

Hawaii Invasive Species Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 27, 2010
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
HDOA, PQ Conference Room

MINUTES

Attendance:

Voting Members-Laura Thielen (DLNR), Sandra Kunimoto (HDOA), Laurence Lau (HDOH), Dr. Kenneth Grace (UH), Francis Keeno (HDOT)

Neil Reimer (HDOA-PPC), Rachel Neville (OISC), Mark Fox (TNC), Chris Dacus (HDOT), Christy Martin (CGAPS), Paul Conry (DLNR-DOFAW), Keevin Minami (HDOA-PQ), Carol Okada (HDOA-PQ), Tony Montgomery (DLNR-DAR), Dan Clark (USFWS), Christy Finlayson (DLNR-DOFAW/PCSU and HISC), Jacqueline Kozak (HISC), Meredith Kuba (DBEDT), Rob Hauff (DLNR-DOFAW)

- 1. Call to Order (Chairs Thielen and Kunimoto)**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Old Business/Approval of Minutes:** FY2010 HISC Meeting minutes were not recovered from last year. Chairs Thielen and Kunimoto suggest that they be reconstructed and submitted.
 - Paul Conry-Administrator of DOFAW, Acting Deputy of the Department for a few months. Announcing a new position: HISC Coordinator, Christy Finlayson. Began in July. Filled the gap. We had Mindy Wilkinson, who has taken a job on the mainland. Christy F. has done really well in this job. We are pleased to have her on our team.
- 4. Working Group updates**
 - **Public Outreach Working Group (POWG), Chris Dacus:** I have been chair for POWG for past 2 years. In your handouts, you have our budget breakdown. We have 30 people in our POWG. Met seven times in the last year. We started last year with strategic goal setting focusing on statewide objectives that bring together a lot of agencies. Finished one of them, which were biocontrol education materials. Halfway done with 2 of them. Making progress on the fourth. Have had a reduction in staff due to cuts last year. Hired a new position: HISC Communications Coordinator. Jacqueline Kozak.

Lau: Are your goals supplementary to the 2008 goals?

Dacus: Following along strategic plan goals, plus key messages. We have a passionate collaborative group. We tried to tackle some bigger items. Four goals. 1. Prevention: educational outreach materials at airports.

Still working on installing those. 2. and 3. were outreach to nursery and landscaping industry. Plant Pono project and best management practices. We are working on a website for Plant Pono. Working with HDOA on BMPs to prevent spread of pests. Biocontrol educational materials were in collaboration with HDOA.

Lau: Did you do a public survey?

Christy M.: CGAPS usually conducts them. We decided not to do it this year because we don't have burning questions. We have one planned for the next year. About invasiveness of plants and consumer choices. Awareness and support of biocontrol. And normal questions that we always ask.

Lau: I would encourage future surveys to measure if people are changing their behavior. Can get a sense if all of this education is leading to better action.

- **Prevention Working Group, Carol Okada:** Last year HDOA PQ had drastic reductions in force (RIFs), majority of Prevention WG funds went to bring back 22 positions. We were faced with losing 50. That in itself made it so the neighbor island ports stayed open. Same time export industry suffered a blow, facing a CA embargo, got program back on line. As far as PQ, this was critically needed for ports and industry. We are now on 50% special funds, 50% on general funds. We expect to get them back one day. Special funds used for staffing. We are still requesting general funded position. Would bring back all but four positions.
We did continue the weed risk assessment. Important asset to HISC objectives. As we do energy projects, lots of materials that are planning to be brought in for research. Need it not just for landscape and Ag crops, but for energy too.
Funding for DAR ballast water and hull fouling. Did some hull fouling inspections, maintained compliance with hull fouling. Tony can explain more.
These are all vital aspects of the working group.

Lau: Detecting more or same new species?

Okada: Because we haven't brought back the 24 inspectors, hard to tell, but we are detecting more past the port of entry. Front side is lacking so we will find more in the back side.

Lau: Is the threat of pests decreasing or increasing?

Okada: Increasing. It is about commerce. Not as much coming from the mainland. Coming from foreign. Other tropical environments Pest types are

changing. Everyone is affected by the economy. Because of this climate, we are all working better together out of necessity. Pests are coming in one after another. Never a time to catch up, having to move on to the next one.

Lau: Speaking as someone who reports to the legislature on low inspection, high rates of food sanitation violations, I encourage you to report it anyways. Even though the numbers may go down (explain about few inspectors), at some point does sink in with funding powers. Track over time. Did a study...number of inspections went down, number of violations went up, weren't getting inspections as often. Annual report does address it. Important that we do highlight these measures of effectiveness and how we are doing them.

Thielen: Break down past years. Common average of inspector citations?

Okada: We have interceptions on insect side. We had it prior and after riffs. Can see the decline.

T: If you see same average per person of discoveries and violations, you would think if we have full funding we would be catching this more violations. Being able to illustrate for policy makers is important.

T: The HISC funds had gone to support the inspectors through last fiscal year and now under HDOA?

K: HISC provided 600K, which did not cover all 22 alone, but with our special fund could retain them. Thank you very much.

T: Thanks to the group for that.

