

Forest Stewardship Program Advisory Committee Meeting

University of Hawaii Hilo College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
Cooperative Extension Service, 875 Komohana Street, Hilo, Hawaii
May 6, 2011

9:10am

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Present: JB Friday (Chair), John Henshaw (Chair-elect), Betsy Gagne, Tony Ingersoll, Greg Hendrickson, Katie Friday, Laura Brezinsky, DayDay Hopkins, Rich von Welsheim, Alvin Kyono, and Benton Pang. **Members absent:** Kip Dunbar. **Staff:** Sheri Mann and Irene Sprecher. **Visiting:** Jessica Newpher (NRCS).

Changes to the Agenda: The Committee will be reviewing an additional Forest Stewardship proposal for the Ostrowski project, and the Committee will be visiting the Kubota CREP project for today's site visit.

New member introductions

New Chair-elect: **self nomination Rich von Welsheim, seconded by Henshaw. Passes unanimously.**

Review February 11, 2011 Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve with minor edits as collected. Moved by Henshaw, seconded by von Welsheim. Passed unanimously. Abstained - Hendrickson and Pang.

Joint Forestry MOU

The Joint Forestry MOU will be signed at a press conference event on May 19, 2011. The Governor and representatives from each agency involved with the MOU will participate in the event. Once signed, the partners will work on projects identified under the MOU and most will be done under separate cooperative agreements. The MOU includes language for a jointly funded position/s that will work on initiatives under the MOU. Also, we would like to make sure that the FSP management template is a consistent template for future FSP, HACD, NRCS and USFS management plans.

Cost-share update subcommittee

Committee members were identified for subcommittee to review the current FSP cost-share rates. JB Friday, Tony Ingersoll, Benton Pang, and Kip Dunbar will participate in the subcommittee.

Available Federal & State Funding

State funding: The state has funding to continue existing FSP projects, assist with the development of future FSP management plans, and may be able to enter into new cost-share agreements with future projects pending budget considerations. *Federal funding:* The federal funding that is provided for the FSP is stable and goes to support positions and committee business. *Forest Service State and Private Competitive funding:* The Forest Service has competitive funding available for projects that are inline with the State Wide Assessment and Resource Strategy (SWARS). Projects can benefit both state and private interests. The State

may submit 4 projects per year with a max request of \$300,000 up to a 3 year period. The state reviews project proposals for competitive grants in early August, and at which time up to 4 will be invited to develop a full project proposal that is due in late October. Potential projects for the competitive funding: 1) Hawaiian-grown timber certifications for structural use; 2) thinning of scarified koa projects; 3) wildland urban interface vector study; and 4) tropical urban forestry research center. Other possibilities could involve the Coral Reef Task Force's selected watershed – the task force is focusing on terrestrial projects to improve a Maui watershed.

Forest Stewardship Program:

Project Proposals

Dalton FSP project is approximately 100 acres located on the lower elevations of the Kukaiau Ranch (approx 2,500 ft). The property is dominated by beautiful mature ohia trees, some koa pockets, and a few open pasture areas. There are some native understory plants, but gulch areas are being invaded by strawberry guava. Staff made a site visit to the property and feels that the landowners need direction and advise on how to set their goals for this site and manage the property. Currently, they have planted a variety of native and non-native plants on the site, seemingly in a random manner. There is potential to scarify the site to encourage koa regeneration. The Committee recommends using a consultant for development of the management plan. Staff should discuss the applicant's vision and goals for their property before they get into their management plan development.

Motion to accept the Dalton project proposal and invite the applicant to development a Forest Stewardship Program management plan. Moved by von Welsheim, seconded by Gagne.

- Staff should see if a list of qualified forestry or resource consultants can be included on the State Procurement Office website.
- Also, it would be nice to have a website with a list of available nurseries and other service providers to offer interested parties.
- The Hawaii Forestry Industry Association has a list of consultants on their website but they are mostly members of the association. Staff should inquire to see if the list can be expanded.
- There are not many certified foresters in Hawaii; we would like to work with NRCS to get more consultants registered as technical service providers (TSP) for forestry.

Passed unanimously.

Lau FSP project is approximately 50 acres located north of Akaka Falls. Plants used in the project should be suitable for the area and the seed sources should be from the Big Island whenever possible. The Committee expressed concern that not enough information was provided in the project proposal to determine what the intent of the project is.

Motion to rejection project proposal and ask them to resubmit based on new template. Moved by von Welsheim, no second.

- There is an issue with rejecting a proposal based on new standards that the applicant was not made aware of. The project proposal currently meets the basic requirements FSP project proposals.
- An approved project proposal would commit us to funding a FSP management plan, but the applicant would only be eligible for payment if the management plan is approved.

- The development of a FSP management plan is good for guidance and long-term planning, even if the project is not supported with a cost-share agreement.
- The development of a management plan will help the project access various funding sources.

