

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

U.S. Forest Service Institute of Pacific Island Forestry

60 Nowelo St., Hilo, HI 96720 – Conference Room

January 20, 2017

Present: Rich von Wellsheim (Chair), Betsy Gagné (Ex-officio), Michael Constantinides (Chair-elect), Gregory Koob, Patrick Conant, Jonathan Ching, Janet Britt, Kip Dunbar, Jay Warner, Hank Oppenheimer

Staff: Irene Sprecher, Marissa Chee, Malia Nanbara

Guests: Katie Friday (Forest Service), Dawn Horn (MDHE LLC), Springer Kaye (BIISC), Rico Reed (Quest), Dustyn Hirota (Forest Solutions Inc.), Kristen Kiriou (USDA FSA), Keisan Tamura (USDA FSA), Elisabeth Green (Mana Gardens LLC), Michelle David (Hawaiian Sanctuary)

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 10:00am by Chair Wellsheim.

2. Welcome New Members and Guests

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

3.1 September 9-10, 2016 meeting minutes

- The FSAC reviewed the meeting minutes from the September 9-10, 2016 meeting and made the following corrections:

- Member Oppenheimer stated that PEPP has not started outplanting at the Haleakala Ranch project site yet. They are just starting to work with the landowners as a partner and potential planting site.

Motion to approve the September 9-10, 2016 FSAC meeting minutes as corrected. Moved by Member Britt; seconded by Member Ching.

Approve: Wellsheim, Gagné, Constantinides, Koob, Conant, Ching, Britt, Dunbar, Warner, Oppenheimer; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

4. Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) Management Plans

4.1 MDHE Forest Stewardship management plan, Ko'olaupoko District, Honolulu County

- Staff Nanbara introduced the project as a 6-acre project in Kailua on O'ahu. The proposal was approved at the September 2016 meeting.

- Member Conant commented that manual removal of koa haole will be challenging. Guest D. Horn said they have been experimenting with manual removal. The seed bank has challenging and they are looking to incorporate mulching after the plan is approved. Member Conant added that potassium nitrate may be a good option to treat invasive plants.

- Guest D. Horn said they are looking to outplant koai'a which is found on the property. Koai'a is more appropriate at lower elevations and is somewhat resistant to fusarium.

- The FSAC recommended that the autograph trees be treated for removal.

- Guest D. Horn provided more information on the illegal encroachment onto the property by neighbors.
- For the removal of koa haole, the FSAC recommended using a weed wrench to help pull out the plants.
- Because there are non-native plantings, the objective of the plan should be revised to capture larger objectives such as agroforestry rather than native forest restoration. Scientific names should also be updated.
- The FSAC wanted clarification as to why irrigation costs the same every year if it is going to be reusable and moved around.
- The FSAC asked about the bamboo type. Guest D. Horn said it mostly comes from the neighbor's property.
- Member Constantinides said they should do 0.6 acre units once a year instead of two 0.3 acre units twice a year because the planting season only occurs during one part of the year. Guest D. Horn explained they are doing it that way to reassure the neighbors (part of the group Save Kaiwa Ridge) that the area to be managed will not be larger than one house lot per season.

Motion to approve the management plan and budget contingent on addressing the comments from the committee. Moved by Member Constantinides, seconded by Member Conant.

Approve: Wellsheim, Gagné, Constantinides, Koob, Conant, Ching, Britt, Dunbar, Warner, Oppenheimer; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

4.2 Kahanu Preserve Forest Stewardship management plan, Hana District, Maui County

- Staff Nanbara introduced the project as a 63.3 acre project in Hana, Maui. Their proposal requested approval for a management plan over a larger area, but the applicant has since decided to focus on two smaller areas. As of right now, they are only requesting approval of the management plan. They are hoping to use the plan to leverage other funds, and may come back to get their budget approved later.
- Member Dunbar asked if the applicant will be doing mostly maintenance since the site is in relatively good condition. Staff Nanbara explained that the project area is not where the botanical garden is. The canopy in the project area is intact, however weeds are coming in and moving quickly in the understory.
- Staff Nanbara clarified that the heiau restoration is indirect, and involves removing nearby African tulip trees to prevent seedlings from growing on the heiau.
- Member Conant felt that the fence will not be high enough should deer populate the area in the future. Chair Wellsheim said that deer will probably not get to Hana for years. Staff Nanbara said they have an existing fence for their CREP area, and want to complete the perimeter.
- Member Constantinides asked what the suggested planting density of 70 plants/acre is based on, and if a full vegetation inventory has been completed. Staff Nanbara said she was not sure if a full inventory has been done, and that they may be basing the planting density on what they see closer to their facilities. Member Constantinides added that having a good vegetation inventory is essential to support planning in degraded native forests.

