

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of Acacia koa leaves. The leaves are long, narrow, and have a silvery-green color with prominent veins. They are arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern, creating a textured background.

Final Report

Submitted to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
for
12200-3-G-024, UH05182: CGAPS Media Plan

Award Period 9/15/03 - 9/14/08

Final Report for the CGAPS Media Plan

Introduction

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) Media Plan was implemented by the CGAPS Public Information Officer (PIO). The primary goal of the CGAPS PIO is to raise the awareness of the public, officials and special interest groups about invasive species issues in order to effect a change in perception, actions or funding for invasive species programs. The PIO also works to promote CGAPS and the ISCs as viable solutions that aid in the battle against invasive pests in an effort to build awareness and support for these initiatives.

Funding for the PIO is through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (a separate grant from the Media Plan) and the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Forestry and Wildlife. In-kind support for the PIO and Media Plan activities includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) Tropical Plants and Soil Sciences supports the PIO by providing an office in the University of Hawai'i St. John Plant Science Laboratory. Office supplies including a FAX line, copy machine and other basic supplies were provided by the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU).
- Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) has graciously allowed CGAPS meetings to be held at their conference room. The use of this exceptional meeting space is appreciated.
- The volunteer CGAPS steering committee and chairs provide guidance and supervision for the PIO. Agencies and NGOs that allow their staff to assume a CGAPS chair or steering committee position contribute immeasurable amounts.

Activities and Accomplishments

Funding provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in support of the CGAPS Media Plan is gratefully acknowledged. The CGAPS Media Plan involved starting a media campaign involving the production and primetime placement of public service announcements (PSAs), public outreach activities and news media stories to raise awareness of the issue of invasive species and what people can do to help protect Hawai'i. Funding also provided support for pre-and post-campaign surveys to determine outreach efficacy, and partial salary support for the CGAPS PIO to coordinate and conduct the different components of the campaign. Some of the media projects and initiatives received additional funding from state, federal and private businesses sources, all of which allowed CGAPS to maximize the funds provided by this grant, and ultimately to reach more people.

The Silent Invasion Media Campaign

In October 1996, CGAPS contracted a company to conduct the first baseline public awareness survey specifically on the topic of invasive species. Four hundred and seven registered voters were interviewed by telephone in a random sample, balanced according to all known demographic factors, for a margin of error of +/- 4.8% at a 95% confidence level. From these results, CGAPS learned that just 29% of people polled had heard of the concept of "alien pest species," yet more people had heard of high-profile species such as the brown treesnake (66%),

(Kitchens Group 1996). These results helped CGAPS craft the first the first media campaign on invasive species titled the “Silent Invasion.” The Silent Invasion campaign featured “shock footage” television PSAs and a graphic 26-page booklet about invasive species and how they affect us. The campaign ran in 1997-1998, largely coordinated by PIOs from The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i and the Department of Land and Natural Resources for CGAPS.

Although no follow up surveys were conducted after the first campaign, the newly hired CGAPS PIO used this prior work as a starting point for designing a new media campaign. By examining the materials and messages of this first campaign, along with the public’s awareness of key issues, new messages were crafted. In the five year period covered by this report, CGAPS has conducted two television media campaigns titled the Silent Invasion, utilized radio and print media pieces, and has taken advantage of outreach opportunities via the news media in non-campaign years.

Because of past success, the new Silent Invasion campaigns also featured high profile species that were already well known. However, the new campaign focused on providing the public with one or two actions they could take to help address the problem. In 2003, four key messages were selected: invasive plants spread from people’s yards into natural areas, so plant non-invasive plants; report invasive species to the pest hotline; declare produce and plants for inspection when returning to Hawai‘i ; and protect reefs by not spreading invasive seaweeds.

Focus Groups

USFWS funds were used to conduct three focus groups to test these concepts and messages with the public, to fine-tune messages before filming and airing the PSAs. The 2003 Focus Groups Summary can be found online at www.cgaps.org under “Reports and White Papers.”

One of the most important findings from focus groups centered on issues with the pest hotline number. Results showed that invasive species were not a “top of mind” concern, yet participants were aware of the brown treesnake and talked about the damage it caused on Guam. When it came to talking about reporting snakes, many participants said they would report them, yet some of the same participants relayed anecdotes about people they knew who had smuggled pet snakes into Hawai‘i , and yet they did not report them to authorities. From these results, CGAPS concluded that it was important to continue to link snake issues with the brown treesnake story, and that the amnesty program message should be added to let people know that they can turn in pet snakes without fear of prosecution by calling the hotline number.

