

**MINTUES OF THE APRIL 21, 2008 NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM
COMMISSION MEETING, HONOLULU**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

DRAFT Subject to approval

Dr. Dale Bonar, Chair
Dr. Scott Rowland, Vice Chair
Dr. James Jacobi
Dr. Lloyd Loope
Dr. R. Flint Hughes
Ms. Rebecca Alakai
Mr. Richard Hoeflinger
Dr. Sheila Conant, for President, University of Hawai`i
Mr. Scott Derrickson, for Director, Office of Planning (OP)
Mr. Patrick Conant, for Director, Department of Agriculture
Ms. Laura Thielen, Director, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Ms. Sylvianne Yee
Ms. Colleen Murakami, for Superintendent, Department of Education

STAFF:

Ms. Linda Chow, Deputy Attorney General (AG)
Ms. Betsy Gagné, DOFAW
Ms. Christen Mitchell, DOFAW
Mr. Randy Kennedy, DOFAW
Mr. Bill Evanson, DOFAW
Ms. Lisa Hadway, DOFAW
Mr. Matt Ramsey, DOFAW
Ms. Emma Yuen, DOFAW
Mr. Brent Liesemeyer, DOFAW
Mr. David Smith, DOFAW
Mr. Mike Wysong, DOFAW
Mr. Chris Mottley, DOFAW
Ms. Sheri Mann, DOFAW
Dr. Dan Polhemus, Division of Aquatic Resources

VISITORS:

Ms. Theresa Menard, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Ms. Page Else, Hawai`i Conservation Alliance
Mr. Jason Sumiye, TNC
Ms. Teresa Dawson, Environment Hawaii
Mr. Mique Klemme, Action `Ahihi-Kina`u
Mr. Abbey Mayer, Director, Office of Planning
Ms. Stephanie Lu, TNC

ITEM 1. Call to order and introduction of members. Chair Bonar called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m., followed by Commissioners introducing themselves. Member Derrickson introduced Abbey Mayer, newly appointed Director of the Office of Planning.

MOTION: Hughes/Jacobi moved that the NARSC move up item 4 on the agenda, taking it first, followed by other items, then take up items 2 and 3. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 4. `Ahihi-Kina`u Natural Area Reserve (NAR) Action Plan.

ITEM 4.a. `Ahihi-Kina`u NAR Two Year Resource Protection Action Plan to restrict access to all or portions of the Reserve for up to two years, for discussion and action. Staff Ramsey gave a powerpoint presentation to summarize the Action Plan and events that have led to the request to restrict access to portions of the Reserve to allow recovery of the resources. Four studies highlight the need to take action: a human use survey showed it was the third most –visited site on Maui, an anchialine pool survey suggested restricting access to the pools or at least not approaching within 100 meters, a cultural survey showed impacts to sites and suggested re-routing trails or restricting access, and a coral trampling study showed that sensitive areas need to be restricted and others areas more carefully controlled access should be done. Other issues such as safety are also of concern including cuts, rescues, and ordnance.

The Action Plan proposes to restrict access to the majority of the Reserve but allow or direct access to two areas: Maonakala and Waiala. These areas are safer to access and cell phone coverage is available, facilitating emergency and enforcement response.

Staff Ramsey went over 10 objectives that create a timeline leading up to restriction and following through the next two years: 1) approval from the NARSC and BLNR by May; 2) Outreach Program with press releases, printed letters to the visitor industry, development of an informational website, and volunteer docents; 3) regular progress reports through the website and more frequent Advisory Group Meetings; 4) clear access guidance with clear boundaries, including a protective barrier for Maonakala Village; 5) get word out expressing **why** areas are restricted, and working with Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE) to get their early cooperation; 6) increase communication by improving the radio and phone systems (virtually nonexistent at present); 7) hire staff to increase management capacity (at least 3; one in the process of being hired now and two more in the near future); 8) develop protocols for human use and resource monitoring; 9) test program with guided education walks using local classes; 10) delineate clear trails to keep people on trails.

Member Derrickson asked about working with State Parks, possibly working out cost-share Rangers to patrol from Makena to Keone`o`io; would have less financial impact for all and provide greater coverage. Staff Ramsey: 12-14 State Park Rangers were in the budget at the beginning of the Legislative Session; only three may be funded if at all. This might be the opportunity to approach the University or Maui Community College (MCC) to find graduate students interested in research that would help to direct

management of the Reserve. Member S. Conant suggested the Marine Option Program (MOP) at MCC, to interest them in a class project, but need to be careful to find the right instructor. Member Derrickson also suggested Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU). Member Hoeflinger: If closing for two years and doing surveys over the next two years; how do you know it will happen. Staff Ramsey said they would make it happen; including partnering with DAR, contracting others where possible to conduct surveys to assess the health of the resources to guide future actions, to provide a baseline to build on to evaluate future management objectives, not just one-time.

