

**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 4, 2012 NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM
COMMISSION (NARSC) MEETING, HONOLULU, O'AHU**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

DRAFT Subject to approval

Dr. Dale Bonar, Chair
Dr. John Sinton, Vice Chair
Ms. Rebecca Alaka'i
Mr. Trae Menard
Dr. R. Flint Hughes
Mr. Ronald Rapanot
Ms. Marie Bruegmann
Ms. Marnie Meyer, for Director, Office of Planning
Mr. Bill Tam, for Chair, Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR)
Mr. Pat Conant, for Chair, Board of Agriculture
Dr. Sheila Conant, for President, University of Hawai'i

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Mr. Randy Ching
Ms. Sydney Iaukea, for Superintendent, Department of Education

STAFF:

Mr. Paul Conry, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) Admin. Office
Mr. Randy Kennedy, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Betsy Gagné, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Emma Yuen, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Molly Schmidt, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Tanya Rubenstein, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Leah Laramee, DOFAW, Admin.
Ms. Lisa Hadway, DOFAW Big Is. Branch
Mr. Bill Evanson, DOFAW Maui Branch
Ms. Lisa Ferentinos, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Sheri Mann, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Marigold Zoll, DOFAW O`ahu Branch
Dr. Maggie Sporck, DOFAW O`ahu
Mr. David Anderson, DOFAW O`ahu
Ms. Amanda Hardman, DOFAW, O`ahu
Ms. Gabrielle Schuerger, DOFAW, O`ahu
Ms. Brittany Lawton, DOFAW, O`ahu
Ms. Jazmine Baligad, DOFAW, O`ahu
Ms. Cynthia King, DOFAW Admin.
Ms. Melissa Kolonie, DOFAW Admin.

VISITORS:

Ms. Robin Newbold, New NARSC Member (July 1, 2012)
Dr. Jonathan Price, New NARSC Member (July 1, 2012)
Dr. Dan Polhemus, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Ms. Emily Fielding, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Mr. Manuel Mejia, TNC
Ms. Leinā 'ala Kuloloio Vedder, Cultural Practitioner

Mr. Leslie Kuloloio, Cultural Practitioner
Ms. Teresa Dawson, Environment Hawai'i

ITEM 1. Call to order: Chair Bonar called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. followed by Commissioners introducing themselves, followed by new NARSC members Robin Newbold (Maui, Marine) and Jonathan Price (Big Island, BioGeography), staff and others present.

ITEM 1.a. Recognition of retiring members Dr. Dale Bonar and Dr. Flint Hughes; welcome new members: Ms. Robin Newbold and Dr. Jonathan Price to a first term, and Mr. Trae Menard to a second term. Staff Gagné presented lei and thanked departing NARSC members: Chair Dale Bonar and Member Flint Hughes; both completing two full terms on the Commission. They were presented images that reflected their specific expertise (Dr. Bonar a photo of the seaweed *Ulva* by Susan Middleton and David Liittschwager and Dr. Hughes a print of the native tree fern *Cibotium*, by Richard palmer). Cards of appreciation were circulated for all present to sign. Chair Bonar has been instrumental in helping to drive development of a Strategic Plan, pushing for new Reserves, improving the overall management of 'Āhihi-Kina'u Natural Area Reserve (NAR), and raising the bar for overall stewardship. Everyone present expressed their appreciation.

ITEM 1.b. Discussion and appointment of new Natural Area Reserves System Commission (NARSC) Chair and Vice Chair. Chair Bonar announced that Member Sinton, the current Vice Chair, has agreed to serve as Chair, subject to appointment by the Governor; selection of a Vice Chair will take place at the next NARSC Meeting.

ITEM 1.c. Discussion and appointment of a NARSC member to sit on the Legacy Land Commission, as per Act 82, SLH 2012 (SB 1312 HD1), signed by the Governor on April 26, 2012. Chair Bonar said that he will also be stepping down from the Legacy Land Commission (LLC), and with the new legislation at least the NARSC Chair is not automatically Chair of LLC; but the NARSC will need to select a member to sit on the LLC; he suggested members attend the next LLC meeting to get an idea of what their meetings are like.

