

MINTUES FOR THE  
MEETING OF THE  
HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2006  
TIME: 8:30 A.M.  
PLACE: HAWAII DEPARTEMNT OF HEALTH  
5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD  
HONOLULU, HI 96813

Chairperson Peter Young called the meeting of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to order at 8:50 a.m. The following were in attendance:

MEMBERS:

Mr. Peter Young, DLNR	Ms. Sandra Kunimoto, DOA
Mr. Sam Callejo, UH	Mr. Rodney Haraga, DOT
Mr. Jerry Haruno, DOH	Ms. Liz Corbin, DBEDT

AGENCY AND LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. Bill Spitz, County of Kauai	Senator J. Kalani English
Senator Russel Kokubun	Representative Cliff Tsuji
Mr. Garrett Kashimoto, DCCA	Mr. Earl Cambell, USFWS
Mr. Mike Robinson DHHL	B. G. Gary Ishikawa, DOD

OTHERS:

Ms. Linda Chow, Deputy Attorney General's Office	
Mr. Erick Cremer, DOH	
Ms. Nancy Cook Lauer, Stephens Media Group	
Ms. Vanessa Falke, University of Bern	NJ. Liquido, USDA
Mr. Paul J. Conry, DLNR	Dr. Mindy Wilkinson, DLNR
Mr. Mark Defley, DLNR	Dr. Lyle Wong, DOA
Mr. Domingo Cravalho, DOA	Ms. Carol Okada, DOA
Ms. Teya Penniman, MISC	Ms. Julie Leialoha, BISC
Ms. Rachel Neville, OISC	Mr. Mike Robinson
Mr. Bill Durston, Leilani Nursery Inc.	Mr. Carl Miura
Mr. Paul Singleton, UH-Manoa	Mr. Jeff Burgett, USFWS
Mr. Alan Takemoto, Hawaii Farm Bureau	Mr. Kelvin Sunada, DOH
Mr. Mark Fox, The Nature Conservancy	Ms. Priscilla Billig, HISC

Mr. Chris Dacus, DOT

Mr. Kelvin Sunata, DOH

{Note: language for deletion is [bracketed], new/added is underlined}

**Item 2: Approval of Minutes of January 19, 2006**

The following amendments were made to the minutes

**1. Page 1 to include those present at the January 19, 2006 meeting**

**“Members**

**Mr. Peter Young, DLNR**  
**Mr. Laurence Lau DOH**

**Ms. Sandra Kunimoto, DOA**  
**Ms. Liz Corbin, DBEDT**

**Staff**

**Dr. Mindy Wilkinson, DLNR**  
**Dr. Lyle Wong, DOA**

**Mr. Ken Teramoto, DOA**  
**Ms. Carol Okada, DOA**

**Others**

**Mr. Rob Parsons, County of Maui**  
**Ms. Lisa Naputi, USDA WS**  
**Mr. Keevin Minami, DOA**  
**Ms. Amy Takahashi, HDOA**  
**Mr. Mark Defley, DLNR**

**Mr. Mike Robinson, DHHL**  
**Mr. Billy Kenoi, County of Hawaii**  
**Ms. Linda Chow, Deptuy AG**  
**Mr. Morris Tamanaha, Airports**  
**Mr. Jeff Burgett, USFWS**

**2. Page 3 under the heading “Working Group”**

“Neal – 20 projects of pests including [~~gall~~] gall wasps. Working with U.H. to suppress [~~gall~~] gall wasp population with various pesticides and chemical treatment as well as biological control methods.”

**3. Page 9**

“Sandra – Modified to say an investigation to provide [~~rules~~] recommendations on conduct. Should be inclusive. Suggest a working group to do this type of plan”

Unanimously approved as amended (Kunimoto/Haraga).

**Item 3: Presentation of the Draft Statewide Plan for Coqui Frog Management**

Mindy Wilkinson, Invasive Species Coordinator for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) indicated over the last several years significant time and resources have been spent addressing coqui frogs. County representatives have asked the legislature for more funding to help deal with this issue on their respective islands. Dr. Wilkinson spoke of the efforts of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) quarantine branch in trying to stop coqui frogs from being transported interisland as well as impacting our export markets. DLNR-Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is addressing the issue by supporting the development of the Invasive Species Committees.

