

HAWAII WETLAND JOINT VENTURE

MEETING NOTES

HI Dept. of Agriculture Conference Room
Lihue, Kaua'i
NOVEMBER 17, 2009

1. Welcome and Introductions: J. Rubey (Hawaii Wetland Joint Venture Coordinator) facilitated the meeting. Gregory Koob, NRCS, provided computer assistance for the webcast portion of the meeting dealing with Kauai focus areas.

Those in attendance were:

In Person:		
Gregory Koob	Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Honolulu	gregory.koob@hi.usda.gov
Michelle Clark	US Fish & Wildlife Service, Conservation Partnerships Pgm.	michelle_clark@fws.gov
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Gordon Smith	USFWS Fish Habitat Partnership	gordon_smith@fws.gov
Lex Riggle	NRCS, Kauai	lex.riggle@hi.usda.gov
Morri-Ann Nagata	NRCS	morri-ann.nagata@hi.usda.gov
Sara Bowen	E & W Kauai SWCD	sara.bowen@hi.nacdn.net
Chris Kauwe	Community member	mehunefishpond@hotmail.com
Laurie Ho	Garden Island RC&D	laurie.ho@hi.usda.gov
Carey Smith	Pacific Coast Joint Venture	carey_smith@fws.gov
Carl Berg	Hawaii Wildlife Tours	cberg@pixi.com
Lida Pigott Burney	Makauwahi Cave Reserve	makauwahi@gmail.com
Jason Vercelli	DLNR DoFaW, Kauai	Jason.A.Vercelli@hawaii.gov
Mike Mitchell	Kauai National Wildlife Refuge	michael.mitchell@fws.gov
Chadd Smith	Kauai National Wildlife Refuge	chadd_smith@fws.gov
David Burney	National Tropical Botanical Garden	dburney@ntbg.org
Norma Bustos	DLNR DoFaW, Honolulu	Norma.I.Bustos@hawaii.gov
Dave Caylor	Kauai Parks & Recreation	DCaylor@kauai.gov
Jeff Burgett	USFWS, LCC Coordinator	jeff_burgett@fws.gov
By Phone:		
Ati Jeffers Fabro	DLNR DoFaW, Oahu	Ati.R.Jeffers-Fabro@hawaii.gov
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Joshua Fisher	US Fish & Wildlife Service	joshua_fisher@fws.gov

2. Hawaii's Landscape Conservation Cooperative called Pacific Islands Climate Change Cooperative. Presentation by Jeff Burgett, USFWS Interim Coordinator

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is supporting the development of regional Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs), across the country, that will complete the science behind conserving native species when landscapes change due to global climate shifts. The task is to integrate local climate models with models of climate change responses by species, habitats, and ecosystems. Cooperatives will scientifically plan and design appropriate conservation actions at a landscape scale, while monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of the strategies taken.

In Hawaii the early action LCC is named The Pacific Islands Climate Change Cooperative (PICCC.) Sponsored and partly supported by the USFWS and hosted by the Hawaii Conservation Alliance (HCA) the partnership includes federal, state, and local agencies, Hawaiian and conservation organizations, and academic institutions. Functions of the PICCC are: to develop bio-climate models that integrate ecological information to project landscape changes, assess management actions using bio-climate models, validate the bio-climate models and management actions with strategic monitoring, and provide a forum for partner feedback.

For more details about the LCCs and PICCC please refer to the power point presentation provided by Jeff at the meeting. It can be found under the Hawaii meeting section at <http://pcjv.org>

3. Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership presented by Gordon Smith, USFWS

Part of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, the Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership received authorization in March, 2009 as one of the first fish habitat recovery partnerships in the nation. The Fish Habitat Action Plan mission is to protect and maintain intact and healthy aquatic systems, prevent further decline of habitats, and increase the quantity and quality of fish habitats.

The National Fish Habitat Partnership concept is modeled after the success of the national wetland Joint Ventures implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Here in Hawaii the Fish Habitat Partnership was formed to: provide coordination for aquatic habitat conservation across agency and public/private boundaries, increase capacity for watershed level planning to improve fish habitat in streams and estuaries, and reverse declines in the quantity and quality of aquatic habitats in Hawaii. Grant funding proposals for fish habitat projects will be solicited on an annual basis during the months of July and August.

The Fish Habitat Partnership welcomes partnering with the Hawaii Wetland Joint Venture on projects that jointly encompass wetlands and aquatic stream corridor protection. For more details about the Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership please view the power point presentation provided by Gordon at the meeting. It can be found under the Hawaii meeting section at <http://pcjv.org>

4. Strategic Plan Focus Areas, Kauai

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 the Maui meeting in September some further refinements and discussion ensued regarding the islands of Moloka'i and Mau'i with the available expertise of our Maui partners.

