



## Brown Tree Snake Rapid Response Training FY15 HISC Grant Final Report

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The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), received a grant of \$20,505 from the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) in Fiscal Year 2015 to support training opportunities for field staff to become part of Hawaii's Brown Tree Snake (BTS) Rapid Response Team (RRT).

In response to the threat of BTS moving from Guam to other jurisdictions in the Pacific, the US Congress authorized the Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act of 2004. This act created the Brown Tree Snake Technical Working Group, an interagency network including DLNR, Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA), and the HISC, as well as federal partners including US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Department of Agriculture, and US Geological Survey (USGS). USGS provides oversight for the BTS RRT, a Guam-based program that maintains a trained network of rapid responders that can be utilized in the event of a BTS sighting outside of Guam.

At the time of application, the Hawaii-based members of the BTS RRT included 37 individuals who received the full three-week training on BTS detection and handling. Of those individuals, 23 were HDOA staff, five were DLNR staff, four were USFWS or USDA staff, and five were staff from CGAPS or the Invasive Species Committees. Of the five DLNR staff, three were with the Hawaii Island DOFAW Branch, one was with the Kaua'i DOFAW Branch, and one was with the Maui DOFAW Branch.

As the manager of a large portion of Hawaii's public lands, increasing the ability of DLNR DOFAW staff to contribute to the BTS RRT would enhance Hawaii's capacity for effective, rapid response to the introduction of BTS. This grant was used to support four new DOFAW BTS RRT trainees as well as one individual who previously took the initial training but was due for a refresher course. These individuals included:

- Hans Sin, Wildlife Manager, West Hawaii District
- Jason Vercelli, Wildlife Biologist, Kaua'i District
- Stephanie Franklin, Wildlife Biologist, Maui District
- Fern Duvall, Wildlife Biologist, Maui District, and
- Lanky Morrill, Forestry and Wildlife Technician, O'ahu District.

The BTS RRT training course is a two-week program based on Guam. Major costs under this project included airfare (approximately \$2,000/pp) and per diem (\$145/pp). A rental car was also needed to transport trainees from the hotel to various field sites. All five trainees successfully completed the training course under the direction of USGS biologist Adam Knox. These five trainees are added to the roster of the Hawaii-based BTS RRT and have committed to participating in a rapid response effort if needed.