

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting

March 23, 2022

Present: J.B. Friday (Chair), Michael Walker (Ex-Officio), Janet Britt, Kalena Blakemore, Kirk Derasin, ‘Olu Campbell, Bart Potter, Eva Blumenstein, Malia Nanbara, Seana Walsh, Jordan Jokiel

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

Guests: Adam Laeha, Zachary Judd, Aviva Gottesman, Aja Grande, David Girbino

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 September 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- The Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee (FSAC) reviewed the meeting minutes from the September 2, 2021, meeting.

Motion to approve the September 2, 2021, FSAC meeting minutes. Moved by Member Blakemore; seconded by Member Potter.

Approve: J.B. Friday, Britt, Blumenstein, Nanbara, Derasin, Blakemore, Jokiel, Walker, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: Walsh

Motion Passed.

5. Forest Stewardship Program Proposals

5.1 Loui (Holokila LLC), Volcano, Hawai‘i

- Staff Young introduced the 10.6 acre project located in Volcano on Hawai‘i Island. The property is near Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park, the state Kahauale‘a Natural Area Reserve, and Ola‘a Forest Reserve. The project area is a wet forest comprised of ‘ōhi‘a lehua, large koa, and other prominent wet forest species. This forest has become overrun with Himalayan ginger, yellow strawberry guava, tibouchina, and other noxious species. The project goals include removal of invasive species and the restoration of the native forest and habitat for native birds. A perimeter fence will also be installed. The long-term vision for this property includes an educational and ecotourism component where small groups of visitors will be invited to experience the forest, observe native birds and participate in forest restoration activities.
- Member Blakemore said that the project sounds like a great partnership with the nearby arts center and school. Staff Rubenstein added that the greater area surrounding the

- proposed project is unique with its native forest and native forest birds. The location is a gateway community to the national park and has a high number of visitors.
- Member Potter asked whether the strawberry guava on the property is the short or tall variety. Guest Laeha said that it is the short variety, which seems less susceptible to biocontrol because it does not flush like regular guava. Guest Laeha added that the waiawi only seems to be in the unmanaged pockets of the property and going in now will allow for impactful management.
 - Staff Rubenstein suggested coordinating with Pat and Sheila Conant who have a Forest Stewardship project nearby, to learn about their experiences and methods for controlling common weeds. Member Jokiel added that East Maui Watershed Partnership and the National Park are two groups that can give guidance regarding weed management. Member Derasin also offered his knowledge of common weed management practices. Member Blumenstein added that the West Maui Watershed Partnership has some aggressive removal techniques for Himalayan ginger that may be a valuable resource.
 - Member Walsh felt that the education/community outreach component should be expanded on or removed from the project. Guest Laeha said he was inspired by the learning center's forest walks and felt that the proposed education component matched well.
 - Chair J.B. Friday noted that letters of support should be included with the management plan.
 - Member Britt was concerned that the amount of revenue generated from the cottage would not be enough to cover maintenance of the property.

Motion to approve the Loui project proposal for the development of a management plan. Moved by Member Nanbara; seconded by Member Blakemore.

Approve: Blumenstein, Blakemore, Nanbara, Britt, Jokiel, Walsh, Walker, Campbell, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed.

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

Approve: Blumenstein, Blakemore, Nanbara, Britt, Jokiel, Walsh, Walker, Campell, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed.

5.2 Parker Ranch Mauna Kea Reforestation Project, Kamuela, Hawai'i

- Staff Zhang introduced the 3,300 acre project located on Mauna Kea on Hawai'i Island. The property is adjacent to the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) managed Mauna Kea Forest Reserve, Ka'ohē Game Management Area, and Palila Mitigation Area. The project area is dominated by non-native rangeland grasses with scattered native trees. The project area currently has domestic cattle, feral sheep and pigs, and some native birds. Management will include restoration, habitat improvement, watershed enhancement, fire prevention, silvopasture, and outreach and education.