The plan presented stemmed from an initial meeting June 2005 when a group of agency representatives gathered in Hilo to conduct a statewide summary meeting which addressed what their goals were in terms of what research needed to be done regarding coqui frogs and what the control priorities were. Based on that meeting and other discussions the committee created a document, which summarized what the agency's roles were in terms of control, prevention and outreach. Using that document the committee looked at what the alternatives were if we did nothing and the outcome if we implemented a plan and how much it would cost. Dr. Wilkinson provided the members with the executive summary in its draft form and went through the document. She invited those present to review the document and to provide feedback as to reflect what each agency is doing. It is Dr. Wilkinson's hope that next year after the \$2 million dollars appropriated by the legislature for the purpose of controlling coqui frogs has been spent we will be able to show what we've done with those monies. Dr. Wilkinson went on to discuss the coqui frog population on each of the islands specifying the areas the frogs are in existence and what each county is doing to control and eradicate the coqui frog population.

Senator Kokubun asked for clarification as to the procedure of what will happen after comments are received on the Draft Statewide Plan. Dr. Wilkinson pointed out this document is not a required planning document and is not tied to any funding so there will be no formal adoption of a plan but this document will provide information as to what other agencies are doing with regards to the Management, Research and Education Plan in Hawaii's Coqui Frog and provide both a vehicle for coordination and a benchmark for the impact and effects of control actions. Dr. Wilkinson plans to release the final version of the plan by September. Should the public want to receive the Statewide Plan for Coqui Frogs or provide comments they could do so by contacting Dr. Wilkinson.

Dr. Earl Campbell testified that there have already been a large number of people that have reviewed the plans and have provided comments. He spoke of his efforts in dealing with invasive species control, specifically vertebrates, disclosing that there are very limited broad scale success and people need to have this in mind and be realistic. He suggested that others worldwide who have worked on this type of plan be able to comment on the draft executive summary.

Representative Cliff Tsuji spoke of a group of individuals on the Big Island who are advocating for the coqui frog. He asked Dr. Wilkinson if there is a plan to address this issue. She pointed out not everyone will agree with the plan but hopes that by providing

an objective account of the actions taking place and the resources needed to achieve specific outcomes that the plan would provide the basis for clear decision making. He asked Ms. Wilkinson if she was aware of a voluntary policing and certification of coqui free nursery business. Dr. Wilkinson indicated knowledge of two such groups doing voluntary coqui free certification, one the Big Island the other on Maui. She introduced those present to Domingo Cravalho who works with individuals who are a part of this group.

Domingo Cravalho of the Department of Agriculture (DOA), Plant Quarantine Branch let it be known the Kohala Coalition started a program called “Coqui Free Hawaii.” In the beginning the group had problems as it was a voluntary, non-regulatory group of nursery growers. Since that time the group has evolved into “Stop Coqui Hawaii.” After several meetings the group came up with a working document on an application for nursery growers and distributors to use, which attest that they would provide plants that are coqui frog free. The document also detailed the various levels of violations. At this time the program is being finalized.

**No Action.**

**Item 4: Update and Overview of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture’s Biosecurity Initiative.**

Carol Okada of the DOA announced that the first year’s money was used to look at the programs available at DOA, Plant Quarantine. The monies allowed the department to take a new look at how things (i.e. applying for federal aid) were being handled. This past year they’ve looked at staffing at the various islands and what more was needed. Ms. Okada communicated that five percent (5%) of invasive species arrived in Hawaii through Kahalui Airport while ninety-five percent (95) enter through Honolulu Airport. On Maui, DOA focused their efforts on identifying invasive species and plants at Kahului Harbor but due to the limited resources DOA was not able to address if insects were coming to Hawaii on maritime cargo. At present there are on going inspections looking at cargo coming in through Young Brothers. Another issue they would need to assess would be the arrival of the super ferry. In order to deal with these problems DOA has employed inspectors and dogs at the various airports. Kauai has only 2 inspectors as it was determined that their biggest risk was the produce brought in by Young Brothers. Kona has 3 inspectors even though they rate third in terms of cargo volume. The concern in Kona is the private flights arriving on the island. There are little imports into Hilo so those inspectors are looking at the pest moving in between the islands.

Ms. Okada communicated to everyone that prior to the existence of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) the DOA knew coqui frogs were a problem but they did not have the funds to deal with that problem. Since HISC came into existence in the first year they’ve conducted surveys and brought sprayers to deal with the coqui issue. On the second year with the funding received from HISC (\$755,000) the DOA was able to design a large hot water treatment unit which will be placed at State Plant Quarantine. The funding has also allowed the DOA to purchase the same units for Maui and Kona.

