

**Minutes of the Natural Area Reserves System Commission
Natural Area Partnership Program Subcommittee Meeting**

Date: November 22, 2013

Time: 9:00am-3:30pm

Place: Room 325, Kalanimoku Bldg., 1151 Punchbowl St., Honolulu, Hawaii

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Marie Bruegmann

Ms. Ulalia Woodside

Dr. Jonathan Price

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Trae Menard

STAFF:

Lisa Ferentinos, DLNR, DOFAW

Carli Gardner, DLNR, DOFAW

Randall Kennedy, DLNR, DOFAW, Program Manager

Leah Laramée, DLNR, DOFAW

Molly Schmidt, DLNR, DOFAW

PUBLIC:

Dan Parcell

MINUTES:

ITEM 1. Call to Order and Introduction of Members.

Meeting called to order at 9:33am

Natural Area Reserves System Commission ("Commission"), Natural Area Partnership Program Subcommittee ("Subcommittee") members, staff, and members of the public introduced themselves.

Staff presented an overview of why the subcommittee was formed. Ms. Leah Laramée explained that a full, in-depth review of the Natural Area Partnerships Program was a priority subcommittee initiative.

ITEM2. Administrative Updates

Mr. Randall Kennedy explained that there was an application for the EMI lands on Maui to join the NAPP, the application has been approved by the Natural Area Reserves System Commission.

Mr. Kennedy went over the Natural Area Partnerships Program ("NAPP") budget. It was mentioned that annual NAPP reporting allowed a portion of the conveyance tax, delegated to the Natural Area Reserve Fund ("NARF"), to go toward NAPP with a 2:1 match from the Partners.

Ms. Laramée explained that the NAPP budget came off the top of the NARF, which did not allow for flexibility in the NAPP budget. A decrease in the NARF would limit funding for other projects within the Natural Area Reserves System and the NAPP would consume most of the budget. It was suggested that

the Subcommittee consider reduced funding for existing projects in the case that new projects are added to the NAPP.

Member Woodside explained that a commitment to a fixed funding amount did not seem appropriate for the NAPP. Member Price agreed. It was suggested that partners receive a cycle of funding based on their long-term managements plans and funding need overtime. Member Bruegmann suggested that the Subcommittee receive reports demonstrating successes and allocation of the budget across NAPP projects to ensure sustainable funding. General consensus with the Subcommittee was to revisit the budget and to setup objective criteria with benchmarks for success in order to assess the budget for each project.

Ms. Laramee explained the new system for standardized monitoring and reporting, which she mentioned could help staff determine how successful the projects have been. Mr. Kennedy asked Ms. Laramee to include a section in the reporting spreadsheet for cultural components and outreach and education. Member Woodside suggested the reporting demonstrate the benefit of all control methods used in the NAPP.

Staff brought up a discussion on creating specific standards for Conservation Easements and/or NAPP agreements. It was explained that there was previously loose ties to conservation easements. Mr. Kennedy explained that the Nature Conservancy joined the NAPP before the requirements were set, therefore, Conservation Easements were not placed on their properties; however, they were willing to get the easements in order to be compliant with the NAPP regulations. It was mentioned that there needed to be consistency throughout the NAPP.

There was a discussion on the perpetuity of the Conservation Easement and the State's role during a transfer of landownership.

Mr. Kennedy explained each NAPP has three legal documents, the agreement between the State and Landowner, the CDUP, and the Conservation Easement. There was a discussion about the few instances where the Conservation Easement requirement kept certain private landowners from applying for NAPP.

There was a consensus to take a look at Conservation Easements and report back to determine if the requirement is beneficial. Staff agreed to assess the easements and send out a broad overview to all Subcommittee members.

Ms. Laramee suggested setting baseline requirements for Conservation Easements, Member Woodside agreed.

Member Woodside left the meeting.

ITEM 3. NAPP Enhancement

Ms. Laramee encouraged a discussion for increased Commission involvement. Member Bruegmann suggested increased involvement in the yearly reports and Commission visits to the NAPP sites. Ms. Schmidt explained the taskforce, or permitted interaction group, rules and regulations for Commission site visits. General consensus was to increase Commission involvement with the reports and site visits.

Dan Purcell, public attendee, asked the Subcommittee about monitoring areas using unmanned vehicles and video recording methods. Member Price explained it would be difficult due to the numerous Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations involving unmanned vehicles.

Staff suggested new NAPP interests be focused on coastal areas, since there are other programs within the Department of Land and Natural Resources focused on mountain ecosystems.

Member Bruegmann suggested the subcommittee look at all ecosystems across Hawaii in order to determine where the NAPP are underrepresented. Member Price and Member Bruegmann discussed the potential values of various ecosystems around Hawaii. Member Price suggested some research for Staff to address in order to assess land across the State.

Ms. Ferentinos mentioned that there are no NAPPs on Oahu or Kauai, it was explained that those two islands are underrepresented and underreported. Ms. Ferentinos explained that the Koolau Mountains Watershed Partnership could be a good opportunity to get a NAPP on Oahu. It was mentioned that NAPP and Watershed Partnerships could be beneficial to one another.

Mr. Kennedy explained that the NAPP is encouraging representation on all islands but there was not as much progress as expected.

There was another discussion on the NAPP budget and assessing existing NAPPs to possibly redistribute funds for projects. It was suggested the Subcommittee develop NAPP criteria. Member Price suggested staff address the HIGAP report to develop the criteria.

Member Price discussed match funds and the possibility of project recipients voluntarily reducing their funding in order to further facilitate for other NAPP areas. Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Laramée explained previous instances where recipients volunteered to reduce their funding.

The Subcommittee agreed to develop NAPP priorities and criteria before the next NAPP application process.

There was a continued discussion about the reporting system. Ms. Ferentinos explained the new standardized system, a more efficient way of demonstrating data throughout monitored areas across the state. Staff discussed the benefits and effectiveness of having all data consolidated in one place. Member Bruegmann mentioned the importance of monitoring or demonstrating benefits to NAPP management.

Member Bruegmann asked if there were any criteria already in place that the Subcommittee members could base the NAPP criteria off of. Member Price said it depends on the value that was identified in the beginning of the NAPP.

It was suggested that Staff and Subcommittee members address previous long-term management plans to demonstrate what the goal was for each individual NAPP and to monitor what has been done or where the money went. Member Bruegmann agreed to look over some of the long-term management plans. Ms. Laramée suggested sending out all NAPP long-term management plans for the NARS Commission members to look over and assess individually. Member Bruegmann and Member Price agreed that it was important to have an outline for Commission members to address while reviewing the plans. Ms. Laramée said she would address the topic of NAPP management plan reviews to the

NARS Commission at their next meeting. Member Bruegmann and Member Price agreed to review a few of the plans before addressing the entire NARS Commission.

Dan Purcell asked Mr. Kennedy why the Native Ecosystems Protection and Management section of DOFAW was a priority for the Governor and received approved funding. Mr. Kennedy explained the threat of climate change was the push for the Watershed Initiative. The other thing mentioned was land acquisition, there were opportunities available where the timeframe was limited. Mr. Purcell thanked the Subcommittee for their efforts and service.

ITEM 4. NAPP Outreach

There was a consensus to defer the topic of outreach to the next meeting.

ITEM 5. Announcements

There were no announcements.

ITEM 6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:24pm