Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council
Established Pests Working Group
Minutes, July 15 2011

Present:
Rob Hauff (Chair, DLNR), Josh Atwood (HISC), Jono Blodgett (DAR), Mike Lohr (Pacific Rim Conservation), Rachel Neville (OISC), Darcy Oishi (HDOA), Keren Gunderson (KISC), Jan Schipper (BIISC), Kate Cullison (DAR), Neil Reimer (HDOA), Thomas Motsuda (HDOA), Sky Harrison (PBIN), Christy Martin (CGAPS), Mary Ikagawa (OISC), Diane Sether (UH), Kristine Macdonald (Hawaii Army National Guard), Lori Bunchanan (MoMISC), Teya Penniman (MISC), Tiffani Keanini (KISC), Mary Lou Kobayashi (DBEDT), Carlton Saito (Sen. Gabbard).

Minutes:

1. Introductions
2. Approval of previous minutes: removed from agenda due to lack of minutes from previous year's meeting. It was noted that the last meeting was the FY11 budget meeting.
3. Review of the Strategic Plan, 2008-2013 (Rob Hauff)
    a. The Strategic Plan will be updated beginning in the fall of 2012. Suggestions for revisions are welcome.
    b. The Strategic Plan states that the HISC will give priority to novel projects rather than the continued funding of existing programs.
    c. The budgeting process for FY12 was reviewed. Discussion of evaluation committees, Resources working group meeting (July 29 2011) and tentative date for the HISC meeting (Aug 18 2011).
    d. Reviewed objectives and goals for Established Pests from the Strategic Plan.
4. Goals for this meeting (Rob Hauff): Today is for presentation of proposals; we do not necessarily need to get to a specific number today, but we should have a target number in mind to ask of the Resources working group. There will be an opportunity to submit revisions of proposals.
5. Total amount available this year (Josh Atwood): $1.8M. $202,709 will be taken off the top as assumed costs for HISC support, Central Services fees, and DOFAW overhead. Research and Technology may be funded this year, depending on the needs of the various working groups. Christopher Dunn is preparing a statement of needs for the Resources working group meeting.
6. Identifying priorities for FY12
    a. Axis deer, biocontrol, maintain existing capacity of ongoing work, programs that target gaps in capacity, including aquatics along with terrestrial programs, data management, identifying alternative funding sources, having working groups meeting multiple times per year, identifying policy gaps. We ideally would like to have a rapid response reserve fund.
7. Discussion of the June 27 HISC Meeting

a. Concern over public commenting in the agenda: need to emphasize the opportunity for public comments after each administrative action or relevant agenda item.
b. Discussion of how priorities are set for HISC meetings: we need to include working group and public input in bringing items to the Council. Priorities need to be discussed more than once a year.

8. Proposal Review (Total requests: $2,006,785.56)
    a. OISC (Rachel Neville): $360,000. Review of OISC priority species and programs. Early Detection team has finished a three-year roadside survey for incipient weeds. Working with nurseries and botanical gardens to educate regarding invasives. Field responses for coqui frogs, snakes, naio thrips, little fire ants. Continuing to suppress Miconia. Only one mature tree found in 2010, but 3800 juveniles were pulled. Asking for money needed to continue operations, assuming that other anticipated funds are received. No support from Honolulu County.
    b. Herbicide Ballistic Technology (James Leary, UH [absent, presented by Rob Hauff]): $64,957. Seeks to provide training for the use of herbicide ballistic technology (HBT), for real-time plant control during helicopter surveys. Would be used by the ISCs. His proposal does not include helicopter time, as the ISCs are individually requesting funds for that purpose. The amount requested in the minimum amount for supplies.
        i. Keren: Helicopter surveys are critical for Miconia control on Kauaʻi due to inaccessible terrain.
        ii. Teya: Not as effective as a ground treatment, but it is very effective as an aerial treatment.
        iii. Rachel: Miconia control requires getting every plant. Aerial treatments with HBT are good for getting individual plants in inaccessible areas.
        iv. Jan: It is a good tool for achieving eradication.
    c. BIISC (Jan Schipper): $386,500. Funding is for field crew. BIISC has been working on Rauvolfia vomitoria, will be spending a month in Kohala to manage it there. Has been working on land access for Axis deer. Early Detection team is finishing a four-year roadside survey. Developing a rapid response program now. BIISC now has an animal-specific field crew, in addition to the field crew working on plants. Still going after coqui where feasible. The equipment funding requests are round numbers because they are only a portion of the amounts actually needed. The budget request identifies four potential layoffs, but funding for those positions is being sought in a request to another funding source. No support from Hawaiʻi County.
    d. Axis Deer Project (Jan Schipper): $166,800. Deer have likely been on the island for years, but thanks to motion camera detection over the last five months, there has been evidence for their presence. This proposal covers part of the management plan, particularly a program wherein deer (likely from Molokaʻi) are caught, neutered, and tagged with satellite radio collars and video cameras. These deer will join hard-to-find herds on the

