

HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL
PLANT QUARANTINE CONFERENCE ROOM
HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
JULY 9, 2008
10:00 A.M. –12:00 P.M.

MINUTES

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Sandra Kunimoto called the meeting of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to order at 10:12 a.m. The following were in attendance:

MEMBERS:

Ms. Sandra Kunimoto, DOA	Mr. Laurence Lau, DOH
Ms. Laura Thielen, DLNR	Mr. Sam Callejo, UH
Mr. Francis Paul Keeno, DOT	Ms. Liz Corbin, DBEDT

AGENCY AND LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. Matthew Goo, USDA
Representative Fuji

OTHERS:

Dr. Ann Marie LaRosa, USFS	Mr. Tony Montgomery, DLNR/DAR
Dr. Earl Campbell, USFWS	Ms. Ana Gabela, DLNR/DOFAW
Dr. Lyle Wong, HDOA	Ms. Anjie Pham, Animal Rights Hawaii
Dr. Neil Reimer, HDOA	Ms. Anoa Naniole, for Senator Kokubun
Dr. Tracy Johnson, USFS	Ms. Betsy Gagne DLNR/DOFAW
Mr. Chris Buddenhagen, HISC/DOFAW	Ms. Cathy Goggel, Animal Rights Hawaii
Mr. Chris Dacus, DOT	Ms. Christy Martin, CGAPS
Mr. Chuck Chimera, HPWRA	Ms. Inga Gibson, HSUS
Mr. Darcy Oishi, HDOA	Ms. Kathy Carlstead, Honolulu Zoo. Soc.
Mr. Domingo Carvalho, HDOA	Ms. Leslie Iseke, HDOA
Mr. Eric Arquero, for Senator English	Ms. Lisa Fiedler, JGDO
Mr. Glen Sakamoto, HDOA	Ms. Liz Corbin, DBEDT
Mr. Keevin Minami, HDOA	Ms. Priscilla Billig, OISC
Mr. Mark Fox, TNC	Ms. Rachel Neville, OISC
Mr. Patrick Chee, HISC/DOFAW	Ms. Stephanie Joe, HPWRA
Mr. Paul Conry, DLNR/DOFAW	Ms. Susan Gray-Ellis, DBEDT
Mr. Phil Andresser, Nat'l Invasive Species Council	Ms. Teya Penniman, MISC
Mr. Rob Hauff, DLNR/DOFAW	

ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 19, 2007

Member Callejo noted that there were numerous small typing errors, as did Co-Chair Kunimoto and member Lau. Co-Chair Kunimoto directed staff to make necessary changes.

Unanimously approved as amended (Member Keeno/Corbin).

ITEM 3. HISC STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE PRESENTATION

Staff Buddenhagen gave a brief overview of the process to update the HISC Strategic Plan (SP): shortening the original plan, condensing into bullet points, adding legal mandates, review by Working Groups (WG) and CGAPS, clarify process, add a timeline, and remove the Integrated Working Group.

Science and Research Working Group now chaired by Dr. Christopher Dunn (unable to attend today), met to consider Request for Proposals. The Interagency Working Group did not meet; however all groups are interagency groups, but with functions specific to each of their respective areas of invasive species management.

Upcoming meetings and budget-setting processes: HISC will meet to discuss priorities and current issues during the second quarter of the FY; WG will work to prepare budgets with alternatives during third quarter; WG chairs will make priority budget recommendations with alternatives to Resources WG fourth quarter; Chair of Resources WG will work to create a balanced budget which will then be recommended to the Council for budget approval. This plan preferentially supports innovation, addresses gaps in invasive species management and transitions from HISC funds to agencies for future internal funding and action.

Further points: the SP may be updated at any time; the Council should provide advice to Legislature regarding invasive issues; adoption of rules mandated in law and SP and if implemented would address access to private property to control invasive species and help reduce liability of staff and landowners; specific points for WG not included here; also, there should be two meetings per year and a process for submitting issues to the Council for consideration has been included.

Comments Member Lau requested more measures of effectiveness under the section that describes the HISC goals and measures of effectiveness. Some of these were modified measures of effectiveness described in the plan under the sections for the Prevention and Established Pests Working Groups. He emphasized the following measures: number of invasive species detected; number of priority pests threatening Hawaii that are not yet present; current status of priority pests in Hawaii; proportion of invasive species eradicated or controlled; species, habitats, agricultural and managed areas protected; our bottom line. It was agreed that Staff Buddenhagen would work with Member Lau to rework the HISC measures of effectiveness.