- Member Constantinides suggested they consider a smaller planting stock instead of using 6 inch to one gallon sized pots. The species list was not included, and the implementation schedule should have units.
- Member Koob commented that if they will be planting wiliwili, which is not native to the area, it should be clarified in the plan that ex situ conservation is being done.
- Member Oppenheimer also felt that some species do not seem appropriate for the site. He noted that there are a few wiliwili that have been planted there which show that it is possible. He asked what type of material they are using for the fence since they get a lot of salt spray. Staff Nanbara said their galvanized CREP fence was installed in 2011 and is holding up so far.
- Member Ching recommended doing ethnohistorical documentation for such a significant site.
- Member Dunbar was concerned about land clearing. If clearing will be done mechanically, surveys should be completed for the area prior to any mechanical clearing.
- The FSAC wanted more specifications on the fence. Member Wellsheim commented that panels are more expensive the woven but can be installed faster and require less clearing.
- Member Ching asked how they are mitigating for rats, cats, and mongoose. Staff Nanbara said they only have the fence. Member Oppenheimer added that they are likely doing some kind of rat control since they have the pritchardia collection.

Motion to approve the management plan. Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Dunbar.

Continued discussion:

- To summarize, the FSAC wants more details on how clearing will be done, and what kind of inventories (vegetative and archaeological) have been completed.

Approve: Wellsheim, Gagné, Constantinides, Koob, Conant, Hendrickson, Ching, Britt, Dunbar, Warner, Kyono, Oppenheimer, Koch; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

4.3 Duren Forest Stewardship management plan budget revision, North Kona, Hawai‘i County

- This plan was reviewed and approved in September 2015. They are now seeking approval of their budget that incorporates their CREP contract. The map has also been updated.
- Staff Nanbara clarified that weed control will be covered by the NRCS Agricultural Management Assistance program.
- Member Warner asked if ROD has been found in the area. Guest S. Kaye said that suspect trees have been found in general area.
- Member Britt asked if they intend to build any residences. Staff Nanbara said no, but they may be interested in building a yurt or something else low impact in the future.
- Member Oppenheimer asked if the state is liable when applicators buy and use pesticides bought with state funds. Staff Nanbara said they will be using Jill Wagner’s crew who is reliable. Member Oppenheimer added that someone familiar with land snail fauna needs to do a diurnal and nocturnal survey before applying sluggo.
- Member Conant said that the moth for fireweed has been shown to be successful against German ivy and could be used at the project site.

- Member Dunbar asked if staff discussed doing smaller enclosures as opposed to just a perimeter to allow them to expand. Staff Nanbara said that because of the CREP contract, a perimeter fence was the best option for using both Forest Stewardship and CREP.
- Member Constantinides said that their site prep and weed control costs are going to be higher than what NRCS can pay. They will have to accept what can be offered by USDA.

Motion to approve the management plan budget. Moved by Member Constantinides, seconded by Member Koob.

Approve: Wellsheim, Gagné, Constantinides, Koob, Conant, Ching, Britt, Warner, Oppenheimer; Oppose: Dunbar; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

Continued discussion:

- Member Warner felt that the program should put more thought into fencing so that applicants can get the most for their money.

5. Forest Stewardship Program management plan costs

- Staff provided the FSAC with the range of management plan quotes landowners have been obtaining, and the amounts actually awarded dating back to fiscal year (FY) 13. The FSAC had been capping the cost share amount at \$2,500. Recently however, it has been left up to staff. The cost of management plans has been increasing, especially over the last year. Staff requires 3 bids, but they are not required to work with the lowest bidder. If they choose to go with a consultant whose bid is outside the allowable cost share rate, we may only provide a portion of the cost share.
- Member Dunbar noted that the average of quotes from FY17 still fall within the allowable cost share rate range.
- Staff Sprecher added that we may have to revisit the cost-share rate if the legislation gets passed increasing the amount to 75%.
- Member Wellsheim said that it appears that larger projects receive less recourse than smaller projects based on the management plan cost per acre. Guest K. Friday commented that she is supportive of more resources going to larger projects.
- Staff Nanbara said she has been encouraging landowners to do one management plan for their whole property, even if they will only be doing active management in a smaller area.

