

April 3, 2008

Aloha Plant Industry Folks,

It has been a year since I sent out an update on the Codes of Conduct and Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment (HPWRA), so here are the highlights. Over the past year we (outreach staff from CGAPS, the Invasive Species Committees and the Hawaii Invasive Species Council) continued dialog with plant industry groups, botanical gardens, arboreta personnel to promote the Codes of Conduct project and promote the use of the HPWRA.

Also included is a summary of the ASLA Hawaii Chapter Invasive Plants Initiative, and a few ideas for where we, as a community, may want to go.

HPWRA

More than 600 plants have been screened using the HPWRA. Submit plant names for screening to hpwra@yahoo.com, this email address is used by both Weed Risk screeners.

1. **Chuck Chimera** replaced Shahin Ansari as Weed Risk Assessment screener late last year. Chuck lives and works on Maui, but has statewide responsibilities (ph: 808-264-1202).
2. Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) approved funding for a second Weed Risk Assessment screener, and **Stephanie Joe** was hired earlier this year. Stephanie is based at the University of Hawaii at Manoa Department of Botany, also with statewide responsibilities. (ph: 808-956-9512).
3. The vast majority of the 600+ plants that have been screened are already in Hawaii, although a growing number of species being submitted for screening are not widely planted or available. This would allow us to get the word out about these potentially invasive plants BEFORE they become popular and perhaps too widespread to remove. We are still interested in finding a way to communicate the results of these species widely, (the current practice is that the WRA screener sends the results to the requestor, and posts the screening on the HPWRA website). Input is welcome.

Codes of Conduct

The three major objectives of the Codes are, 1. To have all plant importers voluntarily submit names of plants not known to be present in Hawaii to be screened for invasive potential using the HPWRA; 2. Reach an agreement between natural resource managers and horticulture businesses to discontinue use and sale of several invasive ornamentals, and 3. Work together to identify and promote native or non-invasive plants for use in place of common invasive ornamentals. Individual Codes can be found on the Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii website, www.licHawaii.com/invasive_species.htm

1. Hawaii's agriculture industry is evolving with the end of sugar and pineapple crops. There has been a lot of emphasis on diversified agriculture, and CGAPS is concerned that some of these new crops may become invasive if allowed to escape. Voluntary use of the HPWRA could help, but a lot more outreach is needed for these groups.

□ We expanded outreach on voluntary Codes of Conduct to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation members and participating groups such as the Hawaii Export Nursery Association leaders and the Hawaii Fruit Growers Association.

2. With the growing demand for biofuels and other crop-to-energy projects in the state, there is significant concern about growing and using invasive species such as *Arundo donax* (giant reed), *Falcataria moluccana* (albizia). We believe that there are plant species that are non-invasive, that can be good biofuel crops for Hawaii--we just need to work together to find the best species for all.

□ Many species that are currently being used or considered for biofuels are being screened using the HPWRA, and this information will be shared once completed. Again, there is no way to keep people from importing or planting invasive species (that are not on the federal or state Noxious Weeds or Seeds Lists). Therefore, the only tool we have is education and voluntary kokua.

3. Codes of Conduct have been signed by the following groups:

- Oahu Nursery Growers Association (ONGA)
- Kauai Landscape Industry Council (KLIC)
- Hawaii Island Landscape Association (HILA)
- Maui Association of Landscape Professionals (MALP)
- Wal-Mart Garden Marts of Hawaii
- National Tropical Botanical Garden
- Lyon Arboretum
- Waimea Valley Audubon Center.

4. The Codes have been endorsed by the Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii (LICH) and the board of directors of the Big Island Association of Nurserymen (BIAN). BIAN is a large and diverse group of over 80 businesses, and the BIAN board has taken responsibility for educating their members and gaining buy-in.

It is our hope that everyone that imports, grows, buys, sells or specifies plants, also supports and signs the Codes of Conduct.

HASLA Invasive Species Initiative

CGAPS is working to support the ASLA Hawaii Chapters initiative to gather a list of invasive plants that are deemed unfit for cultivation. With the help of green industry professionals, HASLA looked at the 168 plants that were predicted to be invasive when screened by the HPWRA (out of more than 600 plants that had been screened at that time), and agreed to stop specifying 134 of these plants. The remaining 34 are considered valuable species without non-invasive alternatives. Industry association meetings are ongoing to create planting guidelines that could help prevent the spread of some of these plants when used in landscape settings.

1. This initiative provides a platform for finding greater common ground between conservation and green industry. It has also helped further the understanding of

- green industry about the HPWRA. Updating the list of invasive plants will be easier with just one list.
2. To date, HASLA, MALP and HILA have agreed to use this list. Meetings to review this list and create planting guidelines with the following still need to be conducted: Hawaii Association of Nurserymen, Hawaii Landscape and Irrigation Contractors, Hawaii Society of Urban Forestry Professionals, Hawaii Turfgrass Association, Kauaïi Landscape Industry Council, Aloha Arborist Association.
 3. Chris asks for your help by scheduling discussions within your groups. He is available to attend meetings for these discussions. Also available are the Weed Risk screeners or me, if you would like our participation.

Please join Chuck, Stephanie, Chris Dacus and me for a discussion on the Codes, HPWRA and ASLA initiative at the annual LICH Conference, Invasive Species Session on Thursday, May 29, 2008. If you have questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (808) 722-0995, or via email at christym@rocketmail.com.

Thank you for your time and your willingness to work together to protect Hawaii.

Aloha,
Christy Martin

Christy Martin, Public Information Officer
CGAPS-Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species
P.O. Box 61441
Honolulu, HI 96839
Cell: (808) 722-0995
FAX: (808) 956-4710
www.cgaps.org