

Hawai'i Invasive Species Council  
Minutes, Resources Working Group Meeting  
July 29, 2011

In attendance: Mary Lou Kobayashi (Resources Working Group Chair, DBEDT), Carol Okada (Prevention Working Group Chair, HDOA), Rob Hauff (Established Pests Working Group Chair, DLNR DOFAW), William Aila (HISC Co-Chair, DLNR), Paul Conry (DLNR DOFAW), Chris Dacus (Public Outreach Working Group Chair, DOT), Teya Penniman (MISC), Lori Buchanan (MoMISC), Keren Gunderson (KISC), Rachel Neville (OISC), Susie Iott (OISC), Christy Martin (CGAPS), Josh Atwood (HISC), Mark Fox (TNC), Kate Cullison (DLNR DAR), Jono Blodgett (DLNR DAR), Sky Harrison (PBIN), Dan Clark (USFWS), Darcy Oishi (HODA).

1. Introductions
2. Opening remarks by Chair Aila and Paul Conry
  - a. Chair Aila: Stressed the importance of balancing a budget under tight resources.
  - b. Paul Conry: The HISC budget is \$1.4M from NARS and \$400k from the LLC program. We are hoping that the economy is returning and that funding will increase for the NARS funds and for the HISC. Last year we identified general funds coming to the department for invasive species management. We are hoping that there will be something in the \$300k range this year, but it remains unknown. There will be more general fund money that we can apply. This process will help us identify priorities. We've identified new challenges, such as axis deer.
  - c. Teya: Not having the general funds to work with has made the budget setting process much harder. How will decisions for general funds be made when they're found? At the recommended budget, the ISCs will lose capacity. I recommend that ISCs be a priority for general funds.
  - d. Paul: I would ask that you identify what the needs are beyond the recommended budget.
3. Previous meeting minutes (Sep 8, 2010) approved.
4. Review of the HISC Strategic Plan (Mary Lou Kobayashi)
  - a. Josh: Our current focus is on maintaining capacity rather than supporting new programs. While Established Pests is an important focus, continuing to provide funding to Public Outreach and Prevention maintains the broad overview of the HISC.
  - b. Lori: The ISCs received correspondence from Rob regarding our funding, and it was really low. I reviewed the strategic plans. Historically the strategic plan has always supported the ISCs. Back when HISC formed and had a lot of funds, the only real, established invasive species push in Hawai'i was from the ISCs. Historically the ISCs have always received from 40-55% of the special funds from the conveyance tax. If you go back into the minutes of HISC meetings, in all budgets, when Paul talked about a surplus, it was always easier to give that surplus to established projects like the ISCs. New projects are top-heavy and take time to set up. This year we have a really huge project, a new project that is requesting a lot of funds (Axis Deer). I am concerned about the decreased funds to the ISCs. The burden that the new project of the deer working group is bringing on is pretty taxing to all of us. We haven't had the opportunity to see how those moneys would be spent. At this point, I don't know if I can support a new project at this time from this funding. If DLNR has other funds for the deer project, I'm asking this Resources working group to fund the ISCs, especially OISC and KISC.