Co-Chair Kunimoto summarized comments: one Council meeting for the budget and one for policy and issues. Staff Buddenhagen suggested 5 – 6 months between, with one in beginning of FY (July/August) the second before the Legislative session (December). Member Lau emphasized the need to be flexible due to many meetings scheduled in December with Legislators.

ITEM 4. APPROVE ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN AND CHANGES TO WORKING GROUP STRUCTURE

MOTION: Member Lau moved to adopt proposed changes to the Strategic Plan; seconded by Member Keeno. Co-Chair Kunimoto suggested one addition: clarify budget process and schedule. Member Lau said that his motion was only for his

changes. Co-Chair Kunimoto suggested a motion for all; Member Lau withdrew his original motion.

MOTION: Members Lau/Callejo moved and to adopt the Strategic Plan with proposed amendments as suggested by Member Lau and budget schedule as needed for clarity, dropping the Integrated Working Group, but keeping all the other Working Groups.

Comments

Dr. Reimer (HDOA) liked the changes proposed by Member Lau; asked about the process. Co-Chair Kunimoto: Staff Buddenhagen will work with Member Lau to make changes.

Ms. Cathy Goggel from Animal Rights Hawaii expressed concern regarding individual Working Groups, when individual Non Government Organization (NGO) ideas do not jive with the majority; she questioned whether HISC groups considered and if they have a voice at all. Cathy, who attends the Established Pest WG, felt her voice had not been heard.

Staff Buddenhagen commented that there is now a website with all Working Group Minutes located at <http://www.hawaiiinvasivespecies.org/hisc/> He assured that all those who want to be included will be included on mailing lists for HISC meetings.

Co-Chair Kunimoto called for the vote: Approved as amended.

ITEM 5. DISCUSS WORKING GROUP PRIORITIES IN CONTEXT OF STRATEGIC PLAN FY 09: WORKING GROUPS TO PRESENT MAIN PRIORITIES

Public Outreach

Mr. Chris Dacus, from DOT, gave an update as new Chair of the Public Outreach Working Group. Dacus replaces the previous chair Maile Sakamoto, from DOH. The groups focus is on the promotion of a number of statewide messages and help to support the prevention and established pests.

Christy Martin responded to a question from Member Callejo about public outreach work with the DOE. Martin outlined work carried out by outreach staff with teachers on Maui using the Hoike curriculum (<http://www.hear.org/hoike/>) and through an education program funded through HISC at the Moanalua Gardens.

Prevention

Domingo Carvalho, from HDOA, reported on the Working Group for Carol Okada. He discussed the West Nile Virus work, avian disease coordination, hull fouling and ballast detection and prevention efforts, and the Pacific Invasives Learning Network initiative which is a peer learning program with South Pacific Island trading partners.

Established Pests Tony Montgomery gave an update as new Chair of the Established Pests Working Group with a special focus on the Aquatic Invasive Species program. Montgomery emphasized the need to maintain the capacity for early detection and rapid response similar to that provided by the invasive species committees.

Member Lau asked about the Invicta database. Cravalho responded: the database covers permits, inspections, and detections. He indicated that the information is not shareable outside of DOA at this point.

Co-chair Thielen expressed her approval that Tony Montgomery should take the role of Chair for the Established Pests Working Group because of his role in the management of marine invaders, and indicated that this issue has an important interaction with non-point sources of pollution, another issue of concern.

Research and Technology

Staff Buddenhagen, HISC Coordinator, DLNR, gave an update on the research and technology development efforts of HISC for Chair Dunn, University of Hawai'i. The strategic plan emphasizes biocontrol, marine issues and science based risk assessment.

Resources

Liz Corbin reported as ~~Chair~~, Susan Gray-Ellis is a new staff member supporting this working group. Resources Working Group plan aims to find corporate funding sources for some of the invasive species effort, document funding needs for addressing invasive species, and identified a need to move projects funded by the HISC special appropriations to departmental budgets where possible.

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Member Lau indicated that some departments may be better placed than others to get funds budgeted from the legislature to address invasive species issues.

West Nile Virus

Member Lau, Deputy Director of Environmental Health, HDOH, reported that HDOH was very grateful to the HISC for the funding received. HDOH has been very active with many partners in their efforts to detect WNV in bird and mosquito populations and suppress mosquitoes in high risk areas.