Staff Schmidt gave a powerpoint overview of the powers and duties of the LLC to give members a general idea. Member Bruegmann asked how many meetings were held per year. Staff Schmidt replied up to 7 meetings per year including subcommittee meetings. Chair Bonar said that it would probably be best to decide the NARSC representative at the next meeting once new members are on board; but that it was important to present this information now so that members could think about whether they were interested or had the time to serve.

ITEM 2. Approval of Minutes of November 11, 2011 NARSC Meeting.

MOTION: SINTON/ALAKA'I moved that the NARSC approve the Minutes of the November 11, 2011 NARSC Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 3. Administrative Updates.

ITEM 3. a. Budget Update. Staff Kennedy passed out handouts detailing proposed budget. One of the priorities is to fill all positions including the NARS Planner and State Botanist. The Legislature made commitments without funding, with respect to the Conveyance Tax, so all are eyeing it; Realtors are saying that housing market is improving. There was, however a 25-20% drop in the Natural Area Reserve Fund (NARF); next year should return back up to 25%. Deputy Kaulukukui and Staff Yuen went to Washington, DC to meet with federal officials to leverage state money in support of the watershed initiative. Anti-ungulate control groups are becoming more organized now. The Hawai'i Conservation Conference (HCC) will hold its 20th meeting end of July through first week of August 2012. A number of Hawai'i Conservation Alliance (HCA) members and staff will be attending the World Conservation Congress, many with the goal of bringing the high-profile meeting to Hawai'i in 2016; it has never been held in the United States; however there is a lot of competition from other potential host countries.

Staff Kennedy also mentioned that O`ahu DOFAW had recently reorganized the NARS Program in alignment with the Administrative Office to be called Native Ecosystem Protection and Management Program (NEPM), with the NARS still as a central core, but also including Watershed Partnerships, and Rare Plants; and introduced the new Manager: Ms. Marigold Zoll (who started May 8, 2012), succeeding Brent Liesemeyer). Also, Ms. Sheri Mann is the new Forestry Program Manager, succeeding Michael Constantinides.

ITEM 3.b. Legislative Update. Staff Kennedy handed out a list of bills passed; HB 2593 being one of the important ones that allows for emergency administrative rules so can enact emergency control of axis deer. Also, SB 1312 dropped the NARSC Chair automatically being Chair of Legacy Land Commission (LLC); NARSC members to select a representative for LLC. Governor's Message (GM) 860, GM 861, and GM 862 were passed to give us a reappointment of Mr. Trae Menard to serve a second term, and the appointment to first terms of Ms. Robin Newbold (replacing Dr. Bonar, Maui) and Dr. Jonathan Price (replacing Dr. Hughes, Hawai'i). Budget adjustments have not been signed as yet by the Governor; however there is \$2.5 million in Capitol Improvement Projects (CIP) to build fences for the Governor's Watershed Initiative all on State land.

ITEM 3.c. Joint Consultation Between NARSC and Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee (FSAC): Chair Bonar said that the decision to transfer funds with joint discussion is confusing, because it is not clear how the money is divided, especially now with other programs being able to receive money. Staff Mann felt it was very important to have both groups review and comment on the budget allocations, but it should be 6 to 8 months in advance; there is a need to overhaul the timing. Staff Ferentinos agreed, asking for more clarity; however Staff Kennedy said that this matter needs to be taken up first with staff, before coming back to either advisory body. Chair Bonar asked about FSAC meetings; Staff Mann replied they meet at least four times a year, and may have subcommittee meetings in between regular meetings.

Staff Kennedy said that the 20th anniversary of the Natural Area Partnership Program (NAPP) is approaching; staff is working on a review of the program to be on a future NARSC agenda.