- **Established Pests Working Group, Tony Montgomery:**
EPWG does not change too much year to year. From speaking to the ISC coordinators, there is a sense of gratitude to this Council, been rough times in the past. AIS program too. The ISCs are continuing, notice in this budget request. Went through working group meeting. Resources WG are actually less than the recommended from the WG. Christy F. can talk about other funding that will fill the gaps. These have been tough times. EPWG are very labor heavy in the costs. Takes a lot of money to go after these organisms in forest and in the water. Points of interest: BIISC has had a substantial increase, realized that they took too big of a cut last year. A lot of discussion about biocontrol under HDOA. Strongly supported. First time this WG supported that. Low funding request, but hope can improve in future years. Other updates: No specifics on the ISCs, on AIS side, I do appreciate the support that the Council has provided. Limited our scope but we can maintain our capacity. A lot of projects behind the scenes that the Council

doesn't see. Maintaining of capacity can lead to funding increases from other areas.

Kunimoto: Nobody expected that the economic situation would go the way that it did, but we are grateful that we were able to maintain core capacity.

Thielen: As economy turns around, it will be a strong base to work from. Will make the entire effort stronger.

Lau: Are we gaining ground on established pests?

Montgomery: We are losing ground. Only way to gain ground is by increasing funding. Can't speak to terrestrial.

Rachel Neville: In regards to terrestrial established pests, we are gaining ground, but it depends on target. None of ISCs are losing. Part of what we are doing with early detection. Get stuff early enough so that we can gain ground on everything. Part of the measure is that we show acreage and number of plants killed. Can show mature plants are declining.

Lau: What is your assessment of communications efforts on strawberry guava? Seems like a big controversy, but scientific community united.

Martin: I can comment a little bit on this. Appreciate the concern. As POWG we tried to target our effort. Jackie pulled together a workshop of science and outreach people. We need to learn the science so we can translate. Took info and relationships and worked with USFS and HDOA to create materials, media work, articles, website, on every news station. Managed to get footage of invasion areas of strawberry guava. All leading up to the public comment period. Look at number of letters. In support compared to opposition. 2:1 in support, if you don't include petitions. Savetheguava.org folks submitted petitions. We did get some calls from our legislators. We think it worked, don't have numbers to prove it.

Thielen: The areas on the terrestrial side, mainly due to biocontrols?

Neville: From ISCs, we don't do biocontrol. HDOA does all of that. ISC targets are chosen based on feasibility of control, so don't do strawberry guava because it's been here so long and it's everywhere. With miconia, we knew where all mature trees were and knew where to survey. Where there may be a seed bank. Found only four mature trees. It is a systematic control program that has kept our projects at bay.

Neil Reimer: I have a different perspective. Complicated question. If you look at the targets that we are addressing, we are gaining ground, but so many targets and new things coming in. Ones we are prioritizing, we are

gaining ground. We are limited about what we can release, but biocontrol helps to gain ground. We got strawberry guava coming up with USFS. Fireweed trying to get a release as well. Lots of potential. The actual progress is fairly limited, but it is increasing and positive.

Kunimoto: Our exploratory entomologist is on a trip right now.

Finlayson: There is no update from Research and Technology, no funding for that working group in last 2 years.

5. Briefing about the budget recommendation from the Resources Working Group Chair, Meredith Kuba [see attached PowerPoint and budget proposal]

- Liz Corbin, former chair, retired last June. Asked by Ted Peck to be new Resources WG chair.
- There is 1.4 million in state special funds for the HISC
- There is 400K from the Legacy Land Council
- Total= 1.8 million
- Each working group met with proposals at high, medium, and low levels. The working groups recommended a 2 million in projects. Resources Working Group met and figured out a balanced budget.
- The proposed FY2011 budget includes:
 - POWG: ISC outreach support, HISC Communications Coordinator, outreach projects, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) support
 - EPWG: ISC support, AIS team, HDOA PPC biocontrol
 - Prevention WG: Weed Risk Assessment specialists, invasive ant program, ballast water and hull fouling
 - No money for Research and Technology Working Group
 - HISC Support: HISC Coordinator and Invasive Species Project Manager

Thielen: Liz led the discussion last year when we had reduced budget. Were you able to get through it ok?

Kuba: I was new and so was Christy F. it was challenging, but we came to consensus.

Thielen: Having worked in the departments now, a lot of change in the last couple of years, positions cut, retirements, new people, appreciate you guys carrying that spirit forward. Paul and I were talking about it today, we had Mindy who was very knowledgeable, and she is gone now. Doing a lot of good work building a broader group of people to build capacity. Article his morning about water plants. Caution at the end that it could end up at the waterway. Master gardeners, Neil was there. You are getting into the consciousness. We have to find good ways of quantifying what you are doing and reporting it. If we are being successful we want to quantify it, but we also want to quantify what still needs to be addressed. Shows that this is a

good group to invest in. You get things done. I used you as an example with governor and legislature how you came together and reprioritized since we are taking big cuts. Great effort!

6. Discussion on FY2011 budget recommendation

Kunimoto: Is there any discussion?

