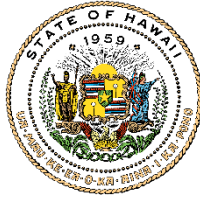


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 299, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

House Bill 299, House Draft 1 appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program and the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (Council) to continue to control and eradicate invasive species statewide. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department administers the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council, and the Department's Director co-chairs the Council alongside the Director of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA). The Council is a critical policy-level forum that joins state department leadership with legislators to provide strategic direction and statewide coordination to prevent and manage invasive species.

Annual funding for the Council is provided through LNR402. Most of this appropriation is distributed through a competitive grant process to support interagency projects and programs statewide. Grant proposals are reviewed by an evaluation committee comprised of staff from the Department, HDOA, the University of Hawai'i, Hawai'i Department of Health, Hawai'i Department of Transportation, and the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. This committee drafts a recommended budget and presents it to the Council for approval annually. However, funding has historically covered only a portion of the total grant requests received.

This bill provides a much-needed increase from \$5.75M to \$10M annually. Funding the Council fills gaps between agencies, supports research that improves the detection and management of pests, and allows for timely action as grant funds can be spent by Council partners immediately.

Department programs have received funding through the Council's competitive grants through LNR 402, allowing the Department to provide leadership for specific projects for natural resources protection. Since FY16, the Council has provided \$1.14M to Department-based projects, including a planner position for the Division of Aquatic Resources' ballast water and hull fouling program and a contract to rear mosquitos for the landscape-level control of avian diseases that threaten Hawai'i's remaining forest birds. The Department also manages other projects, such as the island-based invasive species committees that control invasive plants that threaten the State's watersheds. Without dedicated Council funding, these efforts would not have existed, and invasive plants like *Miconia* would have replaced native forests across the State.

The Department strongly recommends that the increased appropriation be recurring to ensure the long-term sustainability of invasive species management efforts.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB299 HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL.**

REP. KIRSTIN KAHALOA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 9:30AM and Room Number: CR 325

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure will not impact the priorities identified in the Governor's
- 2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's ("Department") appropriations and
- 3 personnel priorities.
- 4 **Department Position:** The Department supports this measure.
- 5 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Services Division, Vector Control Branch,
- 6 provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.
- 7 HB299 HD1 appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program and the
- 8 Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) to continue efforts to control and eradicate invasive
- 9 species statewide.
- 10 The Department supports HISC and its programs to prevent and eliminate invasive species in
- 11 Hawaii. Vector-borne diseases such as dengue fever, zika, chikungunya, lyme disease, and
- 12 many others are transmitted via animals and insects that are invasive to Hawaii. Vector-borne
- 13 diseases are increasing worldwide, often exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. To
- 14 protect Hawaii from diseases transmitted by invasive species, efforts must be prioritized to
- 15 prevent their spread and establishment..

1 HISC plays a critical role as a cross-cutting organization that coordinates, supports, and funds
2 research while directing invasive species control activities. These activities are essential in the
3 fight against organisms that harm public and environmental health.

4 The Department supports increased funding and additional resources for HISC to help fill gaps
5 between agencies, support research that enhances the detection and management of invasive
6 organisms, and enable timely action in the fight against invasive species.

7
8 **Offered Amendments:** e.g., None

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

10

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025
9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 299, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 299, HD1 relating to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council, which appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program and Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) to ensure their long-term viability and continue to control and eradicate invasive species in the State, effective 7/1/3000.

The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports this measure. The HISC and the projects it funds are an important component of enabling the State to achieve its goal of increased statewide biosecurity. The funding of projects by HISC enables the funded programs to fill some of the gaps in biosecurity-aligned agency mandates until said agencies are able to absorb these functions on an on-going basis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

1151 PUNCHBOWL ST, #325
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

VOTING MEMBERS

DAWN CHANG
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL
RESOURCES

SHARON HURD
HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

KATHLEEN HO, D.Env
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PARWINDER GREWAL, Ph.D.
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

MARY ALICE EVANS
BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
TOURISM

DEXTER KISHIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Chelsea Arnott, HISC Coordinator on behalf of
HISC Co-Chair Sharon Hurd and Co-Chair Dawn N.S. Chang

House Committee on AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of HOUSE BILL 299 HOUSE DRAFT 1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

House Bill 299 House Draft 1 appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program and the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure their long-term viability and continue to control and eradicate invasive species in the State. **The Hawaii Invasive Species Council (Council) supports this measure.**

Since its inception in 2003, the Council has received an annual appropriation that supports interagency programs and projects that address gaps between agency mandates and advance our collection knowledge through research and development of new tools. In FY20, the Council received an increase to their appropriation making the baseline \$5.75 million. The majority of funding is distributed through a competitive grant process where projects are submitted through an online application system in early May. An evaluation committee comprised of designated staff members from each of the Council departments reviews each application based on the Council funding priorities. Each application receives a score that is then discussed in an open meeting where the applicants are invited to attend to answer any questions from evaluators. The evaluation committee drafts a recommended budget that is then presented to voting members of the Council for approval at a public meeting. This process provides transparency on how projects are awarded and ensures that the most pressing needs are being addressed.