Chair Bonar mentioned that there are dive clubs that are interested in helping too. Member Jacobi: Need to actively go out and make contacts for monitoring without waiting.

Staff Ramsey: Currently there are 3 Rangers, the Naturalists through HWF, and Action `Ahihi volunteers; funding for HWF will be running out at the end of April; then there will be no Naturalists at Maonakala. There is an immediate need to seek new funds and to re-work the volunteer program under staff guidance. During public meetings, people liked the idea of guided hikes, to restore use, but to keep people on trail. The Advisory Group did **not** want, however, to see any hikes going to Kalaeloa; they felt the area was too sensitive. There are two plans: 1) Action Plan which restricts access for two years and the actions specific to that time frame and 2) Long Range Management Plan which looks at options including entrance fees, charging for hikes, and long term goals. This Plan is being worked on by Emily Fielding, TNC, who in turn will be working with staff and the Advisory Group.

As part of his presentation, Staff Ramsey showed a scale of how the signage would look and how it would be strategically placed for better visibility so that no one could say they had not seen the signs. Adding up costs for next two years comes to \$511,500, with monitoring and staff making up the largest portion. Member P. Conant: `Ahihi-Kina`u is the third most-visited spot on Maui, but is no comparison budget-wise to Haleakala National Park; need to show Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) that they need to be more supportive. Staff Ramsey: Top two sites are visitor/recreation destinations, and `Ahihi-Kina`u is a Reserve that is not geared to recreation in the traditional sense.

Chair Bonar thanked Staff Ramsey for his presentation and asked for any further questions or comments from Commission Members.

Member Alakai: Suggested checking with the Outdoor Circle to make sure that the large signs are within the proper size to meet requirements. Member Hughes asked if trails would be restricted. Staff Ramsey: entire area will be restricted except for the areas indicated on the maps in the Action Plan. Most visitors will follow rules **if** they know the rules in place, while others will continue to go to the remote coves; need to work with DOCARE. They are willing to help as they can, but there is no guarantee that officers will be there every day.

Discussion followed on gates as part of enforcing visiting hours. Member P. Conant asked about opening gates. Staff Ramsey: Shut but not locked. Chair Bonar recommended locks. Staff Mitchell: Gates imply something that people can pass through. Staff Ramsey: need to get through for management purposes. Chair Bonar suggested small barricades along the trail to the 2 remote coves; not where visible, but they need to be there in addition to the signage that tells people they are in a restricted area.

AG Chow asked about the Environment Assessment (EA) process for fencing and signage; what requires an EA, and what time line. Staff Mitchell said that there was an exemption list that would cover these. Staff Ramsey said the next two years would be to assess for the future, then need an EA. State Historic Preservation is on board and offering to help, particularly with Maonakala. AG Chow: need an EA for re-routing trails. Staff Ramsey: no re-routing of trails is planned for now; there will only be a cultural assessment. Member Rowland asked about the small enclosure at Kalaeloa. Staff Ramsey wanted to start small (under 10 acres) to see what is possible for restoration.

Member Derrickson asked about the makai portion and if that would remain open. Staff Ramsey: it will remain open for now because the types of buoys needed do not fall under rules for the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR); which deals only with mooring or harbor buoys. Chair Bonar: Kane`ohe Bay has restricted areas; DOBOR has been involved in those. Member Jacobi thanked Staff Ramsey for a good job.

Chair Bonar called for a lunch recess at 12:00 noon. Chair Bonar called the meeting back to order at 1:12 p.m., then introduced Laura Thielen, Director of DLNR, followed by introduction of other Members.

Discussion continued on Item 4.a. and the need to implement the Action Plan; there have been numerous meetings over the years. Staff Gagné passed out a letter that was e-mailed in as testimony from Tom Crowley, a volunteer in the Reserve. Chair Bonar said that volunteers are a critical part of the work in the Reserve, citing Mique Klemme, who was present at the meeting; it is important to keep volunteer involvement.

Chair Bonar asked if there were any additional comments before asking for comments from the public.

Mique Klemme said he was a partner, working with Action `Ahihi at Waiala Cove helping to educate visitors. He wants to keep the partnerships going; volunteers need to be kept; when the whole area is closed they will be gone from where they are, where they keep people from entering the water in the wrong place. He has a group of 25 volunteers to help with guiding visitors and monitoring. Hate to see the cove like a swimming pool, getting swamped with people; need to see signage to direct people to appropriate entry sites and appropriate behavior.

