

HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL
PLANT QUARANTINE CONFERENCE ROOM
SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

MINUTES

Members Present

Peter Young, Co-Chairperson, Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR)

Sandra Lee Kunimoto, Co-Chairperson, Department of Agriculture (DOA)

Sam Callejo for Interim President David McClain, University of Hawaii (UH)

Larry Lau for Dr. Chiyome Fukino, Department of Health (DOH)

Bill Brennan for Mark Rectenwald, Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs
(DCCA)

Rich Manayan for Theodore Liu, Department of Business, Economic Development, and
Tourism (DBEDT)

Rob Parsons, County of Maui

Others Present

Linda Chow, Deputy Attorney General, Attorney General's Office

Kim Langly, Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)

Christy Martin, CGAPS

Jamie Runnells, Big Island Association of Nurserymen

Bruce Caslet, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Cathy Goeggel, Animal Rights Hawaii

Jeff Burgett, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services

Arnold Hara, UH-CTAHR

Clyde Tamaru, UH-Sea Grant Program

Mike Pitzler, USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS-WS)

Mark Ono, USDA-APHIS-WS

Chris Dacus, Department of Transportation (DOT)

Lynn Becones, DOT

Liz Corbin, DBEDT

Mindy Wilkinson, DLNR

Tony Montgomery, DLNR

Sheri Mann, DLNR

Rob Hauff, DLNR

Paul Conry, DLNR

Larry Nakahara, DOA

Nilton Matayoshi, DOA

Kenneth Teramoto, DOA

Neil Reimer, DOA

Darcy Oishi, DOA

Carol Okada, DOA

Keevin Minami, DOA
Jason Knable, Senate, State of Hawaii
Jennifer Chow, Senate, State of Hawaii

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairperson Peter Young at 1:10pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 1 AND MARCH 31

Peter Young said that the minutes of both meetings have been circulated. Then he asked for any discussion.

MOTION: Sam Callejo made a motion to accept the minutes of the meetings of March 1 and March 31. Larry Lau seconded the motion.

Vote taken. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING ON THE STATUS OF BROWN TREE SNAKE INTERDICTION EFFORTS ON GUAM

Mike Pitzler of USDA-APHIS-WS started by saying that Wildlife Services was established on Guam in October 1993. At that time, the Department of Interior, Insular Affairs, started with \$45,000 and Department of Defense put in \$1,000,000. Funds were used to hire canine handlers, and trapping and fence line searches at night. Today, Interior funds increased to \$475,000 while the DOD funds have remained the same at \$1,000,000. Because DOD funds have not increased since 1993, Wildlife Services has had to cut four positions on Guam in June 2003 and will cut an additional four positions in June 2005. Also, beginning in October 2004, Anderson AFB will be charging Wildlife Services \$84,000 annually for kennel space, electrical fees, etc. Also, offices at Anderson AFB have been moved off base, which means slower response time for inspection of aircraft. These aircraft arrive at various times, sometimes with little or no warning.

Mike Pitzler continued by saying Interior bailed out Wildlife Services with an additional \$300,000 in 2004. Wildlife Services actually overspent \$500,000. It takes six to seven months to properly train a canine handler. 6,000 snakes are caught per year. Spot light searches will no longer be conducted. Canine handlers can conduct only one inspection per day. Household goods and military training cargo will no longer be inspected.

Mike Pitzler said he has been trying to secure more funding, especially from DOD. Senator Dan Inouye's office is pushing for \$1.8 million to re-establish four positions lost

and to secure the remaining eight positions for the current year. Will need \$2.4 million in 2006. Military will increase activities on Guam by 30%. Prior to 2002, 100% of DOD cargo and 85% of commercial cargo were inspected.

Peter Young asked if more letters need to be written.

Mike Pitzler answered that CGAPS have written letters to Senators Inouye and Akaka and Congressmen Abercrombie and Case. Also, Wildlife Services has kept in touch with Sen. Inouye through Chauncey Ching. TNC sent letters to Secretary Rumsfeld (DOD) and Secretary Veneman (USDA). More letters will help the cause.

Peter Young asked how much more funding is needed.

Mike Pitzler said at least \$1.8 million on the DOD side. DOI has kept up with their allocations. \$1 million temporary funding comes in February 2005.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto commented that it is extremely vital to keep up this program.

Peter Young thanks Mike Pitzler for the briefing.