Big Island to allow tracking and provide information on herd size and activity. This proposal is for equipment only, no salaries or fringe.

i. Teya: This should be a Research and Technology request. It is not for control, it is a "proof of concept" project that seeks information only. Questioned the likelihood of success in finding herds, specifically whether deer from one island (e.g. Molokaʻi) would join herds of deer from another island (e.g. the Big Island).
    1. Jan: They are targeting the rutting season, so he is confident that the deer would join each other.
ii. Teya: Questioned the number of deer to be used.
    1. Jan: The major cost is helicopter time, and since the net guns capture multiple deer at once, it makes sense to capture more deer. Permitting should not be a problem, since the team will be acting as an agent of DOFAW. Ensuring cooperation with relevant groups and agencies.

e. PBIN (Sky Harrison): $19,931 from Established Pests, $89,551 total from all working groups. USGS has defunded the national structure that has traditionally supported PBIN. They have a year of funding remaining (through June 2012). Looking for 6 months of support, carrying them through December 2012. PBIN is becoming a project underneath the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) at UH. PBIN supports or hosts the Hawaiʻi Early Detection alert system, Hawaiʻi Invasive Species Web Mapping Portal, HISC website, Plant Pono website, CGAPs website, ISC websites, HEAR website. Funding would hire a temporary web developer to improve the reporting system for the Hawaiʻi Pacific Weed Risk Assessment.
    i. Teya: This is a critical service from an ISC perspective.
    ii. Rob: Where will the PBIN staff be housed?
        1. Sky: In negotiations with Maui Community College to continue physically hosting the program.
    iii. Christy: One of the HISC goals is to maintain a list of invasive species in the state. PBIN supports this.
    iv. Sky: This proposal was submitted to all three working groups. If any one working group chooses not to fund PBIN, the project as a whole will not function.
f. MISC and MoMISC (Teya Penniman): $200,000 A team in Hana and a team in Makawao, working on Miconia, pampas grass, and other species. Early Detection. Eradicated 11 populations of coqui frog. Working on a large population in Maliko Gultch. Previously the National Park Service has provided support ($3-500k) for Miconia control, but that funding is disappearing. Support from Maui County. Requesting more-or-less level funding from last year, actually a slight increase for new work on Kaho'olawe. Still short $400k in annual budget. If that funding is not found, staff reductions or operation reductions will be necessary. ISCs as a whole are operating at about 60% of past capacity. The funding request is not a "high" request, but a realistic representation is what is needed.

i. Kate: They deserve recognition for securing non-HISC funds.
ii. Josh: How do you secure county support? It seems rare.
    1. Teya and Lori: Outreach. Knocking on doors and asking for it.

g. Ka'ena Pt Ecosystem Restoration Project (Mike Lohr): $9,482. Believes rats are eradicated from Ka'ena Pt, working on mice. There is a fence in place. Need to maintain and monitor fence. This request would cover four months of work including heavy baiting to reduce rodent pressure, trapping along the ends of the fence, and bait boxes on the inside of the fence for added security.
    i. Teya: Is this for existing positions or hiring someone new?
        1. Mike: Hiring someone new.
    ii. Josh: Can you explain the budget line for "data analysis?"
        1. Mike: The data is spacially explicit and involves monitoring.
    iii. Rob: Does the project tie into the statewide EIS for rodenticide?
        1. Mike: Unsure. Coordinating with USFWS.