ITEM 4.a. Enhancement: Kaluanui Natural Area Reserve: Receive recommendations from Division of Forestry and Wildlife, if any, and approve, defer, make other recommendations, or deny to the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and the Governor, the proposal for Kaluanui Natural Area Reserve (NAR), TMK 5-3-001:0009, O'ahu. Staff Yuen gave a Powerpoint presentation summarizing the proposed 376-acre Reserve, whose lower boundary would be just mauka of Kaliuwa'a Falls, which will continue to be held under State Parks jurisdiction; and continues to remain closed following a fatal landslide and continuing rock fall (access is by permit only and is currently closed to hunting as well). Access to the proposed Reserve is primarily via helicopter and a trail across private lands controlled by Kamehameha Schools. There are no Ko'olau Natural Area Reserves as yet. Dr. Dan Polhemus, former Division of Aquatic Resources Administrator, now with US FWS, advocated for both areas based on stream and entomological resources: Kaluanui is one of only a few unaltered streams from headwaters to the sea, and Poamoho has a different suite of features, though only a few miles away. There are 64 acres along the Ko'olau crest already under fenced protection by the Army. The upper plateau also contains endangered tree snails in the genus *Achatinella*, as well as other native land snails and numerous insects.

This is a follow up from the NARSC recommendation that staff re-survey the area to find extra value in further pursuing this nomination; including its geological importance. State Parks still concurs with the idea of this upper parcel of Kaluanui becoming a NAR. Member Menard asked about plans for fencing and weed control. Staff Yuen said that this is considered to be a high priority area to fence for watershed values; also to control feral ungulates and weeds. A Management Plan will need to be completed and implemented once the NAR is designated.

MOTION: Menard/Hughes moved that the NARS Commission recommends the proposed nomination of Kaluanui Natural Area Reserve, TMK 5-3-001:0009, O'ahu.

Motion carried unanimously by those present (Chair Bonar was excused briefly; Vice Chair Sinton continued meeting, still with quorum).

Vice Chair Sinton called for a short break at 10:42 a.m., Chair Bonar reconvened meeting at 10:55 a.m.

ITEM 5.a. Status of Remedial Investigation within 'Āhihi-Kina'u NAR being carried out by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Staff Evanson said that USACE has completed the initial phase of this investigation; nothing major was found; however they have not as yet scheduled a meeting on the final UXO analysis is complete.

ITEM 5. b. `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve Draft Management Plan Status. Staff Evanson said that any further movement towards completion of the management Plan came to a screeching halt on the face of the USACE. However, Emily Fielding, Maui TNC, continued to work on finalizing the Management Plan, absent USACE recommendations; focusing on an Implementation/Action Plan as suggested by the NARSC and Working Group; she gave a Powerpoint overview of the Implementation Plan. After final changes are made to the draft, staff will recommend approval by the Land Board of the Management Plan as it stands, with management actions that can continue to take place in the open areas of the Reserve. Member Meyer thanked staff for preparing the Implementation Plan to focus on specific priorities. Chair Bonar asked if the timeline was listed in any particular priority. Staff Evanson said that this is the list that staff is currently working from; they are not waiting for the final Management Plan.

Staff Evanson said that the Volunteer Coordinator position had just gone through the recruiting process and an offer will be made the week after the meeting.

ITEM 5.c. Continued Closure of portions of `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve for up to two years: discussion and recommendation to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to continue closure, re-open the entire area, continue restricted access or other recommendations; which may be subject to Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) concerns from the USACE, which has not yet issued a report with their findings and management recommendations. Chair Bonar asked AG Chow whether the extension could be up to two years or less, or up to such a time as the USACE comes up with its management recommendations. AG Chow replied that there is currently no authorization to permanently close the area; however the NARSC does have authority to continue to keep areas closed for up to two years at a time. Entry into the closed areas would be allowed under special use permit, including cultural practitioners and researchers.

MOTION: MENARD/S. CONANT moved that the NARS Commission recommend to the Board of Land and Natural Resources, that they approve continued closure of portions of `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve for up to two years (August 1, 2012 through July 31, 2014).

Motion carried unanimously.

Request to move-up ITEM 6.d. Note: AG Chow said that do not need to vote to move up agenda items.

