

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Division of Forestry & Wildlife
Kalanimoku Building
1151 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
November 13, 2015

Present: Nicholas Koch (Chair), Betsy Gagné (Ex-officio), Alvin Kyono, Michael Constantinides, Gregory Koob, Patrick Conant, J.B. Friday, Greg Hendrickson, Kip Dunbar

Staff: Irene Sprecher, Malia Nanbara, Marissa Chee, Krista Lizardi

Guests: Katie Friday, Paul Conry, Shahin Ansari, Sheri Mann

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 am by Chair Koch.

2. Welcome new members and guests

- Paul Conry and Shahin Ansari from H.T. Harvey and Associates explained that they were contracted by the state to update the Forest Action Plan.

3. Meeting Minutes – September 18-19, 2015

The meeting minutes from the September 18-19 meeting were not available for the committee to review. The committee will review the minutes at the next meeting.

4. Hawaii Forest Action Plan

Introduction

- The Forest Action Plan (FAP) was created in 2010 as a requirement of the 2008 Farm Bill. This was an effort by congress to push a more holistic integrated planning approach to natural resource management. The plan connects federal, state, and private forestry programs, and the public. States were asked to articulate how state and private forestry programs meet national priorities. The national priorities are to conserve and manage working forest landscapes, protect forest from threats, enhance public benefit through trees and forests.

- The purpose of the 5 year update is to identify new issues, threats, and strategies that may not have existed in 2010. The existing structure and material that is still relevant will be used in the updated plan.

- The committee was asked to identify new issues, threats, and strategies they feel should be included. Projects that are reviewed by the committee can also be connected into the chapters.

- DOFAW has begun the process of updating each issue chapter, and H.T. Harvey is currently getting input from stakeholders. They plan to have a draft out for public review in December and finish the update in early 2016.

- The committee was asked to email their comments to Staff Sprecher and Guest Conry.

Discussion

- Guest K. Friday asked if Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) stakeholders have been a part of the process. The FAP can be used to seek competitive funding, so having

agencies unanimous on priorities would be beneficial. Staff Sprecher said it has not gone to the state technical committee, but we may look into it.

- Member Dunbar asked if the Soil Water Conservation District Program reviewed the FAP. Staff Sprecher said only the leads DOFAW designated have provided comments on it so far. Once a final draft is completed, it will go to a broader audience.
- In response to Guest K. Friday, Member Constantinides said that his presence at this meeting can serve the role of providing support and concurrence from NRCS. If there is a need for higher level review, he can facilitate that. Given that the document is broad, the actions carried about by NRCS fall within objectives laid out in the FAP. There are two new programs, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the Joint Chief Landscape Restoration Program (JCLPR), which should be mentioned in the FAP. These programs help take the NRCS business model into watershed areas in a way that was not happening in the past. He added that the forestry funding pool for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is decreasing. Forestry is the lowest priority program.
- Member Constantinides said it would be helpful if someone could summarize how the FAP has done in the first 5 years and if it has been working or not so the committee knows where to focus their support and advice.
- Guest Mann explained that other states defined areas spatially in their plans. In Hawaii, issues cross all areas, so they decided to have issue chapters rather than define spatial areas. Guest Mann still felt this method works for Hawaii and that there is no need to radically change it. We need to be more competitive when applying for state and private forestry funds.
- Member Dunbar felt that things that specifically impact issues such as food security and potable water should be addressed.
- Member Koob said that he sees the value of this for regional grants, but asked if it can be used for local grant opportunities. Staff Sprecher said we use it to tell our story locally but it does not go towards local competitive funding. It is also used in writing forest reserve plans. Guest Conry added that they want to use the FAP to connect all the different types of plans.
- Guest Mann said the committee could review the priority table at the end of each chapter, and provide feedback on updating or changing any of the priorities.
- Member Hendrickson said there are some data deficiencies throughout the document, and asked if any additional data has been gathered to help fill gaps. Priorities of data that we want should be included to be more effective in understanding and addressing issues. Guest Mann said a chapter on fire will be included, and the invasive species maps will be updated.
- Guest Mann clarified that we are not trying to prioritize issues. The goal is to keep the document relevant for those issues. The FSAC was asked to think about how the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) and Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) can address those issues.
- Staff Sprecher said the Koa Action Plan will fit into this document as an appendix.
- Staff Sprecher presented maps showing where landowner assistance programs are.

