

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting
September 2, 2021

Present: J.B. Friday (Chair), Trae Menard (Chair-Elect), Michael Walker (Ex-Officio), ‘Olu Campbell, Mathew Cocking, Bart Potter, Eva Blumenstein, Nicholas Koch, Malia Nanbara, Kalena Blakemore, Janet Britt

Staff: Marissa Zhang, Tanya Rubenstein, Katie Friday (U.S. Forest Service)

Guests: Adam Laeha, Philip Richardson, Frederick Ralston, Marigold Zoll (Division of Forestry and Wildlife)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am.

2. Welcome and Introduction of Members and Member News and Announcements

Members were welcomed, introduced, and shared news and announcements.

3. Welcome and Introduction of Guests

Guests were welcomed and introduced.

4. Review and Approval of July 7, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- The Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee (FSAC) reviewed the meeting minutes from the July 7, 2021, meeting.

Motion to approve the July 7, 2021, FSAC meeting minutes. Moved by Member Britt; seconded by Member Koch.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: Blumenstein.

Motion Passed.

5. FSAC New Member

- Staff Zhang explained that there are going to be 3 open seats at the end of the year. There are 4 applicants and Member Koch is rotating off the committee. Staff Zhang reminded that committee that there should be representation from all islands, and diversity in skills, race, and gender. According to the FSAC Guidelines, the committee should be comprised of representatives from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), state and county governmental departments, Soil Water Conservation Districts, environmental organizations, forest products industry, private landowners, land trust organizations, cultural practitioners, cooperative extension, forestry consultants, and other relevant interests.
- Chair J.B. Friday clarified that Staff K. Friday represents the USFS but is not serving as a committee member.
- The committee reviewed and recommended representatives for the FSAC:

Members	Bart Potter	Mathew Cocking	Kepa Hewahewa	Kirk Derasin
Bart Potter	Yes	Yes		Yes
Eva Blumenstein	Yes	Yes		Yes
Janet Britt	Yes	Yes	Yes	
JB Friday	Yes	Yes		Yes
Kalena Blakemore		Yes	Yes	Yes
Malia Nanbara	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mathew Cocking	Yes	Yes		Yes
Michael Walker	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Nick Koch	Yes	Yes		Yes
Olu Campbell		Yes	Yes	Yes
Trae Menard	Yes	Yes		Yes
Total “Yes” Votes	9	11	5	8

Motion to approve Bart Potter, Mathew Coking, and Kirk Derasin to the FSAC. Moved by Member Koch; seconded by Member Britt.

Approve: Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

6. Forest Legacy Program

6.1 Maunawili, City and County of Honolulu

- Staff Rubenstein provided the committee with an overview of their role regarding the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). The FSAC is required to review and approve all projects that the state submits for funding.
- The Maunawili project is a 700 acre fee acquisition. The state is requesting for close to \$5 million. There are 6 different parcels for sale. The state is seeking to use FLP funding on 3 parcels. One of the parcels has an existing golf course, so the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) is working with the landowner to subdivide golf course out. The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) and TPL are also working closely with community groups on the remaining parcels which are better suited for community and agricultural uses. The project has important recreation components including several trails.
- Guest Zoll explained that the Maunawili Falls Trail draws large number of people who are damaging watershed and cultural sites. There are also conflicts with the community regarding illegal parking and trash. There is a lack of facilities to support this type of use. The community strongly supports the project and wants to see the area better managed. Acquisition would enhance safety measures and allow for managed public access.
- Member Nanbara recommend expanding on the importance of having managed access to the trail in the importance section of the proposal. Including statistics such as how many people are utilizing the trail will also strengthen this section.

