

## Pacific Islands Area – State Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

When: 1:00-4:00 HI Standard Time, May 15, 2018

Location: USDA-NRCS State Office Conf. Room, 300 Ala Moana Blvd, Room 4-118, Honolulu, HI

Call in Number: 1-888-844-9904, access code 2244222#)

Web Link for Meeting: <https://usda.adobeconnect.com/rrhplrn6r3w4/>

### Welcome:

Travis Thomason

Thanks- coverage area- purpose is feedback and local workgroups.

### Partner Reports concerning how NRCS better address high priority Resource Concerns:

Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts (Michelle Watkins) 15 minutes

- Comprised of 16 soil and water conservation districts, each has board of 5
- Promote resource conservation, educate, facilitate cooperation, partnerships, legislation
  - Grower assistance w/IPM
  - assist farmers with Tech & tools for scheduling and disease/pest outbreaks
  - increase in non-English speaking cooperators- need contract interpreter
  - advisory services for flood mitigation
  - Farm bureau- Randy
    - Invasive species, rat lung worm, food safety modernization act
    - Fencing cost assist is a big issue for all islands
    - VOG= greenhouses for future (consider design or cost share)
  - SWCD- get funding to increase efforts beyond what NRCS has on table

Tropical Fruit Growers (Ken Love/Mark Suiso)

15 minutes

- Current major project is repository- 10K grafted or fruit tree for \$20 or less
  - Want to get prices for trees down
- Primary need is pig fencing- requirements are based on mainland acres, not local
- Soil web app (UC Davis & NRCS) was great- now reduced to website only
  - Need these features & would like to work with tech; smartphones...
- Looking for tool to categorize plants for microclimates for Hawaii
  - Data exists in pieces and forms, but not consolidated or in an app- need funds to create

Feral Ungulates Subcommittee Report (Craig Clarke)

15 minutes

- Part of USDA, APIS, Operational part of Wildlife Services
- Airports are main focus- preventing wildlife damage
- Nuisance animals- feral pig, dog, cat, mongoose
  - Feral Swine working group- to use funds & partner with other agencies
  - Money tied to corals or similar- not just fencing
  - Have a bait that is effective, but want to prevent other animals from getting & not palatable- humane death w/ability to eat flesh if avoiding stomach
  - Engaging hunter groups- they only want to reduce population not eliminate
- Protect- threatened and endangered species

Cattlemen's (Dale Sandlin)

15 minutes

- Have increase in demand- retailers, restaurants, schools
- Helping with evacuation and destruction for those exposed to sulfur dioxide
- Hawaii Grazing Lands Coalition- Partnership with NRCS

HI Dept. of Agriculture (Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser) 15 minutes

- Focus on plan quarantine & pest control branch today
- Quarantine- blue shirt inspectors at airports & docks as first line prevention
  - No controls on Molokai= high risk area- plans to prevent risks to watershed
  - Rely on community- Auntie Laurie
  - HTA providing funding for outreach- are they on ROD workgroup
    - Want to recommend/request help on this issue- regulatory component?
- Plant pest control is 2<sup>nd</sup> line defense & involves chemical and other prevention
- Fireweed in pastures Hawaii, Maui, Lanai
  - Causes liver damage if ingested by cattle or horses
  - Found in areas of construction/rebuilding
  - Pesticide- effective but a lot of downside, going biological w/natural reoccurring agents
    - Request NRCS to support travel for continued research as funding draws down
- NRCS working on boards, recommend planting alternative species to address ROD
  - 2 strains of disease, now found on Kauai

Watershed Partnership (Katie Ersbak) 15 minutes

- Native Ecosystem Protection & Management
- Native intact ecosystems portion of watersheds- uplands
- Remote- helicopter locations, working on weed prevention...to keep intact
- Focus areas- Soil, water, plants, animals
- Do add fencing to prevent ungulates, then go in and do removal
  - Limited involvement from hunters due to remote locations
  - When possible open areas up for them to do removal
- Restoration & monitoring
- Management Practices via NRCS do not fund helicopter costs- this addition would help
- Simplifying eligibility requirements and/or process to apply for landowners

Hawaii Rural Water Association (Juanita Reyher-Colon) 15 minutes

- Provide technical and managerial assistance to farmers & ranchers
  - Classroom training for continuing ed for producers & on site assistance
  - Focus is Water Protection Program
    - Farmers provide data & Juanita compiles, makes recommendations, does outreach= positive community reception
    - Budget includes water testing- does it meet FSMA
      - Not currently, but will look into this

NRCS Reports:

Technical Reports:

Ecological Sciences (Eric Boettger) 10 minutes

- Updating standards- does this on 5yr rotation
  - Public can comment on standards- on national & state level

Engineering (Sherman White) 10 minutes

- Practice standard updates- will be open for cost sharing in 2019
  - Composting of animal carcass
  - Vegetate treatment area- likely pig waste
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program

- Relieves eminent to be expected threats due to natural disasters- does not require presidential declaration
  - Freshwater only
  - In Hawaii require 25% cost share can be in-kind
  - Engagement in Kauai floods- yes from start and ongoing
  - Ag land only?- any land outside of cropland can get assistance (no practice implementing) emergency only

Soils (Amy Koch)

10 minutes

- Soil Survey App- cost & human capital to update it was changed to website- it does have same capabilities

Programmatic Report:

- EQIP- obligated and requested more \$. Includes Feral Swine, restoration...
- WLFW- Nene on all islands except Oahu
- Joint Chief- West Maui
- RCPP- DLNL is awardee

Farm Bill Financial Assistance Update (Nicola Giardina) 15 minutes

- New farm bill may have detached RCPP opportunities

Summary – Wrap-up – Suggested Next Meeting Date - November 14, 2018

- Would like landscape level initiatives for lowlands
  - Expand watershed partners
  - Suggest Butch assemble a request that can be submitted as proposal for this
- NRCS focus- priority resource concerns (from last meeting) get ranked
- Use local workgroups that priorities resource concerns/areas
  - Geographically based by county in US, other areas geo varies
  - Chaired by local SWC
  - Need to use notes from STAC meetings to establish local workgroups
- FWS- reclassifying Nene from endangered to threatened
  - Open comment thru 5/30
  - Request for public hearing is due today 5/16