6. Forest Stewardship project updates

- Currently, there are 10 active projects totaling 2,420 acres and \$200,000 for FY17. There are 5 projects that we are hoping to contract this fiscal year that would add 500 acres to program and cost \$160,000. The Keauhou Bird Conservation Center and Haleakala Ranch management plans are being heard at the January 27, 2017 Board of Land and Natural Resources meeting. There are six projects with approved plans that could request cost share.
- Staff Sprecher added that the Division put a request in to the legislature for an increase in funding for the program.

7. Forest Stewardship Template for Project Proposals and Management Plan updates

- Staff Chee demonstrated the project proposal and management plan templates. The template is now fillable but applicants will not be able to edit fields. The estimated cost section is now a spreadsheet.
- Regarding the proposal budget table, Member Constantinides commented that the cost share rate range in column J is not compatible with column B. Staff clarified that the cost share rate is the typical range of cost per unit. Member Constantinides recommended changing the heading of column J to clarify that, and to clarify that column and F and G are 50% shares.
- Member Ching asked if there will be any changes to the cell if the landowner changes the cost per unit manually. Staff said they will look into allowing that.
- Member Constantinides recommended including a column for field number, however staff felt that would only be needed for the implementation schedule.
- Staff Chee explained that the template for the management plan is also fillable. In the implementation schedule, there is a column for management unit and the cost per unit needs to manually be entered.
- Member Dunbar asked if the cost share rate covers all possible options for fencing. Staff Nanbara said the rate is based on the different options for fencing.
- Staff Britt recommended having a cell change color if a number higher than our allowable cost share rate is entered.
- Staff Sprecher said that a space for project name should be added to the implementation schedule. There should also be a line on the bottom that calculates the total cost from all. A separate sheet for the budget summary should also be made. The template should allow for a cover page and the insertion of pictures and maps.
- Staff Nanbara added that applicants will have the option of using this template or another depending on what works for them. Guest K. Friday commented that there are other category recommendations from the federal FSP requirements that could be included in the template.
- Member Koob said that we may need to define the requirements for working with wetlands in the handbook revision, and could assist with the language if needed.

8. Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively (TELE)

- Staff Nanbara provided an overview of her experience at the TELE training in New York. This workshop trained participants in reaching landowners and targeted marketing to improve engagement. Staff Nanbara is now a trainer for the program and will try put on a workshop in Hawai'i sometime this year. The workshop covered: setting your communication objective, choosing your audience (woodland retreat, working the land, supplemental income, and uninvolved landowners), determining what motivates your target audience, designing your message, and implementing, evaluating, and adapting your strategy. It is important to establish how you will track and measure your success throughout the process.
- Staff Nanbara added that in Hawai'i, our target group typically consists of woodland retreat and working the land landowners. We have seen that they tend to get information about assistance programs from neighbors, so it is important to engage and work with the community and community groups.

9. Forest Stewardship Landowner Information Reports

- These reports were developed to create an outreach tool that highlights certain projects that may have been experimental or had several different components. The landowners were interviewed and shared what they learned and challenges they may have faced. The idea is to share these reports with new landowners who may have similar projects.
- Member Conant felt that there was not enough distinction between his project and Laura Brezinsky's project throughout the report, and could send edits.
- Member Ching commented that the format and content of the Ola Honua report was well done and informative. He asked if there was a standard format for these reports. Staff Nanbara said that Ola Honua was done by an intern, while the other three were done by a consultant.
- Guest S. Kaye commented that the Umikoa report looks more like a formal state document, while Ola Honua looks better geared toward landowners.
- Guest K. Friday added that recognizing the Forest Service partnership can help transform it into a tool that can be used to communicate with the national legislature.
- Member Britt said that the year the conservation easement was completed for Ola Honua which should be corrected on the first page to be 2004, not 2002.
- Member Koob commented that wililwili is not federally threatened.

10. Chapter 195F, HRS, 2017 Legislative Proposal

- All bills have been submitted for consideration by legislature this session. Staff can prepare a short paragraph on each pertinent bill and share it with the FSAC and landowners.
- The FSP bill looks to clean up language in the statute, increase cost share, and allow for engagement with landowners who have native forest and want to do production.
- Member Ching asked if DOFAW is addressing how a person can be cited for trespassing in forest reserves. Staff Sprecher said we are not specifically addressing that, but are adding in the ability to assess criminal penalties.
- Regarding the parking bill, DOFAW is required to be able to assess fees for use of our areas.
- For FY18, DOFAW submitted a request to maintain our existing budget and to receive an increase. Approval was given to maintain existing budget, but it is unlikely we will get an increase. The program's priority for funding is for the development of management plans and we do have the resources for that. We have been cost effective in our cost share agreements over last few years.
- Bills will start being heard in February. Member Conant asked if people can testify remotely through a video call. Staff Sprecher said that they are looking to make hearings more accessible, but are not at the point yet.