ITEM 6. HAWAII PACIFIC WEED RISK ASSESSMENT (HPWRA) PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Chuck Chimera reported on progress in the use of the HPWRA. He described the HPWRA process as an objective science based background check that is done on introduced plant species, leading to a determination that a plant has a low risk or high risk of becoming invasive (or there is insufficient information). Seven hundred and seventeen (717) species have been assessed to date, with one third being designated as as high risk. Chimera has been reviewing species suggested for use as biofuels. Sixty percent (60%) of these potential biofuel species are considered high risk. Chimera previously worked with the landscape industry and early detection teams on Oahu, Maui, and Kauai. His efforts include a number of public outreach efforts. The same weed risk assessment model was used in Australia where it was shown that within 10 years a screening program pays for itself, in terms of costs avoided by keeping potential invaders out of Australia. In addition, a similar model to the HPWRA is used to inform technical advisory groups to make decisions about whether or not to allow new species to be introduced. According to a recent landscape industry survey in Hawaii, 66% of respondents supported mandatory screening using input from the HPWRA and concerned parties.

Co-chair Thielen suggested that work was needed to work one on one with government agencies to ensure that planting lists are compatible with the HPWRA. Intensive one on one work is needed with the agencies.

Christy Martin said that some progress has been made with arborists, Maui County, and others, but that more needs to be done.

Co-chair Kunimoto asked about the cost and turn around time for users.

Chimera responded that many species are already assessed and the information is publicly available. Return time is typically between one half to two days.

Co-chair Kunimoto recommended that more targeted outreach be undertaken to promote the use of the HPWRA for planting programs.

Patrick Chee asked if such a recommendation could be dealt with through a rule making process as mandated by the HISC legislature.

Co-chair Kunimoto said that the process of making rules under HISC was a larger issue and at this time they would only consider the recommendation.

Co-chair Thielen recommended to adopt the motion with the amendment that HPWRA and outreach staff work with state and county agencies to identify the ones with planting guidelines, seeking to gain their support of this recommendation and informing them of the weed risk assessment services we provide.

Motion: Thielen / Keeno moved to adopt staff recommendation: That state agencies conducting planting operations request HPWRA scores, when available, as one of the tools to assist decision makers in determining whether of not to plant a species. For species that have scored as potentially invasive in Hawai'i, this information should underscore the need for containment plans or remediation efforts if it becomes necessary. HPWRA and outreach staff should work with state and county agencies to identify the ones with planting guidelines, seeking to gain their support of this recommendation and informing them of the weed risk assessment services we provide.

Approved as amended.

ITEM 7. BRIEFING ON CURRENT BIOCONTROL ISSUES INCLUDING PROPOSED CONTROL OF STRAWBERRY GUAVA

Dr. Neil Reimer presented background information about biocontrol in Hawaii. Since biocontrol was introduced in Hawaii in the 1890s, more than 240 biocontrol agents have been established. He noted that mongoose was not a biocontrol introduction.

The scientific process of selecting agents that are specific to the target has improved significantly in the last 30 years with the emphasis now on eliminating any detrimental environmental impacts. Since 1970 none of the biological control agents have attacked

non-target organisms. USDA, FWS, HDOA and OEQC are involved in the regulation of biological control introductions through a publicly consulted environmental assessment process. He outlined as an example some efforts that are in progress to find a biocontrol agent for the *Erythrina* gall wasp, that attacks endemic Wiliwili trees, and other introduced species of *Erythrina*. He described some of the limitations of biocontrol, but concluded the high benefit to cost ratio makes biocontrol a viable option for managing some invasive species.

Tracy Johnson from USDA Forest Service works on biocontrol projects for invasive plants that impact native forest in Hawaii. Johnson described a number of invasive alien plant species impacting native forests that may be targeted for biocontrol. He described research initiated in 1988 to find a species specific biocontrol agent for strawberry guava. The biocontrol agent they found, *Tectococcus ovatus*, is specific to strawberry guava (does not attack any other species except strawberry guava). The biocontrol agent spreads via wind and its dispersal is passive. Hence the biocontrol spread is expected to be slow. Federal environmental assessments and USDA and HDOA permit reviews were completed and approved for the strawberry guava agent. The Forest Service voluntarily initiated an environmental assessment process under state laws and more outreach and public listening sessions are planned. Johnson showed pictures from Brazil of strawberry guava with infestations of *Tectococcus* right next to the healthy common guava, which is historically more important in Hawaii as a crop. Strawberry guava covers hundreds of thousands of land throughout Hawaii, and its range is still expanding. He showed an image of highly impacted native forests where strawberry guava prevents the regeneration of native ohia forests. The agent is expected to reduce fruit productivity, much as it does in its native range in Brazil, where the cost of control with mechanical means is high on a per acre basis, and requires continuous inputs. Nevertheless, biocontrol is expected to be a cost effective means of reducing the rate of spread.

