



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 4/11/08, for immediate release

Pages: 2

Contact: Christy Martin, Public Information Officer
CGAPS—Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species
Ph: (808) 722-0995
Email: christym@rocketmail.com

Brown Treesnake Working Group to hold an update

Honolulu, Hawaii- The Brown Treesnake Working Group will meet on April 16-18 to discuss progress and challenges related to managing brown treesnakes and preventing their movement. Agency representatives and cooperators from Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the continental U.S. will provide brief overviews on their efforts related to brown treesnake control, containment and research over the past year. The public and media are invited to attend.

The meeting will be held at the Hawaii Prince Hotel, 100 Holomoana Street in Honolulu.

General Schedule:

Day 1: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Day one topics will include a general overview of the history and current issues related to brown treesnakes, recent research and management developments. The morning will also feature the results of a new economic evaluation of the potential impacts to tourism in Hawai‘i. This marks the first study that uses visitor surveys to more accurately define potential impacts on the visitor industry if these snakes were present in Hawai‘i.

Day 2: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Thursday, April 17

Day two topics will include more updates on recent research and management followed by regional updates on snakes and similar species.

Day 3: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Friday, April 18

Day three topics will focus on invasive species issues associated with military growth on Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, and increasing inspection capacity and regulatory authorities.

The Brown Treesnake Working Group was formed in 1996 and is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, and the Interior; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); the Territory of Guam; and the State of Hawai‘i.

(more)

Additional Information

The accidental introduction of the brown treesnake to Guam placed the species beyond its historic native range, triggering a cascade of extinctions and an ecological disaster. The brown treesnake is responsible for the extinction or local extirpation of nine of the 12 native forest birds, two of 11 native lizards on Guam, and have contributed to the decline of native fruit bats. Brown treesnakes have also imposed significant stress on the island's economic and agricultural interests, thereby harming the integrity and environmental stability of the island's ecosystems and economy.

An excellent summary of the BTS invasion history on Guam can be found at:
<http://www.mesc.usgs.gov/resources/education/bts/invasion/history.asp>

Christy Martin is the Public Information Officer for the statewide Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS).

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