Issue Chapter 1: Water Quality and Quantity

- Member J. Friday suggested incorporating data from the Rain Follows the Forest initiative since that came out after the FAP was completed. Staff Sprecher added that work done by the Honolulu County Board of Water Supply on priority watersheds will also be added.

- Guest Mann said that the FAP is not necessarily advocating only preserving the best of the best areas. It can also be used to restore degraded areas.
- Staff Chee introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These included increasing collaboration with other programs regarding GIS data, including invasive species information, increasing outreach, prioritizing important watersheds for acquisition, and targeting landowners in those areas.
- Member J. Friday said there could be better coordination with the counties to get a better handle on the development of forests to improve water quality.
- Chair Koch said one possible data gap is the tables do not mention siltation and turbidity at the mouths of rivers as measures of success.
- Member Hendrickson felt that development below forests is outside the scope of the plan, unless we are looking into acquiring land to prevent development. He added that non-point source pollution and ungulate control are mentioned as they relate to water quality.
- Staff Sprecher said there may be a role for agroforestry as a component of agricultural uses such as riparian forests.
- Member Hendrickson said they are experiencing pushback about removing invasive species on their property because some feel invasive species are acting as cover and limiting erosion.
- Member J. Friday suggested identifying the need to know more about evaporation, transpiration, and vegetative cover types as a knowledge gap.
- Member Koob asked if there has been any coordination with people from game management, given that ungulate control and management is listed throughout. Guest Mann said there have been discussions with the Pig Hunters Association on Oahu. We are planning to create a map of where they use the forest and where the access routes are.
- Member Constantinides said to make sure to add RCPP and JCLRP, and remove WHIP. He thought that the management classes would inform this document. In the first section, controlling feral ungulates is after controlling weeds. He felt that weeds will come back if ungulates are not under control.
- Member J. Friday said that instead of focusing on a specific weed, the focus should be on land management.

Issue 2: Forest Health

- Staff Sprecher introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These included working more with the invasive species councils and to connect with landowners. For FL, we have incorporated language that has owners looking at what they are introducing to the property. For insects, we are looking at using resistant koa seeds and doing experimental silvicultural practices.
- Member J. Friday said that nursery regulations must be more specific to enhance biosecurity. Member Kyono added that we have a problem controlling private nurseries.
- Guest K. Friday said that outreach with the horticultural industry and urban forestry is captured in strategy 1, but could be highlighted more.
- Staff clarified that the Department of Agriculture regulates the movement of pests and plants, not the DLNR.

- Chair Koch said there are data gaps in the weed risk assessment. It appears that it is going to become a powerful tool, so the data needs to be supported and consistent. Guest K. Friday said that as a predictive tool, it is well vetted. It is a predictive tool, therefore it is not regulatory. Chair Koch wanted to know who owns or maintains the list. There is a need for a repository after further evaluation once we get the prediction and score.
- Member J. Friday said we need to be more specific and clear on what we mean by invasive species.