h. Marina Swiftlet Predator Control Project (Mike Lohr): $4696. Swiftlets were established on O'ahu in 1962 in Halawa Valley. They are native to Guam and are a conservation target, thus resulting in their intentional introduction to O'ahu. Predation by rats has prevented nesting and egg-laying. 'Elepaio are also present in this area.
    i. Rob: Has there been an ongoing control program since 1962?
        1. Mike: Sporadic control since the 1970s. Steve Mosher of Army Environmental was working on this project.
    ii. Kate: What are the population numbers?
        1. Mike: The peak was 50-60 nests, 120 individuals. No recent numbers.
    iii. Rachel: Were they introduced intentionally?
        1. Mike: Yes. Introduced as a failsafe in the event of extinction in their native range. A bird conservation group brought them over.
    iv. Teya: What is the size of the control area? Could it be fenced?
        1. Mike: We've discussed that option. Any barrier around the cave would be restricting for the birds.
    v. Christy: Concerned about setting a precedent for protecting a species that was likely introduced illegally to Hawai'i. Our intent is to protect species in Hawai'i.
    vi. Rachel: The swiftlets have no negative impact that we know of, but this is not a project typical for the HISC.
    vii. Christy: We make other exceptions for nonnative species that are beneficial, e.g., European honeybees, but this may not be a good project for HISC priorities.

i. HDOA Foreign Exploration for Biocontrol Agents (Neil Reimer): $100,000. Looking at trips to Africa. Focusing on natural enemies of fountain grass, small hive beetle, coffee berry borer, fireweed. We

returned recently to Southeast Asia, found potential agents for banana bunchy top virus and maile pilau. Working on Erythrina gall wasp, nettle caterpillar, strawberry guava, and fireweed.

i. Josh: There is a request for a trip in September 2011. Funds will probably not be available by then
    1. Neil: We may be looking at a spring trip, then. Our funds arrived very late last year, so we have some remaining that we may use. If you are looking to cut funding, we could potentially do one less trip on this proposal and seek additional funding later.

ii. Teya: The interisland travel estimate includes a lot of travel.
    1. Neil: We travel to the other islands to test and monitor potential agents.

iii. Rob: When you were fully staffed, could you rely on outer island staff to do the monitoring?
    1. Neil: Yes. Our interisland travel budget has increased because our outerisland staff has been reduced.

j. Response to Coqui Frogs, Little Fire Ants, Nettle Caterpillars, and Other Pests (Neil Reimer): $13,632. The Coqui Frog Working Group is a partnership of Plant Quarantine, Plant Pest Control, and OISC. Much of the work is done at night. Overtime is not available, so crew is compensated with comp time. This is not sustainable since it interrupts day time tasks for staff. This funding would provide overtime pay and supplies for coqui frog control.

i. Rob: Have you asked other partners if they could pick up the slack?
    1. Neil: Plant Quarantine can't provide overtime either, and OISC is strapped as is.

ii. Teya: How does the collaboration work: when calls come in, who responds?
    1. Rachel: We're using the 643-PEST hotline for reports. Keevin (DOA) will call Jonathan (OISC) to respond. Due to rough terrain and nighttime hours, multiple people need to go on response calls. Maybe we should institute a fine for nurseries harboring coqui frogs.

k. KISC (Keren Gunderson): $266,500. KISC is the responding group for coqui calls. Their top plant priority is Miconia. Contracted OISC's Early Detection team to do a survey. KISC partners with DOA for invertebrate surveys, DOFAW for mongoose response. This funding is for 12 months of work. Funds listed as anticipated are now confirmed.

l. Control of Little Fire and Emerging Pest Ants (Darcy Oishi): $109,566.12. Cas Vanderwoude has worked on a Pacific network for sharing ant information. Eradicated an infestation of little fire ant on Maui. Receive 700 calls/year regarding ant species, equivalent to taking $14k/year from DOA's primary tasks of research and quarantine issues. Coconut ant, rover ant, white-footed ant are all present in Hawai‘i and have economic

impacts. Coconut ant is new. We have traditionally been funded through the Prevention working group, but this project needs to be funded through the Established Pests working group as well, to legitimize the project and reflect successes in the legislative report.