- Member Walker asked if the community supports developing the trailhead, and what that might look like. Guest Zoll said the community is in support of creating managed access, though it is undetermined where the trailhead will ultimately be. DOFAW does not want to create financial or time barriers to access.
- Staff K. Friday explained that the proposal is still in the draft stage and that there will be a few more rounds of revisions. She added that data can be very helpful to include.
- Staff K. Friday said that 75% forest cover requirement can include agroforestry. The other remaining 25% may include other compatible uses such as ranching and agriculture. Golf courses are not compatible.
- Member Campbell asked for more detail on the decision-making process to pursue fee acquisition instead of a conservation easement. Guest Zoll explained that the three parcels were determined to be best for community use after extensive discussion.
- Member Nanbara asked what the timeline is for the subdivision. Guest Zoll said that TPL is currently working with the landowner to move forward with it. Staff Rubenstein added that matching funding has not been secured yet. The landowner seems committed to working with the state and TPL. The Hawaii Land Trust (HILT) is involved with the community parcels. A conservation easement (CE) will likely be placed on the community parcels, and HILT may be the holder or co-holder of the CE.
- Guest Zoll clarified that TPL will be buying all of the parcels initially, then carving out the different pieces.
- Chair J.B. Friday asked if the importance bullet with aquifer information was accurate. Staff Rubenstein said she would check.
- Guest Zoll said that koa is present on the property and that the state is looking to partner with the Hawaii Agricultural Research Center (HARC) to expand on koa reforestation. Chair J.B. Friday said if sandalwood does not exist on the property, it should be removed from the proposal.
- Staff Rubenstein said she could send the Tax Map Key numbers to Member Blumenstein.

Motion to approve the Maunawili FLP proposal as a FLP project. Moved by Member Britt; seconded by Member Walker.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion Passed.

6.2 Kaneohe Pali, City and County of Honolulu

- Staff Rubenstein explained that the proposal for Kaneohe Pali was approved by the FSAC last year. It did not get on the Forest Service list for funding, however. DOFAW wants to resubmit the proposal again this year and need approval from the FSAC. The project is a fee acquisition of 948 acres near the Maunawili project. It contains cliff ecosystem, hala forest, critical habitat, important agricultural sites, community parcels, recreational components. This project has a high readiness score and match funding secured.
- Guest Zoll added that the golf course next to it shut down. The owners are partnering with Pono Pacific to reimagine use of the golf course. There are opportunities for

collaboration with partners such as Hoomaluhia. The Kekele trail is an ancient trail on the property. DOFAW wants to move toward a managed access model to manage the number of people accessing the site and prevent damage to the trail.

- Chair J.B. Friday noted that taro was not part of managed Hawaiian agroforestry systems. He also said the date of Hawaiian settlement is now believed to be 1000-1200.
- Staff Rubenstein clarified that plans are not required for fee acquisitions, but plans would be developed later.
- Member Menard asked how imminent the threat of development is. Staff Rubenstein said that development has been proposed in the past but was stopped by community acquisition. Much of the property is cliff however, so the threat section of the proposal is the weakest based on the Forest Service definition of threat.
- Staff K. Friday said the program is intended to provide resources in preventing development if law allows it, regardless if there is community opposition. She recommended the proposal clarify what is legally allowable on Maunawili.

Motion to approve the Kaneohe Pali FLP proposal as a FLP project. Moved by Member Campbell; seconded by Member Walker.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion Passed.

Scores and Voting

Maunawili

FSAC Member	Score
Bart Potter	82
Eva Blumenstein	70
Janet Britt	82
JB Friday	65
Kalena Blakemore	76
Malia Nanbara	53
Mathew Cocking	82
Michael Walker	78
Nick Koch	72
Olu Campbell	74
Trae Menard	73
Total	807
Average	73.4

Kaneohe Pali

FSAC Member	Score
Bart Potter	82
Eva Blumenstein	77
Janet Britt	78
JB Friday	73
Kalena Blakemore	79
Malia Nanbara	64
Mathew Cocking	82
Michael Walker	75
Nick Koch	64
Olu Campbell	78
Trae Menard	74
Total	826
Average	75.1

Motion to submit both projects without prioritization. Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Koch.

