

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 26, 2018 ESRC Meeting

Endangered Species Recovery Committee
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Committee Members:

SUBJECT: Annual Review for Round-Leaved Chaff Flower (*Achyranthes splendens* var. *rotundata*), Kenai Industrial Park HCP by SWCA

BACKGROUND

The HCP compensatory mitigation measure implemented for this HCP was to create a new population of round-leaved chaff flower on the Kalaeloa Unit of the Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) from the genetic stock (seeds and cuttings) of the individuals at the project site.

In the 2017 Fiscal Year Annual Report (covering 2.5 years since outplanting) the license-holder is proposing the elimination of specific success criteria in the HCP. Those requested to be eliminated are the following:

Criterion #1, Outplanted individual survivorship:

- a. 100% of 120 outplanted individuals will survive by Year 1;*
- b. 95% of 120 outplanted individuals will survive by Year 2;*
- c. 85% of 120 outplanted individuals will survive by Year 3;*
- d. 75% of 120 outplanted individuals will survive by Years 4 and 5.*

The license-holder has not met Criterion 1 (93 of 159 or 58% of the original outplants remained alive as of June 14, 2017) and suggests that it should be eliminated because it does not adequately take into account the short life-span of this species and other criteria capture the goal intended for plant establishment and maintenance of a self-sustaining population.

Criterion #3, Number of seedlings recruited into the mature age class must be greater than the mortality rate of existing adult plants over a 5-year period, with a minimum recruitment of 25% of the number of outplanted individuals over a 5-year period.

The license-holder argues that it has proven very difficult to track because it is not obvious in many cases which plant the recruits originate from therefore presents a logistical difficulty.

RECOMMENDATION:

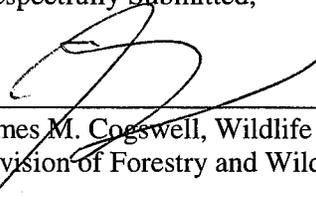
Criterion #1: Given that criterion #1 cannot be met DOFAW HCP staff supports eliminating it. Information readily available (although very limited) does indicate a short life-span for this species. However, there is a concern that the genetic diversity of the 3 original plants taken will not be maintained with the reduction in survival. The HCP (p. 27) listed a 30:1 offset ratio. Therefore, DOFAW HCP staff recommends that a new criterion be added that specifies that this

30:1 offset ratio must be achieved for each of the original plants taken, but can include mature, reproducing progeny of the outplants.

Criterion #3: DOFAW HCP staff does not support elimination because the criterion does not specify tracking of parent plants to achieve the specified success. The FY17 annual report indicates 20 plants (over 6 inches in height) have recruited and the latest field evaluation on January 18, 2018 recorded 35 seedlings with no seedling mortality. To meet the 25% success criteria 40 plants would be required.

We note that according to the HCP (p. 37) one of the triggers for a major amendment to the HCP is “Revisions to success criteria, if not achievable”. Therefore, elimination of Criterion # 1 may, according to the HCP (p. 37), require “implementation of all permit processing procedures applicable to an original incidental take authorization”.

Respectfully Submitted,



James M. Cogswell, Wildlife Program Manager
Division of Forestry and Wildlife