ITEM 6.d. Special Use Permit Application: Cultural Access and Gathering in `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve by the Kuloloio Family: discussion and recommendation to the Board of Land and Natural Resources for approval, deferral or denial; or make other recommendations. Uncle Leslie Kuloloio said that he and his daughter were appearing today to ask for cultural access to the Reserve, as the Lu`uwai Family did previously. Uncle Les said that his ties to the area go back to the *Kumulipo*; his goal is not primarily to fish or gather, but to educate his children and

grandchildren by directly connecting them to the correct names of each place, how to walk on the lava, how to observe features and resources, learn about *limu* present in the area; taking only small samples of specific items, as well as sampling on site. The whole area has a lot of meaning and he wants to be sure that this is passed directly to his family on site.

Chair Bonar thanked him for taking the time to travel to the meeting and for his deep held beliefs and knowledge. He asked if some of this could be taught to volunteers. His daughter, Leina'ala, replied that they could be involved in the volunteer program but not responsible for them.

There was discussion about potential liability with UXO in closed areas; AG Chow said that everyone needs to acknowledge that there is an ongoing investigation by USACE and that this needs to be part of the conditions of any permits issued. Member Conant felt that the NARSC could approve the permit with the proviso to delegate conditions to staff.

MOTION: S. CONANT/ALAKA'I moved that the NARS Commission recommend approval of the Special Use Permit to the Kuloloio Family for Cultural Access and Gathering in 'Ahihi-Kina'u Natural Area Reserve, with the proviso to delegate final permit conditions to staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bonar called for a lunch recess at 12:30; meeting re-convened at 1:20 p.m.

ITEM 5. d. O'ahu Update. Staff Zoll said that they are now filling out their staff and moving forward on number of management actions. The Ka'ena predator fence has some corrosion and other issues that are in the process of being addressed; still the past season was spectacular with 31 Laysan albatross fledged and approximately 1700 Wedge-tailed shearwaters. On-going invertebrate surveys, weeding, and outplanting continues; along with monitoring the fence and trap lines. Unfortunately acquisition of the small cove adjacent to the NAR boundary is on hold due to title not being clear. The critter cam was tripped by two Black footed albatross, and one Brown booby; and one Black footed albatross was banded; a first for the area!

The Ka'ala Boardwalk repair and update project has been completed; done under partnership with the Army and volunteers; three small benches have been installed; sphagnum moss and ginger control is underway with staff and volunteer efforts on both sides of the boardwalk.

Pahole has on going rare plant outplanting and weed control, with staff working on an Adopt A Forest program with High School students and organizations such as the YMCA.

ITEM 5.e. Big Island Update. Staff Hadway now oversees 94,953 acres; she recently hired Anya Tagawa as new Outreach staff; she has an extensive background in graphics and has already produced some outstanding products.

Mauna Kea Ice Age: the water level in Lake Waiau began to fall in 2007; this appears to be a continuing trend; even with winter snow fall. Dr. Jim Juvik, UH Hilo is conducting long-term monitoring under Special Use Permit, to determine what is happening and what the long-term prospects might be for Waiau.

The Kohala watershed Partnership hosted an outing to Pu'u O 'Umi to the Kilohana Stream Unit. Partners were able to see the dramatic difference between different management areas, the value of fences, but also the incorporation of access and fence cross-overs to aid in management as well as access for animal control and other users. The cover of strawberry guava has increased in lower portions of the Reserve, along with ginger; *Tibouchina herbacea* is also increasing.

On the CIP list is a request for fencing to close off 1900 acres in a remote corner of the Reserve.

Kahauale'a still remains closed due to volcanic hazard; access by permit only is worked out in partnership with Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, the National Park Service and Civil Defense.

The top *kipuka* in Manukā is now closed off; however approximately six sheep remain to be removed.

Laupahoehoe has been a part of the Hawai'i Experimental Tropical Forest for 5 years; permitting is handled through US Forest Service staff member Melissa Dean, with a review committee including DSOFAW and NARS staff.

