

HAWAII WETLAND JOINT VENTURE

Partners Meeting

MEETING NOTES: September 6, 2011

Pono Center Training Room
62 N. Market St., Wailuku, Maui Island

- 1. Welcome and Introductions:** J. Rubey (Hawaii Wetland Joint Venture Coordinator) facilitated the meeting. Those in attendance were:

In Person:		
Gregory Koob	NRCS	gregory.koob@hi.usda.gov
Norma Creps	DOFAW	Norma.I.Creps@hawaii.gov
Ranae Ganske-Cerizo	NRCS - Maui	Ranae.ganske-cerizo@hi.usda.gov
Fern Duvall	DOFAW -Maui	Fern.P.Duvall@hawaii.gov
Jennifer Higashino	USFWS	Jennifer_Higashino@fws.gov
James Crowe	Hawaiian Islands Land Trust	james@hilt.org
Penny Levin	E kupaku ka 'aina	pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com
Julia Staley	Maui County Long Range Planning	Julia.Staley@countyofmaui.gov
Paul Higashino	Kahoolawe Island Reserve Commission	phigashino@KIRC.hawaii.gov
On Phone:		
Joy Browning	USFWS Recovery Program	Joy_Browning@fws.gov

2. Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Restoration by Paul Higashino

Kaho'olawe and its surrounding waters were under the control of the U.S. Navy from 1941 to 1994 and was used as a live-fire training area. In 1994 the island was conveyed back to the state of Hawaii. The island and waters within in two miles of its shores have been designated by the State of Hawaii as the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve. The Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) was established to manage Kaho'olawe, its waters and its resources in trust. The vision for this island is to restore the arid landscape to healthy condition while also growing Native Hawaiian cultural practices through interaction with the Reserve.

Despite recent clearance efforts unexploded ordnance are still present and pose a threat to safety while on the island. The island is approximately 7 miles in length, 45 square miles (28,800 acres) in area and its waters encompass approximately 78 square miles. Environmental challenges abound, with barren hardpan or invasive dominant arid landscapes, seasonal erosion and sediment runoff into the ocean, and no standing source of freshwater. Soils on the barren hardpan areas have been so compacted that water will not infiltrate them. Invasive species dominate other areas. Seasonal rains during October to April deposit 1.9 million tons of soil each year onto the surrounding ocean reefs. A catchment basin has been build at Pu'u Moa'ulanui to catch 500,000 gallons of water each year and reverse osmosis units have been set up.

The southwest coast is the base of operations for restoration activities. The interior of the island is accessed via a main road through the center. Volunteers arrive committed to work for extended

periods of time while camped out on the island. Their first training is in munitions safety. Invasive species removal and native plant re-vegetation is the ongoing and never-ending activity. Major grants have been provided by the Hawaii Dept. of Health in 2003-05 and 2005-08 to reduce sedimentation runoff with native vegetation plantings.

There are eleven wetlands on Kaho‘olawe, all mostly under an acre in size except for three: 1) Honokanai‘a (~8 acres on shoreline) 2) Kaukukapapa (10 acres on shoreline), and 3) Kealilalalo (6 acres mid-island). All three are located toward the western side of the island. At Kaukukapapa, Natural Resource Conservation Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service funds were contributed to eradicate kiawe trees and mulch the trees in place. Kealilalalo’s kiawe trees were removed during the past munitions clean up in that area. This wetland is only ~ 2 ft deep and filled with sediment. Historically this wetland has been home to a small ancient shrimp called triops. A few kolea and migratory shorebirds use the coastal wetlands but numbers are low due to the presence of introduced predators: feral cats, rats and mice. An island-wide eradication program will begin this year first to remove cats, then rats by 2017 and mice by 2020. The interest in predator removal is spurred by the potential to reintroduce a number of native endangered birds including the Laysan duck, Hawaiian stilt, Nene, and Nihoa Millerbirds to a predator free environment.

The Kaho‘olawe Reserve management plans for Access & Risk, Ocean Use, and Environmental Restoration can be viewed at the Kaho‘olawe Reserve website:
<http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov/home.php>

3. HWJV Coordinator’s Update by J. Rubey

Wetlands Brochure. DOFAW’s new Wetland Brochure and Poster, funded by the PCJV, were passed out. It is the first wetlands information material available for the general public of Hawaii. The brochure and poster can be accessed on the PCJV website at: www.pcjv.org/hawaii/wetlands
Copies of the poster can be obtained directly from DOFAW’s Michelle Jones at Michelle.G.Jones@hawaii.gov

Funding Reminders: a) North American Wetland Conservation Act Standard Grant round in early March and early August. The small grants (\$75K max.) proposals are annual and due the end of October. b) State Legacy Lands acquisition grants are due Sept. 16th.

National Coastal Wetlands Grant Proposal Submitted: in June for the Honu‘apo site in Ka‘ū District of South Hawaii Island. It is for restoration of ~10 acres of estuarine wetland.

2011 Wetlands and Waterbird Workshop: The event is rapidly approaching and will take place October 4-6th at the Koolau Golf Course conference rooms in Kaneohe, Oahu. The workshop will provide hands-on afternoon training sessions for managers along with conference format presentations in the morning. Workshop presenters will be Andy Engilis, Jr. on the koloa hybrid identification key, Mike Reed with new software for managing endangered species in Hawaii, and Leigh Frederickson on the new Hawaii Wetland Management Handbook. Adonia Henry, founder of Scaup & Willet LLC is coordinating the event. Funds are provided by the PCJV, NRCS, and

USFWS. The Hawaii Chapter of the Wildlife Society is the host. A formal announcement is posted on the PCJV website at www.pcjv.org/hawaii.

PICCC Integrated Science Plan Partnership Questionnaire: The Hawaii based Landscape Conservation Cooperative (PICCC) is conducting a partnership climate change information needs assessment. Results of the needs assessment will become the Integrated Science Plan that will drive subsequent annual research funded projects and allocations.

4. HWJV Partners' Reports:

- **DOFAW: Norma Creps** reminded that she is the go to person for any projects that would qualify for the annual National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant submittal.
- **NRCS: Ranae Ganske-Cerizo** shared that there will be some new Wetland Reserve Projects in FY '12 located statewide. Apparently WRP opportunities have been scant in recent years.
- **DOFAW Maui: Fern Duvall** indicated that the failed water circulation pump for Kanaha Pond has been removed and they are waiting for the new one to replace it. They are seeing lots of stilts and coots, as well as migratory birds right now. The recent 5 ft. high tsunami took out 2,200 ft of fencing which will need to be replaced. They are looking at the tsunami's effects on vegetation, which include having killed makaloa. Also, nene will be relocated to Maui from the abundant population on Kauai.
- **HILT: James Crowe** indicated they have excavated ~ 15 acres down 1 foot at Waihe'e to improve wetting conditions.
- **E Kupaku ka 'aina: Penny Levin** has been working with taro farmers on the stream above Waihe'e and mitigation efforts are resulting in more water flow downstream. Some Lidar mapping will be done to look at wetlands in the Central Maui area. Laihea (?) wetland in Kihea has a plan completed to address invasive species removal of water cabbage, mangroves and kiawe.

Morning Site Visit to Waihe'e Wetland with Jim Crowe showed extensive progress in native vegetation growth across the site. The diligent work of Maui Coastal Land Trust (now HILT) staff has paid off with wonderful native community composition.