The additional funding would allow a much needed increase to the operations of the Island Invasive Species Committees, better invest in research and biocontrol, marine biosecurity, pest surveillance at critical control points, and increase staffing for Council program support that would include a data and grants manager. Council funds are important to leveraging federal dollars. For FY23 and FY24, the Council secured \$4.6 million from the Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program to support a range of invasive species work across the state. Council funding provided much of the 50% match requirement.

The proposed increase to Council funding would bring the baseline to \$10 million. The majority of the funding would still be available through the competitive grant process but prioritized to the projects mentioned above. A breakdown of Council FY25 funding is provided in the attached page along with what was requested.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

FY25 Summary:

HISC Budget Summary	FY25
Total Requests from Proposals	\$8,083,419.17
Appropriation:	\$5,750,000
After Restriction (10%) & DOFAW Overhead (7%)	4,779,230
HISC Support, HBIN, Weed Risk Assessment	\$465,797.09
Multi-agency pest monitoring at critical control points	\$240,056.11
Remaining for competitive grant process	\$4,059,457

Programmatic Awards:

Project Name	HISC Awarded Amount	Total Requested
Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC)	\$850,166	\$1,741,939
Oahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC)	\$762,500	\$1,844,233
Maui and Molokai Invasive Species Committee (MISC/MoMISC)	\$725,074	\$950,000
Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC)	\$714,369	\$1,340,730

Project Awards:

Project Name	HISC Awarded Amount	Total Requested and Application
UH: Development of an environmental DNA (eDNA) tool for early detection of invasives and monitoring for spread of Unomia in Hawai'i	\$43,274	\$132,511.00
UH CTAHR: ROD Outreach Extension Program / 6-mo. Salary	\$17,713	

		\$54,238.41
UH CTAHR: Tracking the spread of ramie moth, <i>Arcte coerula</i> , a Pest of Māmaki and other nettles in Hawai‘i”	\$20,884	\$71,474
Demonstrating efficacy of large-scale mosquito control using Bti larvicide to facilitate recovery of native Hawaiian forest birds	\$117,374	\$117,376.00
DLNR DAR: Ballast Water and Hull Fouling	\$85,000	\$85,000
Hawaii Ant Lab: Statewide Little Fire Ant Monitor and Control	\$670,323	\$1,000,000
CGAPS Staffing Program-Outreach	\$52,780	\$83,500



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Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 12, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 299, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice-Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 299, HD1, which appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program and Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure their long-term viability and continue to control and eradicate invasive species in the State.

Invasive species have become one of the most devastating problems impacting Hawai'i. Many invasive species are damaging Hawai'i's environment and economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture suffers when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few. Control measures take time to develop, leaving farmers and ranchers at risk. This is inconsistent with the State's goal of increasing self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Proper funding for HISC is critical for protecting Hawai'i's environment and economy and the health and lifestyle of its people through the support of invasive species prevention, control, research, outreach, and planning. This measure will provide necessary resources to HISC to help control and hopefully eradicate invasive species in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HISC.



House Committee on Education

Testimony on HB 299

Relating to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

February 12th, 2025

9:30 AM

Room 325

The Climate Change and Health Working Group (CCHWG) is a cross-sector collaborative interested in strengthening climate and health resiliency in Hawai'i. CCHWG supports this measure, which provides critical funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to address the growing threat invasive species pose to our ecosystems, public health, and communities.

Testimony of the Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group

In Support of HB 299

Relating to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Agriculture Committee:

The Climate Change and Health Working Group (CCHWG) supports HB299 and its goal of providing essential funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program. As a collaborative committed to strengthening Hawai'i's public health systems in the face of our changing climate, we recognize that the threats posed by invasive species are increasing. Warmer temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns can accelerate the spread of pests like coqui frogs, little fire ants, and the fungi causing rapid 'ōhi'a death. Meanwhile, invasive insects such as the coconut rhinoceros beetle threaten to decimate our tree canopies, diminishing our natural shade and exacerbating the heat island effect—a serious concern as we work to protect communities from rising temperatures and resulting heat-related illnesses.

