

Minutes for November 17, 2017

In Attendance:

Blake Watson	Council Aid – Jen Ruggles District #5
Ann Kobsa	Malama O Puna
George Hayducsko	County Enviro Mgt – Recycling Coordinator
Neal Tanaka	County Bldg Div – Mechanical Engineer III
Craig Blaisdell	Nat'l Guard Enviro Office – Pest Mgt Coordinator
Dave Wiseman	Community member
Nancy Redfeather	Community member
Franny Brewer	BIISC
Tanya Power	West Hawaii Assoc. of Realtors

Announcements:

- LFA HUI contributed to the Statewide October LFA Awareness month “Stop the Ant” with our walk-up ID events. BIISC held an event in partnership with the Humane Society and HAL held an event at the WHCC. We learned of several new infestations from participants bringing in their specimens.
- New infestations are reported at Kainaliu, Holualoa, Honalo, Honalo, Mahaiula Beach and along Ali'I Drive across from Kahalu'u Beach.

We watched the MISC 7-minute Youtube video “Fire, Little Fire Ants in Hawaii.” All persons are encouraged to share with co-workers, friends, neighbors and ohana: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJ8TQ_ASsYQ&t=100s. The video is public property of the State. To more broadly disseminate the video ideas include approaching Regal Theaters, Olelo and other tv stations to show as a public service. Dave Wiseman offered to work on this project.

Tanya Power gave a real estate update. Several Homeowners Association have been circulating the MISC video to their Board of Directors. In other news, a new LFA paragraph to be included on the Buyer Disclosure form has been crafted. Inclusion of this verbiage is at the discretion of each Realtor. Hawai'i Board of Realtors has a professional standards Board that can be notified of any sale activity with known LFA infestation not being disclosed.

The HDOA in Captain Cook is no longer accepting ant specimens for ID, due to staff vacancy. Alternately, specimens can be dropped in person at the CTAHR front desk in Kainaliu, or mailed directly to BIISC or HAL in Hilo.

George Hayducsko explained the county contracts with Hawai'i Earth Recycling for composting green waste in two locations, Hilo and Waikoloa. The material is chipped and then placed in wind rows, heated to 130F for 15 days. Monthly surveys are conducted by HAL with results showing no LFA detections in the material.

The county is currently assessing a third location close to Hilo. There will also be additional drop off locations added with those materials trucked out to the compost site. Currently Puna does not have any green waste drop off location. Blake Watson requested that consideration be given to providing two drop off locations -- one each for upper and lower Puna. He mentioned the possibility of locating land in subdivisions for this purpose. Ann Kobsa agreed, explaining that closer drop off locations are needed as many find the driving distance to dispose of green waste a barrier. In the Kapoho area there are a lot of rental properties maintained by landscapers who are dumping along the roads spreading LFA to new locations.

Currently there are tub grinders in both east and west Hawaii. Puna could benefit from being provided a tub grinder as well.

Many people on the west side are suspicious of the free mulch. To raise awareness the banner advertising this mulch could explain this material is temperature treated and surveyed regularly and is LFA free.

Next we discussed Construction and Landscape Activity. 90% of all goods are shipped to Hawaii yet only 5% are inspected. Building materials and course grade are also a pathway for LFA to be introduced to a building site. Given that we are currently experiencing a building boom it would be important to provide outreach to all involved in such projects, including suppliers.

The state and county are themselves undertaking large scale construction projects: Kamehameha School, Kahalu'u Beach, Village 9 Homeless encampment and Hapuna Beach to name a few. It would be prudent for all to be educated on LFA risks and best practices.

Neal Tanaka reported that he discussed outreach ideas with his department prior to our meeting and offered that Public Works will begin attaching LFA educational material to the grading and building permits. Further, LFA brochures will be made available in both their east and west offices to the public. Neal suggested that they could also share the MISC video through their media department's email. BIISC will provide the department a short introductory paragraph for this.

For all landscape materials brought to site the recommended procedure is to designate a quarantine area by applying a chemical barrier surrounding the area

and to survey the product twice, spread over several days, to assure it is LFA free before planting. Landscape suppliers need to be more aware as to status of their product prior to deliveries.

Discussion followed that the Mayor also has a quarterly publication and this source should be considered as another avenue for public outreach. All County of Hawaii departments and agencies need to be educated on the LFA threat. A county invasive species coordinator is needed. Then any new information could be pushed out to all agencies in a more effective and timely manner.

The National Guard has an invasive species coordinator. Communication is a priority for them so that they can respond quickly. They meet quarterly to provide information to command and soldiers on invasives and other conservation issues. They work with all government agencies and BIISC.

In open discussion we covered miscellaneous facts and topics:

- Pre-border controls throughout the state are minimal so that new pests are introduced nearly every day. On average 10-15% of these introduced in island ecosystems cause a problem with some becoming invasive.
- LFA will keep multiplying until they occupy all the available land to a maximum of 20,000 ants per square meter.
- HAL is working on an organic treatment option for farmers.
- The 2015 Economic Impact Study is provided in this link: <http://www.hawaiibusiness.com/little-fire-ant-could-take-big-bite-out-of-hawaii-island-economy/>
- In Guam, containers are levied a fee. A portion of this used to fund invasives.
- Shipped Christmas trees carry many new invasives. Buy locally grown!
BIISC's list of growers: <http://www.biisc.org/christmas-trees-grow-in-hawaii/>

It's been a productive first year. Heartfelt thanks to everyone for your support and contributions! 2018 Legislative session is coming up. Be informed and engaged!