Focus groups also revealed some major issues with the pest hotline itself. Participants were not aware that the state had a pest hotline number, despite it having been in operation since 1992, and most couldn’t identify what agency to look under in the phone book. When participants were told that the hotline was an Oahu number, neighbor island residents said they would be reluctant to call because they would incur long distance charges. Neighbor island residents also preferred to speak to someone on their island that might be familiar with the sighting locations.

To address these hotline issues, a new statewide pest hotline number was set up to allow callers to dial the seven-digit number, 643-PEST, direct and toll free from any island. The new hotline

number uses a computer program to automatically route calls to the nearest HDOA office during work hours and to the HDOA office at the Honolulu International Airport after hours and on weekends, for 20 hours per day, 7-day coverage.

2006-2007 Silent Invasion PSAs

Selection of a production company to produce five PSAs was done by RFP. KITV (the local ABC affiliate) was selected in February 2005 as they offered the lowest bid, a wealth of stock footage, experience with the topics, and the greatest value of in-kind services. The CGAPS PIO worked with KITV and public information officers from the various agencies to write the scripts for the 5 messages and to produce the 30-second spots.

With funding from the USFWS and other sources, prime broadcast time was purchased to ensure that the PSAs aired during high-viewership programs such as the evening news, CSI Miami, Lost, Dancing with the Stars, and on local programs such as Outside Hawai‘i, a show that appeals to hunters and hikers. The PSAs aired more than 1000 times, and selected messages were aired again in spring 2007. The PSAs were rotated and aired more than 1,000 times on all major television network affiliate stations from January through July, 2006, and continue to be aired on Outside Hawai‘i and in free slots on KITV. PSAs may be viewed online at <http://www.Hawai‘i.invasivespecies.org/multimedia.html>.

1. “Protect Hawai‘i —Don’t Plant a Pest.”

Background: More than half of the invasive plants that are threatening Hawai‘i’s forests and natural areas started off as ornamental plants in yards, gardens and landscaping. Some of the most popular ornamentals today are spreading through the forest and replacing native plants and the animals that depend on them, yet they continue to be sold. People can help protect Hawai‘i by asking for native or non-invasive plants at their nursery or garden shop.

Script (announcer says): Miconia... banana poka ... fountain grass ... These pretty plants started in people’s gardens, but wind and animals spread these seeds into the forest. These plants are now hurting Hawai‘i’s fragile environment. Today, we can make better gardening choices by choosing native Hawaiian plants or plants that are non-invasive. (Child: let’s get the ilima! Mom nods). Ask your nursery for non-invasive, environmentally safe plants. Protect Hawai‘i. Don’t plant a pest.

2. “Protect Hawai‘i —Don’t Pack a Pest.”

Background: In Hawai‘i there is a tradition of bringing presents back from overseas to give to friends and family, and oftentimes it is food. This message reminds people that they could unknowingly carry in unwanted pests hidden in produce or plants (Photo 1). People can help protect Hawai‘i by declaring all items listed on agriculture forms so that they can be inspected for unwanted pests.



Photo 1. Filming “Don’t Pack a Pest.”

Script (announcer says): Alien insect pests...they can hide in fruit, vegetables, flowers and soil, costing everyone money in diseased crops and higher prices. How can they get here? When we fly home to Hawai‘i, we sometimes forget that all fruits and plants must be inspected for alien insects and diseases. (Daughter: “We better tell them about these,” Mom, Dad nod in agreement). Most items are returned after inspection. But declaration starts with YOU. Help protect Hawai‘i. Don’t pack a pest.

3. “Protect Hawai‘i —Report a Pest” (two PSAs)

Background: Public awareness studies indicate that the vast majority of people do not know who to call when they see a snake or other invasive pest, or that there is a pest hotline number. Additionally, the state pest hotline number was an Oahu number, which is a toll call for neighbor island residents. A new, toll-free pest hotline system has been instituted with a new number, 643-PEST (643-7378), and two PSAs will advertise the number and the importance of calling to report invasive pests (Photo 2).