Motion Withdrawn.

Motion to approve the Lau project proposal and invite the applicant to development a management plan, and offer cost-share on the management plan development based on the existing guidance for cost-share rates under the Forest Stewardship Program. Moved by K. Friday, seconded by Henshaw.

- Should the amount of available cost-share be determined by staff?

Motion Amendment: to offer \$2,500 in cost-share for the development of the Forest Stewardship management plan. Moved by Henshaw, seconded Hendrickson. 7 approved, 3 opposed. Amendment carries.

7 approved, 4 opposed, Motion carries.

Ostrowski FSP project is approximately 30 acres and located in Ninole, HI. The property has numerous transecting streams and is characterized by open pasture areas and vegetative gulches with both native and non-native species. The Committee would like to make sure the program is not landscaping an estate and recommends that the applicant work with a professional to identify native plants and wildlife that are and would be found in the area. Also, the project should work to balance the fencing needs associated with removing ungulates from riparian areas. The project seems ambitious; however, the landowners seem to understand that this is a long term effort that will require a plethora of funding sources and technical expertise to accomplish the scope described in the project proposal.

Motion to accept the Ostrowski project proposal and invite the applicant to development a Forest Stewardship Program management plan. Moved Brezinsky, second von Welsheim.

Motion Amendment: to offer \$2,500 in cost-share for the development of the Forest Stewardship management plan. Moved by K. Friday, Brezinsky accepts friendly amendment. 9 approved, Abstain Hopkins, motion passes.

Project Proposal & Management Plan Templates

Project Proposal Form – the Committee and staff feel that the current FSP project proposal form does not allow applicants to describe their goals and vision for their project adequately. Applicants should provide three quotes associated with the management plan development cost within the project proposal form. The Committee provided additional comments and recommended changes to the form; staff will revise the form based on the Committee's recommendations.

Management Plan Template – Staff and NRCS have begun revising the FSP management plan template to make it more consistent with NRCS conservation plan requirements. The Forest Service also recently provided a forestry management template for potential incorporation into FSP plan template. Staff will continue to work with NRCS, Forest Service and HACD to revise the FSP management plan template. The Committee would also like to develop a formula for determining the allowable cost-share amount for management plan development. The cost-share

subcommittee will recommend methods to determine cost-share rates after reviewing NRCS and other cost-share development processes.

Project Updates

Ola Honua FSP project is seeking an amendment to their original FSP management plan. The participant would like to start focusing on surveying the gulch areas on the property and doing some selective clearing of non-native species around remnant natives to protect and promote regeneration and growth along steep slopes in the gulch areas. Ola Honua also is looking to collect tissue and soil samples to determine if additional nutrients are needed in their plantings. Additionally, Ola Honua would like to add an agroforestry component to their plan. The Committee will need to see a list of species of interest and a design plan for the agroforestry component to the project.

Motion to approve the Ola Honua management plan amendment provided the amended actions do not require additional cost-share funding. Moved Henshaw, seconded Kyono. Passed unanimously.

Ho‘oulu ‘Aina, Kokua Kalihi Valley project – project staff traveled to the Ola Honua project in April 2011 along with DOFAW staff to consultant and review each others projects because there is much overlap in objectives and goals. Ho‘oulu ‘Aina is interested in revising their FSP management plan, and learned much about the process during this visit.

Kukaiau Ranch Forest Legacy project is currently working on developing a FSP management plan for their Forest Legacy application. The Nature Conservancy is working with the landowner to develop the plan.

Brookes FSP project is currently working on developing a FSP management plan. Cost-share funding for the management plan is in place and ready for payment once the plan is approved.

Ookala Community Forest, Laupahoehoe Train Museum project has been approached by the County of Hawaii and an associated landowner to purchase live trees from the community forest (root ball intact) to be transported and planted around a cellular tower that the public wants to disguise. Staff is currently reviewing this request in light of their current contract and the FSP rules for payback penalties or other requirements.

Forest Legacy Program

Kealakekua Heritage Ranch project should be completed within the next few months.

Kainalu Forest Watershed is working on finalizing their conservation easement language, after which the state will get an appraisal.

Kukaiau Koa Forest ranked 13th in the nation for FY12; we are waiting on national budget.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

The Committee will likely be asked to review BCAP producer plans that involve the use of woody species for this program. The Committee may also be asked to assist in some development aspects of the program.

Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Hawaii CREP currently has eight projects that have enrolled in the program to date, one of which the Committee will be visiting as part of this meeting (Kubota). There are still some issues with getting projects completed through the implementing partners, especially as new or other program timelines are generally a higher priority. Staff is working with partners to try and solve some of the issues with implementation of this program. CREP is a potential funding source for approved FSP management plans, along with other NRCS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife funding.