Member P. Conant asked what happens when all parking spaces are full and is that a control method for the site. Mr. Klemme responded that there were 225 people in 4 hours on Christmas Day and all used the concrete slab for entry; but new entry areas are already happening. He suggested closing the gate when the parking lot is full.

Staff Ramsey: received funding to modify the lot at Maonakala, to flatten the big rocks in the middle of the lot, and only gravel certain portions of the lot. Parking is not a limiting factor. Have assigned one Ranger (Judy Edwards) specifically to coordinate all outreach for the Reserve; including contacting the visitor industry about the coming changes, designing signs, protocols, volunteer involvement, etc.

Member Rowland asked if visitors follow signs whether volunteers there or not. Mr. Klemme: if the Partnership continues, having signs is a support mechanism; there is no support (signs) there now. Chair Bonar: Little brown signs with yellow lettering are virtually unreadable and ignored; need more appropriate signage to convey information to visitors. Mr. Klemme said there were many public comments on more appropriate signs.

Member Jacobi: Limited entry points should be supported; whatever it takes to get this and tie it into monitoring. Staff Ramsey: Not necessarily people following signs; it is convenience they follow. Education signs are being developed to show the damage and to encourage visitors to use a certain area for entry in particular. Member Hughes suggested signage that says "restoration zone: please do not enter"; Staff Ramsey agreed. Mr. Klemme: but there is no signage there now and no one knows where to go and why. Member Jacobi: When Rangers are there, do they go at night. Staff Ramsey: yes, though they cannot arrest anyone; but work with enforcement officers.

Chair Bonar asked Staff Ramsey for a summary from the last Advisory Group Meeting to give Commission Members a sense of their sentiments. He attended the meeting and got a sense that all Advisory Group Members wanted the area closed, with only hikes overseen by staff or docents for education only or for cultural access; other than that closed for 2 years and open access limited to Maonakala and Waiala.

MOTION: S. Conant/Derrickson moved that the NARS Commission approve the `Ahihi-Kina`u NAR Two Year Resource Protection Action Plan to restrict access to all or portions of the reserve for up to two years, and to recommend this closure to the Board of Land and Natural Resources for their approval.

Discussion continued with Member Hoeflinger asking how the time period of two years was come up with. Chair Bonar: Rules allow closure for no more than two years at a time. The two years will be used to determine the efforts needed to restore the area, and results may call for further closure of some but maybe not all areas. Member Hoeflinger said he is one of those that do not trust government: are you closing it just because you can; why close it is important. Chair Bonar: Signs of impacts at sites; degraded by high human use; need to set aside to study effects of reduced impacts on the resources and develop means to control such impacts. Member Alakai asked if there would be

measurable criteria at the end of two years to see about opening, continuing closure, etc. Chair Bonar: Allow limited access, determine carrying capacity, group size, appropriateness and frequency; it is possible to manage and at what level to prevent more degradation. Need to develop a monitoring plan by August 1.

Member Rowland: Need to allay worries of letter writer (Tom Croly submitted an e-mail letter of testimony) that the reserve will remain closed. AG Chow reminded everyone: two years is **finite**, and unless an extension is requested of the NARS Commission and Board of Land and Natural Resources, it will be open again. Chair Bonar said that some do say to close the reserve for longer. Member Rowland suggested that the Plan state that it is not open ended, that two years is the target and assessment of where to go with this further. Chair Bonar asked Staff Ramsey about notices; he replied that there will be signs with dates of closure on them. Chair Bonar: the whole process needs to be transparent. He then called for the question, repeating the motion once again.

Member Jacobi asked Staff Kennedy about the budget, and was there enough now; he replied that it was a pretty significant amount for a single Reserve. It is part of the Ocean Recreation Management Program (ORMP): special areas that are expected to receive more support over the next year. Member Jacobi: Because if make recommendation to close and only one quarter of the funding is available, will you be able to make it work; the important question is whether all this will be able to be in place by August 1.

Chair Bonar turned to DLNR Director Thielen; who said that the general fund budget is not looking good this session. The Department's budget has been cut (State Parks \$1.5 million and Administrative \$400 thousand for Fiscal and Personnel). Vacant positions will not be filled; will have to deal with cuts in Department or may have to shut down parks; need to figure out Department priorities. Administrators suggested looking at geographic regions, one on each main island (hot spots), ending up with four: `Ahihi-Kina`u/Makena, Ka`ena, Kealakekua Bay, and Ha`ena. Each group is developing their own budget requirements; too early to tell what will shake out this session. A lot of people have invested a lot of time in `Ahihi-Kina`u and other areas.

