

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting

Division of Forestry & Wildlife

KEY Project

47-200 Waihee Road

Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

February 12, 2015

Present: Nicholas Koch (Chair-elect), Betsy Gagné (Ex-officio), Alvin Kyono, Michael Constantinides, Rich von Wellsheim, Greg Hendrickson, Kip Dunbar

Staff: Irene Sprecher, Marissa Chee

Guests: Katie Friday, Lisa Ferentinos, Susan Kaye Lundburg, Kalani Matsumura, Kamaile Rafaelovich, Malama Markowitz, Faith Inman-Narahari

1. Meeting Site Visit:

Committee members and interested guests met at Hui Ku Maoli Ola and conducted a site visit from 9:00 am – 10:30 am.

2. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 11:10 am by Chair-elect Koch.

3. Meeting Minutes – September 12, 2014:

The FSAC reviewed the meeting minutes from the September 12, 2014 meeting and made the following corrections:

- Page 2, Chair Elect Koch said that “Forest Stewardship projects” should be changed to “Forest Legacy projects”.
- Page 11, Member Constantinides stated that “EQUIP” should be replaced with “EQIP”.

Motion to approve the September 12, 2014 FSAC meeting minutes as corrected. Moved by Member von Wellsheim, seconded by Member Gagné.

**Approve: Koch, Gagné, Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

4. Koa Action Plan:

Motion to move agenda item 8 up to item 4. Moved by Member Dunbar, seconded by Member von Wellsheim.

**Approve: Koch, Gagné, Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

- Guest Inman-Narahari said that she was contracted by DOFAW to prepare the Koa Action Plan (KAP), which is a supplement to the Hawaii Forest Action Plan. The committee’s role is to review and provide comments on the plan.
- Guest Inman-Narahari summarized the process of developing the plan. They established the vision, conducted surveys, and identified three major themes. Each section has a goal, problem statement, background, and project ideas.

- Guest K. Friday recommended changing “project ideas” to “recommended projects” to make it a stronger statement when different interest groups use this document.
- Staff Sprecher said that the review process is still on going, and that the goal is to complete the plan by the end of June. Guest Inman-Narahari asked the committee to submit their comments by the end of March.
- Member von Wellsheim felt that the plan should address maintaining the purity of genetics in certain situations. Guest K. Friday clarified that the purpose of the document is not to be an operational plan, but to identify issues, strategies, and priority areas. The issue brought up by Member von Wellsheim is addressed in section 1.6.
- Member Hendrickson felt that centralized data collection should be prioritized. Guest Inman-Narahari said they recognized the need for some type of database to track seed collection and outplanting. Member Hendrickson also thought it would be good to have a discussion about landscape scale approaches or alternatives for prioritizing certain types of ecosystem services in certain areas. There could be a something in the plan for people who want to do conservation easements or dedicated conservation, saying this is part of our strategy related to koa and its ability to function across a variety of ecosystem services.
- Guest K. Friday said she liked the map analysis that was done, and felt it would be good to eyeball good existing priority stewardship areas with the maps from the plan.
- Member Dunbar said that the focus should be more on planting and seeing what grows well where, rather than just focusing on the science. The maps should not preclude someone from planting. Staff Sprecher said there is room in the plan for both sides of the genetic discussion, in that maintaining the genetic purity may be important to some, and not to others.
- Member Constantinides suggested revising the format. Much of the document cites literature, making it more of a literature review. Since it is supposed to be an action plan, he felt it could be shortened by placing the literature review in a separate supporting document. The plan should state priorities and initiatives, rather than just project ideas. Member Gagné added that the resources should include people and places that are doing real research and work on koa, in addition to literature resources. Member Koch felt that more could be said about community and culture. The committee agreed that the bullet points are very helpful.
- Guest K. Friday felt that to keep the document doable, stopping it at strategies is sufficient since it is not meant to be an operational plan.
- Guest Ferentinos said the maps would be useful for the watershed partnerships to help them guide landowners on where to plant koa. Member Kyono added that some of the maps need to be updated. Member Constantinides said that a tree inventory project was done around 2000, and that it could be used in the map analysis.
- Member Hendrickson suggested that if it becomes a document that is regularly updated, there should be some type of forum to look at it and revise it in a systematic way.
- The FSAC agreed that they want to see the KAP in its final form.

5. Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) Project Proposals:

5.1 Duren Forest Conservation and Restoration Project Proposal, North Kona, Hawaii County

- Staff Sprecher introduced the project as a management plan for a 22.5 acre property in Kona. The property contains an intact forest canopy and some cave openings, but is impacted by feral

ungulates. They are looking to first manage the threats, then focus on restoration activities such as outplanting.

