

HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL FINAL REPORT FY16

Proposal Title: Expansion of Aquatic Invasive Species Program

Content area: Control, Prevention, and Research

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Project Overview:

The expansion of AIS project entails two separate projects conducted in Molokai and Lanai. These projects are described below.

1) Molokai Gorilla Ogo Control

The invasive alga species gorilla ogo (*Gracilaria salicornia*) densely populates the southwest side of Molokai. Gorilla ogo threatens native aquatic ecosystems including coral and fish. The office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) has recently spearheaded an effort to implement a community based invasive algae control project on Molokai. The AIS team along with Molokai community members and the Nature Conservancy are working to map the distribution of invasive algae. The next step is to develop a control plan to begin removal. We seek travel funds to conduct site visits, additional monitoring, and participate in planning workshops and meetings. Given the extensive distribution of gorilla ogo on the island, considerable thought, planning, and resources will be required to develop and fund the control plan. Given DAR's experience planning and implementing invasive algae control projects; we would be able to contribute considerably to this effort.

2) Lanai Aquatic Invasive Species Assessment

Pulama Lanai is in the process of developing an environmental management plan for Lanai. Pulama Lanai has partnered with Conservation International (CI) to develop the marine aspect of the plan. CI has asked for DAR's AIS team for support in making recommendations concerning AIS control and prevention projects. There is very little information regarding aquatic invasive species on Lanai. Therefore, an AIS assessment is necessary in order to make informed recommendations. We request funds for a team to travel to Lanai to conduct AIS field surveys. The team will be composed of DAR biologists, field technicians and a biofouling and AIS expert from NOAA.

Project Outcomes

1) Molokai Gorilla Ogo Control

- The AIS team conducted field surveys in May to continue mapping the distribution and extent of invasive algae in Molokai. The AIS team worked with community members to map approximately 2-miles of remote coastline. This information is being used to develop an invasive algae control plan for Molokai.
- DAR has been meeting with the Molokai community members, OHA, and researchers to find grant funding and a host organization for the Molokai algae removal project.

2) Lanai Aquatic Invasive Species Assessment

- The AIS team completed the field portion of the AIS assessment in April. We worked with Conservation International and Pulama Lanai to conduct surveys on the east and west shores of Lanai. We also had a chance to visit two Lanai High School Science classes to

provide information on aquatic invasive species and how students could help protect their aquatic resources.

- We produced an AIS Assessment Report for Conservation International and Pulama Lanai to be incorporated in the Environmental Management Plan for Lanai. Fortunately Lanai does not have many of the marine AIS issues as the neighboring islands, therefore a key recommendation of the plan focused on AIS prevention measures.