

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting

Department of Agriculture
4398A Pua Loke Street, Lihue, Hawaii 96766
9:15 am, May 11, 2012

Present: Michael Constantinides, Betsy Gagne, Rich von Wellsheim, JB Friday, Koa Kaulukukui, Benton Pang, Nick Koch, Laura Brezinsky, Alvin Kyono, Katie Friday, Greg Hendrickson

Staff: Sheri Mann, Malia Nanbara, Pat Porter

1. Meeting Schedule Overview

Announcements: John Henshaw has left the state permanently. Rich von Wellsheim will become Chair since he is currently Chair-elect. The Committee also recommends that Mark White from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) represent TNC until John's term ends, which is January 2013. Mark White is a recommendation from Paul Conry and there was full consensus on this recommendation. There is currently nothing in the rules guiding how to handle replacing someone midterm.

Paul would like the committee to review other plans outside of Forest Stewardship management plans, such as the Green Energy plan we are reviewing today. This is a bit outside of this Committee's previous scope but Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is interested in seeking the Committee's insight.

2. Review and approval of January 21 and 22, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Corrections: Benton Pang was present at the meeting but included in the present members; Rich von Wellsheim is spelled with two LL's and the v is lower case; opposed spelled incorrectly; Christmas trees do not have a mildew issue, but rather are subject to fungal disease.

Discussion: Once an acquisition is complete, the pertinent documents are publicly available. The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) does not release conservation easements (CE) unless a Freedom of Information Act is requested. There are particular types of proprietary information; however, that DOFAW will not release. The committee needs to figure out how to handle having access to a developing CE prior to reviewing the FSP management plan, as one is integral to the other.

Motion to approve January 21 and 22nd meeting minutes as corrected. Moved by Kyono, seconded by Gagne.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, J. Friday, Kaulukukui, Pang, Kyono, K. Friday

Abstain: Brezinsky, Koch, Hendrickson, von Wellsheim

Motion Passes.

3. Project Proposals – Committee review and voting on Forest Stewardship (FSP) project proposals

Loui Project Proposal: Total property is 15 acres; the FSP request is for 10 acres. There is a significant portion of the property in java plum. The only nearby FSP project is Hui Ku Maoli Ola.

Discussion: There are some concerns about the ownership of the parcel; they do not own the entire tax map key (TMK). There is a possibility that it is a condominium parcel regime, which allows for property owners to share a TMK but have their own boundaries. This information is not required to invite them to create a management plan, but will be necessary before completing a contract. The committee is concerned that it is a lot of money required to invest into a management plan if they do not own their property. Please seek out more information about ownership status.

The committee would like to have more information regarding the landowner's interest in timber management, biodiversity, watershed, trails, and public benefit and values. How beneficial will this project be in connecting other projects and protecting the watershed? Will the trail system be available to the public and will there be outreach to the public? It is possible to highlight more wildlife aspects as related to corridors or refugia. We will also need them to address the aspect of how they are going to work on steep slopes without risking creation of a point source for erosion and soil run-off into the bay.

More information about costs for practices is needed. The proposal needs management plan bids, maps, and clarity regarding land and provide a more complete budget. A bid from Pono Pacific came in near \$16,000; however, it did not seem to focus on the elements a FSP management plan normally details. Staff needs to have a discussion with bidders so they more clearly understand what these plans are and are not.

Motion to defer until the applicant can provide more information in the project proposal. Moved by Brezinsky, no second. Motion fails to carry.

Motion to defer proposal, clarify what is required in proposal: map, agreement of all landowners, the three bids, and any other items that are missing from the application. Additionally, provide other comments as constructive criticism to improve the project proposal. Moved by K. Friday, seconded by Kyono.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, Kaulukukui, Pang, Kyono, Brezinsky, Koch, Hendrickson, von Wellsheim, K. Friday

Abstain: J. Friday

Motion Passes.

Additional Discussion: Regarding the Joint Forestry Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), we would still like the Forest Stewardship management plans to come to the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) for funding, but they also have the opportunity to go to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the cost share support. NRCS will not require FSP plans for their projects, but can recommend projects that might be bigger scope to consider FSP. Also, their time schedule is important too, as FSP is long term and NRCS is more short term. NRCS uses the FSP plan to guide their conservation plan.

Antolik Project Proposal: This property is located in the Kopua lots in Mt. View on the Big Island. It is near the Brezinsky and the Neirode FSP projects. It is similar to the Nierode project in that the vegetation and the understory are in pretty good shape. They plan to do restoration, remove invasive species, put in a fence, remove the pigs, plant natives, and improve wildlife habitat.

Discussion: Laura Brezinsky and Nick Koch recuse themselves since both were contacted to submit a bid for the development of a management plan. The management plan quotes were as follows: Forest Solutions offered \$2,499.98 and Laura Brezinsky offered \$3,400.