Script (announcer says): Red Imported Fire ants and biting sand flies...just two of the many invasive pests that could damage the ecosystem, economy and our health if they arrive in Hawai‘i. How could this happen? Our islands receive cargo every day that could easily conceal a nest of aggressive fire ants, biting sand flies, or other unwanted pests. Early detection is our best defense. Report unusual insects to the Pest Hotline, 643-PEST. Stop the Silent Invasion. Report a pest.

Script (announcer says): The brown treesnake ...like all snakes, this snake is ILLEGAL in Hawai‘i. Snakes and other illegal creatures can damage the ecosystem and harm our families. But you can help protect Hawai‘i today and for future generations. Illegal pets can be turned in, no questions asked, by calling the Pest Hotline. And if you EVER see a snake or unusual animal, call the Pest Hotline at 643-PEST. Help protect Hawai‘i. Report a pest.



Photo 2. Filming “Report a Pest.”

5. “Protect Hawai‘i —The Silent Invasion of Hawai‘i’s Reefs

Background: Invasive marine species are a relatively new concept. There is a rise in cases of invasive alien aquarium species found on Hawai‘i reefs, and it is believed that people may dump their marine aquariums, as has historically been the case with fresh water aquariums into Hawai‘i’s streams. Invasive seaweed is also moved as fragments on dive and snorkeling gear from infested reefs (like Waikiki and Ala Moana) to more pristine areas such as Hanauma Bay and Shark’s Cove. People can help protect reefs by not dumping their aquariums, and by cleaning their gear before moving to another spot.

Script (announcer says): Hawai‘i’s reefs are home to a dazzling array of marine life. But in some areas, invasive snowflake coral and invasive seaweeds and are silently spreading,

devastating the marine ecosystem. There are ways you can help protect our reefs. Don't spread invasive seaweed. Clean your gear of all seaweed before moving to another spot.... And never dump your aquarium. Help protect Hawai'i, because a living reef gives our islands life.

Public Awareness Survey Results

USFWS also provided the funds necessary for conducting two statewide phone surveys, a pre-campaign awareness survey in 2004, and a benchmark survey in June 2006, five months into the broadcast period. A final survey was conducted in February 2007 (State funded). All surveys were conducted by professional survey companies. Survey participants were registered voters interviewed by telephone in a random sample, balanced according to all known demographic factors, for a margin of error of +/- 4% at a 95% confidence level. Results for each of these surveys are available at www.cgaps.org under "Reports and White Papers."

The survey results show that outreach efforts are effective in raising awareness and concern. For example, public awareness of the concept of invasive species is rising (Figure 1). General concept awareness started at 29% of people that said that they had heard of the concept of invasive species in 1996, and rose to 62% in 2006, and 70% in 2007.

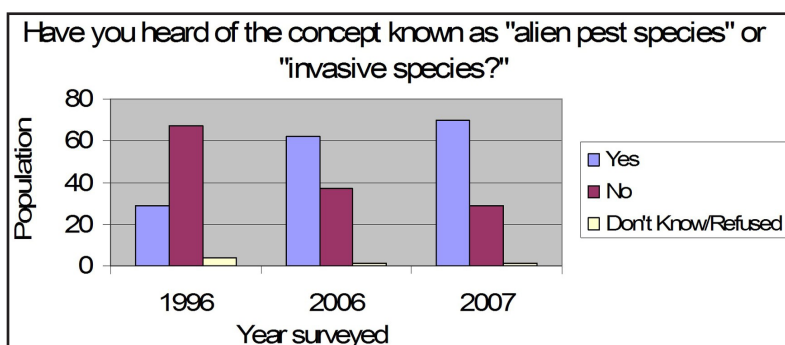


Figure 1. Survey results show that public awareness has risen over the past eleven years of concerted efforts.

The percentage of people that view invasive species as a serious problem is rising (Figure 2). Ongoing efforts to convey to the public the threat and costs of invasive species such as snakes, red imported fire ants, invasive seaweeds, and miconia, are working. In 2004, prior to the second Silent Invasion television campaign, 36% of survey participants viewed invasive species as a "very serious problem." After airing the television PSAs, radio ads and other outreach, this number rose to 43% of participants in 2006, and 46% in 2007. The percentage of people that view invasive species as "not a very serious problem" or "not a problem" dropped from 25% in 2004 to 13% in 2006 and 2007.

