

Hawaii Invasive Species Council
Established Pests Working Group
July 16, 2012
Meeting notes

Attendance: Mark Fox (TNC), Josh Atwood (HISC), Jackie Kozak Thiel (HISC), Carol Okada (HDOA), Christy Martin (CGAPS), Jono Blodgett (DAR), Lori Buchanan (MOMISC), Domingo Cravalho (USFWS), Josh Fisher (USFWS), Page Else (BIISC), Darcy Oishi, (HDOA), Susie Iott (OISC), Rachel Neville (OISC), Teya Penniman (MISC), Lisa Ferentinos (HAWP/DOFAW), Michelle Montgomery (HAL), Rob Parsons (Maui County), Angela Kieran-Vast (Army National Guard), Polly Roth (BIISC), Lori Buchanan (BIISC), Darcy Oishi (HDOA), Michelle Montgomery (HAL), Kristine MacDonald (Army National Guard)

1. Call Meeting to Order (Mark Fox, filling in for Rob Hauff as Chair)
2. Introductions
3. Approval of minutes from 11/15/2011 meeting
 - Moved to approve by Lori Buchanan
 - Darcy Oishi seconded
 - Approved by group
4. Discussion of FY13 funding process (Josh Atwood)
 - \$2.9 million proposal requests across all working groups, \$1.8 million available in funds
 - Funding process is open and democratic: everyone knows about total money that will be given and about other proposals
 - Resources WG on July 30 will be a discussion by the WG chairs to work towards trying to meet the \$1.8 million budget
 - WG chairs will take into account the discussions from the WG and the quantitative evaluation process, scoring rubric was in proposal guidelines
 - We are going to try to find areas of flexibility in budgets without endangering the capacity of the project
 - Will have a HISC meeting on August 3. We will recommend a balanced budget for them to approve.
5. FY13 project proposal presentations and discussion
 - **BIISC core funding and Deer Project** (Lori Buchanan and Polly Roth)
 - Manager just left in June. Lori Buchanan from MOMISC has been helping out on the Big Island. The number of conservation activities on BI is outstanding, but still huge gaps. In the past 2 months been working with our field crews to evaluate how we have been working and what needs to be done. We have been working with the watershed partnerships to figure out how we can work together in the future. We also plan to help with Army, which will put us at the airport and that is the main port of entry in Hilo. Currently we have 15 full time staff members. Funding will carry us to end of August or September, after that is up in the air. People

are still asking about coqui, miconia... there is a lot of support for us being there. If we got full amount requested, we would have to find money for final quarter of fiscal year, we would look for another \$250-300K after April. The timing of receiving HISC funds is crucial for us, especially with manager staff transition. The timing for raising funds will be really tricky. Lori's commute is adding to our travel budget for this fiscal year out of necessity. For our supplies, it is less proportionally than the labor we have asked for. We are asking only 80% of the equipment that would be needed for this level of staffing. We kept in mind there is more money being asked for than there is to give out. That part has been trimmed already. Overhead is a lot. The interisland travel on the Deer proposal is part of the training projects as part of the strategic plan. Right now there are 2.5 salaries (which is three people), the proposal has 4 positions. Jake wants to add a 4th technician and expand .5 person to fulltime.

- **UH Quarantine Facility for Biocontrol** (Leyla Kaufman, not present)
 - Asking for a quarantine facility at UH, can be used for other projects but this proposal mainly focuses on Myoporum thrips. The overhead is fairly low, but it is all equipment costs. No salary. The HISC money is only a 3rd of what they are asking for. The funding may be contingent on them getting HAWP money and sorting this out with DOA.
 - Darcy: It is a room within Gilmore Hall. Has been approved by BOA for containment of fruit fly strains. PPC has concerns regarding this proposal especially with Myoporum thrips, we wouldn't move it into our facilities at this time. Maybe only the pathology facility. Thrips escape really easily. Not sure if UH contacted USDA or PQ. There is a unique population of naio here that we wouldn't want to put into jeopardy. We support the increase capacity of augmentative biocontrol, but there are more logistics that need to be lined up for this proposal. PPC has a lot of concerns, and PQ might have concerns.
- **Hawaii Ant Lab Proposals** (Darcy Oishi)
 - We broke our proposals into four pieces. Core funding is base funding, identification services, staffing, access portals for information, services are listed, in addition to specific projects that the HISC might be interested in funding, such as LFA eradication program. Coconut ant on Maui is a recent detection, new state record. It could develop into a significant pest. It's currently limited to about 20 hectares. It will spread. Right now it is a mix of urban and natural settings, could pose a risk to montane ecosystems. This project is to delimiting the infestation area, get outreach going, develop treatment methods, adapting LFA methods. It can develop large biomass that displaces other arthropods, competitive with other ants, like the nearby Argentine ant, can farm other insect species. It's not as bad as LFA, but the potential exists for it to dominate ecosystem and create systemic problems. For Kaua'i, the EUP does not exempt HDOA from a Clean Water Branch Permit.