Member Jacobi: The big ticket items are: 1) staffing to keep reduced use and 2) implement monitoring to assess changes. Chair Bonar: We can recommend to the Board, can strongly encourage increased resources to the area; so much is driven by tourist guide books. Staff Mitchell: Hawaii Tourist Authority (HTA) matched with the Natural Area Reserve Fund (NARF) in prior years; now they cannot match with non State funds; need to talk to them for further leverage; cannot match State funds with State funds; this probably needs to change. Chair Bonar called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bonar: Now the real work begins, thanking Staff Ramsey; saying this was the door to the future for this and other Reserves. Member Jacobi also added thanks to DOCARE and the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR).

ITEM 5. Discussion and Action on Natural Area Reserve Nomination/Modification Process. Staff Yuen presented this item as a way to **clarify**, by staff request, the NARS designation process and where staff is involved. Staff Smith said that he and Staff Michael Constantinides came up with an alternate process. Staff Yuen worked with AG Chow on clarifying the language so that DOFAW staff are consulted and are part of the process at all stages. She handed out a new version of the process, following AG Chow's input; that adds a new step to include formal DOFAW review and response for all proposals.

Chair Bonar saw it as a slight modification of Commission recommendations of proposals and public comments. AG Chow: A public hearing is more formal than a public information meeting; the Board puts out the public hearings; you have to ask the Board for permission to hold a public hearing. The NARSC needs to hold public information meetings and meet with DOFAW staff first, before go to the Board to ask for a public hearing. A public hearing is different from a public meeting: you hold public meetings such as NARSC meetings (or the many public meetings about `Ahihi-Kina`u); a hearing has certain legal parameters (such as legal notice, hearing officer, etc.). There have been lots of public meetings on `Ahihi-Kina`u.

Director Thielen suggested a 4.5 step that recommends to BLNR that NARSC may hold public meetings, then when the Land Board holds a hearing and there are any substantive changes, then it would start the process all over again. Chair Bonar: want to avoid the Board turning any proposal back to us again. He asked staff if they had a feeling to include 4 – 4.5 or optional that prior to going to the Board, the NARSC go out to public meetings to get public input before going to the Board. Staff Mitchell suggested **may** rather than **shall**; if so, then yes. Chair Bonar asked if any field staff had comments. Staff Hadway felt that public meetings could be done, and depends on time and space between public meeting and the public hearing.

Member Rowland suggested adding all should be “encouraged” to learn new suggestions through public meetings before going to the Board. Chair Bonar wanted a faster track. Member Hoeflinger made reference to the hunting lawsuit: the hunting community wants transparency to discuss; DOFAW Administrator Paul Conry wants to move. Need public meetings because hearings are too formal. Member Hughes agreed with more public meetings. Chair Bonar agreed; holding them on appropriate islands. AG Chow said that the Board determines what islands it holds its meetings on, we cannot direct them, but the NARSC can meet on the island where the area is located. Chair Bonar suggested 4.5 – 5.5: have public meeting on appropriate islands.

Staff Mann asked at what point is the entity that owns the land notified of this. Chair Bonar replied that it starts at number 2 on the new version: DOFAW gets early notification. Staff Mitchell said that was part of the problem; circulation of many on the list were from back in the 1980's, and with staff turnover many new staff do not know about what came before.

Member Derrickson: Even before getting to 1 on the list, should identify who owns (or who has jurisdiction over) the land and any potential transfer problems; plus run through the whole process of criteria **before** there is a formal nomination. Member Hughes: Nominations may come in from elsewhere. Chair Bonar: Need base information first (what is on the checklist). Staff Yuen: Draft 4.5 step public meeting be held on appropriate island to advise the NARSC; step 3 on new version NARSC forwards, prior to adopting, proposals to DOFAW for review; and step 4 DOFAW replies within 90 days or the NARSC proceeds with the nomination process. Staff Smith suggested public meetings be held after DOFAW staff comments. Member Jacobi asked if 90 days were enough time for DOFAW. Staff Smith suggested still setting it at 90 as a reasonable amount of time; this should not take forever, but some staff may be upset that is it too short.

Chair Bonar summarized: put in corrections on checklist; include language re public meeting(s) and public hearing. Member Jacobi: What about an outside proposal with polygons; is the NARSC obliged to work with that specific area, can we or do we have the ability to modify proposals. Staff Smith suggested on step 5 that proposals or versions thereof may be modified. Member Jacobi wondered if need to specify at that step. Staff Smith: Proposals may be modified to their liking (NARSC).

Member Loope asked if there had been any recent proposals; Staff Mitchell said that East Maui Watershed Partnership had just proposed an extension of Hanawi NAR.

