

HAWAII WETLAND JOINT VENTURE

MEETING NOTES

Pono Center
Wailuku, Maui
SEPTEMBER 4, 2009

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** J. Rubey facilitated the meeting with computer assistance from Gregory Koob for the webcast portions dealing with focus area maps & new databases. Those in attendance were:

In Person:		
Gregory Koob	Natural Resource Conservation Service, Honolulu	gregory.koob@hi.usda.gov
Jennifer Higashimo	US Fish & Wildlife Service, Conservation Partnerships Pgm	jennifer_higashimo@fws.gov
Penny Levin	E Kupaku ka 'aina	pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com
Scott Fisher	Maui Coastal Land Trust	scott@mauicoastallandtrust.org
Ranae Ganske	Natural Resource Conservation Service, Maui	ranae.ganske-cerizo@hi.usda.gov
J. Rubey	Hawaii Wetland Joint Venture	Rubey@pcjv.org
By Phone:		
Carey Smith	Pacific Coast Joint Venture	carey_smith@fws.gov
Adonia Henry	Consultant	adoniarhenry@gmail.com
Jason Vercelli	DLNR DoFaW, Kauai	Jason.A.Vercelli@hawaii.gov
Norma Bustos	DLNR DoFaW, Honolulu	Norma.I.Bustos@hawaii.gov
Ati Jeffers Fabro	DLNR DoFaW, Oahu	Ati.R.Jeffers-Fabro@hawaii.gov
Fern Duvall	DLNR DoFaW, Maui	Fern.P.Duvall@hawaii.gov
Joy Hiromasha	US Fish & Wildlife Service	Joy_Browning@fws.gov
Linda Elliott	Hawaii Wildlife Center	hawaiiwildlifecenter@mac.com
Kaimi Scudder	Ahahui Malama i ka Lokahi	rick_scudder@yahoo.com
Stephanie Tom	The Nature Conservancy	stom@TNC.ORG
Kassandra Kelly	Defenders of Wildlife	kkelly@defenders.org

2. Strategic Plan Focus Areas

Discussion continued on the identification of focus areas for the HWJV Strategic Plan. These are areas where partners agree there is the highest ecological need to protect and restore habitat. To facilitate selection, a list of criteria were defined and amended (see the addendum to these notes for the updated criteria.) Focus area identification began in late January with an initial scoping meeting and continued on May 5th when partners meet on Oahu to further define the selection criteria and map focus areas on the core islands. At this Maui meeting some further refinements and discussion ensued regarding the islands of Moloka'i and Mau'i with the available expertise of our Maui partners. Refinements to these maps will be presented once again at our next meeting on Kauai. Once partners from each island have had a chance to provide input to the focus area mapping, the identified areas will be provided as an update to our HWJV Strategic Plan.

3. Hawaii Wetland Information Network (WIN)

A brief overview of the Wetland Information Network website platform was provided, and JV partners were solicited to link their existing web pages with the new WIN address at <http://hiwetlands.com/>. WIN is an education and outreach tool intended to increase public awareness of Hawaii's wetlands. As an interactive web interface, it will contain detailed data about Hawaii's wetland sites, wetland plant species, waterbird species, and other wetland inhabitants. Objectives for the web site are to educate the general public and to provide a forum for wetland managers to share and post information. Development of the web platform was funded with help from PCJV Discretionary Funds and an EPA grant. Active partners in the project include: Ducks Unlimited, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey, University of Hawaii, and the PCJV/HWJV.

The USGS Pacific Basin Information Node (PBIN), located on Maui, is the regional node of the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII). They have agreed to serve and maintain the website for the next 5 years helping with the collection and management of the WIN data. Currently a small amount of additional funding (~\$800) is needed for completion of an administrative tool explaining how-to input data to the web platform. Once that is complete key agency staff will be able to readily add new information.

Loading the platform with existing data will be the next step. HWJV will be seeking additional funding for the data collection and input task remaining. Information will need to be gathered from state and federal offices around the state. Once complete the WIN website will showcase approximately 83 wetland sites, 32 bird species, 135 plant species, 13 fish species, and 30 invertebrates. In addition the site will provide records from the statewide biannual waterbird survey starting from 1977 to present.