Added staff responsibilities: becoming a recent member of The Mauna Kea Watershed Alliance, an advisory group to help manage and protect over the larger landscape.

The Merrie Monarch Parade this year featured the Watershed Partnerships; Staff Glenn Nihipali helped organize 50 staff and family members to participate.

Over the past year, Staff Hadway participated in the Pacific Century Fellowship Program as an active Fellow. Current staffing is 16 (6 Civil Service, 6 PCSU and 4 Americorps interns).

Member P. Conant added that HDOA is evaluating a beetle to help control *Tibouchina herbacea*, so help may be on the way in the not too distant future.

ITEM 5.f. Kaua'i Update. Staff Kennedy gave the report for Acting Manager Chris Mottley, who was out fighting fire at Miloli'i (over 60 people are currently involved in controlling the fire from various agencies on the island); it has already burned into Ku'ia

NAR (approximately 20 acres); it also burned into Fish and Wildlife Service enclosures. Finally have a signed contract to fence Ku'ia. The Hono O Na Pali Management Plan was approved by the Land Board; with many thanks to Staff Rubenstein. Current staffing is still at a very low level with the departure of Michael Wysong; Chris continues to be the Acting NARS Specialist, to keep projects going. Member Bruegmann asked about the Kaua'i Botanist position. Staff Kennedy replied that it was still in continuous recruitment until a qualified person is hired.

ITEM 6.b. and 6.c. Nakula and Kanaio Natural Area Reserves: Special Use Permit Application Fee Waiver; discussion and action to grant an application fee waiver for animal control permits in both reserves. Staff Yuen taking up these two items together as move-ups since she had to leave shortly. She explained that Maui staff wanted to open both areas first to hunters, with no bag limits, for a specific number of days, to control ungulates in both reserves. She recommended that since access to remote Nakula NAR is difficult, that overnight camping be allowed by the NARSC, and that application fees be waived under these specific circumstances for both Reserves. Chair Bonar asked if the NARSC approves this or this is just for members to know what is in the pipeline. Staff Yuen replied that this would be a delegation by the NARSC to staff for animal control. Chair Bonar called for a motion, to be followed by further discussion.

MOTION: S. CONANT/MENARD moved that the NARS Commission delegate authority to the NARSC Executive Secretary, with review and approval of Maui staff, to waive application fees for special use permits for the purposes of animal control in Nakula and Kanaio Natural Area Reserves; and to allow overnight camping specifically in Nakula NAR as part of the special use permit issued to hunters for animal control.

Staff Conry asked if hunters will drive to Nakula. Staff Yuen said that it is landlocked; that hunters will have to get permission from adjacent landowners to hike across their lands to access the Nakula NAR; we cannot do that for them. Member Menard wanted clarity that this was limited public hunting only until ungulates are cleared out of the area. Staff Yuen said that staff would allow the public the option to hunt for a specific period of 45 days, then staff would control the remaining animals.

Chair Bonar asked Member Rapanot if hunters were alright with this. Member Rapanot responded that this was alright. Staff Evanson said that animal control was unclear under NARS Rules (as opposed to Hunting Rules), also camping needs a special use permit under current Rules, and there would need to be specific permission to waive application fee; AG Chow agreed with this assessment. Member Rapanot asked if Nakula was designated as an area to hunt or not, and any problem with dogs or camping. Staff Evanson replied that this is an inaccessible area and that it should not be a problem. Member Rapanot just wanted to be clear where hunters can go. Chair Bonar asked if there were any specific identified campsites. Staff Evanson replied that there are no designated sites as such; the area is very steep and hunters will likely just camp where they are, in as low an impact manner as possible.

Member Menard asked if they would be applying for a particular time and will staff know when they will go. Staff Evanson replied that if they traverse across areas where they do not belong, that is up to them; he then wondered if we could ask them; also wondered if we could give them a permit without being sure. Member S. Conant felt that a permit condition to notify staff first, giving location, etc., should be included; this should be treated the same as other permits with specific conditions (such as bird banding permits). Member Menard asked whether dogs should be permitted.