Discussion:

- Staff Sprecher summarized comments submitted by Member Brezinsky and Member J. Friday, who were not able to attend. Member Brezinsky felt that the proposal was well written. Member J. Friday also felt that the proposal was well thought out, but questioned why the planting rate is so high if the forest is well preserved, as well as the fencing of the five smaller units instead of just the perimeter of the project area. He did not see the need for groundcovers since erosion is probably not a big issue, and felt that irrigation would not be cost-effective. He also felt that the public benefits the project will provide should be better described, as well as the community groups they have and will work with.
- In response to Member J. Friday's comment regarding fencing, Member Constantinides, referred to the map stating that he does not think they will be fencing each of the 5 units since the map indicates that only the perimeter of the project area will be fenced. He felt that the proposed tree planting rate could be high, but not necessarily overkill, and suggested a preliminary inventory of existing species be done to determine density and distribution.
- Chair-elect Koch added that he has seen the property from the road, and it looks like it has an intact ohia canopy with some banana polka and an uluhe understory. Member Kyono said that if there is not much understory, it would be good to plant a variety of species.
- Member Gagné said the property is in a key place to get neighbors interested in forest restoration. Staff Sprecher commented that it seems like the applicants have already begun engaging with their neighbors. Guest K. Friday said that if the landowners take an active role in engaging other landowners that would be a public benefit in itself.
- Staff Sprecher clarified that the applicant is looking to remove feral pigs.
- Member Dunbar was concerned that the project may not be cost effective.

Motion to approve the project proposal for the development of a Forest Stewardship management plan with 50% cost share support for the total cost of the management plan not to exceed \$3,000. Moved by Member von Wellsheim, seconded by Member Gagné.

Continued discussion:

- The committee clarified that the 50% cost share support should be \$1,500.

Motion to amend the previous motion was accepted by Member von Wellsheim, seconded by member Gagné. Motion to approve the project proposal for the development of a Forest Stewardship management plan with 50% cost share support for the total cost of the management plan not to exceed \$1,500.

**Approve: Koch, Gagné, Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

Continued discussion

- Member Hendrickson thought it was interesting that the cave area is considered a riparian area. Staff Sprecher said that through the Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

(CREP), there are allowances that lava tubes can be considered a riparian area since they connect underground and eventually lead to the ocean.

- Guest K. Friday was interested in hearing advice of the planner regarding the treatment of the banana poka. Without biocontrol, it is clearly invasive, so she wondered if it would be that much of a concern if biocontrol was used. Member Kyono pointed out that the biocontrol is particular about the environment and works better in areas with more moisture.

5.2 Waiawa-Waimano Forest Protection Project, Central, Honolulu County

- Staff introduced the project as a management plan from Honolulu County. She clarified that the entire management area is 1,480 acres, which includes both private and public land. The private land portion being proposed for management under the Forest Stewardship Program is 1,050 acres.

Discussion:

- Guest Ferentinos clarified the landownership situation. Kamehameha Schools (KS), who owns the private portion, is a partner with Koolau Mountain Watershed Partnership (KWMP). KS is licensed to the partnership for management on that land, so the work would be under KWMP. KWMP has prioritized this project since it has been identified as a key recharge area. Staff Sprecher added that although the Watershed Partnerships (WP) have larger landscape scale plans, Ohulehule built a separate management plan specific to the property, that tied into greater WP plans. This project could potentially be a good example of a relationship like that.

- Member Dunbar felt that although the funding for fencing will come from other sources, the cost/foot is high. Guest Ferentinos said that it is based on linear foot, and that it may be a little high since the cost has come down. Guest Ferentinos clarified that they are hoping to get capital improvement funds from the legislature to fund the fence.

- Staff Sprecher reminded the committee that cost share for fencing is not being requested. She added that in the future, the committee should discuss the use of the estimated cost table in project proposals, to determine if it is an effective tool in the proposal phase since it does cause confusion sometimes.

- Guest K. Friday asked if this plan tied into a larger WP plan. Guest Ferentinos said that it is. The KWMP plan is being revised, so this Waiawa plan will act like a keystone for planning for the central Oahu area. Guest K. Friday said that the national FSP is moving to a landscape approach with landowner's stewardship plans helping implement larger landscape plans. She suggested using this management plan to show how Hawaii is leading the way with this approach.

- Member Hendrickson asked how close this property is to the Helemano Forest Legacy project. Guest Ferentinos explained that Waiawa is south from Helemano, behind Pearl Harbor.

- Chair-elect Koch brought up a general program concern in approving large projects due to limited funding. Guest Ferentinos said that they are looking for committed funds only for weed control and animal control.

- Guest Ferentinos said that they would be interested in including a component of weed surveys across the property as part of the development of the management plan. Staff Sprecher said this would increase the cost to the maximum threshold of the cost-share rate.