11. Forest Legacy project updates

- Helemano Wilderness Area received funding for FY16 and will likely receive funding for FY17. DOFAW has been working to secure funding sources, and if everything comes through, we will be at \$17 million. Given that some of the sources have not been secured yet, DOFAW put in a request for additional funding support. This was not approved by the Governor, however Representative Oshiro is a strong supporter. A purchase option has been discussed with the landowner for us to acquire it by August. Phase I and the mineral determination are

under contract, and an appraisal has been done. Phase II will likely need to be done in the future. DOFAW has been in discussion with Trust for Public Land to see if they can bridge the funding gap for us.

- Ho‘omaui Ranch is expected to receive funding for FY17. DOFAW is working with the landowner on putting the conservation easement together and finalize the management plan. The preliminary appraisal was under what was requested, so the landowner is reevaluating what they believe the value of the property is.
- Haloa ‘Āina and Kamehamenui were submitted for FY18 and we won't know how they ranked until the President's budget is released.
- We submitted a matching grant to the Legacy Land Commission for Haloa ‘Āina. It got positive feedback from the commission, and ranked at number 4 on their priority list. The commission felt that the threat is not that high, so it is likely we will not get funding from Legacy Land from this year. They did encourage us to come back next year.
- DOFAW is looking at additional fundraising needs for Kamehamenui.

12. Forest Legacy Assessment of Needs (AON)

- In September 2014, a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) identified components of the AON that should be updated. Based on the discussion by the PIG, a scope of work was developed to hire a contractor. HT Harvey and Associates was contracted, and they are working on thinning out the content and incorporating some things that were identified by the PIG.
- The current threat section speaks more to natural resource threats to our forests, and less about conversion to non-forest uses. We want to enhance this section and better describe what is happening specifically in Hawai‘i. Staff Sprecher asked the FSAC to provide resources related to development threat and conversion if they knew of any.
- We are also looking at changing the eligibility criteria and areas of emphasis, and redefining compatible forest uses. Guest K. Friday added that we want to communicate to Washington what is compatible or incompatible with Hawai‘i's values. This may involve explaining what things mean here culturally.
- Member Constantinides felt that defining the eligible areas should not be too complicated. You should begin with masking out clearly ineligible areas such as government or barren land, and areas with easements or are managed by TNC or other similar organizations. From there, list of characteristics that are important influences such as zoning, threat, and quality should be identified to help establish the areas of emphasis. Those factors could also be ranked and analyzed based on their proximity to other managed areas. Member Koob said that Hawai‘i Conservation Alliance has probably already done this type of analysis through their Effective Conservation Program. Guest K. Friday added that the eligibility area could be broad but would need prioritization to be established.
- Member Wellsheim felt that a PIG should be established to further discuss these topics. Staff Sprecher explained that a group of 3 or more could be created to meet and discuss the AON. They would report to the FSAC at the next meeting.

**Motion to establish a Permitted Interaction Group to discuss the Assessment of Needs.
Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Dunbar.**

Continued discussion:

- Member Constantinides felt that a PIG is not necessary and that staff could manage. Staff Sprecher said it would be beneficial for have specific feedback on the compatible forest uses.

Approve: Wellsheim, Gagné, Koob, Conant, Ching, Britt, Warner, Oppenheimer, Dunbar; Oppose: none; Abstain: Constantinides.

- Member Britt and Conant volunteered to be in the PIG. Guest K. Friday also wanted to participate. Staff will ask Members Koch and Hendrickson if they want to participate as they were in the original PIG.
- The consultant is putting together a survey to send to other partner agencies that may have a stake in FLP, asking them to identify threatened areas and their priorities. Staff will send it to committee.

13. Hawai'i Forest Action Plan

- The Forest Action Plan has been updated and will be sent to the Forest Service for approval.

14. Announcements and Travel

- Staff Sprecher explained that we are working with Katie Kamelamela on an inventory analysis program. The analysis is for the importance of non-timber forest products in Hawai'i.
- Irene has accepted the Forestry Program Manager position at DOFAW and will be transitioning away from the Forest Stewardship Program. Staff Nanbara and Chee will be the point contacts for FSP in the future.
- The next FSAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 21 on O'ahu.
- Members Wellsheim, Kyono, Warner, and Hendrickson's terms ended in 2016. They will need to reapply if they wish to continue to serve on the committee.

15. Site Visit to Kaupakuea Orchards Forest Stewardship Project

16. Meeting adjourned at 2pm