The funding has allowed the DOA to set up an incident command that will work with HISC and the counties. Ms. Okada made those at the meeting aware that USDA provided \$135,000, which allowed DOA to purchase the unit, 1 steam sterilizer, 3 sprayers and the ability to complete the survey. This year's money will buy more sprayers. With biosecurity funds from the legislature 8 technicians will be placed in Hilo to monitor the treatment center while 2.9 million in airport funds will be used to hire 56 additional inspectors, half of them being technicians and the other half inspectors. Of these technicians and inspectors, one third will be stationed on the Big Island, 2 on Kauai, 2 on Maui and the rest will be stationed on Oahu. The monies received this year will allow the DOA to start a state/federal inspection pilot program next month, to continue the planning of a joint use cargo and inspection consolidation facility at Honolulu airport and the expansion of their information system. At present, the DOA is implementing the coqui incident command on Kauai and will be meeting with the landowner next week while at the same time provide training for their inspectors.

An unidentified speaker questioned the allocation of inspectors on each island. Ms. Okada pointed out the survey's conducted is an important tool in determining the placement of inspectors. She feels there is a lot of the risk coming from the Big Island (frogs, fire ants) so that's where they're sending the manpower.

#### **Item 5: Working Group Updates**

##### **Prevention**

Eric Cremer, Coordinator of Vector for Borne Disease with the Department of Health appeared before the Council. He noted diseases can arrive in Hawaii through the air, water or on animals. He believes once a disease is introduced into Hawaii it will be hard to control unless we catch it immediately. He believes if West Nile Virus reaches Hawaii it could extinguish our bird population. As a way of stopping West Nile they plan to use the containers mentioned by Ms. Okada to quarantine birds and plants. Mr. Cremer let it be known that part of DOH's function is to observe live and dead birds, conduct mosquito control and examine larvae in ponds. He disclosed in order to prevent West Nile from arriving into Hawaii vector control has over 113 traps set up around the islands concentrated in the ports of entry to capture mosquitoes. These mosquitoes are then tested for West Nile Virus. As for dead birds the DOA previously ran test on all dead birds including birds doves, pigeons, and chickens which are species that would not die from the West Nile Virus. Instead small birds and sparrows, finches and native birds will be tested for West Nile as the disease can prove fatal to their specie. Their goal is to test approximately four hundred birds within the next year. A new procedure is to test live birds that are caught at the airports to see if they carry disease. This procedure is only conducted in Oahu and Mr. Cremer hopes to include Maui, Kauai and Hawaii within the year.

##### **No Action.**

Tabled the remainder of the working group updates until after budget approval.

**Item 6: Approval of the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Hawaii Invasive Species Council Budget.**

Dr. Wilkinson announced the HISC budget has been reduced from four million dollars to two million dollars. One new program receiving funding is the DOA Biosecurity Initiative program as explained by Ms. Okada. The focus of the program is to increase the number of inspectors at the ports and to improve prevention. Coqui Frogs received a funding of \$2,000,000 - \$1,000,000 being a grant in aid to the County of Hawaii, \$500,000 to the DOA and \$500,000 to DLNR (\$300,000 to Hawaii, \$100,000 to Maui, and \$50,000 each to Kauai and Oahu for invasive species control). Dr. Wilkinson stated that they all work with the funding available to protect Hawaii from the coqui frog problem.

**Prevention:** One of the changes from previous years is that prevention has been identified as one of the highest priority but at the same times their funding has been reduced. Dr. Wilkinson noted the DOA has taken on the responsibility of Biosecurity and they've stated that they'd try to maintain the West Nile Virus Prevention Project.

**Research and Technology:** The program has been dropped therefore grants will not be given this year but the groundwork can be started and if the funding is restored the monies will be made available next year. If funding is not restored, funding to the counties will be cut.

**Response and Control:** (four objectives) 1) Focus on early detection. If we know it is a threat we'll go out and investigate (i.e. coqui frog, fire ants and stinging caterpillars). 2) Support rapid response; 3) Planning for prevention and 4) Create shared data structures.

**Invasive Species Committees:** Due to reduction in state and federal funding the committees on Kauai and Oahu will be strongly effected which will result in laying off staff.

**Public Outreach:** Three staff members hired for the program and they'll be trying to maintain staff over the next year.