- Member Constantinides asked why they decided to include the state land in their management area, and what type of land it is. Guest Ferentinos said that it is forest reserve, and they included because it made sense topographically.

Motion to approve the project proposal for the development of a Forest Stewardship management plan with 50% cost share support for the total cost of the management plan not to exceed \$5,000. Moved by Member von Wellsheim, seconded by Member Dunbar.

Approve: Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim; Oppose: none; Abstain: Koch, Gagné.

Motion passed.

6. Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) Management Plans:

6.1 Lundburg Forest Stewardship management plan revision, Hawaii County

- Staff Sprecher introduced the project as management plan that was approved in 2013, and is participating in FSP and CREP. FSP covers the cost of fencing and maintenance, while CREP provides cost share for site preparation and establishment. Guest Lundburg intended to include woody residue treatment and mulching under CREP, however, those practices were not eligible for cost share. Guest Lundburg seeks to include those practices under FSP instead.

Discussion:

- Guest Lundburg said that woody residue treatment and mulching are important since she wants to treat strawberry guava and use the mulch from it on the trees they are planting. In regards to the stream crossing, she said that a flood eroded both stream crossings included in the plan. They completed the first stream crossing by putting in a larger culvert and cement ford, but under budgeted. She is asking for an increase in funding to put a larger culvert in for the second stream crossing.
- Member Dunbar felt that the stream crossing may be taken out again with heavy rain, and asked if they could cement the bottom of the stream bed. Guest Lundburg said they have learned that a larger culvert with gravel across does not work, and that they will have to use concrete. Chair-elect Koch felt that a concrete ford might work better.
- Member Von Wellsheim stated that Guest Lundburg is asking for an increase of \$11,500 from the original budget that was approved.
- Staff Sprecher added that Guest Lundburg has the opportunity to look at cost-share assistance through other USDA programs, such as staged enrollment under the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). She clarified that the contract modification would have to go to the Board of Land and Natural Resources since there is a significant change in the approved budget.

Motion to approve the requested amendment. Moved by Member Kyono, seconded by Member Hendrickson.

Approve: Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim, Koch, Gagné; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

6.2 Black Rhinoceros Forest Stewardship Management Plan, Kau, Hawaii County

- Staff Sprecher introduced the management plan for 190 acres in Kau. They are interested in doing forest management over the entire project area. Staff conducted a site visit earlier that

week, and said the property was very much as described in the plan. There were little to no native species, mostly Christmas berry, and a little lantana. The archeological plan included in the meeting packet was done for a past subdivision project that is no longer on the table.

Discussion:

- Staff Sprecher summarized comments submitted by Member Brezinsky and Member J. Friday. Member Brezinsky felt that the plan was not clearly proposed as a forest production project. She was concerned about the impact on native species when harvesting begins. Member Brezinsky wanted more information on pruning and felt that the amount of planting is high.
- Member J. Friday said that there will be little ground water recharge, but the trees will reduce runoff. He suggested doing a soil test before doing any nutrient amendments. He felt that water absorbing polymers are not effective, in that they are good at absorbing water but not releasing it. It might be better to give supplemental water as needed. For the planting design, he suggested planting in double rows. He said they should also consider protecting the property since they are planting trees of value. He also suggested using *Gliricidia* as an additional host. There is an issue with the economic analysis since he could not re-create the graphs. Member J. Friday would be happy to work with them on it.
- Chair-elect Koch said that cocobolo is now CITES appendix 2, meaning it may be difficult to operate with depending on the restrictions. The use of an auger may cause glazing or soil compaction, however, it may not be an issue at this site since it is drier. He mentioned that ripping and disking may be cheaper, and that weed mats may not be financially viable. Under herbaceous weed control, there are viable options to use contact herbicides that wouldn't affect the roots. There is a discrepancy in the site preparation cost listed in the implementation schedule and the economic analysis. It also seems like the site prep cost should be higher.
- Staff Sprecher clarified that an environmental assessment will be required since the project is going to do forest production.
- The FSAC agreed that the rotation age of sandalwood seems optimistic in the economic analysis, in that it is likely to be much longer than 20 years.
- Member von Wellsheim felt that the site preparation costs should be higher based on the size of the Christmas berry thicket. Chair-elect Koch added that pruning cost should also be higher, but the seedling costs seemed high. Staff Sprecher clarified that the cost includes acquiring and planting. She said that their plan is to purchase some seeds as needed and to propagate on site.
- Staff Sprecher said that they are interested in some of the other USDA programs. Member Constantinides felt that the project would be a good potential fit for EQIP, but did feel the plan needs some work. He said that the consultant name should not be in the plan, and that some the species do not appear to be well suited to the site.
- Staff Sprecher clarified that there are no dwellings on the site and that Terra Aqua will be implementing the plan.
- Member Constantinides said the planting plan should address the wind by planting windbreak species on the windward side.
- Chair-elect Koch wanted more detail and justification for the monitoring cost which he felt was high.

