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January 18, 2018

### SUBMITTAL

TO: Co-chairs and Members  
Hawaii Invasive Species Council  
State of Hawaii

FROM: John-Carl Watson, Former Planner, & Joshua Atwood, Program Supervisor  
Hawaii Invasive Species Council

SUBJECT: Requesting adoption of the *Strategic Plan for the Control and Management of Albizia in Hawaii* as a HISC guiding document for future policy and funding efforts

### Background

The Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) recognized albizia as an important invasive species in Resolution 11-2. Since then, the HISC has invested in multiple albizia control strategies, including the support of the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) and their Albizia Control Teams, as well as mapping efforts, economic analyses, and initial research by the US Forest Service into the use of biological control to limit the further spread of albizia. In 2013, Senate Resolution SR41-SD1 requested that the HISC create a comprehensive plan for the control of albizia throughout the State.

Attached to this submittal is a statewide strategic plan for the control and management of albizia in Hawaii. The purpose of this strategic plan is not to provide site-specific management actions but to provide large-scale objectives and a framework to minimize the impacts of albizia on the environment, human health, and infrastructure by:

- Describing statewide impacts of albizia
- Summarizing available control methods
- Recommending directions for future research on detection and control methodologies
- Supporting and encouraging the development of island or site-specific management plans
- Identifying priorities for HISC funding to support research, detection, and control efforts.

This plan, if adopted by the HISC, could be utilized to direct future funding and collaboration efforts supported by the HISC or other entities.

### Discussion

Native to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, and the Solomon Islands, albizia (*Falcataria moluccana*) is a fast growing tropical tree that was introduced to Hawaii in 1917 by Joseph Rock

as an ornamental plant and for reforestation purposes. This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of albizia's arrival to Hawaii.

Based on initial imagery analysis, the plan estimates that there are roughly 20,000 acres on Oahu infested with albizia, and 43,000 acres infested in east Hawaii Island. Albizia has been evaluated by the Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment as a high risk invasive species.

While albizia is widespread across Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii Islands, localized control can be utilized to minimize damage to people and infrastructure. This has been demonstrated by the BIISC's Albizia Control Teams, through which BIISC has collaborated with communities, government, and utility companies to target albizia near power infrastructure, roadways, and homes.

The attached strategic plan does not provide a complete guide to controlling all albizia in Hawaii. Rather, it provides the tools needed to develop site-specific plans and can serve as a guiding document for future policy and funding efforts. The plan includes a template for community groups to create site-specific management plans, suggestions for landowner or agency actions relating to albizia, suggestions for future research directions, and potential policies that could be proposed as legislation and/or administrative rules.

One potential utility for this plan is to seek a legislative appropriation specific to supporting the objectives and implementation tasks described in the plan. This could function as a separate HISC Call for Proposals in future years.

This plan was first submitted for HISC review and adoption on August 24, 2017. The HISC did not adopt the plan at that time, requesting an additional review of liability concerns in the document. HISC staff subsequently met with legal counsel provided by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HISC staff had previously met with legal counsel provided by the Department of Land and Natural Resources). Based on guidance provided by legal counsel, additional language was added to the plan to clarify the definition of "hazard trees," highlight this definition within the document, and provide additional guidance in the site-specific planning template encouraging project managers to thoroughly consider liability and compliance issues and utilize appropriate signage in project areas.

#### Legal Authority

- HRS 194-2 (a): Establishes the HISC for the purpose of cabinet-level coordination and planning among state departments, federal agencies, and international and local initiatives
- HRS 194-2 (a)(2): Advise, consult, and coordinate invasive species-related efforts with and between the departments of agriculture, land and natural resources, health, and transportation, as well as state, federal, international, and privately organized programs and policies.

#### Recommendations

1. That the HISC adopt the *Strategic Plan for the Control and Management of Albizia in Hawaii* as a HISC guiding document for future policy and funding efforts, provided that portions of the document may be updated in the future based on new information.

#### Attachments:

1. *Strategic Plan for the Control and Management of Albizia in Hawaii*