

**Progress Report**  
**CGAPS/ISCs Public Information Officer**  
**October 1 – December 31, 2002**  
*Submitted 1/16/03*

**Introduction**

An island-based public relations and education campaign has been underway on Maui since January 200 through the Maui Invasive Species Committee's (MISC) Public Relations Specialist. The campaign includes writing and sending press releases and articles, holding media events and conducting community outreach through displays and PowerPoint presentations. The success of this position was observed through local and national media coverage about invasive species issues and MISC's work, along with widespread community support for MISC activities. (Attachment 1). Additionally, \$400,000 in County funding was secured for FY2002 and FY2003 through meetings with Council members and testimony at County Council hearings.

In light of the growing needs for similar services to each ISC and the recognized need for statewide awareness of invasive species issues, the position of statewide Public Information Officer (PIO) was created and filled on 10/1/02. The PIO provides public relations support for the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) and the Invasive Species Committees (ISCs) on each island.

The goal of the CGAPS/ISCs PIO is to raise public awareness of invasive species issues and the CGAPS and ISC partnerships to effect change in attitudes, behavior or policy.

**Activities and Accomplishments**

1. Participated as a presenter in the Weed Risk Assessment workshops held on Kauai, Oahu, Hawaii and Maui. DLNR's Kaulunani Urban Forestry Program organized and sponsored the workshops to promote the Weed Risk Assessment system (WRA) for scoring plants to determine if they may be invasive before they are imported or planted. 10/4, 10/7-10. Also presented WRA information at the OISC meeting 11/6.
2. Continued work on Miconia video project with videographers Masako Wescott and Chris Rieckert. The project includes Art Medeiros (USGS-BRD) and is funded by USFWS. Filmed a segment in Keanae, Maui (Photo 1). 10/13.
3. Met with Hawaiian Electric representatives and Ellen VanGelder about RIFA issues and educating HEI employees about early detection. CGAPS and the Hawaii Ant Group will work together on an article for submission to the HEI newsletter. 10/21.
4. Designed and presented a display for the Hawaii Agricultural Conference. Spoke with key members of the agriculture industry, Senator Daniel Inouye and then-Representative Ed Case (selected display sections, Attachment 2). 10/24.
5. Met with Jim Hollyer, Mindy Wilkinson, Ron Cannarella to look at a new pest identification database and discuss how it might be used by HDOA at airports. 10/31.

6. Planned and held the Silent Invasion Hawaii Pest Update in conjunction with the ANS Task Force Meeting. PIO activities included 300 invitations sent to elected officials, follow-up calls, press advisory and release, and speaker coordination. Noted attendees included Channel 8 film crew and reporter, Representative Helene Hale, newly elected Honolulu City Councilman Mike Gabbard, and attendees of the ANS Task Force. Pest Update held at the State Capitol Auditorium on 11/14. (Attachment 3)
7. Gave presentations about invasive species to community members including Senator Carol Fukunaga and Councilman Rod Tam at the Tantalus Homeowners Association on 11/16, and at Hanauma Bay for the Community Outreach program on 12/5.
8. Gave a presentation about CGAPS, ISCs at the USDA-APHIS Port Director's meeting. Presentation was followed by a request by Hawaii State Director Vernon Harrington for the Port Directors on each island to attend ISC meetings regularly. 11/21.
9. Participated in TNC Honouliuli Preserve hike with TNC staff and staffers from Sen. Morita's and Rep. Hale's offices (Photo 2). Prepared and distributed Miconia information and photos to illustrate the threat to watersheds and native species (Attachment 4) 12/11.
10. Participated in ISC volunteer Miconia work days on Kauai 10/4, Maui 12/23 and Oahu 12/14 (Photo 3).
11. Attended CGAPS, ALL-ISC meetings, OISC meeting 11/6, and MISC meeting 12/6.
12. Attended various meetings such as the Global Invasive Species Program 10/5, Hawaii Botanical Society 11/4 and 12/2, Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force 11/13.
13. Prepared a CGAPS/ISCs PIO Media Plan and budget for FY 2003 and a projected budget for FY 2004. (Attachment 5)

### **Media Activities**

1. Wrote an article for Hawaii Landscape in conjunction with the Weed Risk Assessment Talks. The article appeared in the November/December issue along with articles by Curt Daehler (UH- Botany) and Julie Denslow (USFS) about the WRA system, and Theresa Truman-Madriaga (DOFAW-Kaulunani Urban Forestry) about the need for using the WRA system. (Attachment 6)
2. Wrote and sent a press release about The Silent Invasion Hawaii Pest Update. Press release resulted in news articles and television news coverage of the event. (Attachments 7, 8)

3. Wrote and sent a press release about the effect of Super typhoon Pongsona on USDA-Wildlife Service's brown treesnake program on Guam. The press release generated a lot of attention, resulting in articles in most of the major newspapers across the state and television news media coverage. (Attachments 9-11)
4. Wrote and sent a follow-up press release about the status of Hawaii's emergency response plan for increased brown treesnake interdiction measures (Attachment 12). Additional television news coverage was received, including Pacific-wide exposure in Pacific Business News (Attachment 13). Release was also sent to the LA Times for inclusion into an invasive species article in progress.
5. Formed and maintained contact with journalists. Provided information, photos, maps and additional contacts for news stories. (Attachment 14)
6. Assisted media and video journalists in connecting with scientists in the field, scheduled on-camera interviews and arranged for film permits where appropriate. Assisted a free-lance video journalist in setting up meetings and film locations for Dec 2-Jan 10 on Hawaii, Maui and Oahu. The show will be a special on Hawaii's invasive species for Animal Planet Canada. The show will also be sent to Animal Planet U.S. for possible air dates.



Photo 1: Filming a *Miconia* video at Keanae, Maui.



Photo 2: Planting endangered plants with legislative aides at The Nature Conservancy's Honouliuli Preserve.



Photo 3: *Miconia* service trip with OISC and the Sierra Club.



## List of Attachments

<u>Attachment</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Maui's alien invasion. Maui No Ka `Oi Magazine. Fall issue, 2002.
2	ISCs priority target species photos and descriptions for display. Used as part of the Hawaii Agricultural Conference display and Silent Invasion Pest Update display.
3	The Silent Invasion: Hawaii Pest Update agenda.
4	<i>Miconia</i> presentation/handouts for legislative aids and office managers on The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii's Honouliuli Preserve hike.
5	CGAPS/ISCs PIO FY 2003 Media Plan with current and projected budgets.
6	PIO Editorial: Understanding the impact of invasive species. Hawaii Landscape, November/December 2002, pg. 4.
7	Press release: The Silent Invasion: Hawaii Pest Update.
8	Briefing set on battle plan against invasive species. Honolulu Star-Bulletin. 11/12/02.
9	Press release: Supertyphoon Pongsona lays waste to brown treesnake program.
10	Hawaii watches for snakes after Guam typhoon. The Honolulu Advertiser, 12/11/02, pg A 1.
11	Storm widens door for tree snakes. Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 12/11/02, pg A 3.
12	Press release: Brown treesnake emergency response plan.
13	Hawaii on snake alert as flights arrive from Guam. Pacific Business News, 12/23/02.
14	Fruity solution overcomes coqui frogs. Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 12/15/02.