- Guest Judd said that the project site is one of the only options for forest expansion for native birds on the leeward slope of Mauna Kea.
- Member Jokiel noted that he is managing a similar restoration project that incorporates grazing animals. The removal of feral animals may mean that less outplanting will be needed as regeneration will be allowed. Guest Judd acknowledged that once the grazing animals are removed, fuel loads increase. Fire is currently the biggest threat to forests on Mauna Kea. Parker Ranch looks to use their grazing animals to reduce those fuel loads through a combination of grazing areas that will not be in restoration immediately, and exploring the idea of creating a “conservation herd” of cattle using virtual fencing. Virtual fencing involves collars worn by cattle that use GPS and cellular capabilities to control the movement of herds.
- Guest Judd said that this technology is being used increasingly frequently in Europe, and Parker Ranch has reached out to several companies to trial the system on a small scale and eventually expand it. Member Jokiel added that with the removal of grazing animals, fuel loads are not the only concern; site preparation also becomes challenging with tall grasses.
- Member Walsh asked about the costs and techniques for removing feral pigs and sheep, and if there is any existing fencing. Guest Judd said that natural recruitment will occur and that they do not anticipate outplanting the full number of species noted in the budget table. The management plan will include the fences that border the property but fencing of the entire project site will be challenging and neighboring fences always run the risk of being cut.
- Chair J.B. Friday asked about the road access to the ranch. Guest Judd said that the property does have roads, both mauka and makai, making access no issue.
- Chair J.B. Friday shared a paper summarizing feral and domestic ungulate removal on Mauna Kea. He said that letters of support from Mauna Kea Watershed Alliance should be included in with the plan. Guest Judd noted that the Alliance has given verbal support, but nothing written yet. Guest Judd added that there is not a lot of koa on the property and that they plan to source high elevation DOFAW koa seed.
- Member Nanbara asked if any other funding opportunities are being sought. She noted that the project may be eligible for Partners funding from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Guest Judd said that they are always seeking funding sources, but the first step is creating the management plan by seeking funding support through the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP). Staff Rubenstein noted that moving forward, there may be more flexibility within FSP to allow funding of portions of a project. If the plan can highlight different sub-projects, there will be greater funding opportunities.
- Member Derasin asked about seed sourcing. Guest Judd said that they are getting quotes from nurseries across the state and are seeking partnerships from multiple nurseries. Regarding seed sourcing, hope to source as many seeds as possible in house from the project area and from higher elevation plants.

Motion to approve the Parker Ranch project proposal for the development of a management plan. Moved by Member Jokiel; seconded by Member Walker.

Approve: Campbell, Blumenstein, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt, Walsh, Jokiel, Walker, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed

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

Approve: Campbell, Blumenstein, Nanbara, Blakemore, Britt, Walsh, Jokiel, Walker, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed.

5.3 Grande (Pāhoehoe LLC), Kalapana, Hawai‘i

- Staff Zhang introduced the 30 acre project located in Kalapana on Hawai‘i Island. The project area will be fenced and split into two zones. One zone contains the majority of the ‘ōhi‘a on the property that will be passively managed through weed control. The other zone will be for agroforestry where invasive species will be removed and outplanting will occur. They intend to sell some agroforest products to the community. There is also an outreach and education component.
- Chair J.B. Friday said he visited the property in January 2022. The project site is in a dryer location and surrounded by many native forest and agroforestry properties, lending itself to being a good location to be a center for learning. He said that some older growth ‘ōhi‘a may have to be removed for the agroforest, but the agroforest system defined in the proposal will be interesting and potentially very valuable.
- Member Potter questioned the inclusion of lilikoi as a canopy plant. Guest Girbino said he was interested in experimenting with cultivating the lilikoi vine to fill out some space within the canopy to maximize production and efficiency of the agroforest.
- Member Derasin said that if the fence is going to be ungulate proof, the estimated cost is likely to be low. Additionally, the price of mulching per acre seems high. Guest Girbino agreed that further research and consultation on costs will be needed.

Motion to approve the Grande project proposal for the development of a management plan. Moved by Member Jokiel; seconded by Member Blakemore.

Approve: Jokiel, Walsh, Blakemore, Walker, Campbell, Britt, Blumenstein, Derasin, Nanbara, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

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

Approve: Jokiel, Walsh, Blakemore, Walker, Campbell, Britt, Blumenstein, Derasin, Nanbara, Potter; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday.

Motion Passed.

6. Forest Stewardship Management Plans

6.1 Ho‘omau Ranch, South Kona, Hawai‘i

- Staff Rubenstein explained that the Ho‘omau Ranch Forest Legacy Project was approved Fiscal Year 2017. Negotiations with the landowner on the conservation easement are ongoing, though the project may potentially not move forward.

- The management plan was reviewed and approved at two separate meetings in 2016, however the comments from the FSAC were never incorporated and the plan was never finalized. Although the easement may not move forward, the committee is being asked to approve the management plan, not contingent on the finalization of the easement.
- Member Jokiel noted that managed grazing can be a useful tool, but there might be too much non-target impact where grazing is introduced. Guest Gottesman clarified that grazing would only be done on silvo-pasture lands and in small scales on conservation lands as a test. No grazing will be done in preserved forest areas that are already fenced.

Motion to approve the Ho‘omau Ranch Management Plan contingent upon comments from the committee being addressed. Moved by Member Walker; seconded by Member Blakemore.

Approve: Walker, Campbell, Potter, Walsh, Nanbara, Britt, Jokiel, Blumenstein, Blakemore; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed.

