

HISC FY 2023 Funding Report

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UH Mānoa CTAHR

Title: Outreach and Extension for Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death, DLNR PO C31364

Fiscal year: January 2023 to March 2024

Amount: \$23,075

What was accomplished:

- HISC has supported our extension efforts on ROD for five years. Our work is having an impact. A survey conducted by the state Coordinating Group on Invasive Species in December 2022 demonstrated that the extension programs on ohia, ohia forests, and the threat of Rapid Ohia Death have made significant changes in public awareness and perceptions. Eighty nine percent of respondents reported knowing what ohia trees are, up from 68% in 2017; 80% had heard of Rapid Ohia Death, up from 48% in 2017, and an impressive 85% support funding high-value native forests and removing hooved animal from within the fenced areas.
- We held an in-person outreach professionals workshop in Hilo that drew 35 natural resource professionals from Hawai'i Island, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu, and Kaua'i and included staff from CGAPS, the ISCS, Watershed Partnerships, DOFAW, and other agencies. Attendees learned about scientific updates in pathology, entomology, and progress in developing ROD-resistant lines of 'ōhi'a; Hawaiian mo 'olelo about 'ōhi'a, and ways of conducting effective extension programs. They were able to visit field sites to see ROD firsthand and visit experimental entomology and pathology sites and the greenhouse where 'ōhi'a seedlings are being tested for resistance to ROD. Of the ten topics taught, participants reported an increase of 2 points on a scale of 1 to 5 for six topics and an increase of one point in three others. We surveyed participants from our 2022 workshop and found that for each of 21 online sessions, an average of 69% of the participants reported increases in knowledge and 83% reported that they would use the information gained in their outreach programs.
- We held an in-person 'Ōhi'a Love Fests in Hilo and in Kona for the first time. The Kona event was hosted by Terraformation at their facility. Exhibitors at each festival included the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (whose assistance was vital to the events, CTAHR Master Gardeners and Diagnostics, Terraformation, the Kaloko-Honkohau National Park, the Hawaii Forest Industry Association, Birds not Mosquitoes, and others. About 150 people attended each event.
- We again were asked to staff an informational booth at the craft fair for the 2023 Merrie Monarch in Hilo. We recruited volunteers to help staff the booth over the four days of the fair. We were able to speak directly with some key 'ōhi'a forest stakeholders including lei makers, hula halau, and woodworkers about ROD and what can be done to protect 'ōhi'a trees.
- We coordinated a symposium on ROD with eight talks at the 2023 Hawai'i Conservation Conference.
- We hosted informational tables at the Wiliwili Festival in Kona, the Grow Hawaiian festival at the Amy BH Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden in Kona, and 18 other events. Over 2,500 people were contacted at these events.
- We communicated with the community through our social media accounts throughout the year (facebook.com/RapidOhiaDeath with 6,100 followers, 67 posts, "reach" of 67,348; instagram.com/ohialife, 6,450 followers, 64 posts, "reach" of 87,361 people).

- We kept up our ROD website (www.RapidOhiaDeath.org or cms.ctahr.hawaii.edu/rod), in particular keeping up a catalog of all the research articles published on ROD to date (<https://cms.ctahr.hawaii.edu/rod/RESEARCH/REFERENCES>).
- We respond annually to hundreds of calls and emails about ROD.