Committee would like information regarding what type of wildlife is in the area if one of the goals is wildlife improvement. The budget doesn't show intensive re-vegetation. Committee discussion took place regarding intensive re-vegetation practice – it does not mean quantity of practice but rather specialized practice. Committee believes that this area doesn't need intensive re-vegetation, even though the physiology is young and will need more work. Geology is pāhoehoe, rainfall is 2-200 inches a year, but the ground does hold water, so fire break and fuel breaks aren't required. A pseudo fuel break is already there on one side from an uluhe access effort. Committee questions why the budget shows a 75% FSP cost share?

Motion to accept proposal and invite them to prepare a Forest Stewardship management plan and have staff send constructive comments. Moved by Constantinides, seconded by Pang.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, Kaulukukui, Pang, Kyono, Hendrickson, von Wellsheim, K. Friday

Abstain: Brezinsky, Koch, J. Friday

Motion Passes.

Additional Discussion: The Board of Land and Natural Resources members who have recused from voting generally leave the room during discussion, but that is not what this committee has done previously. Usually we let consultants describe and introduce the project, answer any questions we may have, and then have them leave to discuss the project. But with Sunshine law, all discussion is public knowledge so we are not sure if they should leave room or not.

Haloa Aina Project Proposal: The goal of this project is restoration of native trees with a strong focus on sandalwood harvest. They have been actively harvesting dead material for two years and replanting. There has been some controversy because of the sandalwood harvesting. Greg Hendrickson recused because he has been involved in litigation with these landowners.

Discussion: There are serious ungulate issues, so a fence is necessary. J.B. Friday and Mike Robinson did a site visit in March and found that there was a fair over story of koa in mid dryland forest but fairly poor sandalwood and mamane in the upper elevations. However, the sandalwood is coppicing significantly. Landowners claim to be leaving live trees and only taking dead material. There are many blue tree tubes (exact amount is unknown), which offer temporary protection from ungulate browsing of new coppice growth. Other threats are rats and fire; there was a fire that burned the mauka corner last year and reduced the soil to bare rock. The property currently has fire breaks and there are plans for the North boundary to be fenced between the

Kamehameha Schools property. The seeds are not regenerating due to rat and bird predation. Tree rings are showing the trees to be 50-60 years old, so management planning would need to consider that long to allow for sustainable harvest. Timber harvest plans require a 30 year management plan but it may be possible to extend it to match the life cycle of the trees.

If the trees are natural coppicing and the program provides financial support for the purchase and installation of blue tubes, does that mean the project would be required to payback funding when those trees are harvested? If the land is sold, the FSP contract runs with the land. The management plan will have to include their harvesting techniques and goals, and those goals will need to be obtained or the plan altered.

Motion to invite them to write a full Forest Stewardship management plan. Moved by K. Friday, no second. Motion fails to carry.

Further Discussion: Committee has some issues with taking dead biomass, since the down trees will go back into the soil. Also, there were questions about why they are planting eucalyptus, which is fast growing but will not shade out the grass or in line with their goals of planting a native forest. Koa is native and nitrogen fixing like the eucalyptus and would be a better option. Is the ohia forest healthy? If so, then there shouldn't be any sandalwood out planting, especially if it is known that coppicing is working better than out planting already.

There is no pending litigation so it will not affect our management plan and the landowner being able to financially support this project. The Kamehameha School's fence is for Palila habitat.

Motion to defer the Haloa Aina project proposal until the applicant provides three quotes for the development of a Forest Stewardship management plan for their project. Moved by Kaulukukui, seconded by Pang.

Further Discussion: Randy Senock is their consultant and forester, so he will develop the Forest Stewardship management plan. The management plan cost is the most important information in a FSP project proposal and without any quotes the Committee does not feel comfortable approving the proposal. Committee also feels it's important that we encourage the landowner, rather than discourage them by rejecting this proposal just because they do not have quotes. Recommend that if you leave it to staff to set quote price, we would still like to have three quotes.

In Favor: Kaulukukui, Pang

Opposed: K. Friday, Constantinides, Gagne, von Wellsheim, Koch, Brezinsky, Kyono.

Abstain: J. Friday, Hendrickson.

Motion fails.

Motion to approve the Haloa Aina project proposal subject to the applicant submitting three quotes to DOFAW to determine the allowed cost-share for the development of the Forest Stewardship management plan. Motion by K. Friday, seconded by Brezinsky.