Issue 3: Wildfire

- Staff Sprecher introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These strategies included adding resources in FSP management plans, doing more fuel reduction, creating fuel buffers, and targeting landowners in high fire threat areas.
- Guest Mann said that other states have been expanding their Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. Hawaii should look into defining it more broadly than we currently do to make more funding available.
- Member Koob commented that there is nothing in the chapter about restoring grasslands or abandoned lands from a fire prone area to a non-fire prone area. Member J. Friday added that non-native species may be better for fire breaks.
- Member Conant said someone could revisit doing biocontrol of fountain grass to help reduce fuel loads.
- Guest Mann said there has been a push at DOFAW to get more support for wildfire pre and post suppression and to target high fuel load areas.
- Chair Koch commented that more about what to do immediately after a fire should be included in the chapter. Guest Mann said DOFAW is working with the Department of Transportation and Lyon Arboretum to create slurries, preferably with native species, that can be rapidly deployed in post fire situations.
- Member Kyono said the Forest Service has a recovery team that will deploy things such as hay bales before planting to stop erosion.
- Member J. Friday commented that in Hawaii, fire starts follow the roads.
- Member Conant said if there are ungulates in a burn area, they will eat seedlings as they come up. He asked if it is possible to open it up for hunting. Member Constantinides said there is a potential for more fires if you allow hunting.

Issue 4: Urban and Community

- Staff Nanbara introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. Projects like Kokua Kalihi Valley involve urban forestry and they have done a great job getting the community involved. Forest Legacy can reduce urban sprawl by acquiring lands threatened by development. The Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) could also do more to target botanical gardens.
- Member Constantinides said agroforestry is an opportunity through EQIP. Member Kyono added that the interest in agroforestry is there, but for many land owners it is low budget.
- Staff Sprecher said there is a community forest acquisition program.

- Guest K. Friday said that the Forest Service Community Forest Program offers 50/50 cost share, has a \$400,000 cap, and does fee purchases. The urban forestry program could support community agroforestry. It is analogous to FSP but the lands do not have to be private lands. She wanted to know how projects that are funded through these programs can mesh with what FSP focuses on, particularly upland areas. She felt that there could be watershed projects that encompass both programs to address resource issues.
- Member Hendrickson said the University of Hawaii West Campus has a development plan for the area that extends mauka. It might be valuable to talk with them now before they develop to encourage them to look along lines of urban forestry.

Issue 5: Climate Change

- Staff Nanbara introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. One of the listed strategies is using disturbances to facilitate adaptation for future climate change, such as the restoration at Kokee after the fire. Another strategy would be to share more climate change information with our landowners.
- Guest K. Friday commented that you cannot change an undisturbed area, but you can prepare for a disturbance. For example, if an area has the potential to get washed out or burned, you can plan to reforest or restore that area.
- Member J. Friday they could get some ideas from 3 reports on forestry and climate change.
- Member Hendrickson said CREP could possibly help address issues associated with severe weather in terms of stabilization of water courses.

Issue 6: Biodiversity

- Staff Sprecher introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These strategies included prioritizing and targeting areas of high biodiversity and collaborating with other programs and agencies that work in these areas.
- Member Constantinides said that the priority area is currently USFWS critical habitat and wondered if that was limiting. Staff Sprecher said the priority areas will be changed to something more similar to the State Wildlife Action Plan.
- Member J. Friday said they went with public land for critical habitat over private land. Member Koob said that the proposed critical habitat was based on biology, and the final rules were based on input from other sources.
- Guest Mann said that we do not have to use the same methodology in determining priority areas.
- Member Conant said that insects and pathogens should not be combined.

Issue 7: Hunting, recreation, and tourism

- Staff Chee introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These strategies included determining recreation priorities, including more information on recreation in FL plans, increasing outreach, working more with state foresters on determining priority areas for access across properties, increasing

collaboration with other programs, and making community involvement a bigger component of management plans.