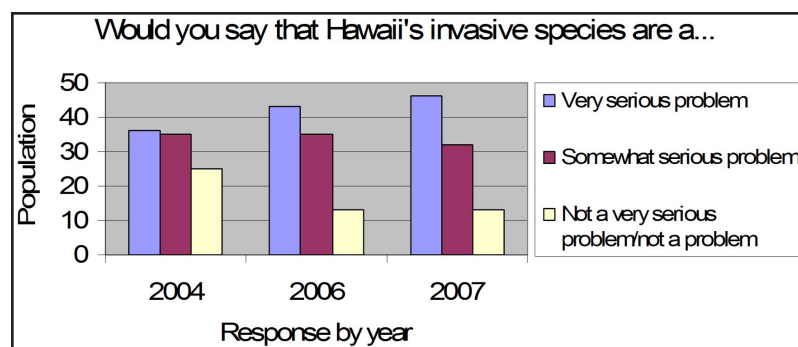


Figure 2. The number of people that consider invasive species a "very serious problem" is rising, and the number of people that don't view invasive species as a problem has decreased.

Public awareness of key "poster species" has increased with television, radio and media exposure. Using a PSA and media exposure to build on existing public awareness of brown

treesnakes to relay the importance of reporting pests to the pest hotline was successful. However, survey results also indicated that concern was rising, but knowledge of the pest hotline was not. This information led CGAPS to change the method used to deliver the pest hotline message from television to radio in the form of a jingle sung by a popular local comedian, Frank DeLima. The hotline jingle can be heard at www.cgaps.org under “Public Outreach, Press Releases and Photos.”

Although the company that provides the 643-PEST number and service was supposed to generate monthly reports on number of calls since the service started in December, 2005, data and billing issues within the company prevented these reports from being generated. The first report received was for March 2006, and regular reports are unavailable until December 2006.

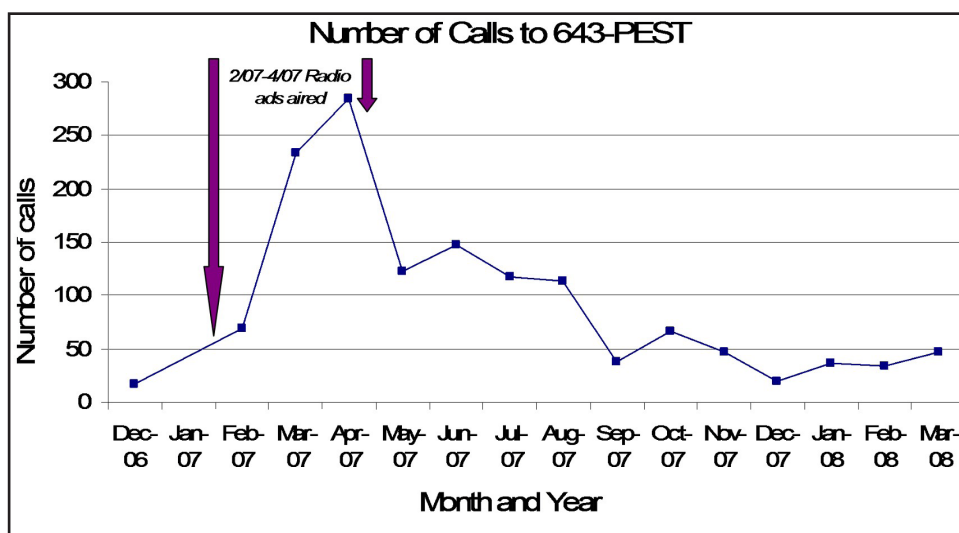


Figure 3. Pest hotline calls increased with the statewide broadcast of the pest hotline jingle.

2007 Silent Invasion Television PSAs

A portion of the USFWS funds were supposed to support the partial cost of producing and printing a new booklet that would be distributed to decision makers, business leaders and local students studying the Hawai‘i an ecosystem or sustainability. CGAPS was in the process of looking for and securing the remaining funds. However, in March 2007 CGAPS was approached by KITV on behalf of the internet provider, Earthlink, Inc., to film and broadcast five new PSAs as a community service. The value of this offer couldn’t be passed up. Earthlink and KITV 4 supported the cost to produce five new 30-second PSAs, create and post website ads on www.theHawaiiichannel.com (150,000 rotating ads), and purchased broadcast time on KITV 4, a package worth \$54,500. The PSAs ran more than 150 times on KITV from September—November, 2007 (Photo 3).