Further Discussion: It does not appear that they are looking for funding for the management plan. Regarding the eucalyptus and direct seeding, the committee recommends contacting Ronda

Low at the University of Hawaii, who is involved in dryland forest direct seeding at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Committee would also need to see harvesting plans and clarity on internal fencing units, cross fencing, and animal eradication.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, von Wellsheim, Koch, Brezinsky, Kyono, K. Friday

Opposed: Kaulukukui, Pang

Abstain: J. Friday, Hendrickson

Motion Passes.

- 4. Management Plans** – Committee review of Forest Stewardship (FSP) management plan or other forest management plans.

Kalepa Short Rotation Intensive Culture Biomass Plantations Plan: guest Gille Lebbe participated in meeting discussion. This project is a closed loop operation, with an average rotation of four to five years harvesting 1/5th at all times. There have been bats observed in the area. Gille does not feel that the bats will roost in Albizia but it will roost in Eucalyptus. Therefore they will avoid harvest during pupping season which is July –September. They will fell trees for ten months and stock pile the wood and use that during the pupping season. They are only leasing 1,000 acres of the 6,000 acre property.

Discussion: Committee questions why they are not killing the albizia stumps. Digging out the stump is expensive, so that will not be included. The private landowners will commit to poisoning the stumps and/or removing the coppicing for the long term.

Eucalyptus grandis x *E. europlylia*, *E. grandis* x *E. palida*, *Leucana lucocephela* KX4, pure *E. grandis* and *E. saligna* are high on the Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) so those ones cannot be used. They will start with small demonstration plots to demonstrate how well the above will do. Precautions will be taken to mitigate these out plantings. They are looking to possibly import eucalyptus seed stock from outside of the country. They are working with Hawaii Agriculture Resource Center (HARC) on the importation, however working with Nick Dudley as a private consultant. They have a Power Purchase Agreement and all of the other necessary documents and approvals. They have also been given a bond with the State in the event they leave.

They have not submitted the hybrid Eucalyptus to the WRA but believe that if submitted they will be run through the system quickly. You have to go to Hawaii-Pacific WRA (HPWRA) to get new species through the system. DOFAW will ask to have these species run through the system to expedite the process. K. Friday suggests consulting with Larry Swan with the Region 5 Forest Service on biomass and processing technical advice due to his extensive experience. He can be contacted at lswan@fs.fed.us. J. Friday says that *E. grandis* is rated high on the WRA as a false positive due to its behavior in South Africa and that here in Hawaii it does not act invasive.

The committee recommends Round Up because it is best on Albizia. Also, burning will bring huge red flags in the community. They already have secured enough of the lands to fuel this project, with an extra 2.5% more. 25% will come from Cowren's land, and green waste from the community will provide a lot too. There will most likely not be an interest in using ohia due to

such a lack of ohia being on private lands. The exit strategy on the land if you don't go past 20 years is to have it return to agriculture. That's part of the bond.

Currently they are short on time and looking at a schedule of three months till seedlings are big enough, six months to see if it works or not, and having four test plots with different soil, climate etc. They plan to do continuous planting over five years, and can always re-adjust since the real risk is only 100 acres. They could start with species that are already approved on WRA. Committee would like more information about what will be done on the land, where are you going to do things, what type of practices, silvopasture? Legumes as ground cover? And what the cost for these would be. The landowner believes it is outside the scope of the management plan to say exactly what to do with each parcel.

Biggest concern is species selection and DOFAW will have to ensure that they are doing what they say they are doing. There may be an issue with shipping biomass through Lihue but they might be working under agreement to ship on back road working with Grove Farm. Committee would like to know if there is enough money in the bond to deal with their exit strategy and ensure it is enough. They would also like to guide their species choice to those that are low on WRA or have been here long enough to know it was ok. There is also an interest in having a higher bar on letting things be imported into the state. Do we care what grass they sow?

Ohulehule Forest Conservancy project proposal and Ohulehule draft management plan:

Landowner wants to have areas for Hawaiian community to be involved, remove pigs, and plant native species. They did not know about FSP when they started drafting their plan. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFW) is interested in the endangered species aspect of their project and told them about their programs. NRCS also went to the site and thinks there are strong possibilities to work with various programs, including Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

Discussion: There are enough native species that it is almost possible to be included in the Natural Area Partnership Program (NAPP), but that would remove it from being eligible for FSP. NAPPs project get 2x1 funding, whereas FSP is 1x1 funding. The committee liked that they defined what wildlife were in question in their plan. There are concerns about ensuring the pigs do not eat the rat bait.

Fixing the road and road restoration is usually not part of FSP's ability. However, roads we can support must be related to access for management or fire mitigation purposes, and they can never be improved roads. There are concerns about possible landslides and the unexploded ordnance. If this is really a concern, should the public be invited? If there will be areas where the public is not invited to go, proper signage should be installed. FSP and the Kaulunani can help with public access & educational signage. The committee would like to learn more about the cacao and koa planting, and see it more prominently included in the plan.