- c. Josh: If you take the HISC support and overhead out of the current budget, slightly less than 50% of the current recommended budget is going to the ISCs.
  - d. Chris Dacus: Every few years, an issue comes up that is new and broader than the work of the ISCs. It would behoove us to have an addendum to the strategic plan for short term strategies for funding new priority projects. There should be flexibility to work on new projects in a shorter time frame than the five year cycle of the strategic plan.
  - e. Carol: Because of the continuing shortfalls, you see a shift in trends. I'm alarmed at the increased spread of pests in the islands. Just this week we stopped about 7 or 8 shipments of little fire ants between the islands. We're going to need help with rapid response. For coqui, it's near the base of the Ko'olau in Waimanalo. Our focus is shifting from one project, like axis deer, to broader problems across the state. It isn't one target anymore, we're going to have to address issues more broadly and work together.
  - f. Mary Lou: We're going to ask the staff to look into ways of addressing issues that come up on a shorter time frame than the 3-5 time frame of the strategic plan.
  - g. Lori: I have to validate what Chris said. Historically, we've been operating at times where the legislature has jumped in to address a cause like coqui frogs on the Big Island. Senators get involved, and then moneys are appropriated and earmarked for certain projects, which may or may not be appropriate. Chair Aila, we need to make sure that the money we spend gets the best bang for the buck. I don't want to spend money without knowing how a project will make an on-the-ground difference. We just heard from Carol that now that they are looking for ants, they don't know what to do. The only established groups out there working on the issues are the ISCs.
5. Discussion of FY12 Recommended Budget (Mary Lou Kobayashi)
- a. Review of Process (Josh Atwood)
    - i. After receiving revised proposals from the working group meetings, we've had teams of evaluators meet and score the proposals. We've used that as one factor in our discussions of how the money might be divided up. That's how we got the amounts in the recommended budget, which is just a recommendation. The projects on the sheet are presented in ranked order based on our evaluations. There is no Research and Technology group this year. We had looked into reinstating the group, but we received only a few emails from interested parties, and the former R&T working group chairs would only like to get together when it's clear that funds would be available for that group. Looking at the budget sheet, the green column is the working group recommendation. Just for your information, the pink column is original requests, orange is voluntary adjustments, revised amounts are in yellow, and in white columns on the right there are, just for reference, HISC and LLC funds from FY11 and the change in amount from FY11. As far as HISC and LLC funds go, the changes in amounts from FY11 are in the ballpark or in several cases higher, but of course this doesn't include general funds. We're also not discussing other funding sources this year, such as USFS funds. We have a massive reduction in HISC support this year, by using a surplus amount from FY11 that was left due to not hiring an intended staff person. We've rolled that over to this year, leaving more money for projects. There is also a large decrease from DAR, as they've done a good job of securing other funding sources.

- b. Chair Aila: Thank you for the hard work. We'll be looking under every rock we can find. (Chair Aila and Paul Conry exit)
- c. Christy: The Invasive Species Data Management proposal was actually a Research and Technology request, but since there is no Research and Technology group this year, they applied it to the other groups.
  - i. Keren: He said all three groups would need to fund him, but only one has.
  - ii. Josh: That project has a year's worth of funding to carry him through July 2012. This proposal is for a six-month extension to the end of 2012, to find additional funding. Our thought was that even if he gets partial funding, it gives him some money to apply to some of the projects he listed here, but he still has a year of funding to keep going, whereas some of the other projects applying for funds might not.
- d. Rachel: For OISC, the reason we asked for more this year was that last year we had ARRA and other federal resources, which have run out. Even though it appears that we're getting more from last year, the need is there because we've lost the federal funds.
  - i. Kate: Comparing to last year is not the best way to go about it. Last year the ISCs all took major hits to build BIISC back up to capacity.
  - ii. Josh: The FY11 numbers were not used in determining amounts from this year. They were not included in the discussions for this year. The information was added to this budget sheet at the last minute just for your information.
  - iii. Teya: Last year the general funds were in play, too, so comparing last year's money to this year's money is not an appropriate comparison.
  - iv. Josh: We can just ignore the white columns.
- e. Prevention Working Group Update (Carol Okada)
  - i. Regarding the HPWRA proposal, it is the only project we have that deals with the prevention of noxious plants. It is a priority. It's unusual in that it has gotten support from industry and the conservation community.
  - ii. For the ant proposals, the federal grants are working on a very narrow scope. There is money for bee work, but only within the scope of Varroa mite, but not for small hive beetle.
  - iii. I'm concerned about the DAR Hull Fouling proposal. It is the only proposal we have that addresses aquatics. I hope there is a way to work it out. We need the oceans protected.
  - iv. We have to maintain our rapid response structure. If we have to maneuver, I'd be willing to direct funds towards the Established Pests to maintain that capacity.
- f. Established Pests Working Group Update (Rob Hauff)
  - i. We set priorities at our July meeting:
    - 1. Axis deer on the big island, biological control, maintaining control and response capacity (especially the ISCs and DAR AIS), data management.
  - ii. Our working group had five evaluators including Josh and myself, for 15 projects for over \$2M. We've come down to a little under \$1.2M in our recommended budget. One project was withdrawn voluntarily. Several proposers voluntarily adjusted their amounts and several requests were reduced through collaboration.
  - iii. The working group has decided to fund the ISCs, DAR AIS, axis deer project, and the DOA biocontrol program.