Photo 3. Opening graphics for the 2007 television PSAs.

1. “Invasive Species Harm Agriculture”

Script: (Announcer says) Invasive species are non-native animals, plants, insects and even diseases that can enter Hawai‘i, harm us, and the agricultural industry.

Dean Okimoto (Owner & Farmer, Nalo Farms): Invasive pests can damage or even destroy crops. Agriculture is critical to Hawai‘i’s economy and security...and for farmers, it’s our livelihood.

(Announcer says): Please, help protect Hawai‘i. When you return home, declare all produce and plants for inspection. Most items will be returned to you.

2. “Invasive Species Harm the Visitor Industry”

Script: (Announcer says) Invasive species are non-native animals, plants, insects and even diseases that can enter Hawai‘i, harm us, and our visitor industry.

Ted Bush (Beachboy & Owner, Waikiki Beach Service): People come to Hawai‘i because of our environment. Can you imagine what this beach would look like if we had biting sand flies?

Jan Abalos (Sheraton Waikiki Guest Services): Our livelihood is at stake, and so is our quality of life.

Announcer says: Please, help protect Hawai‘i by following all import laws.



Photo 4. Filming “Invasive Species Harm the Visitor Industry” PSA.

3. “Invasive Plants Harm the Watershed”

Script: (Announcer says) Invasive species are non-native animals, plants, insects and even diseases that can enter Hawai‘i, harm us, and our watershed.

Heidi Bornhorst (horticulturist and arborist): What we plant in our yards can impact the forest. Take miconia—it was planted in a garden in 1961. Now, it dominates thousands of acres of watershed forest. New invasive plants are still being sold, so please—ASK for native or non-invasive plants.

4. “Invasive Species (like snakes) Cause Harm”

Script: (Announcer says) Invasive species are non-native animals, plants, insects and even diseases that can enter Hawai‘i and cause us harm

Gary Sprinkle (KITV News at 5 Anchor & Journalist): The damage the brown treesnakes has done on Guam is devastating: loss of the birds, costly power outages, infants bitten in their cribs...The same thing can happen here ...any snake is a problem. Protect Hawai‘i. Report all snake sightings immediately to 643-PEST.

5. “Invasive Species Harm Public Health”

Script: (Announcer says) Invasive species are non-native animals, plants, insects and even diseases that can enter Hawai‘i and cause us harm...no matter where we are.

Dr. Cris Ancog (Pediatrician): “We’re lucky—Hawai‘i doesn’t have West Nile Virus or bird flu...yet. But these diseases could arrive. Finding a dead bird could mean that a disease is present, so please help by calling 211 immediately to report it for testing.”

Support for the CGAPS PIO

A portion of the USFWS funds were used to partially support the CGAPS PIO salary. Activities of the PIO directly related to the CGAPS Media Plan include the planning, coordination of all aspects of the media plan as described in this report. Additional activities involved direct public outreach to promote the messages in the media plan, coordination of additional outreach products and media, and working directly with the media to promote messages.

Partial salary support enabled the PIO to work on the following initiatives:

- Worked with the plant industry associations to promote the “Don’t plant a pest” message. Key industry associations now support the concept of using the Hawai‘i Pacific Weed Risk Assessment system (HPWRA) for screening plants for their invasive potential before importing into Hawai‘i and for making better decisions on plant use (Figure 4). With the assistance of the plant industry, we can help direct people towards non-invasive ornamental plants.