FSP cannot reimburse for the cost of a plan that is nearly done and in some other format. However, we can help pay for costs incurred from approval of the proposal to getting the plan fully approved heretoforth. This will be a MUCH less value but it is something.

Motion to approve Ohulehule Forest Conservancy project proposal and ask that they submit an estimate to complete a Forest Stewardship management plan within the parameters of the program. The program cannot provide cost-share support for work done to date. Authority is delegated to DOFAW to decide on the allowed cost-share amount.

Moved by Constantinides, seconded by K. Friday.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, von Wellsheim, Kaulukukui, Pang, Koch, Brezinsky, Kyono, K. Friday, Hendrickson

Abstain: J. Friday

Motion Passes.

5. Project Updates

Ho‘oulu ‘Āina: Thirty acres of invasive species removal converting to native. Their original goal was to remove all invasive species and they were unable to do so, so they rewrote their goals.

Discussion: Staff has encouraged them to incorporate the agroforestry component in their plan as well. They had not accounted for how expensive it is to remove the big invasive species so there has been some reworking of the budget. Committee advises that it would be cheaper to herbicide the tree, around \$100/acre. Committee also believes that they need to expand their acreage and time horizon and map out at a large and small scale, which trees can be girdled and which ones will need arborists. They would recommend not extending their plan, but extending their management plan for a longer time period. We would also like to see cost estimates since we have not updated our hold down rate.

Committee thinks that in three months they could include more detail. They recommend consulting with James Leary and Flint Hughes, to provide better details for special area. We would like them to spatially assess their project practices. It appears that they are budgeting for more trail than they need. We would need a map showing which ones they need cash for and which ones they are using their own materials for water bar etc. This project is a positive example of FSP because there is good community involvement. There are twenty four groups involved and usually involves those that are historically underserved. They also have national health improvement grants so they are integrating things well. Committee suggests they discuss with the Micronesians in community to deal with hibiscus tiliaceus or hau planted in fallow areas.

Motion to defer until the applicant has the with appropriate update information for the special areas, trails, and cost shares rates. Moved by Kyono, seconded by Brezinsky.

Further Discussion: The budgets for first four years are paid. Pig control is done with hunting and dogs because there is no fence. They will need to address koa wilt at that elevation. Mechanical tree removal may be more dangerous than herbicide. Plan needs review for spacing and grammatical issues.

In Favor: Constantinides, Gagne, von Wellsheim, Kaulukukui, Pang, Koch, Brezinsky, Kyono, K. Friday, Hendrickson

Abstain: J. Friday

Motion Passes.

6. Hawaiian Grown Certification Grant

Last year DOFAW did not get funded and staff wanted feedback and thoughts on proposal. We may try to create a wood tech lab to test the wood here, which would reduce the cost of getting the future ones certified.

Discussion: Albizia and other invasive species usually are not the best for lumber, but possibly the *Eucalyptus salignas* and *grandis* might be. In Honaunau there is ash that is ready to be harvested, but isn't usable in buildings so it is just sitting there. This isn't necessarily for the here and now, this is for the future. But there are concerns of how to do this without creating a market for invasive species. There would be an incentive for taking it out, but there is not necessarily a need to replant the area in the same invasive species.

There may be an issue with having ohia certified because it is such a valuable tree here. But ohia wouldn't be used in the wall, but rather for decorative structural components such as a pillar. There is the requirement for the wood to be recertified, so the invasive renewal could have a higher rate to help not create a market for invasive species. There could be more investigation in the cost of creating the lab and market.

Staff wanted a committee to review which trees to certify because there are different species planted on different islands. Committee would definitely want to include the Hamakua eucalyptus and Tropical ash. They do not have much fear of creating a market for invasive species.

We could do a smaller request now to have them fund the planning portion of this then go back for a bigger request the following year. It might be a good idea to take the lab out, unless you think it's going to take root and there is a compelling reason to make the lab. All the technology is at University of Hawaii already, it is just the calibration and certification that is required.

7. Forestry Incentive Poster and Excel Sheet

Committee can review the excel sheet and provide feedback to staff regarding forest landowner assistance incentive programs in Hawaii.

8. Election of Officers

Alvin Kyono volunteers as Chair-elect.

Motion to approve Alvin Kyono as Chair-elect for the Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee. Moved by Gagne, seconded by K. Friday.

In Favor: Unanimous

Motion passes.

9. Travel Compensation

Committee is given statement of completed travel and envelopes to send boarding passes and receipts to staff upon completion of travel.

Propose next FSP meeting for early September on Oahu.

Formal Meeting Adjourned: 2:15pm

Site visit to Kalepa Green Energy Project: 2:30-4:00