MOITON: JACOBI/ALAKAI moved that the NARSC accept the checklist with clarification of the Natural Area Reserves nomination process.

Motion carried unanimously.

Director Thielen left meeting at 2:00 p.m., quorum still maintained.

ITEM 6. Pending NARS Nominations.

ITEM 6.a. Status of proposed Hono O Na Pali NAR expansion. Staff Yuen is in the process of preparing a Board Submittal to hold a public hearing on the withdrawal of the Hono O Na Pali extension area from the Forest Reserve System. This would be to have the NAR designation hearing at the same time, as well as a withdrawal from the Forest Reserve System.

ITEM 6.b. Announcement of Public Hearing for new Poamoho NAR, to be held April 30, 2008. Staff Yuen announced that the public hearing would start at 6:00 p.m., in the DLNR Boardroom.

ITEM 6.c. Status of new proposal for Wai`anae Sinkhole NAR. Staff Yuen has been working with Mike Yamamoto of DAR on a 19.5 acre parcel out near Wai`anae Small Boat Harbor, and gave a power point presentation. The area contains anchialine pools in old, lithified coral reef, that is very different from most anchialine pools which are

generally associated with lava flows. Vegetation on the surface is primarily alien keawe trees and grasses. Some of the deep pools have been used as a garbage dump. The area is not suitable for general park use due to the anchialine pools, some of which are at the base of deep cracks. There is at least one species of anchialine pool shrimp (*Metabetaeus lohena*) that is a candidate for listing by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The area was transferred by the Land Board to DAR early this year (not being a suitable place to put the homeless shelter among other proposals). There are at least two shrimp species, but the area has not been completely surveyed.

Dr. Dan Polhemus, DAR Administrator, said that the genetic and speciation of anchialine pool shrimp is more complex than originally thought. *Halocaridina rubra* has a lot of genetic races separated by old rift zones (hard rock) and they do not mix; *H. rubra* on Wai`anae coast is distinct, and therefore compliments other anchialine pools. If the State goes forward with the higher protection of NARS designation, US Fish and Wildlife Service would support fencing the sinkholes, education buy-in for outreach and to support the classes (such as the neighboring High School). It is the subterranean features that are the most important, even if they are the least visible resources.

Member Alakai asked about public safety and the possibility of cave-ins. Staff Polhemus replied that it is hard rock, less likely to cave in, but people crawling down holes or cracks is why there is a need to fence the area. Chair Bonar asked about soil; Staff Polhemus replied that most of the area is karst; there is some soil not prime agriculture land; but could be restored to its native components of surface vegetation (which was sparse to begin with before being replaced with alien species).

Staff Liesemeyer asked about other sinkholes in the 19.5 acres; Staff Polhemus: concentration in the southern half, closest to Boat harbor. Staff Liesemeyer asked what DAR would do to protect the area in lieu of it being designated a NAR. Staff Polhemus said that DAR has no authority to protect land (only water resources both marine and aquatic). Anchialine pools are mesohaline, they fluctuate with the tide and are therefore considered to be an extension of the ocean so yes, they could be managed by DAR; however, the fast lands surrounding the pools cannot be regulated by DAR.

Chair Bonar asked if this was for information only; staff Yuen said yes, there is no action to be taken today; this was just to introduce the area to members. Member Jacobi asked Staff Polhemus if DAR would help with management. Staff Polhemus said yes, they will remain involved, particularly Mike Yamamoto. Member Jacobi: A couple of reserves have anchialine pools; how many more areas are important to bring into the NARS. Staff Polhemus: Those anchialine pools are located on lava; this is limestone and the shrimp represent a different haplotype. How many more you add depends on your ultimate goal. For example, Goat Island (off Malaekahana) has its own anchialine pool with its own distinct haplotype. Member P. Conant asked about the fencing angle; if NARS says yes, will that help USFWS to provide funding. Staff Polhemus agreed to work on a proposal with NARS staff to see if the proposal has merit and it is up to the NARSC then to move this forward as a NAR.

Staff Yuen said that the High School next door would be a good source of support and education outreach; in May will be going to the Wai`anae Neighborhood Board to talk to them. Staff Polhemus: DAR has never done anything like this yet. Member Derrickson said that this fits with the Governor's intention on the Wai`anae Coast; suggested working with Office of Planning to help with community contacts. Member Rowland asked if there would still be coastal access; Staff Polhemus replied yes. Staff Yuen: the sinkholes are 100 meters mauka of the shore, so fencing the sinkholes would not restrict access to the shoreline. Chair Bonar: Oil spills are a greater concern than restricting access. Staff Polhemus: Most of the pools are subterranean and highly inaccessible.

