

Minutes for November 14, 2016

I believe I speak for all of us when I say we concluded the meeting feeling that “time is of the essence” and that whatever we can do now, we must begin.

In Attendance:

Rep Nicole Lowen’s Exec. Assistant (by speaker phone)  
Rob Curtiss (HDOA)  
Derek Shigematsu (HDOA) Pesticide Branch  
Paul Strauss (HDOH)  
Nancy Redfeather (TKC)  
Franny Brewer (BIISC)  
Jane Clement (County Council)  
Karen Eoff (County Council)  
Susan Kim (Office of the Governor W. Hawaii)  
Carolyn Dillon (Community Organizer - Holualoa)  
Clyde Platt (retired attorney)

Carolyn began the meeting by sharing her story of how she learned LFA were in her neighborhood. She emphasized that the more people she spoke with the larger the know size of the infestation grew. The concern for their hillside became how to obtain the resources to effectively meet the challenge of control/eradication, as many people were unable to treat themselves. The community became aware that the area of infestation is much larger than what is even now currently known. The very real possibility exists that this Holualoa neighborhood is but a hologram of what the entire west side may presently be up against. More must be done immediately to address the LFA.

All participants agreeing that an LFA Coalition is a welcome idea for many reasons. Many in the community are confused by so many different websites when trying to get information. In concept, this Coalition could have a website to include all pertinent agencies’

hyperlinks, all LFA resources, educational material, reporting portal and forums in one location. Cross-sharing of information by the public as well as among agencies would produce benefits beyond each individual or department working in isolation.

The four main areas for the coalition could be:

public awareness & education, testing & mapping, programs (e.g. commercial service providers), and policy & enforcement.

We all acknowledged that many assets currently exist (state, county, business community and the public at large) to carry out these initiatives. If we were to repurpose and connect these many existing resources, we could create an approachable and affordable first solution so that our county would have a viable course of action to contain the LFA before costs escalate beyond reason. (2015 Ecological Economics study found an immediate \$8 million in next 2-3 years...will yield \$1.210 billion in reduced control costs and \$129 million in lowered economic damages over 10 years.)

Explanation was given on how large the knowledge gap is regarding known LFA infestations, particularly on the west side. Raising public awareness is an imperative, however sufficient support needs to be in place concurrent with such a campaign. Franny mentioned spare funds for outreach exist at BIISC but they are hesitant to use them as they are already operating at capacity.

The group agreed that a new service sector for Commercial LFA Yard Control Providers would meet an urgent need and would have a positive effect on LFA control county-wide. (This concept is also recommended in the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan pg 41.)

The group discussed who and how to train such individuals. The vision would be to create a large service sector so that adequate coverage would be available to all areas of the island. Derek explained that the use of restricted pesticides would complicate the program by requiring certification, so we looked at the quickest and simplest avenue of using only non-restricted pesticides to launch such a program with the idea that certification training could be at a later stage. Derek suggested

there might be availability to provide some training through his department at HDOA.

Franny offered that BIISC might be able to take on a full-time roll of training non-certified landscapers if they could get \$70,000 of funding for one staff person dedicated to this task. The continuation of this idea would be to have these new service providers subsidized through an expanded voucher program so that their services would be affordable to homeowners. As a secondary service, they could provide survey capabilities for homeowners. A once annual "recurrent" class would re-qualify them for vouchers each year, with the added benefit that they would provide valuable feedback to enhance the program, and also to more comprehensively map the infestations. Karen suggested that initially landscapers throughout the county could be contacted through an already existing roster.

Nancy raised the idea of engaging the Hawaii Island School Garden Network to help in raising awareness and as a way to map more infestations. She offered to reach out to that group. Also, K-12 curriculum to include LFA is noted on pg 56 of the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan which could be pursued.