- Staff Sprecher explained that the DOFAW access coordinator has a list of prioritized areas of state lands that are land locked, and is looking at different methods to provide access to those public resources. Member Conant said that should be mentioned in the table of strategies.
- Member J. Friday said there are landowners who run managed hunts on their land, so there should be something about non-resident fee hunting in the plan. Member Dunbar commented that it may depend on your insurance since his insurance would not allow him to charge people to hunt on his land.
- Guest K. Friday asked if there are any incentives that encourage landowners to allow more public access. Member Hendrickson said that is a question of liability. Staff Sprecher said there is the cooperative game management program where we do assume some liability for public hunting. There is another program that provides assistance to landowners to allow for public access.
- Member J. Friday disagreed with the opening statement of the issue chapter that says hunting is an essential tool in controlling game mammal populations, given that hunting is the reason those populations of animals are there. Member Conant felt that hunting is just a form of recreation, not an effective management method.
- Member Koob felt that it was odd that one of the strategies in table 2 on page 202 was complying with relevant statutes and laws rules and regulations. Staff Sprecher said enforcement would make more sense.
- Chair Koch commented that the types of accessible trails and camping opportunities made available by the national parks are not that well developed on state land.
- Guest K. Friday said that Kahoolawe and Hakalau get volunteers so easily because there is the option to stay.
- Member J. Friday said on some islands, the state trail system is not well maintained. He felt that more effort should be put into other forms of recreation besides hunting, starting with the trail system. Member Koob commented that Oahu has a trail club that maintains trails.
- Staff Sprecher explained that more people have been interested in using trails, but are not always prepared so there have been more injuries and rescues. This has resulted in more private trails are getting shut down.
- Guest K. Friday said this shows the advantage of having guided groups. Individuals going out have been trespassing or getting in trouble. Hawaii is not doing as much as other places to encourage individual hikers to do guided tours, so there could be more of an initiative to increase activities such as Kahoolawe and Hakalau.

Issue 8: Forest Products and Carbon Sequestration

- Staff Sprecher introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These strategies included supporting the development of a forest product industry, looking into the feasibility of carbon credits on state land, and doing more native hardwood tree research.

- Guest Mann said the maps are going to be replaced to show tree plantations across land boundaries.
- Member J. Friday asked if natural stands that are being commercially managed and harvested are going to be mapped. Guest Mann said it would depend on if the landowner would agree to it.
- Guest Mann said she would like to see areas where we are interested in making timber management areas on state land, but public opinion on cutting trees can be a challenge.
- Staff Sprecher said that FSP has had projects that have looked at doing native forest products. There have been discussions about our role in working with other forest products such as biomass, non-timber forest products (NTFP), agroforestry, and carbon sequestration. Carbon potential could be included in management plan templates. Guest Mann added that a non-timber forest product section is going to be added to the FAP.
- Chair Koch commented that all of the woods we grow in Hawaii do not have a market. Eucalyptus does not have the specifications to be used as a structural wood. Guest Mann said all of the eucalyptuses in Hawaii have gone through a review process, and that all we have to do is take that information and run it through authority process here to use it structurally. Chair Koch added that we should be able to use it locally.
- Staff Sprecher said there are small landowners who do not know how to access the market.
- Member Conant suggested collaborating with architects and promoting locally available woods.
- Guest Mann explained that the presence of hoary bats limits the timber industry that want to come here to do business. They believe it is illegal to cut down a tree during pupping season; however it is only illegal to harm or kill them. Member Constantinides said that it would be beneficial to do a public awareness campaign to inform them.
- Member J. Friday said some of the research topics that are listed were very specific. The topics should be broader to include topics such as sustainable management and silviculture of hardwoods and native trees.
- Member Constantinides felt that information on the hoary bat should be added to the FAP since it is impacting the industry.
- Chair Koch said the state could request data from a eucalyptus trial that used a variety of seed types. The results could be presented to public.

Issue 9: Multistate

- Staff Nanbara introduced the chapter and some of the ways staff felt the private programs can assist with addressing the issues. These strategies included supporting agroforestry and targeting more areas that have habitat for migratory shore birds.
- Staff Mann said a section on the chronic salary shortfalls for wildlife biologists and foresters will be included.
- Member Koob suggested adding information about sea birds since they use the forest more than shore birds.