7. Approval of FY2011 budget

- Kunimoto: Motion for approval?
- Thielen moved to approve
- Francis Keeno seconded the motion
- All said aye, budget approved.

8. Preparing for New Administration, new HISC Participants

- Kunimoto: We also have a new member, amongst our council. Ken Grace was appointed special research director at CTAHR UH Manoa.
- Grace: I am an entomologist, former chair of PEPS.
- Kunimoto: Glad that you are here! We will all be gone! You will be institutional memory.
- Finlayson: I am new to this position. It would be helpful to get information from you on how we can pull people into the council. What worked and didn't during your time on the Council.
- Kunimoto : You will have all new chairs. Educate them about the program, how it has worked in the past. Each one of our staff is part of the WGs. You, being the central person, make yourself available to them. You are key to that. You have the overall. Give them an orientation. Preserving that history. Bring them up to speed. What the group sees as the future
- Thielen: We are doing some prep now for the transition. For administrators to jointly educate the Chair. I think that it would help. It is overwhelming when you first come in. First year on a biennium budget, it will be crazy, wont have a lot of spare time. Prepare an orientation during first meeting. A time that you will have them all here. Make it clean and simple. What it is. What group does. They want to know what their role is. Who in my department are point people that can tell me what is going on. What do I have to do. Don't assume that they remember it after the first time. Reintroduce your name to them every time you see them.
- Finlayson: What timing for meeting?
- Thielen: This budget is for FY2011, figuring there is not a crisis. When is next decision making point? After session would be best time. January-May is crazy.
- Kunimoto: New system for the HISC was started, pre-work done before budget was approved. May/June would be earlier meeting. In addition, because HISC budget has gone through DLNR, needs to go to DLNR Chair because they see it and have to defend in their budget

- Keeno: Has there been any legislative proposals from this committee rather than each department, anything unique to this council?
- Thielen: Want to brief chairs on legislation that is relevant to this group, you want to prepare them for questions legislators may ask
- Martin: Part of the HISC legislation was so that this group can look at the things that need changing policy or procedure wise, the only example that we have is the Oahu risk assessments, going through biosecurity requests through legislative offices and getting those bills passed. In next iteration of the HISC focus more on what needs changing and what HISC as a group can move forward.
- Kunimoto: We Co-Chair by statute. For Christy F., the key for you that HDOA and DLNR is posted ahead on where you see everything going.
- Lau: One other comment. Not only about briefing the HISC, also be alert to new legislative committee chairs, new members, important to educate them. Statutory, has a budget, core functions. 2009 annual report, long, a summary is helpful. Simple and short. Your audience will be overwhelmed with stuff.
- Kunimoto: Ken as someone new, orientation that you would like to see?
- Ken Grace: getting one right now. Can't think of anything specific. All bringing up good points. Generally what is going on. Reintroducing yourself every year is important!
- Lau: Works for me, give me web address, make sure staff knows.
- Keeno: Going back to legislation. Monitor resolutions. Requesting HISC to study coqui frog. Whether DLNR or HDOA is monitoring this resolution, you folks may want to know about, if something in resolution you want to support or oppose can submit testimony through Chair, especially if it includes HISC.
- Kunimoto: Both of our staff has been tracking those things and try to confer on our testimony.
- Thielen: Staff from agencies, when you orient your chair, tell them with program directors that they will need. Getting up to speed early is important.
- Keeno: Since DOT is a member of our Council, I will put it in my transition report incoming will need to ID a rep designee.
- Conry: I would like to add on the transition topic. There are some opportunities. One of the things that the Council can meet more frequently than just once a year on the budget. Could set up one in May after everyone is named. Schedule a meeting that looks at policy issues. Brief them on status on plans. Updates too. The HISC has met and actually items before Council to support initiatives. One of the things that they did two years ago was support use of biocontrol as tool for invasive species control. Lots of opportunities that this body can support initiatives. We have used that many times. When letter goes into paper, position taken by the HISC...i.e. supports biocontrol. There is that opportunity. Those of us who will be continuing in our positions, getting the council ready for the next year. As far as legislation and budgeting, because funding comes through one of the departments, need to be worked into departmental budgets. That is where the close link is

important. Getting ahead, work plans, goals and objectives orientation in May or June of next year.

9. New Business/Announcements

- Thielen: I would like to highlight the proud urchin father of the DAR project. How many do you have?
- Montgomery: Hundreds of thousands.
- Thielen: This is an exciting project of biocontrol of invasive algae.
- Kunimoto: Domingo Cravalho will be retiring. This is his last week. We will miss him, this group will miss him as well. Not gone entirely from this community. Will be joining the USFWS on brown tree snake issues. We will sure miss him.

10. Public Comments

- Conry: I would like to thank the Council members. The Council was set up to work between departments. And it has worked that way. Thank you for all the support and work given to the council and dealt with issues over the years.
- Neville: On behalf of ISCs, I reiterate my thanks, HISC funds integral for our mission, as well as USFWS, USDA FS. Thank you Paul and Christy F. who found extra money for us, made decisions less tough. Especially to Finlayson, this is the lowest HISC budget dropped in your lap, thank you!

11. Meeting Adjourned