Continued discussion:

- Guest Zoll said that both projects are close from the Branch's perspective.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion Passed.

7. Hoomau Conservation Easement

- Staff Rubenstein said the Hoomau project was funded in 2017 for \$2M. DOFAW is currently negotiating the conservation easement with the landowner. The landowner wants to exclude two 5 acre parcels from the easement area. These parcels have not been subdivided out yet.
- Member Koch noted that these exclusions do not affect the rare palms.
- Staff Rubenstein added that before the conservation easement is finalized, an access easement to the parcels would need to be put in place. Member Trae raised concerns about potential widening or improvements of the road. Staff Rubenstein said there has been no discussion on widening or improvement of the road to date.

Motion to approve the modification to the Hoomau FLP project. Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Koch.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion Passed.

8. Forest Stewardship Program Proposals

8.1 Pia Valley, Kona District, City and County of Honolulu

- Staff Zhang introduced the 215 acre project located in Niu Valley in east Honolulu. The project goals include watershed enhancement through restoration of native mesic and dry forest. Active management is proposed on 10 acres. The landowner has an existing NRCS EQIP contract for invasive species removal and outplanting on 1 acre. On the remaining 205 acres, they plan to identify and protect relict stands of native forest primarily through weed control. A portion of the property has critical habitat for elepaio. The property has regular volunteer events. The property is makai of a newly established state natural area reserve, and mauka of Maunalua Bay. The landowner is working closely with Koolau Mountain Watershed Partnership in their current and planned restoration efforts.
- Member Nanbara added that the owner is working with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to do transect mapping to find the relict forest stands.
- Member Potter asked if the project can be successful without use of herbicides. Staff Rubenstein said they will likely include use of herbicides in the management plan.
- Member Britt said the word “relictual” should be change to “relict”.
- Chair J.B. Friday said it is unclear if there are endangered plants on the property. If so, those should be fenced as soon as possible. He also felt that the fencing estimate is low. The proposal mentions watershed recharge, however recharge is unlikely due to the location of the project in a drier area.

Motion to approve the Pia Valley project proposal for the development of a management plan. Moved by Member Koch; seconded by Member Britt.

Approve: Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

Motion to approve cost share support for the development of a management plan. Moved by Member Menard; seconded by Member Britt.

Approve: Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

9. Forest Stewardship Program Management Plans

9.1 Ralston, Kona District, City and County of Honolulu

- Staff Zhang introduced the 10.4 acre project located in Palolo Valley in Honolulu. The property contains mixed mesic forest, including koa, ohia, and strawberry guava. The goals of the project are to remove invasive species, reestablish the native overstory, increase biodiversity, and restore koa as the dominant species. The project also includes a small subsistence agroforestry system for personal use. The landowner has been preapproved for EQIP funding for site preparation and outplanting.

- Guest Laeha said there is a good diversity of native plants on the property and that the existing koa are healthy.
- Member Potter said he has harvested some nice koa from the landowner. He added that he has seen elepaio near property. Guest Laeha said that NRCS did not observe any on the property during a survey, but they are known to be on neighboring parcels.
- Member Koch said he is concerned about the proposed fencing. Guest Laeha said they are intending to strategically fence areas with more pig activity and utilize natural barriers and solar live wire. There are two active corral traps and a good hunting program. Member Koch felt it would be good to come back to committee if fencing plan needs to be modified. Guest Laeha added that pigs are coming from above the property down the stream. Member Menard said that the pig behavior will change once a fence is installed and you start planting. He recommended closing the unit and putting a stream curtain across the stream and installing trail cameras. Chair J.B. Friday stressed the importance of having a good monitoring program.
- Guest Laeha said the live wire is a single strand, but they are willing to upgrade if it is not effective. Member Walker said that pigs will test every barrier and single wire may not be enough.
- Chair J.B. Friday recommended visiting a former FSP project at Kokua Kalihi Valley.
- Member Koch and Chair J.B. Friday felt that the cost at \$25,000 per acre is not unreasonable based on the terrain and woody species. Guest Laeha said the cost rates are based on NRCS rates. Member Britt felt price per acre is quite high. Chair J.B. Friday recommended getting bids on seedling costs since they seem high. Member Cocking clarified that NRCS rates take into account labor and soil amendments for seedlings.
- Member Menard recommended doing scarification to encourage natural regeneration of koa to shift costs away from purchasing koa seedlings.
- Chair J.B. Friday said the active ingredients should be listed for the insecticides.