Chair Bonar asked whether the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) would agree. Staff Ferentinos mentioned that the Kahikinui/Leeward Watershed Partnerships are working with DHHL at Kahua Cabin (located on DHHL lands); it might be possible to go there by foot or via helicopter; but it is challenging communicating with them.

Staff Conry said that there was a need to establish procedures to actually facilitate the public's ability to take animals before staff control is done; this is geared toward removing administrative barriers (hunting only on weekends, bag limits, no camping, etc.).

Member S. Conant has a suggestion: both public and staff animal control be tracked as to species, sex, and other simple data that would help the overall picture of game animals and their effects on native ecosystems. Member Rapanot said that on Moloka'i there are hunter check in stations that ask for age, sex, etc., so do have some data; it's just a matter of looking at it. Member Menard suggested that Maui NARS staff get that information from the Wildlife Program. Member Rapanot said, however, the information is not always accurate; it depends on who fills out the forms. Member S. Conant cited Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge as two classic data bases thanks to Steve Hess, and stated that others including DOFAW should do this! Staff Evanson said he would be happy to help. Member P. Conant asked about camp fires; Staff Evanson replied that they were prohibited at all times and this would be emphasized in any permits issued.

Chair Bonar asked if there was any further discussion; there being none, called for a vote on the motion. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ITEM 6.a. Pu'u Ali'i Natural Area Reserve: Cooperative agreement with National Park Service for joint management of the NAR, since it is an overlay with Kalaupapa National Historical Park; official recognition of the document signed by Board of Land and Natural Resources and requesting that the NARS grant a waiver for any application fees for work within the Reserve.

MOTION: MENARD/SINTON moved that the NARS Commission recognize the signed management agreement and waive application fees for the National Park Service management actions within Pu'u Ali'i Natural Area Reserve. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 6.e. Special Use Permit Application for Commercial tours to Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve: discussion and recommendation to the BLNR for approval, deferral or denial, or make other recommendations.

Staff recommended denial based on long-standing community concerns and wishes not to have organized tours of Ka'ena, no matter how well-intended.

MOTION: MENARD/HUGHES moved that the NARS Commission deny this Special Use Permit application for commercial tours to Ka'ena Natural Area Reserve. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 7. Invertebrate Conservation Strategy Update: Staff King gave a quick update on monitoring; Dr. Karl Magnacca has been recently hired to conduct native bee research, and she is in the process of hiring a person to coordinate the Snail Extinction Prevention program (modeled somewhat after the Plant Extinction Prevention Program or PEPP); there will be a presentation at the next NARSC meeting.

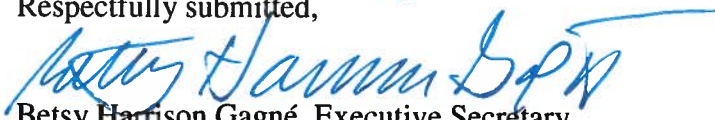
ITEM 8. Rare Plant Program. Staff Kennedy said that Staff Williams got called away, so the update will be deferred until the next meeting. He did mention that the State Botanist position (vacated by Vickie Caraway) is under recruitment; Lyman Perry is currently Acting in the position, while based in Hilo, with support from the Admin office to keep things afloat.

ITEM 9. New NARS logo. Staff Laramee, Native Ecosystem Protection and Management (NEPM) Liaison presented this as an outreach tool. The NARS is a part of a larger program that now includes the Watershed Partnerships and the above-mentioned Programs. There have been a number of moves to create a NARS-specific logo; this time, she contracted with a graphic designer to come up with the proposed logo, which represents from mauka to makai as well as linking natural and cultural together by using naupaka flowers. Chair Bonar felt that some of the designs were too small read for old eyes; but looked forward to seeing the finished product.

ITEM 10. Announcements. No future meeting date was set; no further announcements.

ITEM 11. Adjournment. Chair Bonar adjourned the NARSC Meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Betsy Harrison Gagné, Executive Secretary
Natural Area Reserves System Commission