- Josh: Each of the proposals have supplies, travel, etc. is there duplication?
 - Darcy: All of those are specific for each project. Cas breaks it out by what the providing the service requires. Conference fees are to present results for specific projects. Training is to provide training to specific people related to those projects. The tuition for the University in Australia is for Michelle's PhD candidacy.
 - Mark: This proposal needs some more details. It would be helpful for reviewers to have more specifics about what that travel and tuition is all about and how it drives this development proposal.
 - Darcy, on priorities: My preference would be that core funding be maintained because the services are something everyone utilizes. And because of unique opportunities on Kauai, that is a priority. We need more tools, so work on bait is important. That develops more options for everyone to control ants in Hawaii. Coconut ants could be a long-term problem, and there is an opportunity of control, so how long do we wait?
- **Kauai Invasive Species Committee** (Teya Penniman, for Keren Gundersen)
 - Recently Kauai was declared coqui free. KISC really worked with the community and kept focus and responded to individual coqui that popped up. Also, there has been recent discovery of mongoose, two have been dispatched. Huge accomplishment that is taking tons of time. There is some additional funding for that project, but that means more work that is not helping keep current staff on. Without the current level of funding requested, KISC will be looking at having to lay people off.
 - Josh: There is additional funding for mongoose in the form of in kind help to fund techs through DOFAW.
 - Josh F: funds from USFWS will be set up as ICS structure, so not dedicated to KISC, but for all partners on Kauai to draw on that. There are funds there, but is not for their base funding. It is project specific.
 - Josh: I asked Keren by email about flexibility in budget. We were looking at high equipment and utilities costs. Keren said not much area to trim. Heli time is for miconia. Equipment is for herbicides.
- **Kokee Resource Conservation Partnership**, (Katie Cassel, not present)
 - This project used to receive DLNR money, typically 40K in general funds annually. That money has dried up in the last few years. New proposal to HISC, but not a new group. Focused in Koke'e. KISC is more island-wide. They identify a number of plant species they go after. Run an extensive volunteer program. Money is highly leveraged through more people on the ground. They don't provide %FTE for salaries and fringe, so it is difficult to score cost effectiveness of this proposal. They are using RC&D group. How many interns will this support and how much free labor from volunteers?
- **Management of Axis Deer on Maui** (Teya Penniman and Rob Parsons, for the Maui Axis Deer Working Group)

- Primary focus is to reduce impact on farmers and ranchers, but there are rather large steps that need to be taken. We need to figure out how many deer there are. And we need to focus on management areas because controlling deer on ranchlands vs. on residential areas is different. We need to outreach to the different areas and different stakeholders and involve hunting community. The goal is not to eradicate. This project has been meeting for a couple of years now, strong collaboration to draft this plan. I have been carrying the load of facilitating and drafting, which is hard to carry with all my other duties. The consensus is that the process needs a coordinator, with the idea that it could be a plan that would work on other islands as well. The group asked the county for funding and the county council passed a resolution that it is important and urged other agencies to cooperate and develop a management plan. The focus of this effort would be population assessment, community outreach strategies, hiring a coordinator, and development management areas.
- Rob: I hope that folks in this room are familiar with the breadth of the many impacts of the rising deer population, and private hunting and poaching and collisions with vehicles is not even coming close to reducing it. We don't know the numbers we are even dealing with, except DOFAW flying over a limited area. We don't have a baseline to mark future progress. This has been a large collaborative effort, we are 2 of 15-18 people who meet once a month. This is the 10 year anniversary of the first working group recommendations. The strongest recommendation of that group is the same priority of this proposal for a coordinator. There has not been a cohesive person to move forward a management plan. Teya has done a fabulous job even though this is not a target species of MISC. We need to get her back to work to all the other things on her plate.
- Lori: You talked about pop. assessment, but I don't see that in the budget.
- Teya: we are hoping to get support from UH. Josh has done a good job at identifying different people who would support in kind efforts, we are hoping that a grad student would take that on or a class project working with Chris Lepczyk at UH. Database development could be taken down, Teya will provide Josh with some revised numbers.
- **MISC and MOMISC** (Teya Penniman)
 - This is an increased ask for MISC and MOMISC from previous years because we've had very strong funding from NPS in the past, and we were able to cover the gap over the past year. We have spent those funds down entirely. The county has picked up some of that gap in the past year and we are hopeful that it will continue this year, but it is not a guarantee. Our costs are high because we work on 4 islands and do remote work. Utilities are high because we maintain multiple facilities.

