

Title: Invasive Species Education and Outreach on Hawai'i Island

Organization: Big Island Invasive Species Committee

Award(s): \$30,000

Introduction: The Big Island Invasive Species Committee works to identify, detect, eradicate and control the highest risk invasive species likely to impact the environment, economy, or human health on the Island of Hawai'i. Our motto is *Hoala i ka Maka*: Healing the land; Awakening the people. BIISC outreach strives to educate and empower the members of our community and Hawaii Island's vibrant green industry to take an active role in preventing and controlling the spread of invasive species. BIISC thanks the Hawaii Invasive Species Council for funding 100% of our outreach budget this year.

Achievements in FY13

Deliverable 1: Provide consistent representation for invasive species issues at community events: BIISC reached an estimated 6,210 residents at 28 community fairs and other events. Key messages included containing pets, and "Don't pack a pest."

Deliverable 2: Provide targeted outreach to Hawaii's green industry professionals: BIISC reached an estimated 1,535 members of the agricultural and horticultural industry through attendance at 21 green industry events.

Deliverable 3: Educate students about invasive species issues: BIISC staff provided classroom lessons, activities, fieldtrips and workshops to approximately 650 students, from preschool to retirement age.

Deliverable 4: Provide directed messaging on target species to appropriate audiences: BIISC staff visited community association meetings to present information and obtain rights of entry to eradicate three target species, directly communicating with at least 60 residents in areas of control activities. BIISC staff actively promotes Little Fire Ant materials in cooperation with the Hawaii Ant Lab at all events. BIISC developed and printed 400 sets of high-quality invasive species I.D. cards, for general distribution.



New BIISC Manager Springer Kaye with new Big Island partner, the Office of Mauna Kea Management, and weed pull volunteers.

Other Activities in FY13

Progress on Eradication Targets: BIISC has six island-wide eradication target species. During this reporting period, BIISC revamped target species informational brochures to include permissions and treatment information, and a new more polished look.

New Management: A review of funding levels and efficacy of outreach work led to the difficult decision to move from an outreach position at BIISC to a professional Public Relations contract. BIISC does not intend to give up its presence in the community, but will strive to make it more effective, and more relevant. Embracing the BIISC motto: *Hoala i ka maka*, all BIISC staff have begun to engage and empower communities to take the lead in invasive species control in their neighborhood communities.

Policy initiatives: BIISC Executive Committee members gave a presentation on albizia to the Big Island Caucus of the state legislature, with 100% attendance. Follow-up included the first Albizia Stakeholder's Meeting in Hilo with over 40 in attendance, and HISC support for an albizia demonstration project in the Puna district, leading to two submitted bills, and unprecedented state, county, and private cooperation.

Next Generation: With the assistance of HISC and private funds, BIISC supported two PIPES interns, a summer HYCC intern, and hosted two HYCC teams this summer. Each participant was trained in key statewide messages for invasive species prevention and control. A session on policy and funding was held for the long term interns, to help them appreciate the need for continued advocacy as they continue their career paths.

Additional Information

Protecting the Biggest Island: Public outreach is a key component of success in invasive species management. We can't do it alone, and you don't develop great advocates and volunteers without constant contact. The direct reliance of residents on natural resources, which may include invasive species, presents both obstacles and opportunities to engage Big Island residents in BIISC activities. BIISC looks forward to a new chapter working with a professional public relations firm to develop a communications strategy and direct marketing campaign for FY14. Additionally, we hope a new strategy of channeling out outreach efforts toward directly training and assisting community groups in invasive species control and advocacy for their community will reap long term benefits in public recognition and support for invasive species control efforts at the state level.

Contact Information :

For more information, please contact:
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BIISC staff and long-time partner Malama O Puna attracted dozens of volunteers to remove mangroves from anchialine ponds.