

Minutes for October 13, 2017

In Attendance:

Ann Kobsa	Malama O Puna – Vice President
Diane Ley	County R&D – Director
Rose Bautista	Mayor’s Office – Exec. Assist
Springer Kaye	BIISC – Manager
Nancy Redfeather	Farmer
Michelle Montgomery	HAL
Blake Watson	County Council member aid
Paul Strauss	HDOH
Heather Forester	HAL
Carolyn Dillon	Founder

Announcements:

- Valued LFA HUI member Rob Curtiss resigned his position with HDOA and moved to the mainland in pursuit of his Doctorate.
- A new LFA infestation is reported at Kawa Bay in Ka’u.

Rob Curtiss’ departure creates an entomology vacancy, the only person conducting LFA ID’s on the west side. Until this position is re-staffed the work-around will be for specimens to be dropped at CTAHR extension office in Kealakekua. HAL will provide postage for CTAHR front desk personnel to mail ants to Hilo for ID.

Regarding Kawa Bay, BIISC is already working with students and County P&R team to test and treat the area.

Next, a brief explanation and summary of LFA HUI’s structure, initiatives and progress was given. Having concentrated on the Kona side up to this time, we now begin a rotation of monthly meetings between east and west.

We then discussed how to increase capacity for BIISC & HAL further. There is no representative for LFA or any invasive issue on the Kona side. This critical gap needs to be filled as it tasks both BIISC & HAL to conduct training workshops island-wide from Hilo. The excess driving is an inefficient use of their time. A training position on the west side through CTAHR extension (Kealakekua) is the logical decision.

Positions for CTAHR are now being drafted for next legislative session. A suggestion was made to ask Ken Grace for positions on Hawaii Island. Another opportunity might be to meet with State Legislature Ways and Means Committee during any site visits they have planned.

Arnold Hara, post-harvest pest DOA, has also left his post. Who will fill this important position?

A discussion on the issues specific to East Hawaii included the following:

- Puna District: Hard to organize communities. Hard to measure and treat infestations in high trees, forest reserves and thick vegetation. Treatment products prohibitively expensive. Property owners absent or too busy. People need help. The community is overwhelmed. Some people offer treatment services to others but are not properly trained.
- Immigrant Farmers: Due to language barrier, outreach resources tailored to immigrant farmers who sell at farmer's market is needed. CTAHR may have someone on staff that can translate and also have contact lists. (Talk to Dean Nick.) R&D may also have contact lists and can provide outreach.

Green waste: This will always be a risk and requires quarantine and multiple surveys before spreading on property. The county has contracts with Hawaii Earth Products (HEP) for two processing facilities – one in Hilo and one near Waikoloa. Mulch is heated to 130F for numerous days before transporting for use. HAL surveys both sites monthly and reports good results to their website. What has not yet been established is if ALL green waste material island-wide is transported from ALL dump locations to the two HEP facilities for treatment. Diane Ley (P&R) will inquire with Bill Kucharski at Environmental Management regarding policy and protocols for LFA and all invasives and report findings to BIISC, HAL and LFA HUI. Likewise, important to confirm best practices with county P&R regarding green waste. Strong protocols are imperative to ensure county is not a source of spreading infestations.

Dumping of green waste alongside roads and in gulches is another issue. Long-held cultural beliefs hold its biodegradable and going back to the earth. All Hawaii Island schools need to model best practices for their students. Does DOE facilities have policies and protocols for green waste on each campus? In Puna it's too far to drive to drop green waste at county facility. Multiple green waste collection sites would be very important to address behaviors. A ready solution could be trainings for large-scale composting on site to discourage moving of green waste.

Road work: The County moves materials around the island to do road work. These materials are sometimes left behind -- another source for LFA infestation. Check on policies and protocols.

County Parks: Check on policies and protocols for movement/disposal of green waste.

Best practices throughout all county departments will be reviewed for improvements. In fact, Hawaii County employees may well make up the largest group of employees on island. This provides an opportunity to train many persons very efficiently and at low cost through the use of an online tutorial. Each employee could login at their convenience. If implemented, such training should go through the Mayor's office.

LFA HUI will continue our outreach to raise awareness of the LFA risks and direct to our two educational resources on island -- BIISC & HAL. BIISC reports good results with their 30 community-based training programs. HAL is currently conducting trainings approximately once a week. Landscape/yard care trainings may leverage the knowledge as they interface with many and can provide LFA treatment service. Both BIISC & HAL are planning more landscape trainings.

Other outreach: BIISC is requesting to conduct a presentation of their community-based training for all County council members. HAL will coordinate with Jan Ruggles office for a panel presentation in Puna, similar to the Oct 2017 panel at Palamanui campus. We will consider taping this to use as future educational material.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be November 10th @ 10:30am-12:00pm to be held in Kona. We will take December off to plan for our January 12th All Agriculture HUI.

We are stronger together. Mahalo to everyone for your support of and contributions to Little Fire Ant HUI!

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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In reply, please refer to:
File

October 10, 2017

Carolyn Dillon, Founder Hawaii Unites Against Invasives

RE: Support for Little Fire Ant HUI

Dear Carolyn Dillon,

The Hawaii District Health Office credits the Little Fire Ant Hui's good work in bringing more awareness and resources to bare on the increasing threat posed by the Little Fire Ant (*Wasmannia auropunctat*, LFA) to Hawaii. LFA have been designated as one of the world's worst invasive species, wreaking havoc across Pacific communities during the 20th century and continuing to do so to this day. LFA were first discovered as early as 1999 on the island of Hawaii. They have continued to spread across the island from the original 13 locations discovered in 1999 to more than 4,000 locations today. A recent study done by the University of Hawaii estimated LFA could cause as much as \$12.9 billion in economic damages, including 3.4 billion stings to people, over the next 35 years on Hawaii Island alone. These numbers were projected based on current treatment and eradication efforts. However, it also made clear that much of the economic and human harm LFA are projected to do over the next 35 years could be significantly reduced, for a fraction of the cost LFA will impose, by aggressively increasing education and control efforts.

The Hawaii District Health Office recognizes the threat Little Fire Ants (*Wasmannia auropunctat*, LFA) pose to the health and well-being of Hawaii's people, environment, agricultural industry, economy, and the very way of life for those who live, work, and play here in Hawaii Nei. It is because of this threat that the Hawaii District Health Office supports and encourages the work being done by the LFA HUI and its many partners to educate people and bring more resources to bare on addressing the threat LFA pose.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aaron Ueno".

Aaron Ueno, District Health Officer
Hawaii District Health Office