- iv. While Established Pests is the largest chunk of the budget by far, some of our programs will suffer due to the cuts we've had to make to balance the budget. Any flexibility in the other working groups would be appreciated. The reason I contacted the ISCs was so they could be prepared today to discuss what the impact of the proposed funds would be.
- g. Public Outreach Working Group Update (Chris Dacus)
  - i. The POWG met several times this year. We met on July 15 to discuss proposals. Three or four proposals didn't have a presenter. I highly recommend that next year we require proposers to be present. There's a lot of collaboration and synergies found at those meetings. On the 15<sup>th</sup> we identified how projects would fit together with other projects going on in the group. We were able to reduce funding requests due to collaboration. That was extremely helpful. We had a revised proposal process for those proposals that we had questions about.
  - ii. We had five people in our evaluation committee. The scoring this year was helpful for a qualitative review, but quantitatively I personally don't believe that the scores represent true prioritization. A 92 and a 98 could be the same level of priority. But it allowed us to go through and evaluate on some critical areas. This is the first year we had very specific comments, which Josh will send to proposers so they can understand what we were looking for.
  - iii. I think most folks believe that the HISC was set up to support innovation but has become a funding source for existing groups that fill gaps. I struggle with this, with the idea that the main funding priority of the HISC is the ISCs. It's always difficult to weight ISC and non-ISC projects.
  - iv. It was inferred that we needed to reduce our proposed amount to a certain amount, but we didn't look at it that way. We looked at projects that were worthwhile and were able to take out some projects that didn't really address metrics in a way that was a good use of funds. We reduced below our target amount for the benefit of the other working groups. The amount given away from POWG was about 20% of our hypothetical budget.
- h. Rachel: The ISCs are supposed to bridge gaps. Even though we are longterm projects, we continually address new gaps. That addresses the strategic plan.
- i. Teya: How did the recommended budget magically come out to \$1.8M?
  - i. Josh: That was coordination with the working groups and I. Projections that I had done beforehand were used as target numbers, and then with each working group we worked to approach those numbers. My vision for this year is that, while everything is still up for debate at this meeting, if we can start this conversation from a place where the budget is balanced based on evaluations, then we have a good place to start from and we can shift funds around as need be.
  - ii. Teya: So you did this in coordination with the working group chairs?
  - iii. Josh: Yes.
  - iv. Rob: I think we all agreed that starting from realistic numbers and then discussing how we might want to change those numbers was a good idea.
  - v. Teya: Was that done one-on-one or was there a Resources working group meeting before the Resources working group meeting?
  - vi. Rob: No, that was individual coordination with Josh.
  - vii. Josh: And nothing is set in stone.

viii. Chris: It is a big improvement over previous years.

6. Adjustments to FY12 Recommended Budget

- a. Mary Lou: As the chair of the Resources Working Group, I thank each of the working group chairs for working on their budget and coming up with figures that add up to the amount of funding available. I've heard that the numbers are roughly proportional to funding in year's past. The budget is balanced, but it is open for discussion. Are there any adjustments that are needed?
- b. Rob: The problem I see with Established Pests is that we've cut our core programs back quite a bit to the point where we're going to have to do layoffs. If there is flexibility from the other working groups to go into those projects, that would be great. But we have to look at whether the programs that funding would be coming from, if those projects would still be sustainable and whether the amounts would be meaningful to our core projects.
- c. Carol: I want to get a hold of Darcy, since they have ants under all three working groups, to see if there is flexibility.
- d. (Break)
- e. Carol: I was able to talk to Darcy, and biosecurity funds will cover some of their projects. The \$71,838 for ant prevention and the \$6,500 ant outreach projects can be changed to zero. Those programs will continue under other funding.
  - i. Mary Lou: We appreciate that.
  - ii. Rob: That's a meaningful amount.
- f. Jono: With that opening up, we have one possible recruit for the Ballast Water coordinator position, but it's tough to bring someone over with only one year of funding. We have one year of funding now.
  - i. Kate: We can't pay for relocation. What we're applying for is a second year of funding to make it a better job offer. We're interviewing now.
  - ii. Jonathan: The funding would be used in August of next year.
  - iii. Carol: DAR had originally asked for \$53k for 8 months of funding. They revised at \$21k for 4 months of funding.
  - iv. Mary Lou: Before the break, Rob had asked that we looked at whether any funds could be moved towards the ISCs. The Prevention Working Group has come up with this adjustment (from eliminating ant proposals); so we can propose that there are two options for this funding: the ISCs and the DAR Ballast Water coordinator.
  - v. Carol: This position is special funding?
  - vi. Jono: In the past it was a civil service position. We are funding it through soft money and trying to give them as much time as possible.
  - vii. Rob: It sounds like those funds are critical just for getting someone on board.
- g. Teya: I would like to propose that KISC be brought up by \$50k. They are the lowest funded at present and are comparable in size to the other ISCs.
  - i. Keren: As is, I'll be laying off two people. With the proposed budget I'll have to lay off three people. That's a third of my staff.
  - ii. Josh: With an extra \$50k, what would your layoff numbers be?
    1. Keren: I'll have to reduce one (less FTE) and layoff someone too. Prior to next year I'll have to let someone go.
- h. Josh: Right now we have about \$78k in "surplus."
- i. Rob: How do the other ISCs feel?
- j. Chris: Are the other ISCs losing personnel with the current recommended budget?