At current funding ask, that is 18% of our total budget. HISC dollars are extremely leveraged with other funding. We have 21 field staff and 1 FTE early detection staff. Under this funding scenario, this provides us with enough money until October of 2013. Molokai does awesome work. Reduction of staffing on Molokai is not an option. The cost effectiveness of herbicide ballistic technology on miconia and pampas grass has been great too, which is in this request. We would have to stop doing ivy gourd if lost staff. We would cut back on early detection and Lanai work. We would cut back on miconia work as well.

- **Oahu Invasive Species Committee** (Rachel Neville)
 - We have 12 people, spend a lot of time on Miconia mostly in southern Ko'olaus. Miconia is primary target. I do want to emphasize that we have been doing miconia for 10 years, we know that seeds stay viable for at least 18 years. Just last month they were doing survey of Wahiawa botanical garden and found a miconia. They had removed their plant in 1995, so it just shows if we stop now we will lose all the work we have done. This funds work with the Bishop Museum to do early detection. We are asking 300K, which is less than 50% of budget. Deliverables in chart is not everything we do, but what we think we can do with this funding. Funding for this and POWG proposal would take us to Dec 2013. We are planning to be more aggressive with private foundation proposals. Ideally we would want 50K for helicopter. Usually we get 20-30K.
 - Josh: Really appreciate focus on detection of LFA. Was surprised how low utilities and travel was, but probably because most meetings are on Oahu.
- **Biocontrol Proposals** (Discussed by Darcy Oishi on behalf of Tracy Johnson)
 - There are 3 proposals from the USDA FS:
 - Evaluating insect agent of biocontrol of Christmas berry: Greg Wheeler with ARS in Florida has been a long time partner with HDOA and has been working on Christmas berry. That project is completed in Florida. Greg has been testing Hawaiian plants for us at no cost at the point, but he can no longer do that. Our insect containment facility can't do the testing. Greg is willing to finish project for us, but he just needs funding. They will be releasing the agent in Florida. This could be done in 2-3 years, which is a fast turnaround for biocontrol and would be in step with DOA goal of release every 2-3 years.
 - Josh F: because of where things are at now, would the cost go up if we waited? Darcy: there wouldn't be any project if we didn't do it now because they will be moving on from this target. It would be a shame to lose the effort at this point.
 - Miconia project: This is to provide more support in Brazil. There are a suite of insects and diseases that have good potential but are difficult to rear. It poses problems to send to Hawaii to work

on here. It's critical to get this work done because some of the more cryptic species are the best agents, but you need someone working on the biology part.

- Lisa: This is an important project from a watershed perspective. We only got one biocontrol proposal. We want to fund some biocontrol projects, and this sounds like a really good one.
 - African tulip project: This is a long-term project. Fiji has been looking at this. But it is in the infant stages. It is looking at identifying the genetics of African tulip so we can go to point sources of agents. There is some movement on this project, but need more funding to kick start it. It is a 10-15 year project to have something released. We won't see products within the next few years.
 - Teya: African tulip is a huge issue on Maui. People ask us why we don't work on it. It's hard to kill and is very established. We don't think that it is as much of a watershed changer.
 - Mark: it is not on the list of biocontrol targets that the WG has put forward, but I would also say that this list has just been about people telling us what they are working on.
- **DAR** (Jono Blodgett)
 - We have some funds from NOAA and mitigation funds and harbor fees, so we are not requesting funds from HISC this year. Those funds are just to keep Kaneohe Bay project going. May propose something to HISC next year to expand to other islands.
 - Josh: get all voluntary changes to Josh by July 27. If anyone has flexibility that they want to show with numbers, that would be helpful. Can also email any comments to Josh on proposals and the process. The HISC funding process is always evolving.

6. Public Comments

- Teya: Thank you.

7. Adjournment

- Mark Fox adjourned.