- Member Constantinides asked Member Koob if a Recovery Land Acquisition would be more logical than FSP or FLP for coastal land. Member Koob said if there are corridors that reduce light or are in the bird's flyway, that land could be acquired.
- Guest K. Friday asked how much they want this section to stand alone versus integrating it into other sections. Guest Mann felt having this as its own chapter is useful since some issues tend to overlap. The things in this chapter are integrated in other chapters as well.
- Member Constantinides asked if agroforests can be installed under FSP. Staff Sprecher said it would have to meet requirements and that we do not fund the cropping plants. Member Constantinides explained that over the last few years, specifications to install agroforestry under EQIP were developed. It is for small quantities of species so it is considered subsistence rather than commercial. If it could fit under FSP, it might be something to add.
- Member J. Friday clarified that if something is milled into boards, then it is a timber product. If the product comes out of the forest, it is a NTFP. He added that there is a gray area. For example, planting coffee in an ohia forest is considered somewhere in between.

5. Forest Legacy Assessment of Needs

- Staff Sprecher explained that there are currently 6 areas of emphasis and asked the committee if these were still applicable. Only the South Kona area of emphasis has had several projects.
- Member J Friday commented that these areas are either too small, or we do not have enough applications to need priority areas.
- Member Constantinides pointed out that if you did have an applicant from a priority area, it would rank higher during FSAC review and at the national level.
- Member Hendrickson added that when scoring projects in the future, a project in a priority area should receive an automatic point. He felt that it does not hurt to have priority areas. We should communicate and outreach more to landowners in other priority areas
- Member Dunbar felt that priority areas should be broader instead of being so specific.
- Member Constantinides said we should identify priority lands and owners. While it is important to capture specific parcels, they could be incorporated into a larger area. The program should be ready if there is a possibility of an easement or sale on land that was once not available.
- Member Hendrickson said the nature of the program has been opportunistic. There is also a level of being strategic by going to the landowner and saying their land is in the priority area. He felt we should be aggressively going after the landowners in priority areas. Member Koob agreed, but it depended on how the priority areas were chosen.
- Member Kyono commented that instead of Olokele, Wainiha Valley could be a priority area.
- Staff Sprecher asked the FSAC what should be considered when determining priority areas.
- The FSAC felt that degree of recoverability, forest condition, and threat of development should be criteria. Member Koob pointed out that within each category on the spreadsheet, the criteria could be different. Member Hendrickson said that works well for importance, but we would have to filter it through strategic and threatened.

- Member Conant suggested lower Puna as a priority area.
- Staff Sprecher said that other states have areas similar to Puna and they work to put together easements across the whole area.
- Staff Sprecher explained that the FLP eligible areas cover most of the private lands in the state and are based off of 4 spatial criteria. Member J. Friday said the prime forest land criteria could be removed since it is outdated. Staff Sprecher said the prime forest land layer covered a lot of the agricultural land in the state, and asked the FSAC if something should replace it if removed.
- Chair Koch felt that NTFPs seem to be a more important criterion than prime forest land, but was not sure how that falls into eligibility.
- Staff Sprecher said that staff is considering having someone work on updating and trimming down the Assessment of Needs.
- Member J. Friday commented that the introduction sounds outdated. He felt that while hunting is another product of forests if managed well, it is not necessarily beneficial.
- Member Koch felt that because the conservation district already has a lot of legal protection, it does not necessarily need to be criteria for eligibility.
- Greg Hendrickson said the only caveat to that is if you have a parcel that has both agricultural and conservation land in the same tract, they would only have partial eligibility. Staff Sprecher added that DOFAW still has an interest to acquire conservation land for management.
- The committee agreed to send the rest of their comments to Staff Sprecher via email.

6. FSAC new members announcement

- There are 5 potential openings on the committee. Koa Kaulukukui and Mark White stepped down, and this is Member J. Friday's last meeting. Member Constantinides and Dunbar's terms are ending and they may reapply. Based on the openings and the types of members we are seeking on the committee, people from non-profit land trusts or the county would be beneficial. It would be more strategic to target people.

7. Announcement and Travel

The next meeting will be during the last week of January on Oahu.

8. Meeting Adjournment at 2:30pm