**Public Comments:**

Rachel Neville representing the Oahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) and the Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC) provided the council with a hand out. She pointed out Oahu and Kauai will have their budget cut and wanted to make the council aware of how it would affect their programs. Ms. Neville communicated that their mission is to eradicate invasive species, prevent new species from establish itself and stop the spread of established species. In the area of eradication, miconia and coqui frog are great example of what they've been doing. Since 2001, OISC has stopped the spread of miconia. On Kauai all flowering and mature trees have been eradicated. On Oahu, due to budget cuts they will have only 2 field staff and the support staff will be cut to a part-time position. On Kauai they'll be laying off 3 field staff. For Kauai this will mean that they will not be able to conduct surveys as quick, which will result in a tree maturing

before they find it resulting in eradication efforts being set back. In the area of naturalized coqui frog population on Oahu, they're close to eradicating the population in Wahiawa but budget cuts will result in the hiring of only two temporary individuals for the coqui crew. This in turn will mean the crew won't be able to spray as much resulting in total eradication being just out of their reach. On Kauai they are working on the lauae population, but a cut in funding will impede eradication goals for 2007. Along with their partners, OISC has been able to eradicate fireweed and smoke bush on Oahu and staff cuts will only put eradication efforts in jeopardy. In the area of preventing new species from establishing itself, OISC has removed 2 plants. Ms. Neville announced that early detection and rapid response funding is good for this year but if cuts continue next year it will make it difficult for them to find and eradicate these plants while the cost associated with this task is cheap and easy. Addressing the issue of stopping species before they've established themselves, OISC have stopped fireweed from spreading to the Koolau's and fountain grass from spreading to the leeward coast. If funding is cut they'll need to drop fountain grass as a targeted species. Ms. Weville asked those present if there were monies or grants available that her group could qualify to receive to keep their group in mind. Her hope is next year that the funding will be restored.

An unidentified speaker commented on the long-term investment. He questions if we have a good control over a species and funding is cut and we can not keep on top of the species it could end up costing us more money in the future.

Sam Callejo from the council made a motion to recommend the council ask for an emergency appropriation of two million dollars (knowing that there is a surplus). He suggested HISC work with governor on this request.

An unidentified speaker stressed the importance of sticking with eradication efforts instead of putting it on the back burner and coming back several years later and seeing that the area effected has greatly increased.

Senator Kokubun stated that members of Legislature were present to be liaisons to their community in terms of the councils work and to also provide them with info as they go back to their job. He understands and appreciates what was said today.

**Unanimously approved as submitted (Callejo/ Young).**

## **Item 5 Working Group Updates, continued**

### **Established Pests**

Teya Penniman, representing the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) provided the council with a map of Maui that indicated the different areas they've worked on with regards to dealing with invasive plants and animals. She let it be known the invasive species committee arose as a result of a gap between agencies when they both had jurisdiction. She spoke of the local expertise that helps them deal with eradication issues. In terms of the eradication efforts, Ms. Penniman emphasized that the process and objectives are similar across the islands the only thing that differs in the targeted plant or

animal. She noted that whatever level of support the state can provide in terms of money is very important. Ms. Penniman indicated the key elements to their success are that the crew is very flexible in terms of the job they do and the location they are at. At present, they are focused on early detection - on Maui they've driven across Maui to look for invasive species and prioritized their list for removal as well as the associated cost. Approximately 8 detrimental species have had all of their known population controlled. They are also working to involve the public by doing workshop targeted at specific groups and providing them with some resources as to what they can do to control the plant or animal. In closing, Ms. Penniman spoke of their previous eradication efforts of coqui frog and banana bunchy tops population on Maui. Their future priorities are to enhance early detection, sharing their success stories and doing better job of getting out to decision makers to show they are making efforts in eradication.

**No Action.**

### **Research and Technology**

Bill Durston of Leilani Nursery and Paul Singleton of the University of Hawaii presented the results of their improvements to a thermal treatment system for coqui frogs in nursery stock.

**No Action.**

### **Public Outreach**

Maile Sakamoto of the Department of Health presented an update and summary of public outreach activities to date.

Senator English commented that the Public Outreach Working Group met many times, whereas other working groups have met many fewer times—especially the Interagency Working Group, which has never met.

Rodney Haraga affirmed that the Department of Transportation would be convening that working group in the future.

**No Action.**

**Meeting Adjourned by Peter Young at 11:50 a.m.**