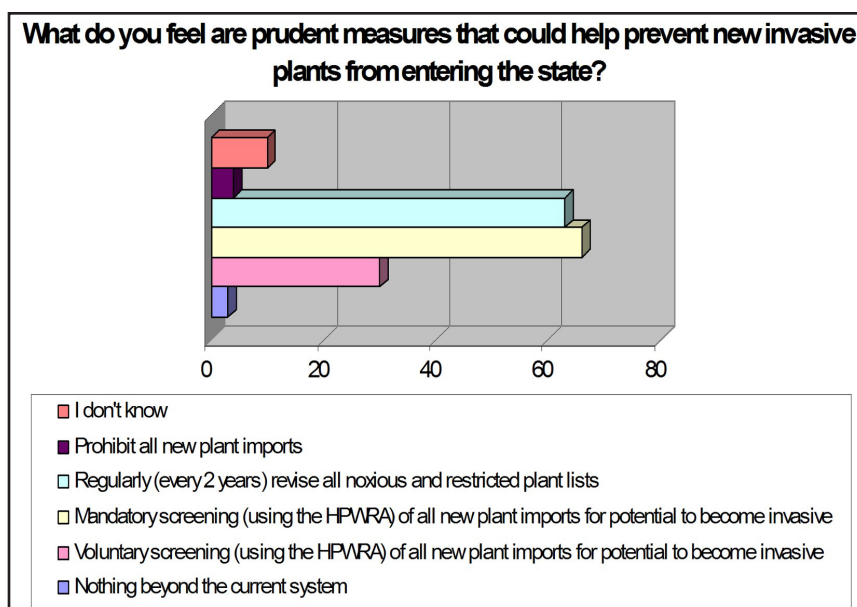


Figure 4. 2008 survey of plant industry professionals shows support for mandatory use of the HPWRA and for updating noxious and restricted plant lists.

- Coordinated the design and implementation of a new website for the Invasive Species Committees of Hawai‘i, CGAPS and HISC. Worked with Info Grafik, outreach staff and the staff of Pacific Basin Information Node (PBIN) and the Hawai‘i an Ecosystems at Risk (HEAR) to get the new site up and running at www.Hawaiiinvasivespecies.org.
- Worked with agencies and the Hawai‘i Superferry on public outreach materials and sign verbiage about resource conservation and preventing the movement of invasive species. Worked with other interisland transport companies to train staff on invasive species issues and response to key species.
- Helped coordinate the Leeward Community College (LCC) invasive species video series, a Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) outreach grant project. Worked with Les Matsuura

of the LCC Educational Media Center to plan and coordinate filming of four hour-long invasive species programs. Scheduled panelists for filming and served as the program host and moderator. Programs on brown treesnakes, West Nile Virus, invasive seaweeds, and miconia aired in 2008 on community access stations (Photo 5).

- Assisted the ISCs and the Aquatic Invasive Species Team with outreach needs. Assisted in projects that require public awareness and support, including rodent control to protect native species, public early detection of West Nile Virus and avian influenza via dead bird reporting, support for better cargo inspection capacity at ports. Although these messages are not directly in line with the media campaign messages, they raise awareness and concern about the issue in general.
- Participated in boards and working groups. Continued participation in the Pesticide Safety Working Group as the ISCs/HISC representative, to keep the group abreast of invasive species issues and legislative initiatives. Participated on the board of the Hawai‘i Society of Urban Forestry Professionals; helped HSUFP with the goals of promoting and protecting the urban forest, while working toward educating participants about selecting non-invasive species. Worked with the USDA National Wildlife Research Center and USFWS staff on refining the potential costs of brown treesnakes to tourism in Hawai‘i.
- Gave outreach presentations to the public, special interest and community groups. Participated in community events by setting up and staffing exhibits (Photo 6), and participated in conferences to learn about issues and projects, and to facilitate inreach and collaborative projects where possible.



Photo 5. Hosting miconia expert panelists for LCC video series program on miconia.



Photo 6. CGAPS PIO with miconia face paint at outreach booth on invasive plants at arborists conference.

Acknowledgements

The Silent Invasion media plan was generously supported through funds from the Department of the Interior-Office of Insular Affairs, Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Forestry and Wildlife and Division of Aquatic Resources, Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council, Hawai‘i Tourism Authority-Natural Resources Program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, KITV, Earthlink, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CGAPS participants include Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, ‘E Kupaku Ka ‘Aina, Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture, Hawai‘i Department of Health, Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Aquatic Resources and Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Hawai‘i Department of Transportation-Harbors Division, Airports Division, and Highways Division, Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Federation, Invasive Species Committees of Hawai‘i, Maui

Land & Pineapple Company, Inc., National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i, University of Hawai‘i-Department of Botany, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA APHIS—Wildlife Services, USDA Forest Service-Institute of Pacific Island Forestry, U.S. Department of Homeland Security-Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey-Biological Resources Division Pacific Island Ecosystems Research Center, U.S. Geological Survey-Pacific Basin Information Node and Hawaiian Ecosystems At Risk, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corp Base Hawai‘i , and U.S. Navy.

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