In addition to these ecological harms, invasive mosquitoes stand out as a pressing public health threat. Mosquitoes capable of carrying dengue fever already pose a risk in Hawai'i; should new mosquito species arrive—potentially those that transmit malaria—our communities would be especially vulnerable. Effective biosecurity and robust, well-funded invasive species programs are critical for detecting, monitoring, and eradicating these vectors before they gain a foothold and create outbreaks of mosquito-borne illnesses.

Central to addressing these challenges is HISC's collaborative, multi-agency approach, which enables targeted strategies for pest control, ecosystem restoration, and community engagement. However, these essential efforts have long been under-resourced, forcing many initiatives to focus on containment instead of eradication. By appropriating greater, more consistent funding, HB299 would empower HISC to expand its competitive grant programs, invest in innovative technologies, and strengthen on-the-ground efforts that protect our native forests, agricultural lands, and the health of our residents.

Ultimately, this measure addresses not only the ecological and economic impacts of invasive species but also the intertwined reality of climate change and public health. When our native canopy is compromised, our ability to mitigate rising temperatures is diminished, leaving our keiki and kūpuna increasingly susceptible to heat-related illness. When mosquito populations flourish unchecked, communities face an elevated risk of vector-borne disease. By supporting HB299, the legislature has an opportunity to fortify Hawai'i's defenses against these growing threats, ensuring the long-term health and resilience of our islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Sincerely,

The Climate Change & Health Working Group



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

February 12, 2025

9:30 AM

Conference Room 325

In **SUPPORT** of **HB299 HD1**: RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB299 HD1**, which recognizes the vital and foundational role that the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its island invasive species committees (ISCs) play in our biosecurity strategy.

HISC and its ISCs have proven to be incredibly effective at holding the line against invasive species in our islands, despite extremely limited funding and a lack of support from other agencies assigned their own unique roles in our biosecurity framework (such as the Department of Agriculture). The HISC and ISCs are able to combine specialized expertise, field knowledge, cross-agency coordination, and community relationships to support the all-hands-on-deck fight to monitor, manage, and eradicate myriad invasive species throughout Hawai'i, in areas ranging from forests to open spaces to even businesses and homes. **Notably, they have been able to successfully prevent or eradicate dozens of outbreaks of invasive species on every island, from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants, saving us from untold millions of dollars in damages and protecting our environment, food security, cultural integrity, local businesses, and residents from the significant and potentially irreparable impacts of invasive pests.**

However, our biosecurity challenges are many, and the ongoing spread of coconut rhinoceros beetles on Kaua'i and the continual detections of little fire ants in new areas on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Maui demonstrate the need for much greater investments in their work to safeguard us from the devastating impacts of these and other invasive pests. This measure appropriately recognizes this funding need in its preamble. To the extent that this bill may be a vehicle to provide a much-needed boost in funding to the HISC and its partners' efforts, the Sierra Club strongly supports its passage.

To be clear: it is not just our watersheds, water security, food security, economic stability, public health, and quality of life that could be irrevocably impacted if we do not



make appropriate investments in our biosecurity framework – it is that of our children, grandchildren, and future generations as well.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** HB299 HD1, and increase the amount the legislature invests in HISC and its efforts – and by extension, in the health and future of our islands and communities.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
9:30 am Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 299 HD1

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB 299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC).

HISC is composed of the Director or Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, and the President of the University of Hawaii (UH), or their designated representative. (HRS 194-2) It is co-chaired by the Chairperson of HDOA and the Chairperson of DLNR. The Co-Chairs and the Council set HISC's priorities and approve its actions. This inter-agency structure is working well to carry out policy-level direction for invasive species response efforts across departmental boundaries.

During 2024, HISC organized and facilitated the development of action and response plans, by country, for little fire ant (LFA), coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB), and coqui frog pursuant to the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding for High-Priority Pests signed by leadership from HDOA, DLNR, and UH. Pests do not respect boundaries between agricultural lands, conservation areas, residential areas, and other land uses. The action and response plans ensure that response work is efficient and identifies the entity with the regulatory authority and/or appropriate expertise and capacity to respond across boundaries and actions.

Under the guidance and approval of the HISC co-chairs and Council, HISC staff was able to move proposed administrative rules to address identified high-impact invasive species through the rulemaking process in 2024. HISC voted to initiate rulemaking on May 29, 2024, and the rules are now awaiting final signature by the Governor.

In addition to work carried out directly by HISC, almost 90 percent of HISC funds are used to provide intra-governmental grants through a process that allows state, county, and federal offices to submit requests for funding activities that complement existing programs in the State by:

1. Expanding the reach of, or filling gaps between agency mandates or existing agency programs, and/or
2. Advancing our collective knowledge and capacity through research and development of new tools.