UPDATES AND SUMMARY OF WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

Resources Working Group

Liz Corbin (DBEDT) reported that the group had two meetings with the next meeting on Sept. 30th. The group has started to identify funding groups and also new sources of funding. Also developed preliminary task list and are reviewing with other groups to find gaps in funding. Lead agency for the Resources Working Group (RWG) is the Hawaii Dept. of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Prevention Working Group

Neil Reimer (DOA) reported that this group met twice to discuss the status of prevention efforts in Hawaii, review the proposed task list, and discuss, develop and recommend a budget for the funding of invasive species prevention programs. Lead agency for the Prevention Working Group (PWG) is the Hawaii Dept. of Agriculture.

Neil Reimer reported that PWG recommends that HISC fund four prevention initiatives for FY04-05: (1) \$650,000 to DOA; (2) \$90,000 to USDA-Wildlife Services; (3) \$75,000 to DLNR-Aquatic Resources; and (4) \$175,000 to DOH.

DOA proposal is to conduct a risk analysis to determine the risk of entry of invasive species through ports-of-entry across the state and determine the effectiveness of current prevention efforts. DOA will hire 13 research aids through RCUH to collect and analyze this data. The aids will work under the supervision of Plant Quarantine

inspectors. Data on commodities and pests entering the state will be collected during the intense blitz inspections of 100% commodity inspections. This collected data will be analyzed concurrently with the inspections for the generation of monthly reports.

USDA-Wildlife Services proposal is to conduct a pilot project using two canine handlers to inspect brown tree snakes (BTS) on ship containers on Guam destined for Hawaii. Snake traps will also be placed around these areas. Data collected will provide valuable information on the risks posed by these containers to Hawaii. This proposal is critical considering the recent cutbacks the Wildlife Services program on Guam has suffered. The data will be instrumental in the discussions on the need for a certification program for ship containers leaving Guam for Hawaii.

DLNR-Aquatic Resources proposal is to conduct three projects to increase communication between Aquatic Resources, other state agencies, and the shipping industry to minimize aquatic invasive species introductions.

DOH proposal is to improve surveillance and rapid response capabilities to address the threat of West Nile Virus.

Established Pests Working Group

Mindy Wilkinson (DLNR) reported that this working group met once to review efforts in Hawaii to control established pests by DOA, DLNR, and DOH; review the proposed task list; review the list of invasive species control programs. Lead agency for the Established Pest Working Group is DLNR.

Based on the discussions at the meeting, the distribution of Response & Control, funds for FY04-05 are as follows: (1) \$220,000 for support of Kauai Invasive Species Committee; (2) \$220,000 for support of Oahu Invasive Species Committee; (3) \$240,000 for support of Maui Invasive Species Committee; (4) \$320,000 for support of Big Island Invasive Species Committee; and (5) \$200,000 for DLNR-Aquatic Resources Marine Invasive Species Response Team.

Public Outreach Working Group

Mindy Wilkinson (DLNR) reported for Laura Lott (DOH) who was not present at the meeting. This group met five times to review and update the list of goals and tasks in the Interim State of Hawaii Strategic Plan; review current efforts; and develop an agency survey form to track current invasive species outreach efforts and matching funds needs. Lead agency for the Public Outreach Working Group is Dept. of Health.

The group agreed that the following issues need to be addressed in the coming year: (1) West Nile Virus; (2) coqui frogs; (3) aquatic issues; (4) Weed Risk Assessment; (5) Ports-of-entry worker outreach; (6) transport of pests (into the state, between islands, around islands); and (7) Red Imported Fire Ant. Recognizes the importance to include DOT and Dept. of Education.

Three funding strategies have been identified: (1) hire additional outreach staff for Big Island, Oahu, and Kauai to be supervised by the Invasive Species Committee to carry out Public Outreach Working Group quarterly work plan; (2) use new staff and funding to support outreach on priority species and messages, including West Nile Virus, CGAPS “Don’t pack a pest, Don’t plant a pest, and Report a pest” public service announcements.; and to support the development of the HISC website; and (3) make grants available for existing programs carrying out invasive species outreach and provide opportunities to coordinate messages between groups relating to priority messages. A Request for Proposals is being developed and will be finalized at the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF INVASIVE SPECIES BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006

Mindy Wilkinson explained the budget of \$3 million for a one year pilot project to provide support for both the operations of HISC and its cooperating partners to develop and implement a partnership of federal, state, country and private entities for a comprehensive state-wide invasive species prevention, detection, and control program. State dollars will be matched 1:1 by non-state dollars or equivalent in-kind services making this an overall effort of \$6 million.

