



Date: May 20, 2020

RE: Public Comments Submitted to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

Aloha HISC Members,

On behalf of CGAPS, thank you for allowing your staff to collaborate on the strategic planning process. We feel strongly that having the same Strategy for both networks will greatly enhance the implementation of the most important aspects of the nearly 150-point Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan. Although progress was being made on the HIBP, the remaining priority actions are really difficult, and by selecting and focusing on a subset of those 150 HIBP actions. The HISC staff should be commended on their leadership on this plan.

Second, it is clear that some of the HISC & CGAPS 2025 Strategies will be even more difficult to achieve with the economic situation that we find ourselves in. I know that you have been advocating for all of Hawai'i, finding ways where we can move forwards safely. If I may, I'd like to frame some of our work in light of Covid-19.

- Moving towards greater self-sufficiency in food production is a priority. Residents are also gardening and trying to grow food, but they are learning what farmers already know: invasive species makes food production REALLY challenging. We need to include invasive species prevention, response, and biocontrol in our move to support local agriculture.
- We see more people using public spaces such as hiking trails, nearshore reefs for exercise, hunting, fishing, and other activities. We need to consider protecting these resources from invasion from pests such as little fire ants and the new coral disease that is killing coral in Florida. If we cannot fail to keep these resources safe and available for use.
- The stay at home and safer at home orders also bring to mind our work on little fire ants. There are currently 10 infestations on O'ahu alone, and some are in communities and yards. There is a need to continue work not just in forests and fields, but also in homes.

Here is some suggested language that "translates" some of this work in light of emergency funding opportunities:

- Enhancing resilience of food distribution systems through mitigating impacts of invasive species on local food crops
- Facilitating harbor infrastructure protection and vessel operations through invasive species reduction

- Enhancing public safety during safer-at-home and outdoor recreation through controlling harmful invasive species in residential areas, public trails, forest reserves, and nearshore reefs

Mahalo for all that you're doing already and for considering these comments.

Aloha,
Christy Martin
CGAPS