Member Hughes asked if adding this to the NARS would be a burden on O`ahu NARS staff. Staff Liesemeyer replied that the restoration aspect would not be in the near future; protection of pools would be important; however saw the proposal only recently; there could be management difficulties and it is close to a large population center, but if done in cooperative management with DAR then it might be possible. Staff Polhemus: Keeping people out of the area would put an end to trash and using pools as a dump; that is the only active management, since the pools are self-supporting. He stated that this was just for preliminary discussion and no action to be taken at this time.

Chair Bonar called for a short recess at 2:35 p.m.; reconvening group at 2:42 p.m.

ITEM 7. Risk assessment for *Myoporum thrips*: introduced insect pest on introduced species similar to Hawaiian *Myoporum sandwicense* (naio). Member Loope said that this was a preliminary informational item and a plea for help from Staff and Members for information on the importance of *Myoporum* in Hawai`i. In 2005, there was a wakeup call with the gall wasp, and its rapid spread. Guava (`ohi`a) rust is next; and while it is already here, there is a worry that additional strains could come in that would wipe out native `ohi`a forests. He brought this to the NARSC to bring this concern about rust to the public and to DOA to help push for interim rules banning further importation of plant material in the Myrtaceae (family that guava and `ohi`a are in). We need to continue to protect the dominant native forest species as much as DOA does to protect dominant agriculture species (sugar and pineapple). Rob Hauff, DOFAW Forest Health Coordinator, informed him in March that in 2005 in Southern California they planted *Myoporum* from New Zealand, and discovered that the thousands of plants outplanted were infested with thrips (small, sucking insects that can cause wholesale damage to plants); it was described as a new species in 2007.

Member P. Conant remarked that it was déjà vu all over again. Ironically, it was described as a new species in California, even though it appears to be a New Zealand species. Member Loope continued, suggesting that naio be added to the list of dominant native forest canopy species `ohi`a, koa, mamane; however DOA is not enthusiastic about such a list; so there is a need to document naio as important. There is hardly any naturally occurring on Maui; however it is used in the landscaping trade now; need to know where it occurs naturally on other islands.

Staff Hadway: Need to ask all staff; naio occurs from the coast all the way up to high elevation. Member Jacobi: there are two forms: coastal sprawler to tall rain forest (and dry forest) tree. Staff Hadway: the coastal sprawler naio is everywhere in the landscape trade; she is also concerned about bringing in new species.

Member Loope felt in future that the NARSC could make a request of DOA; meanwhile he suggested looking into native naio distribution, keeping an eye out for thrips and non-native *Myoporum* species, as well as promoting write ups such as the recently release `ohi`a rust paper he handed out to members. Member Jacobi asked if there was any outside traffic with *Myoporum*; Member P. Conant was not sure. Member Jacobi asked what would happen if it is already here. Member P. Conant: Need a uniform plan to protect the dominant native species; besides Fish and Wildlife Service, need to get the conservation community via Hawai`i Conservation Alliance (HCA) involved. Chair Bonar agreed that HCA should take this up. Member Loope felt that the NARSC had more of an influence; HCA is too diffuse to do anything. Member P. Conant said this could show up in *Environment Hawaii*; *Myoporum elatum* can be killed by the thrips and it is the closest to our own species. Member Loope said that if Member Jacobi and Staff Hadway can get information to him, he will write it up as a request to DOA for the next meeting.

ITEM 8. Update on recommendations for reducing the risks posed by biofuels to natural areas. Member Loope reported on the recent session of the Kaua`i Conservation Conference which addressed a rethink on Albizzia as a species for biofuels on Kaua`i. There is a need to focus on a few species, not a huge list of potential species for biofuels, not just have free enterprise bring in this or that to try out. Member Derrickson said that the other part of the equation is now in Conference Committee at the Legislature that seeks to allow biofuel facilities on Agricultural lands by right; this is poised to be signed as part of a national steamroller to streamline the process. Chair Bonar asked if DOFAW gave any testimony on this matter. Staff Kennedy replied that nothing was passed to him for response. Member P. Conant said it was over his head; that he had not seen anything to the effect at DOA.

ITEM 9. Ka`ena Predator Proof Fence status: Staff Mitchell reported that shoreline certification is an ongoing process with Division of Accounting and General Services (DAGS); NARS staff doing pre-fence predator monitoring for rat and mongoose, and Lindsay Young heard and saw a nene fly over the Reserve last weekend; a record for O`ahu. Chair Bonar asked about a target date for construction. Staff Mitchell said that depends on the shore line certification, and then the County Planning permit process that includes a public hearing; then nesting season for Laysan albatross and other species will have to be taken in to consideration, before any actual construction is planned.