6.2 Regan, Hāmākua, Hawai‘i

- Staff Zhang introduced the 37 acre project located in Hāmākua on Hawai‘i Island. The project site is primarily dominated by kikuyu grass in the understory and old growth ‘ōhi‘a in the overstory. Invasive species include ginger, raspberry, and guava. Management activities will include forest restoration, habitat improvement, invasive species control, and outreach and education, including an ecotourism component. The landowner is interested in becoming a seed source for her neighbors, and currently has a 7.5 acre Environmental Quality Incentives Program contract with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for invasive species removal, site preparation, outplanting and monitoring.
- Member Potter asked what type of milling equipment is being used. Guest Regan said she uses a movable Linn Lumber Mill.
- Member Britt asked for clarification on the \$11,000 per acre cost. Guest Regan said this aligns with the NRCS costs. Most of the cost comes from seed sourcing. DOFAW is not currently providing permits to collect seeds, however Staff Rubenstein said that DOFAW is working to resolve the seed permit issue to make collection easier.
- Chair J.B. Friday added that the surrounding community is moving towards reforestation. He also noted an inherit issue with NRCS’ approach to seedlings costs, which makes plant procurement an issue as there is supply limitations. Chair J.B. Friday also noted possibility of hybridization of the types of ‘ōhi‘a.

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

Approve: Blumenstein, Potter, Britt, Jokiel, Walsh, Nanbara, Blakemore, Campbell, Walker; Oppose: none; Abstain: J.B. Friday, Derasin.

Motion Passed.

7. Ukulele Management Plan Revisions

7.1 Ukulele (Haleakalā Ranch), Makawao, Maui

- Staff Young introduced the 100 acre project located on the windward slopes of Haleakala on Maui. The project is requesting an extension and modification to their original management plan which began in 2017. The plan encompasses the protection and restoration of native forests, invasive species control, and development of silvo-pastoral practices as a tool for weed suppression. The Ukulele project has had delays due to challenges with COVID, drought, proliferation of invasive species, and the added complexities of utilizing livestock for weed control. Based on lessons learned so far, a three year extension is being requested, as well as modifications to their methods of implementation, including a second round of targeted grazing and weed control.
- Member Jokiel further described the project, work done up to this far, and the project's mission and goals.
- Member Blumenstein asked what the survivorship of outplants should be per FSP guidelines. Staff Rubenstein said it should be approximately 80%.
- Member Walker asked what the plans are for grazing during the drought and if it would be beneficial or detrimental. Member Jokiel said that they are not planning on grazing any time soon and that it may be detrimental as the cattle may switch targets to the young koa.

Motion to approve the extension and modification of the Ukulele Management Plan. Moved by Member Nanbara; seconded by Member Blakemore.

Approve: Nanbara, Campbell, Blakemore, Potter, Walsh, Walker, Derasin, Britt, Blumenstein; Oppose: none; Abstain: Jokiel

Motion Passed.

8. FSP Handbook Update

- Staff Zhang updated the committee on the revision of the FSP Handbook, last updated in 2013. The Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) held five meetings to discuss revisions to the FSP Handbook and primarily focused on the management practices (names, descriptions, applicability to FSP and FSP requirements) and cost-share rates.
- Member Nanbara presented the findings and recommendations from the PIG, including proposed name changes, changes to cost-share rates, and updated practice descriptions.

9. Update on PIG for FSP Strategic Direction

- The Permitted Interaction Group to guide FSP Strategic Direction had previously been established with Chair J.B. Friday and Members Menard, and Jokiel. Member Nanbara also volunteered to join the PIG.

10. Hāloa 'Āina Forest Legacy Project Update

- Staff Rubenstein explained that the Hāloa 'Āina conservation easement, funded in 2018, is looking to reduce their project acreage to exclude a total of 47.212 acres. This will exclude two old pump houses associated with water catchment that were noted as recognized as environmental conditions during the Phase 1 environmental study. This will allow the

landowner to avoid having to remediate the pump houses and will expand the current excluded area to also include the pump houses. If this exclusion is approved, the total easement area will be 2,733 acres.

- Member Potter asked if the rock wall on the property is approved as an ungulate deterrent. Staff Rubenstein said that the rock wall is the boundary between Hāloa ‘Āina and Kamehameha Schools land. Kamehameha Schools and Three Mountain Alliance are working on getting funds to propose fencing along the border.

Motion to approve the exclusions and reduce the Hāloa ‘Āina Forest Legacy Project area to 2,733 acres. Moved by Member Blakemore; seconded by Member Nanbara.

Approve: Campbell, Nanbara, Blumenstein, Walker, Blakemore, Walsh, Britt, Potter, Derasin; Oppose: none; Abstain:

Nanbara, Campbell, Blakemore, Potter, Walsh, Walker, Derasin, Britt, Blumenstein, Jokiel; Oppose: none; Abstain: none

Motion Passed.

11. Announcements

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

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12pm.