A special thanks is owed to Christina Ryder for her dedication to making this happen.

4. Guided Introduction to the Conservation Registry and PCJV Portal:

This year PCJV discretionary funds were allocated to develop a portal to make it easier for PCJV partners and other interested users to access the Conservation Registry, a database and spatial mapping system for tracking and documenting on-the-ground conservation projects. The system is being developed by Defenders of Wildlife with private foundation funding.

Kassandra Kelly of Defenders joined us via phone and webcast to provide us with an understanding of how the Conservation Registry works. She explained that the website is easy to use and can be browsed in a number of ways such as wetland type, funding source, project lead, etc. Soon the site will have a marketing component to link projects with funders such as the National Fish & Wildlife Federation and Duke Foundation who have already been using it for project selections.

In Washington and Oregon where the Registry is already up and running a number of state and federal agencies are beginning to enter projects into the database for their own use. The Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) recently provided data to Defenders for about 9,000 projects on their PRISM system, an action that will eventually strengthen the accessibility and utility of both systems, for project managers, decision makers and others.

We will update our partners on the development of the portal, via the PCJV website. For more information on the Conservation Registry, go to: www.conservationregistry.org/

5. Hawaii HWJV Funding Report: J. Rubey mentioned:

- **Small NAWCA Applications:** The FY/2010 deadline for small North American Wetland Conservation Act grants is **October 29, 2009**. Grants are for up to \$75,000, require at least 1:1 non-federal match, and are available to a wide range of public and private partners. Contact Rubey for assistance if you are contemplating a grant application this fall. The next deadline for Standard (large) grants will be sometime in March, 2010.
- **State Legacy Land** annual applications are due by Sept. 15th for acquisition projects.

6. HWJV Partners' Reports:

- **DLNR DoFaW (Maui): Dr. Fern Duvall** reported news that the State has made a new land ownership designation on the Pala'au Wetland on Molokai. Three hundred and fourteen (314) acres of state land have been designated as the Pala'au Wetlands Wildlife Sanctuary (PWWS). There are many issues ahead that will need attention, including restoration of the wetland system, but undeniably this is extremely wonderful news!
- **Ahahui Malama i ka Lokahi: Kaimi Scudder** reported that progress is continuing at their Kawainui site. The Conservation Corps recently helped with putting in a new walkway. Also at the foot of the heiau volunteers are clearing hau and bamboo from the marsh. Their organization is looking for funding to support additional work.
- **DLNR-DoFaW (Oahu): Ati Jeffers-Fabro** reported work is progressing at several sites on Oahu. **Kawainui Marsh** 1) Partnering with Army Corps to create two restoration ponds totaling 24 acres. 2) USFWS Coastal Program Grant to restore 20 acres of upland riparian habitat and 60 acres of wetland enhancement. 3) USDA-NRCS WHIP contract for tree/shrub establishment and pest management. **Pouhala Marsh** 1) USFWS Coastal Program Grant to create one restoration pond totaling 5.3 acres 2) USDA-NRCS WHIP contract for tree/shrub establishment and pest management. **Hamakua Marsh** 1) USDA-NRCS WHIP contract for tree/shrub establishment and pest management. **Paiko Lagoon** 1) USDA-NRCS WHIP contract for pest management and conservation cover. All of these sanctuaries have provided opportunities for community participation through service learning and service projects. Several hundred students and volunteers have worked, and learned about Hawaiian wetlands, alongside the wildlife staff. *The DoFaW division is looking for funding to continue predator control program at all of these sanctuaries.*
- **DLNR DoFaW (Honolulu): Norma Bustos** mentioned that a National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant was submitted in June for installation of a predator proof fence at Kanaha Pond on Maui. The application will be reviewed and decided in October. Two PCJV discretionary projects that were funded and will be coming up in 2010 are the cat brochure and the "Wetlands and Waterbirds" workshop.