- i. Rachel: OISC, KISC, and BIISC are all relatively the same size. MISC is several magnitudes larger. Approximately \$200k for OISC, BIISC, and KISC, that seems fair based on size. With the current number proposed we'd need to find another \$160k. That assumes some money from USFWS. If that doesn't come through, we'd need \$260k. We will try and do that. I haven't thought about what staff we'd layoff. I don't want to think about that until the time comes.
  - ii. Keren: My shortfall was \$111.5K, not including the \$50k I never even asked for.
  - iii. Teya: For MISC, we're ok for this next year, through 2012. For our overall budget we're short \$350-400k. But we have enough carry over to see us through. The current budget will cause us to drop off a couple of services.
  - iv. Rachel: For OISC, it'd be about 3 people if I didn't raise more money than what's in the current budget.
- k. Mary Lou: We are in a good situation that the Prevention Working Group has found these additional funds. We have some proposals before us.
- l. Rob: What would be a meaningful amount for the Ballast Water position?
  - i. Jono: It's hard to say.
- m. Rob: We could fund Ballast Water at the revised request (\$21k) and use the rest for KISC and possibly OISC.
  - i. Josh: That would leave us with \$56k for KISC and OISC. How would we like to divide that up?
  - ii. Rachel: Keren's original proposal still left her short on her budget. I think it should go to KISC.
  - iii. Rob: The need is greater for KISC than OISC? What does this mean for staffing?
  - iv. Rachel: We have money until the end of 2011. We have six months to fund raise. An extra \$10k is not going to make that much of a difference.
  - v. Rob: Let's put the extra \$56k toward KISC.
  - vi. Josh: That leaves \$211.8k for KISC, and \$21k for the Ballast Water coordinator. Now that we've divided up that money, we're at a balanced budget again, and we can continue to tweak.
- n. Kate: I have a process question. Two of the working groups decided not to fund PBIN, and one did. What are the deliverables with that money?
  - i. Josh: There was a request from Public Outreach that the money going to PBIN would be used with priority for the hiring of the web application developer, which would support developments for the Hawai'i Early Detection Network as well as upgrades to the weed risk assessment reporting system, which will improve the HPWRA and the Plant Pono website that will utilize that information. That's a request, however, not an obligation. It's still up to Sky how he'd like to use that money.
  - ii. Kate: That's a contract position?
  - iii. Josh: Yes, it's a temporary position, and the amount provided would more than cover that position. The Public Outreach working group met first, so the thought was that, the funding is available within the projection, so we'll fund PBIN and see what happens with the other working groups. The other working groups were a lot tighter on funds. For the HISC in general, we get a lot of services from PBIN, and providing them some money at least starts to pay for those services. Whether or not we're able to fund the full six month extension that he needs to look for grants, that would be really tough in this budget.

