

COQUI FROG WORKING GROUP

Minutes to meeting on Aug 12, 2002, 1:00 – 4:30 pm
Komohana Agric. Complex, Hilo HI

1. ATTENDANCE (see attachment)

- Coordinator: Arnold H. Hara
- Facilitator: F. Benevides, Jr.
- Recorder: R. Niino-DuPonte

2. INFORMATION SHARING [Group]

- Invitation to participate in the planning process for the development of an Environmental Assessment that will evaluate an emergency plan to control invasive *Eleutherodactylus* frogs in the State of Hawaii (deadline for comments is August 30, 2002). T. Ohashi had circulated the proposal to CFWG via e-mail. Also caffeine work is moving forward. Maui sites have been approved to collect EPA information on impact on non-target organisms and possible water contamination will be monitored.
- List of EPA “Inert Ingredients” and label for ‘Sharpshooter’ pesticide that lists citric acid as an inert ingredient which is a change from previous label that lists it as the active ingredient. G. Sahara had limited copies – these will be scanned and circulated to CFWG.
- Update on registering hydrated lime as a pesticide. L. Nakahara contacted several cement companies on the mainland but none are interested in registering hydrated lime as a pesticide because of the additional paperwork and whether it would be cost-effective to the company. Incidental findings indicate that the dry form of hydrate lime will act as a residual pesticide as long as the ground remains dry. G. Sahara stated that hydrated lime cannot be used intentionally or “non-intentionally” as a pesticide unless it becomes registered.
- Nursery industry reps were invited for input. B. Kenoi addressed H. Tanouye’s concerns regarding Mayor Kim’s request for a concerted effort and possible declaration of ‘disaster’. M. Saxby added that the loss of export revenue due to negative publicity (such as declaration of disaster and quarantine for frogs) will far outweigh other aspects.

1. PRESENTATION [W. Mautz]: Potential Impact of the Coqui Frog on Hawaii’s Ecology and Factors that Affect Frog Mortality (William Mautz, professor at UH Hilo).

- Alien vertebrates are ecological generalists, that is, eat a diversity of organisms and are capable of living in a wide variety of habitats
- Coqui frogs, in particular:
 - its loud vocalizations may disrupt any other species that use the quiet of night to communicate
 - its sheer numbers will inevitably be disruptive to other species (e.g., its feces change the microbial decomposition on the forest floor)
 - will disrupt arthropod balance because it consumes beneficial arthropods (spiders, predatory beetles and wasps) as well as nuisance arthropods and affects the predator-prey relationships and numbers
- What predator in Hawaii can keep the coqui frog population in check?
 - Majority of the birds present are primarily nectar feeders. Larger birds (hawk, owl) generally look for larger prey than the small coqui.
 - Mongoose may also look for larger prey.

- Biggest threat: potential food source for snakes. There are some that feed solely on frogs. The brown tree snake is the most likely species to be accidentally introduced and if there is an abundant food source (e.g., coquis) available, they can quickly become established.

1. NEW ACTION ITEMS [Group]:

- Invite DNLR representatives (possibly John Giffin) to discuss what they plan to do to control coquis on their lands, especially those contiguous to nurseries. **[F. Benevides] Status: OPEN**
- Invite DNLR enforcement (possibly Lenny Turlip) **[F. Benevides] Status: OPEN**
- Invite a state parks representative (possibly, Glen Toguchi) to discuss what they plan to do to control coquis on their lands **[F. Benevides] Status: OPEN**
- Contact Invasive Species Committee's Christy Martin as potential Public Relations person for all coqui inquiries **[M. Craig] Status: OPEN**

2. OLD ACTION ITEMS: none

6. SUBMISSIONS TO AGENDA [Group]

Notes: Numbers in () indicate number of participants interested in discussing item. Underlined items indicate closure, resolution, and/or discussion.

- How can we educate the public regarding coqui frog control? (21)
- Is eradication of coqui frogs in Hawaii possible? (13)
- If it is possible, how can we eradicate coqui frogs in Hawaii? (13)
- How can hydrated lime be legally used to eradicate coqui frogs? (8)
- Brainstorm quarantine issues. (11)
- How do/can we enforce individuals who knowingly spread coqui frogs? (3)
- Who are our stakeholders? (5)
- How can we prepare for public controversy? (10)
- Develop educational programs for industry and homeowners. (11)
- What is the impact of coqui frog on Hawaii's ecology? (12) (see **W. Mautz's presentation**)
- What are alternative treatment techniques for potted plants moving between islands and landscape plants? (11)
- Seek humane (i.e. quick kill) methods for controlling coqui frogs. (7)
- Identify all potential funding sources. (11)

- **Formation of 'virtual' committees** to move the agenda forward versus further discussion during meeting times. [Point of Contact]

1. Public Education [W. Kenoi, County of HI and B. Mautz, UHH]
2. Research [A. Hara, UHM and R. Sugihara, USDA]
3. Nurseries [J. Runnells, Big Island Association of Nurserymen]
4. Quarantine [M. Enriques, HI DOA, Plant Quarantine]
5. Legislative [G. Santos, BIISC]
6. Tracking Funding & Resources [T. Ohashi, USDA]
7. Public Relations (see action item regarding Christy Martin)
8. Operations [S. Veriato, USDA; G. Santos, BIISC]

Action/Resolution: Expectation: CFWG members will volunteer for various committees. Committees will conduct discussion/take action outside of meeting time (via e-mail, phone calls as well as meeting physically). Time is allocated during CFWG meetings to give updates and get feedback from the group

- **Brainstorm quarantine issues. What are alternative treatment techniques for potted plants moving between islands and landscape plants?**
 - M. Enriques, HI DOA, PQ, gave the group some background information on how/why the certified BN (burrowing nematode) nurseries program began, the importance of export nursery products to Hawaii's economy (third to Florida and California), the probability that the coqui frog hitchhiked on nursery products from Florida to Hawaii, slipping through quarantine inspection (hard to detect smaller froglets and eggs), and that HI DOA designated the coqui frog as an "agricultural pest" but no other state has done likewise.
 - If a quarantine treatment for nursery products is developed, the nursery industry must initiate treatment and build any necessary facilities, and HI DOA will regulate and enforce that the treatment is effective. Several possibilities, including vapor heat (UHM) and citric acid (HI DOA, USDA), will be evaluated for efficacy and phytotoxicity for a variety of host plants.

7. MEETING EVALUATION [Group]

- **Pro Issues:**
 - Input from nursery/industry representatives should have been included from the first meeting
 - Useful to hear about ecology issues
 - Setting up committees
- **Suggested Changes:**
 - Need refreshments, specifically drinks
 - Need DNLR input and cooperation
 - Too process-oriented – need to balance with more action

8. NEXT MEETING

- Monday, 09/09/02
- 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- UH Manoa CES, Komohana Agricultural Complex, 875 Komohana Street, Conference Room A (upstairs), Hilo, HI