An unidentified speaker asked whether both the types of strawberry guava would be controlled. Johnson replied that both types would be controlled and reiterated that common guava would not be impacted.

Anjie Pham thought strawberry guava was uncommon on Oahu and asked if native birds depend on strawberry guava. Johnson responded that native birds did not depend on strawberry guava, explaining that native birds typically feed on the nectar of ohia, or other native species; though alien birds are known to spread guava. Anjie expressed concern about the aesthetics of the forest and the role

Phil Andresser asked for confirmation that the proposed biocontrol agent is a tool in the toolbox that is expected to make all other control methods currently used more effective, and that it would not kill trees outright. Johnson confirmed that this was the case.

Teya Penniman said that strawberry guava was controlled on Lanai to protect native bird habitat, and that the personnel costs for this control exceeded \$10,000 per acre.

Paul Conry asked that the Council support increased outreach efforts with respect to responding to the public's concerns as part of the environmental assessment process.

Anne Marie LaRosa wanted to clarify that biocontrol has never resulted in eradication in Hawaii, and she could not think of any way for it to be eradicated with available

resources; she believes strawberry guava is here to stay. She said that all we are trying to do is keep it under control.

Co-chair Kunimoto asked for further comment from the Council

Member Lau noted that the recommendation was worded as a general recommendation and asked whether it should be a specific recommendation about strawberry guava. Second, he stated he would like some reassurance that we would not be making some sort of decision that could be construed as bypassing the environmental assessment process under the environmental laws. His sense was that we wouldn't since it was a voluntary submission, but was concerned with who would be the accepting agency? His third concern was the budget related to strawberry guava and wondered what the budgetary implications of that might be.

On Member Lau's third concern, Co-chair Thielen said she thought the recommendation should be a statement of general support for scientifically researched, regulated and approved biocontrol as a tool for combating invasive species; because she has seen from the presentations that there are some invasive species that we will not be able to control using labor. As long as thorough protections are in place, she said she hopes that the council would support biocontrol. As far as the budget is concerned, she thought that would come up on a case by case. She did not think the general recommendation would have budgetary implications. She further stated that she thought more information needs to be distributed, explaining that we are really trying to protect native forests, habitats and ecosystems without eradicating a species that might have some landscape value. She said she would support the recommendation of general and the supplemental recommendation that encourage additional outreach on this particular topic (strawberry guava control).

Member Lau wondered if this would lead to a request for more HISC funds.

Co-chair Thielen thought DLNR would be doing the environmental review under the state EA process.

Christy Martin informed everyone that listening sessions are planned on each island to support the EA process and respond to public concerns, but clarified that there is no budget request being made.

Member Lau recommended that we vote on the two issues separately. He said that we are making a general recommendation without budgetary implications.

Corbin / Callejo moved that the Council issue a statement of support for scientifically researched, regulated and approved biocontrol as a tool for combating invasive species.

Motion approved as amended.

Thielen / Lau moved that the Council support a statewide outreach effort to distribute information and address community concerns with respect to the *Tectococcus* biocontrol Environment Assessment process.

Motion approved.

ITEM 8. NEW BUSINESS

Staff Buddenhagen said that we need to arrange a meeting in August to approve the budget. Co-Chair Kunimoto directed staff to find a common date and inform HISC.

Member Lau asked about status of the Brown Tree Snake (BTS) project, following previous meeting's substantial budget request. Dr. Campbell gave a quick update: BTS is moving along with success, but still faces significant budgetary issues. Of the \$6.2 million budget total, Department of the Interior (DOI) is currently providing \$ 2.9 – 3 million and they are working on next year's funding. The Department of Defense (DOD) has different parts to it: the Air Force has put a \$3 million line item into their budget; the Navy has not yet addressed this issue.

ITEM 9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cathy Goggel asked how to get minority issues considered by a WG, because members of the public are supposed to participate as well, but the wording seems to say that the majority of the WG may squash proposals for more humane disposal of animals.

Staff Buddenhagen said that the public is present at HISC/Working Group meetings and may comment during the public comment period. Ms. Goggel indicated that the views of minority opinions from the WG were not adequately addressed.

Co-Chair Kunimoto agreed that the comments at HISC and working groups would be incorporated into the minutes and posted on line for all to read. There should be a way for us to be able to hear that.

ITEM 10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 12:17 p.m. by Co-Chair Kunimoto, following motion from Member Lau.