Motion to approve the Ralston Management Plan contingent upon comments from the committee being addressed. Moved by Member Koch; seconded by Member Nanbara.

Approve: Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

9.2 Richardson, Koolaupoko District, City and County of Honolulu

- Staff Zhang introduced the 8.3 acre project located in Ahuimanu in Kaneohe. The property has degraded wet mesic forest with some natives including koa, ohia, and uluhe patches. The goals of the project are to restore and enhance native forest and invasive species removal. There is also an ecotourism and education component. The landowner has been preapproved for funding from NRCS for site preparation and outplanting.
- Guest Laeha said that the property has a lot remnant forest and a lot of uluhe. The terrain is steep since it is located at the base of the Koolau Mountains. Guest

Richardson added that the ecotourism component is more about sharing of knowledge than commercial tourism.

- Chair J.B. Friday asked how the project improves damselfly habitat. Guest Laeha said that since the damselfly habitat is mostly in the riparian areas, management activities will not disturb these areas. Staff Zhang added that the DOFAW entomologist did not have concerns about the project as long as there is no stream alteration or vegetation removal near the stream.
- Chair J.B. Friday asked for more detail on the erosion issues. Guest Laeha explained that erosion is coming from areas where there is no understory layer. The area has high rainfall, so in steep areas where trees shade out the understory and pigs disturb the soil, erosion occurs.
- Member Walker recommended changing the language regarding critical habitat to say that the critical habitat unit has been designated as potential habitat for species.

Motion to approve the Richardson Management Plan contingent upon comments from the committee being addressed. Moved by Member Walker; seconded by Member Blumenstein.

Approve: Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

10. Forest Stewardship Program Strategic Direction

- The Committee considered the establishment of a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) to make recommendations on a strategic direction for the program, as well as the process and procedures for Committee review and approval of proposals and plans, and project prioritization for state funding

Motion to approve the establishment of a Permitted Interaction Group to discuss the strategic direction of the program and other program procedures. Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Blakemore.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

- Staff Rubenstein said that Member Jokiel volunteered to participate in the PIG prior to the meeting since he could not attend.
- Chair J.B. Friday and Member Menard volunteered to participate on the PIG. Staff K. Friday said she would attend the meetings as staff.

Motion to approve Member Jokiel, Member Menard, and Chair J.B. Friday as members of the PIG. Moved by Member Britt, seconded by Member Nanbara.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Menard, Walker, Campbell, Cocking, Potter, Blumenstein, Koch, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt; Oppose: none; Abstain: none.

Motion passed.

11. Ongoing Forest Legacy Project Updates

- Staff Rubenstein explained that Fiscal Year 2021 Hawaii Koa project fell through right after the grant was awarded for \$4M. The project area was a 13,000 acre parcel below Hakalau Refuge. The property was sold for \$2M over the asking price. Staff is hopeful that the new landowner may engage with watershed partnership and DOFAW to consider some elements of management.
- The Hana Highway project ranked highly on the funding list, however funding has not been awarded yet. DOFAW started the due diligence and the landowners found title issues for certain parcels. Staff is working with the landowners to see if they are willing to undergo quiet title, since the state cannot buy the parcel with broken title. The Trust for Public land is participating in ongoing conversations.

12. Announcements

- Staff Zhang will send a doodle poll later to schedule the next FSAC meeting.

13. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 12pm.