ITEM 10. Status of legislative bills affecting the NARS Program and Natural Area Reserve Fund (NARF). Staff Kennedy handed out copies of the current budget and bill status. The bill that would give the State ownership of the County road that passes through `Ahihi-Kina`u NAR died without a hearing. For the budget, the Native Resources Program got what it requested, including \$2 million increase in the spending

cap of the NARF, supporting an enlarged YCC program, Watershed Partnership Program (WSP), Natural Area Partnership Program (NAPP), and increased staff support. The spending cap is now \$10 million for the NARF. The positions that DOCARE had requested be funded through the NARF, were transferred to another funding source; although there is an ongoing debate in Conference Committee as to final disposition of funding these positions. Member Rowland asked if funding comes from the NARF, can we ask them to work in NARS only. Staff Kennedy said that was not the intent here; DOCARE needs more officers across the entire State.

Chair Bonar asked if that was an appropriate use of State funds. Staff Kennedy said that the Program will be drawing on these funds a long time and the concern is that there will be enough to fund existing commitments with the possibility of a decrease in the conveyance tax. Permanent drawing on the NARF could affect the ability to manage NARS over the long haul (or to meet other commitments such as NAPP).

ITEM 10.a. Overview of Forest Stewardship Program. Staff Sheri Mann, Cooperative Service Forester with DOFAW, gave an overview of the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) funded through the conveyance tax, or private landowners and lessees of State lands. She passed out copies of the Forest Stewardship Handbook so that Members could see the differences in FSP and the NAPP. She referred to the Handbook when talking about the recent raise in hold-down rates, so that they are comparable with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other hold-down rates. These will be reviewed annually by Staff and the Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee (FSAC). Contracts for participants in the FSP run from 10 to 30 years. Having a lower contract of 10 years has brought in more interest in participating. Further interest has been generated by raising the cap from \$75,000 to \$100,000 for a project. Staff Mann handed out a spreadsheet that gives a breakdown of projects over time, showing completed projects and those in the active or maintenance mode. The goal of this presentation is to give the Commission a feel where the numbers are at; there are more contracts than in the past and acreage is going up.

Chair Bonar asked about spending trends. Staff Mann said that it varies, though generally about \$100,000 below the spending forecast. Chair Bonar asked whether the rest reverts to the Special Fund; Staff Mann said that it did. There are no conservation easements involved with FSP contracts, as they are shorter-term projects (than those enrolled in the NAPP which require a conservation easement in perpetuity, and have a 2:1 match as opposed to 1:1 match for FSP participants). Harvest is negotiable, as is maintenance; can not destroy buffers. Timber harvest is after 30 years; need to determine pay back to support the program. In the past there used to be an annual point consultation between the NARSC and FSAC. Creation of the Legacy Lands Act took joint consultation away from NARS and FSAC; it is now internal staff review; however would like guidance on this review in the future. Chair Bonar remarked that there is some distance between NARS and Forestry, so recommended this as an action item to appoint a subcommittee.

Staff Mann invited NARSC to come to the FSAC meeting in March to better learn about each other, and will now include all members on any future agenda for meetings; and now formally inviting the NARSC to get involved.

Chair Bonar said he attended the meeting and it was very educational. Member P. Conant also attended. Christine Ogura gave a presentation on the Watershed Partnership Program, Molly Schmidt gave one about the Legacy Lands Conservation Program, and Staff Gagné gave an over view of the Natural Area Partnership Program. Chair Bonar felt it was an important interaction and hoped all members would be on each others mailing lists and hoped that Forestry staff as well will come to NARSC meetings. He thanked Staff Mann for her presentation.

ITEM 10.b. Action Item: Appoint Commission members to a subcommittee between the Natural Area Reserves System Commission and the Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee as part of the joint consultation process for dispersal of funds form the NARF. Staff Kennedy explained that this was part of an informal review that calls for at least two members from each group; however it is up to you whether you wish to do this. Meetings are noticed under sunshine law. Chair Bonar asked if there was anyone interested: Members Alakai and P. Conant volunteered. Chair Bonar asked AG Chow if it needed a motion and vote; AG Chow replied yes.

MOTION: Loope/Derrickson moved that Members Rebecca Alakai and Patrick Conant be appointed as members of the joint consultation subcommittee between the NARS Commission and the Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee.

Motion carried with Member P. Conant abstaining.

ITEM 2. Minutes of the September 10, 2007 Natural Area Reserves System Commission Meeting.

MOTION: Rowland/Alakai moved that the NARS Commission approve the Minutes of the September 10, 2007 meeting as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 3. Minutes of the February 3, 2008 NARS Commission Meeting.