Mindy Wilkinson further explained that redistributing the percentages allocated to each budget area as compared to the previous budget proposal will take advantage of the existing infrastructure of the island invasive species committees, provide jobs and involve the public with visible accomplishments on each island, and provide a stronger justification to support sustained funding for the 2005-2007 administration’s invasive species budget request.

This budget request is under DLNR but it includes and involves programs and project from nine different departments, four counties, and federal and private partners. This funding will not replace any of the existing state, private, or federal funding, but will complement and expand on existing programs.

The overall goals of the Administration’s budget request for HISC are: (1) Coordinate invasive species management and control programs for county, state, federal, and private sector entities by developing a structure for cooperators to work together to share resources and responsibilities; (2) Increase inspection and other “prevention” capabilities to prevent high-risk species and diseases (e.g., brown tree snake, West Nile Virus, etc.) from entry into the state, or to specific islands where they are not currently found; (3) Accelerate the control of priority invasive species already present in the state (e.g., miconia, coqui frogs, marine algae, etc.) by developing a more effective state-wide early detection and rapid response capability with the Island Invasive Species Committees and other response and control efforts; (4) Leverage increased involvement and expertise from private and academic sectors to assure that Hawaii has access to the most up-to-date, effective and efficient research and technology tools to combat

invasive species; and (5) Implement a coordinated statewide invasive species public outreach program with shared research and responsibilities among cooperating entities.

Mindy added that there are four components for state funding: (1) building up prevention capabilities – 33%; (2) establishing response and control programs – 40%; (3) enhance research and applied technology – 20%; and (4) developing a public outreach program – 7%.

Peter Young agreed that there are \$6 million in matching funds. He also questioned how the Invasive Species Committee funding is being spent.

Mindy Wilkinson said that the priorities are set at the county level because each island deals with different pests. Must set schedule and reporting accomplishments and also need to show standards and performance measures. Funding levels depended on the size of the county.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto commented that the contracts for the funding to each island Invasive Species Committee has to be very specific and detailed.

Larry Lau said that the contracts should have a general concern for all activities.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto added that we have to move cautiously and be cognizant of the overall strategy at all times.

Peter Young asked for any other comments.

Rob Parsons, executive assistant to the Mayor of Maui County on environmental concerns, said that the Maui Invasive Species Committee seems to be losing ground to the coqui frog. In the Maliko Gulch area, 150 coqui frogs were caught in two hours recently. Small backyard populations are in various areas on Maui. Commercial nurseries are infested. West and South Maui resorts are also infested. He urged HISC to increase the dollar amount for Maui County, which includes Molokai, Lanai, and Kahoolawe.

Rob Parsons added that DOT has a draft EIS for proposed commercial expansion of Kahului Harbor. The Super Ferry and cruise ships will triple the number of visitors to Maui County, but there is no mitigation language which is a cause for concern.

Peter Young then asked what county should get less dollars.

Rob Parsons could not answer that question. But he just reiterated that Maui County needed more funding because of the limited window of opportunity.

Peter Young asked Mindy Wilkinson to explain the process of allocation of money between counties.

Mindy Wilkinson answered that they first two pests looked at was miconia and coqui frogs. After that, it differed from island to island. Fireweed is a problem on the Big Island and Maui, but almost non-existent on Oahu and Kauai. For the coqui frog on Oahu, Waimanalo and three other fronts; for Kauai, one place. Distribution of funding was agreed upon by a larger group, including U.S. Fish & wildlife Service and other agencies.

Larry Lau said Oahu threats are coqui frog and miconia. The broad funding group includes federal, state, and private entities and also depends on county size. What marine species should be considered?

Tony Montgomery (LNR-R) said that snowflake coral and give species of algae are at the top of the list.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto commented that there should also be a summary on agricultural pests and called on Larry Nakahara (Plant Pest Control) to give this summary.

Larry Nakahara started with fireweed, which infests the Big Island and Maui with smaller infestations on Kauai and Oahu. Currently there are two insects or biological control agents in quarantine. These insects will probably be released some time next year. We are trying to eradicate fireweed on Kauai and prevent the introduction of fireweed in commercial carpet grass from Australia.