i. Rob: Is this related to the Pacific ant plan and the Red Imported Fire Ant?
    1. Darcy and Neil: There is a Pacific plan and a Hawai‘i plan that have been reviewed. The Red Imported Fire Ant is part of those plans, so this proposal is related in that sense.
ii. Kate: What is the total amount needed across working groups?
    1. Darcy: about $185k. Last year we received that amount from HISC, special funds and general funds. $117k of that was general funds.
iii. Teya: Are you training Jackie Kozak as your outreach person?
    1. Darcy: The outreach training would include any HISC outreach staff.

m. Nosema Screening and Monitoring (Darcy Oishi): $16,843.44. Current funding in our apiary program is restricted to Varroa mite and does not allow us to focus on other issues related to bees. Nosema is an immunosuppressant that affects bees, but it is poorly understood by farmers. Nosema weakens bees and increases susceptibility to Varroa mites or small hive beetles. This funding is to develop outreach and provide diagnostic services, and to write a management plan.
n. Aquatic Invasive Species Management and Control (Jono Blodgett): $245,830. Continuing restoration efforts in Kaneohe Bay. Raising native urchins for use in restoration and grazing on *Kappophyccus* algae. This funding request is for federal match. The project coordinator (Jono) is now on soft money as the civil service position has been vacated. This funding request also partially funds Kate Cullison, who will expand the focus of the AIS program to include statewide stream issues and outreach. The field team will continue to focus on Kaneohe Bay.
    i. Kate: One of the requests of the HISC is for projects to reduce their reliance on the HISC year after year. While our request is high, we are securing a larger number of outside funds and are expanding our project.
o. Australian Tree Fern Control in Hono O Na Pali Natural Area Reserve (Mike Wysong [Natural Area Reserve System, absent. Presented by Rob Hauff]): $46,726. This proposal is for high resolution aerial photography to identify invasive Australian tree ferns (ATF). ATF is one of the major invasives threatening the Alakai area.
    i. Christy: How much time is represented in the helicopter budget? It would be helpful if this was broken down by hour.
        1. Teya: Helicopter time is about $1,000/hr.
    ii. Has anyone surveyed the area? Is this a long term program?
        1. Rob: They may not know the full distribution of ATF on the island (outside of the reserve).

9. Discussion of target funding amount for the Established Pests Working Group
    a. Proposals may be revised based on this discussion of funding needs and availabilities. Some programs may not be funded or may be funded at less than the requested amount.
    b. Revised proposals should go to the evaluation committee within four days.
    c. Discussion of where funds come from (special funds, Legacy Land Conservation Program funds, and general funds). Need to identify other funding opportunities, e.g., barrel tax, fee for access to natural areas.
    d. $1.2M was determined as a reasonable target for the group.
10. Announcements
    a. Teya: Understand the need to address Axis deer, but would suggest that Axis deer be considered under Research and Technology.
    b. Carlton Saito: Are there policies that the group intends to introduce to the legislature?
        i. Christy: We are reviewing the need for policy changes. This group should meet after the budget setting process to discuss policy needs.
    c. Josh: Instead of additional meetings for individual working groups, we may want to have a super-meeting, since the individuals in each group tend to overlap. Would be an opportunity for general updates, identifying gaps, and areas for collaboration.
        i. Rachel: We could stagger the focus over the course of the meeting to address each working group.
    d. Rachel: How does this year's funding compare to last year?
        i. Josh: Last year we had $1.8M in HISC funds and LLC funds, but there were also general funds. This year we have the same amount of HISC and LLC funds, but we don't know about the general funds.
        ii. Teya: Last year the general funds were about $330,000.
    e. Evaluators: Rob Hauff, Josh Atwood, Tom Matsuda, Kristine Macdonald, and Mark Fox.
11. Meeting adjourned.