- Member Constantinides suggested that they only do planting during the winter months since the site is hot and dry during the summer. Staff Sprecher said that they wanted to be flexible since the weather fluctuates and they may have plants that need to be planted during other months.

Motion for the management plan to be deferred, sent back to the applicant with comments, and resubmitted to the FSAC. Moved by Member Kyono, seconded by Member Gagné.

**Approve: Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim, Koch, Gagné;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

7. Forest Stewardship Project Update:

- The FSAC was given an informational sheet on what the FSP is currently doing, overall numbers, what has been accomplished, and information from surveys. Staff Sprecher highlighted some of the items on the sheet. Under the program, 56 landowners have participated with a combined acreage of 23,000. Two million dollars has been expended through cost share assistance, which comes out to an average of \$180 per acre. The program has only involved 2% of private land in Hawaii. 80% of projects fall within high priority lands as identified in the Hawaii Forest Action Plan. One project, Ola Honua, has moved to implementation phase. There are 8 active agreements, and 8 management plans in the development phase. Funds were set aside for the Ohulehule project, however, the landowner does not necessarily want to enter into an agreement at this time.

- Member Hendrickson said the committee should remember that approving management plans is a process. The plan and budget should be thought about in two parts.

8. Chapter 195F, HRS, 2015 Legislative Proposal:

- Staff Sprecher updated the committee on the legislative proposal to amend the statute for the FSP. During the hearing, the senators were concerned that by taking out the language that the program can only work with landowners who are interested in doing production on lands that have been cleared of native vegetation prior to 1991, there would be a potential to do commercial forestry on old growth forests. The bill was heard and passed out of the first House committee, and passed but amended by the first senate committee. The bills need to go through a second committee, and then will have to cross over.

9. Forest Stewardship Committee Members:

Motion to accept all four applicants to the Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee (Patrick Conant, James Boyd Friday, Benton Pang, Nicholas Koch.) Moved by Member Kyono, seconded by Member Dunbar.

Discussion:

- Staff Sprecher pointed out that Chair Pang, who represents the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), has not been able to attend any meetings this year. FWS has expressed interest in continuing to participate in the committee. It is possible to send a non-voting representative if a member cannot attend, but it still affects quorum. Member Kaulukukui has also missed a few meetings in a row due to family needs.

**Approve: Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim, Koch, Gagné;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

Continued discussion:

- The FSAC reviewed the FSAC guidelines. If a member does not attend at least 2 meetings during one calendar year, they will not be able to vote until their attendance goes up. They did not feel this guideline needed to be modified, but rather adhered to more. The committee agreed that while although it is beneficial to have people there who represent different areas of expertise, their attendance is important for quorum purposes as well.
- Chair elect Koch has served as the Chair for the last year, and will continue to serve as Chair.

Motion to nominate Rich von Wellsheim as the new Chair-elect for the FSAC. Moved by Member Hendrickson, seconded by Member Kyono.

**Approve: Kyono, Constantinides, Hendrickson, Dunbar, von Wellsheim, Koch, Gagné;
Oppose: none; Abstain: none.**

Motion passed.

10. Forest Legacy Project Updates:

- There is one project open at Kukaiau. Negotiations are ongoing so the project will hopefully close within the next year. The Kaawaloa conservation easement finally closed in January, and they are trying to plan a celebration for those who were involved. Helemano and Ho‘omau Ranch were submitted for funding for fiscal year (FY) 15 and 16. Funding for FY 15 is not anticipated since the projects ranked low. For FY 16, Helemano is listed at 14, so at least \$3 million in funding is expected. There was disagreement over Ho‘omau Ranch in terms of importance. Staff Sprecher explained that island projects usually rank out that way since it is difficult to be strong in all categories. The review committee also said that landowners who are already implementing actions score higher than those who are just envisioning to.

11. Hawaii CREP Annual Report:

- The CREP Annual Report was submitted to the Farm Service Agency this past November. There was not a lot of activity this fiscal year, however there are 750 acres enrolled in the program. Staff Sprecher introduced Kalani Matsumura, the new CREP Planner for Honolulu, Maui, and Kauai County.

12. Announcements and Travel

- DLNR just released a draft environmental assessment for the Waiakea Timber Management Area and the committee is welcomed to comment on it.
- The State has hired a contractor to harvest standing dead biomass from the Kokee and sell it to the new bioenergy plant on Kauai. Harvesting should be starting within the next several weeks.
- Staff Sprecher handed out FSP informational sheets on projects that have finished their 10 year management period.
- Next meeting: Late May or early June

13. Meeting adjournment at 3:45 pm