MOTION: Jacobi/S. Conant moved that the NARS Commission approved the minutes as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 11. Announcements.

ITEM 11.b. Update on revised NARS and Natural Area Partnership (NAPP) websites. Staff Yuen gave a quick background: the State is going through a new process for its website design; access to our old website has been lost so cannot get in to it to change it or update any items. Member Rowland remarked cannot or will not. Staff Yuen replied that the story continues: the new state server will have **all** operating under

the same software and they will all look the same way. This is being handled by the Information and Communication Services Division (ICSD) of DAGS, and we cannot update the website yet (it has not gone live) but will be able to update website in the future. In the meantime, Staff Yuen shared a template for the new NARS website that will go live on the DOFAW website when it is completed. She gave out a handout to members, staff and visitors, asking all to write in any suggestions for what else needs including on the website. The new template is pretty restrictive, even to picking different background colors; everything is standardized. There will also be links to other sites or programs.

Member Hoeflinger asked to have acreage posted for each Reserve. Chair Bonar wanted to see consistency in maps for permits; both good low and high resolution maps. Staff Yuen said that the plan is to have topographic maps for each Reserve with boundaries. Chair Bonar said there have been a number of complaints about past applications not having any or bad maps; need consistent, proper maps. Member Jacobi asked about links. Chair Bonar said that permit applications and guidelines were not on the website either. He also wanted to see examples of good permit applications to use as a guide. Staff Hadway said the \$50 permit application fee is a filter, applications are improving but still not getting applications in a timely manner. Although many DOFAW staff had asked that the application form not be available online, preferring to have applicants read the guidelines then contact appropriate staff; Staff Hadway suggested putting the application form on the web and they pay the application fee whether they get a permit or not. Member Rowland: May be more vicious about sending applications back that are not good enough.

Staff Yuen said to write down suggestions for her, such as list of members, minutes. Chair Bonar wanted all Commission Meetings to be put up on website. Staff Yuen said that can be done when it goes live. Chair Bonar asked about a private access for members and pushed to go ahead of DOFAW. Staff Yuen said that those in charge of the website said no, they cannot go live as yet.

Staff Mitchell said to make sure when reviewing this, look at the newly revised Strategic Plan and what is in it and if they want to be a part of the process, then volunteer now. Chair Bonar wants to see the whole thing first, not just screen shots. Staff Hadway asked if NARS Managers can review information first and clean up first; also how easy is it to add anything after it goes live. Staff Yuen said that she and Staff Michelle Gorham (DOFAW Information and Education) will be able to make changes; but would be the only two staff allowed to make the changes. The calendar of events will also be added; will need to go through Staff Gorham to request changes. There will be a NAPP site with links to each Preserve and all the enrollment information. Chair Bonar asked again about maps; Staff Yuen said that all maps would be there for existing NARs. Staff Mitchell suggested including the NAPP Long Range Management Plans.

Chair Bonar asked if doing own coding; Staff Yuen said yes. Member Derrickson remarked about the limits to fonts. Staff Mitchell said that everything is being configured to conform with Hawaii.Gov, so confined to that template. Staff Yuen said that the new

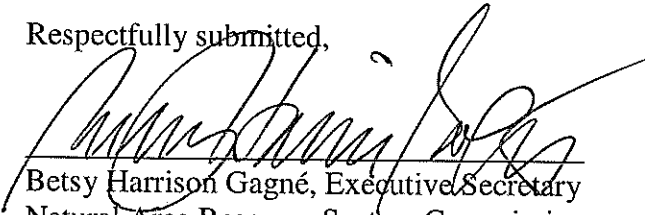
software is easier for people with disabilities to read, but pictures can also be added. Member Derrickson was asking because of the diacritical marks that should be used. Staff Yuen again asked for such comments to go to her before the next meeting.

ITEM 11.b. Set next meeting dates. June 30, 2008 will be the next NARSC Meeting, to be held in Honolulu and principal agenda item will be the Strategic Plan. Staff Mitchell had to completely redo sections of the Plan, so it is as yet not ready to send out for further review; but will be sent to members and staff as soon as she can complete the corrections.

Staff Kennedy announced that Jolie Wanger, DOFAW Information and Education Specialist since 2003, was leaving April 27 with her husband and two small children to be closer to family in Colorado. Staff will be sending her something to thank her for all her years of service, on behalf of everyone. She hired Michelle Gorham through Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) to replace her while on extended leave; she picked up the ball and kept things going, and is currently acting in the position while paperwork goes in to replace Jolie. Everyone wished her and her family well.

Chair Bonar adjourned the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Betsy Harrison Gagné, Executive Secretary
Natural Area Reserves System Commission