block ewa and turn left into the driveway. PQ is located behind the Triple F warehouse - second green building.