- **DLNR DoFaW (Kauai): Jason Vercelli** mentioned that the Youth Conservation Corps assisted with invasive plant removal of pluchea at Kawaiele. Also, the sand auction on Kawaiele was completed and is waiting approval by the State Attorney General. Hydrology planning is continuing for Mana Plain.
- **NRCS (Maui): Ranae Ganske** reported that there were no new WHIP applications in 2009 for Maui nui.
- **Maui Coastal Land Trust: Scott Fisher** reported that the Nu'u management plan is almost done - being at the Board for final review. The MCLT received \$70K in stimulus package funding for construction of a pig exclusion fence at Nu'u. Permits are next. At Waihe'e they have cleared invasives on 27 acres and indigenous vegetation is coming in. Their next issue is determining the source of water for the site as part of the water case hearing. The USFWS & USGS will be assessing the issue.
- **E Kupaku ka 'aina: Penny Levin** mentioned that she has been working on a development proposal for a health facility fringing the Kanaha Pond wetland. A mitigation plan for removing invasives and outplanting natives has been submitted to the Corps for acceptance in relation to permit approvals for the project.

Kanaha Pond State Wildlife Sanctuary Site Visit: was conducted from 1:30 to 3:00 with Dr. Fern Duvall as our site guide. Funding support from the NRCS's WHIP program has resulted in significant restoration of the back pond area. Removal of invasive trees and shrubs is now transitioning to vigorous native plants. Full ground cover with native herbacious vegetation has occurred within 6 months. The strategy to re-vegetate with natives as quickly and thoroughly as possible to prevent re-colonizing by invasive plants is working beautifully.

Mahalo nui loa to Fern for the site tour!

Next HWJV Partners Meeting: The next HWJV meeting is scheduled for **November 17th, 2009** on Kauai. Details to come.

Addendum

Focus Area Selection Criteria

Draft – update Sept, 2009

Background: The purpose of this criteria is to assist the HWJV partners with prioritizing focus areas and future project sites within the JV Strategic Plan. It is a two-tiered level of review: Ecological Attributes (tier 1) and Management Attributes (tier 2). Tier 2 only applies if the ecological criteria have been met first. The criteria are intended for use as general guidance. It is beyond the scope of this process to inventory every site with detailed information and scoring at this time.

Tier 1: Ecological Attributes

Biological Significance: Identified as a priority site or area in recovery & conservation plans for restoring or re-introducing populations of T & E species or species of conservation concern:

USFWS Draft Recovery Plan for Hawaiian Waterbirds,
Pacific Islands Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan,
HI Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, etc.

Broad Ecological Benefits: Provides for recovery of ecological processes with benefits to the watershed such as improved water quality & groundwater recharge, and habitat for multiple species of native or migratory birds, and other native species.

Building Block: Builds on wetland projects already in place by completing or advancing the preservation, restoration, or management of a biologically significant site or area.

Connectivity: Builds a larger, more contiguous, more viable complex, or adds to the connectivity or watershed value of wetland habitat for waterbirds.

Conservation Buffer: Provides a physical buffer to a protected wetland area (e.g., State Sanctuary, Wildlife Refuge, etc.) for sustaining wetland function.

Fills Gaps: Fills gaps in waterbird habitat components (e.g., feeding, nesting, molting, staging) available on an island or across islands.

Historical Site Recovery: Restores habitat historically known to support significant populations of Hawaiian and/or migratory waterbirds.

Reduces Wetland Loss: Regionally or locally significant wetland type in correlation to waterbird needs.

Climate Change & Sea Level Rise: Secures adjacent, in-land areas for predicted in-land migration of coastal wetlands in response to sea level rise.

Tier 2: Management Attributes

Low Fruit: High resource value with relative ease of acquisition and/or recovery.

Eminent Threat: Significant wetland facing immediate threat of loss or degradation.

High Acquisition Feasibility: Successful site acquisition and protection likely as supported by factors, such as willing sellers, conservation longevity, viable land conservation holder, etc.

High Restoration/Management Feasibility: Successful site restoration and management likely as supported by factors such as the technical feasibility of restoration, low populations or easily controlled invasive species, available scientific knowledge, a source of management funding and/or staff, etc.

Funding Competitiveness: Site best suited to meet selection criteria in competitive federal (or state) grant programs:

- North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA),
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC),
- Coastal & Estuarine Land Conservation Plan (CELCP),
- Legacy Lands, etc.