Larry Nakahara continued with the little fire ant. The infestation has spread from Puna, the original infestation site on the Big Island, to encompass over 20 square miles. Staff at the USDA laboratory in Florida are willing to assist but need funds for exploration. The little fire ant is very time and slow moving so most people don't know the ant is there until too late.

The coqui frog is a big problem in Hawaii because it infests areas on the Big Island that are inhabited by people. Infested areas on other islands are generally not inhabited. Currently, DOA is trying to get hydrated lime registered as a pesticide. We are trying to empower people to control this frog by researching ways for individuals to control this pest and loaning 100-gallon sprayers to community groups.

Another agricultural pest is the nettle caterpillar on the Big Island according to Larry Nakahara. This caterpillar stings people and attacks palms, coconuts, and many monocots. According to the literature search, biological agents are probably in Indonesia, Southern Thailand, and probably Taiwan. But Indonesia and Southern Thailand are areas of political unrest and not safe for exploration so we are looking at Taiwan right now.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto thanked Larry Nakahara for the report on agricultural pests.

Clyde Tamaru of the UH-Sea Grant Program commended that the apple snail threatens the taro industry in Hawaii. Taro farms are located on U.S. Fish and Wildlife reserves and, therefore, taro farmers cannot use much pesticides to kill the apple snails.

Larry Lau asked Rob Parsons what kind of dollar amount for Maui County will HISC be looking at.

Rob Parsons said anything more will make a difference. He is not prepared at this time to ask for a specific dollar amount. One suggestion would be to have a reserve to tap in to by one of the counties in case of an emergency.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto said the USDA-WS put in for funding of \$3million per year for three years.

Peter Young asked for a motion.

MOTION: Larry Lau moved to accept with an amendment to put aside 10% of Response and Control funds in a reserve for future disposition. Sam Callejo seconded the motion.

Discussion

Peter Young asked if the 10% would be for an emergency for rapid response.

Larry Lau said rapid response would be preferable.

Peter Young then said 10% should be held in reserve by each county.

Larry Lau said it would be better to have 10% put on reserve than each county reserve 10% of its funding.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto commented that it would be better to have each committee hold back 10%. If HISC holds 10% back, then the members would have to vote later on the disposition of the funds.

Peter Young wants the funds available so money must be set aside.

Mindy Wilkinson said Research and Applied Technology has a call for proposals three times during the year.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto reiterated that the purpose is to get the money to the various agencies so everyone can get started.

MOTION: Larry Lau moved to withdraw the motion. Sam Callejo seconded.

MOTION: Larry Lau moved to accept the budget as proposed. Sam Callejo seconded.

Vote taken. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF A PLAN FOR REMOVAL OF INVASIVE SPECIES FROM STATE LANDS

Mindy Wilkinson read the proposal asked for support by HISC for DLNR personnel and contractors to remove invasive trees if they have a special use permit.

Peter Young said this is a sensitive issue and is not considered commercially harvesting trees, but removal of invasive trees from the forest. A permit is needed for removal.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto asked if DLNR only wanted support for the removal of invasive species trees from state lands.

Peter Young said the species are silk oak and eucalyptus.

Larry Nakahara commended that if silk oak and eucalyptus are not on the noxious weed list, then these species are not considered invasive species according to HISC's definition.

Bill Steiner (U.S. Geological Survey) said that the native insects found on these trees targeted for removal should be studied since the trees have been in the forests for a long time, plus these trees may not be in native forests.

Paul Conry (DLNR-Forestry & Wildlife) said DLNR just want support by this policy body. There are trees in the forest that need to be removed because they are causing problems.

Nilton Matayoshi (DOA-Plant Pest Control) wanted to be certain that this involves only state lands and not federal lands.

Sandra Lee Kunimoto mentioned that no resources will be committed to this proposal

Bill Steiner proposed consideration of a recovery program.

MOTION: Sam Callejo moved to support the program. Sandra Lee Kunimoto seconded.

Discussion

Larry Lau asked to add "appropriate" before the removal in the context of permit regulation. Upon further consideration, he said "appropriate" is not needed.

Vote taken. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55pm by Co-Chairperson Peter Young.

Respectfully submitted,

SUE H. SAKAMOTO
Recording Secretary