The proposals are reviewed by designees from each of the HISC agencies and working groups and a recommended allocation of the grant funds is developed through a transparent and collaborative process. The HISC Coordinator also works directly with agencies to understand if an agency plans to fund a project using their funds or if HISC funding is the only option. The Council members approve the final grant allocations.

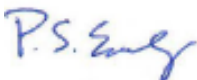
HISC's interagency composition and its coordinating role in filling gaps and extending agency capacities are critical to invasive species response in Hawaii and we hope this Committee will move this bill forward.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,



Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager



Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow

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STAFF

Winston Welch
Executive Director

Jacqueline Wah
Operations Director

Myles Ritchie
Programs Director

Keeping Hawai'i clean,
green and beautiful
since 1912



February 10, 2025

RE: The Outdoor Circle STRONG SUPPORT for HB299 HD1 related to invasive species

Aloha Chair Kahaloo, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Outdoor Circle **strongly supports** HB299 HD1 which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

Many of our trees, plants and animals have been decimated by invasive species, like the catastrophe of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle attacking many species, and the Gall Wasps attacking some species of banyan trees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts.

Their work is essential and serve as integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Please support HB299 HD1.

Mahalo,

Winston Welch
Executive Director



Testimony Before The
House Committee on Water and Land (WAL)
IN SUPPORT OF HB299 HD1

February 12, 2025, 9:30 a.m., Room 325 & Via Videoconference

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua‘āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua‘āina Ulu ‘Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). “Kua‘āina Ulu ‘Auamo” stands for “grassroots growing through shared responsibility,” and our acronym “KUA” means “backbone.” **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a “backbone organization” that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai‘i’s biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) over 40 mālama ‘āina (caring for our ‘āina or “that which feeds”) community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i‘a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai‘i) and wai ‘ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I‘a (“caretakers of fishponds”); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things “limu” or locally-grown “seaweed.” **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as ‘ĀINA MOMOMA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

KUA supports HB299 HD1 as an incremental step toward ‘āina momona.

Communities we work with are intimately familiar with the impacts that invasive species can have on every aspect of life in Hawai‘i—jeopardizing our native ecosystems, food security, cultural practices, public health, fire safety, climate resiliency, economy, and overall quality of life. The impacts from invasive pests and noxious weeds may also be irreversible once they are established, eroding cultural practices and resources that Kānaka Maoli communities are perpetuating and regenerating in furtherance of cultural integrity, food self-sufficiency, and connections to ‘āina and each other that will carry us through the difficult times ahead. For example, **we have heard several horrifying stories from our network members of Little Fire Ants hugely impacting their mālama ‘āina operations and quality of life both personally and professionally.**

Organizations and initiatives in our networks have long dedicated considerable energy and resources to educate and engage their people and the general public to act in defense of our islands from invasive species. These efforts may continue to be in vain if we do not have the support of HISC and its Committees. **We implore you to prioritize our biosecurity systems before it is too late.** ‘Āina Momona is not achievable without prioritizing the urgent eradication

of these invasive pests to best protect our precious biocultural resources and those that care for them.

Mahalo nui loa for considering our testimony in support. Please **PASS** HB299 HD1.

Aloha ‘Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 12:22:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition **SUPPORTS** funding for Hawai'i Invasive Species Council!



House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
9:30 AM Conference Room 325
State Capitol

SUBJECT: Testimony – In Support of HB299 “Relating to Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council”

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the O‘ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) in strong support of HB299 which would appropriate funds for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC). To demonstrate the work that HISC funds provide, I have attached our OISC FY23 HISC Report, our OISC FY23 HISC Outreach Report, and the raw data for our HISC FY23 efforts.

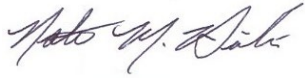
HISC provides OISC with much needed funding to be the second layer of protection when priority pests make it past inspection at the border and begin to establish in peoples backyards and on commercial properties. OISC utilizes HISC funds for early detection and rapid response to some of the world’s worst invasive species that infiltrate our borders. OISC also utilizes HISC funds for public awareness and outreach efforts that are key to successful control. Species like little fire ant, coqui frog, miconia, fireweed, and many more. Without HISC funds, this work would not be possible.

OISC provides relief to homeowners and business owners by being able to use HISC funds to work on their properties when many other agencies cannot. OISC works across all land-ownerships which makes our organization unique in the fight against invasive species. Other agencies cannot work on private lands, whether that is because of agency mandates or because capacity is limited. However, OISC is specifically set up to respond to priority pests regardless of property boundaries.