During this meeting focus areas on the island of Kauai were discussed in detail. The areas of Kilauea and Kapaa were raised as potential additions. Following some extensive discussion it was agreed that these areas did not carry the same level of importance as the three locations currently identified. For now they will not be added, but it was suggested that the steering committee make final decisions at the end of the partner review process.

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.

5. PCJV Coordinator's Update by Carey Smith

- The Joint Ventures are seeing a modest increase in national funding support this year.
- **Large NAWCA Applications:** The PCJV was very successful in the August 2010 NAWCA grant round, receiving three awards – two in the Washington/Oregon area (Lower Columbia Ecoregion & Floodplains of NW OR & WA) and one in Northern California (redwood Coast Wetland Project.) The next deadline for Standard (large) grants will be sometime in March, 2010.
- **NCWCA Applications:** There is no news yet on the awards for the National Coastal Wetland Conservation Act Grants submitted in June.
- Soon to come is a koloa study on Kauai using radio transmitters to track koloa activity.
- PCJV Discretionary Funds RFP will be coming out again this January.

6. HWJV Coordinator's Update by J. Rubey

The PCJV Conservation Registry Portal is up and running. Partners can upload conservation projects at the web address <http://pcjv.conservationregistry.org/>

7. HWJV Partners' Reports:

- **NRCS (Kauai): Lex Riggle** reported that the Wetland Habitat Enhancement Program (WHIP) for new partnerships has not been very active. However, work is underway on existing contracts.
- **Soil & Water Conservation District: Sara Bowen** works with the NRCS and is looking to help landowners get through the permitting process for water quality 319 non-point source approvals.
- **RC&D (Kauai): Laurie Ho** reiterated that WHIP money is available from the NRCS for conservation assistance. There is still a strong local interest to address the Alakoko (Menehune) Fishpond project.
- **DLNR DoFaW (Honolulu): Norma Bustos reported:**
 - State bird banding data will be input into a bird database.
 - Attending a Humane Society meeting on cats where the issue of clearing cats from certain areas was discussed.
 - Attending a Hawaii Veterinary Medicine presentation for wildlife rehabilitation of stilts, moorhens, and ducks.
 - State Wildlife Sanctuary Rules are in the process of being updated, with the comment deadline of 11/19.
 - "Wetlands and Waterbirds" workshop planned for Fall 2010 on Oahu.
- **DLNR DoFaW (Kauai): Jason Vercelli** mentioned the sand auction on Kawaiele was completed and approval by the State Attorney General.

- **National Tropical Botanical Garden: Dave Burney** reported that the upper Limahuli Valley has a 400 acre enclosure eliminating pigs, cats, and rats. Seabird ground nests are now protected and native plant communities are being safely restored.
- **Makauwahi Cave Reserve: Lida Pigott Burney** mentioned that she has been working on propagation of native plants for restoration work. Seed production is well underway. Also with WHIP and EQUIP support, she is working on restoration of dry coastal forest habitat.
- **Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex: Mike Mitchell** reported that the Hanalei Watershed Hui is in need of funds for a koloa taxidermy to be used for environmental education outreach to the community. Additionally, the Refuge is working with DOFAW on a nene translocation project. Also Kim Uyehara has just been hired as the Refuge Wildlife Biologist. **Chadd Smith** mentioned that Hule'ia will have 30 acres restored by summer. Maintenance has been hard and more management money and people are needed. The flooding at Hanalei has created even more challenges.
- **USFWS Conservation Program: Michelle Clark** reported that restoration is underway at Kanaele Bog. There are also two fencing projects underway for restoration of plant communities soon to be enclosed.
- **Hawaiian Wildlife Tours: Carl Berg** shared that he works with taro farmers in Hanalei allot and conducts research on wildlife management needs related to pollution in Hanalei Bay. He mentioned that flooding this year was a disaster to Nene when immature chicks, still in the nest, were drowned out.

Kawaiele and Mana Plain Wetland Site Visit: was conducted from 2:00 to 4:00 with Adonia Henry and Jason Vercelli as our site guides. Mahalo nui loa to Adonia and Jason for the site tour!

Next HWJV Partners Meeting: The next HWJV meeting will be held in Hilo on Hawaii Island. Details to come.

Addendum

Focus Area Selection Criteria

Draft – update Sept, 2009

Background: The purpose of these criteria are 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 from human or climate change causes.

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.