- iv. Christy: One comment, for the Prevention working group, a lot of that money was on the weed risk assessment database. Because it is such a cumbersome database at this point, it's not in a stable environment and they're having trouble integrating it into our public outreach effort, the Plant Pono website. So while I appreciate the Public Outreach working group funding their work on that, some of that work is reflected in the Prevention working group, since the weed risk assessors are under prevention. The assessor scores have to be entered into that database, so that is a prevention service.
- o. Kate: The weed risk assessment team submitted a lower revised request, and it got bumped back up. Does that include some of the work we're talking about, or is it just salary?
  - i. Josh: That's just salary. We removed the travel budget from their request and the funding amount in the green column is just salaries for two people. At the Prevention meeting we had tried to reduced request amounts at the meeting, rather than, for the other working groups, going back and voluntarily resubmitting revised requests later. Chuck offered at that meeting to take their proposal from 12 months of funding down to 9 months of funding, which was really nice of him, but presents a number of logistical problems. Nine months from now we won't be having another cycle of HISC funding, they don't have another funding source, nor do I think they have experience in grant writing. So the Public Outreach working group suggested that some of the surplus they found would be used to restore Patti and Chuck back to 12 months of funding. But that is something else that can be up for debate today.
- p. Mary Lou: We've reached a place where we have a balanced budget and have, in my view, a consensus on items. Does the committee feel that there are additional items for discussion?
- q. Lori: I have a question for Rob. In the Established Pests working group, the funding for the axis deer project, the \$90k, I know that it was evaluated and that we're not privy to that evaluation method, but I have a feeling from my own questions asking around that that project has many other sources of funding that may be coming. I was wondering how strongly they felt about that.
  - i. Rob: We spent some time looking into that project and what the other funding sources were. We felt that we couldn't fund it at the full amount given the evaluations and the demand from other projects. Their funding situation is very much up in the air. We investigated how helpful this reduced amount would be. Jan is actively finding other sources and he thinks he can come up with it, and he'll have to pull the project off, but he was comfortable with receiving the reduced amount. He's received some funds for salary, but this part of the project had not been funded. We felt that it was crucial to the overall project. We went ahead with the reduced amount to support it and hopefully other funds will be made available.
  - ii. Lori: Can we do this exercise then? We're going to have another meeting after this, and I'm going to make the same proposal then that I do now. If those funds are taken out of the budget, where do we want that money to go?
  - iii. Carol: From the prior discussion, it would be used to bring the Ballast Water position up to \$53k, and then the rest for OISC.
  - iv. Teya: Kahoolawe would be happy to get some support.

- r. Kate: Dan, is USFWS providing support for axis deer?
    - i. Dan: We've diverted an existing grant to do some research work, but we're waiting for the next cycle. There's nothing in FY11 for it. The research work was a small grant, under \$15k, looking at collaring work to see if judas deer could be a potential. It's looking at technology seeing if it could work. It's separate from what BIISC is proposing.
    - ii. Kate: Did it work?
    - iii. Dan: It hasn't started yet. It was an existing grant that was shifted.
  - s. Josh: BIISC is also a big funding need here. Jan isn't here to represent BIISC, but they requested \$384k, and the recommended amount is \$205k, so they're quite below the requested amount as well.
  - t. Mary Lou: Getting back to the budget proposal as it is now, these projects have been worked out by the working groups and evaluators and chairs, and we've made some adjustments to provide additional funding to programs or projects that have had their funding reduced. I feel that we've come to a good place. The budget does balance, and funding has been restored to projects. Are we ready to vote on the budget?
    - i. Rob: I think so. I move that we provide the Council with this budget as our recommendation for funding for next year.
    - ii. Carol: I second.
    - iii. Mary Lou: All in favor?
    - iv. Unanimous from working group chairs: aye. (Motion passes)
    - v. Josh: So, just to be clear, we're not reducing the \$90k for axis deer at this time? That exercise was just hypothetical?
    - vi. Carol: It was just an exercise. If something should happen prior to the convening of the HISC, we can alter our suggestion.
7. Future HISC meetings (Josh Atwood)
- a. We have a HISC meeting scheduled for August 18, 2-5pm, in Room 312 of the Hawai'i State Capital. This will likely be the budget that we propose to the Council, but there may be some changes before then as we discussed. I also see this as an opportunity to relay to the Council what our budget shortfalls are in general. Perhaps either as an agenda item or during the public comment period at the end, we can have a demonstration to the Council of what our funding needs are and they can start to understand how dire the situation is.
8. Announcements
- a. Teya: Closing comment, I want to reiterate our thanks. This is a thankless task, but we thank you anyway.
  - b. Josh: I'll send out the Feedback Forms. Those are compiled already, and I'll send out an updated copy of the budget as well.
  - c. Dan: The funding cycle for us won't be until long after the HISC meets, so there won't be opportunity to alter budgets for USFWS regarding the axis deer.
  - d. Josh: Thank you to Mary Lou for stepping in this year to be the Resources working group chair.
9. Meeting adjourned.