By working in backyards and the low-elevation forest, OISC also protects our priority watershed areas by dealing with these invaders before they are able to establish in high-value forest. If OISC were not able to respond to these species and they establish in State Forest Reserves or Natural Area Reserves, they would become the responsibility of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). These HISC funds are also leveraged to secure other county and federal funding sources so that we can provide the most extensive response possible. HISC funds are critical to OISC’s mission, the protection of the community, and the protection of our watershed.

OISC is grateful for the continued support from all State departments, the legislature, and the members of this Committee. Invasive species will continue to be a threat to our economy, watersheds, and our way of life. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nate M. Dube". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nate" being more prominent.

Nate Dube, OISC Manager

Taxa Annual Summary Report**January 01, 2023 to December 31, 2023****ManagementAreaName: Oahu Invasive Species Committee****ManagementUnitName:****SubUnitName:****Action Location Name:****All****All****All****OISC Action or Contribute?: Contribute and OISC**

TaxonName:	Surveyed Acres	Treated Acres	NAWMA Area Treated	Chem. Controlled	Manual Controlled	Mature Controlled	Immature Controlled	Total Controlled	Total ISC Work Hours	Volunteer Total Hours	Contributed Total Hours	Total People Hours
Acalolepta aesthetica	36.5130		0.0000			0	0	0	25.80		6.00	31.80
Anoplophora glabripennis	36.5130		0.0000			0	0	0	25.80		6.00	31.80
Apis mellifera scutellata	8468.5500		0.0000			0	0	0	114.40		17.50	131.90
Ceratocystis species	247048.4860	0.0000	0.0002		2	2	0	2	433.40		38.00	471.40
Chromolaena odorata	295.0940	6.5210	0.6083	602	5481	1148	4935	6083	1227.00	223.50	98.00	1548.50
Cortaderia sp.	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000			0	0	0	0.25			0.25
Delairea odorata	44.8310		0.0031		31	0	31	31	276.00		63.00	339.00
Eleutherodactylus coqui	2.4220		0.0000	0		0	0	0	103.00		10.00	113.00
Halyomorpha halys	36.5130		0.0000			0	0	0	25.80		6.00	31.80
Lycorma delicatula	36.5130		0.0000			0	0	0	25.80		6.00	31.80
Lymantria dispar	36.5130		0.0000			0	0	0	25.80		6.00	31.80
Miconia calvenscens	8364.7510	0.0000	0.1819	78	1741	5	1814	1819	6841.00		545.00	7386.00
Miscellaneous Species	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000			0	0	0	0.00			0.00
Not Applicable	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0		0	0	0	140.50		8.50	149.00
Oryctes rhinoceros	107.7620		0.0001		1	1	0	1	58.20		3.00	61.20
Popillia japonica	144.9690		0.0000			0	0	0	47.90		11.50	59.40
Rubus discolor	28.8710		0.0000			0	0	0	268.00		26.00	294.00
Tibouchina herbacea	211.5360	0.4840	0.0498	498		215	283	498	613.00		28.00	641.00
Tibouchina urvilleana	0.0190		0.0000			0	0	0	4.00			4.00
Wasmannia auropunctata	108.1720	187.5010	0.0000	0		0	0	0	301.25	41.20	20.15	362.60

OISC ANNUAL OUTREACH REPORT 2023

2023 was the year of rising LFA detections on O'ahu and much of OISC outreach efforts went to supporting early detections and messaging that supports efforts to "Wave Goodbye" to LFA.



OISC Outreach staff dressed as LFA at the Pest World Conference, October 2023.

OISC outreach program is dedicated to promoting our mission to prevent, detect, and eradicate invasive species on O'ahu.

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oisc

O'AHU INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
www.oahuisc.org



OISC OUTREACH TEAM



The OISC outreach program is dedicated to furthering our mission of preventing, detecting, and eliminating invasive species on O'ahu. This goal is accomplished through interactions with local schools and communities, developing and sharing educational materials, coordinating volunteer outings, and partnering with other organizations to enhance outreach activities. Additionally, the program ensures access for field operations.

The outreach team comprises two essential members: the Outreach Coordinator and the Outreach & Education Associate. The Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the program, aligning strategies with OISC goals and funding objectives, delivering outreach messages at community events, ensuring access for field operations, and supervising the Outreach & Education Associate. On the other hand, the Associate focuses on creating content, managing social media, presenting Hō'ike LFA Activity sessions in schools (K-12), and engaging in outreach events.

The following report provides detailed insights into OISC's outreach endeavors and highlights how we spread awareness about invasive species a remarkable 596,226 times in 2023.

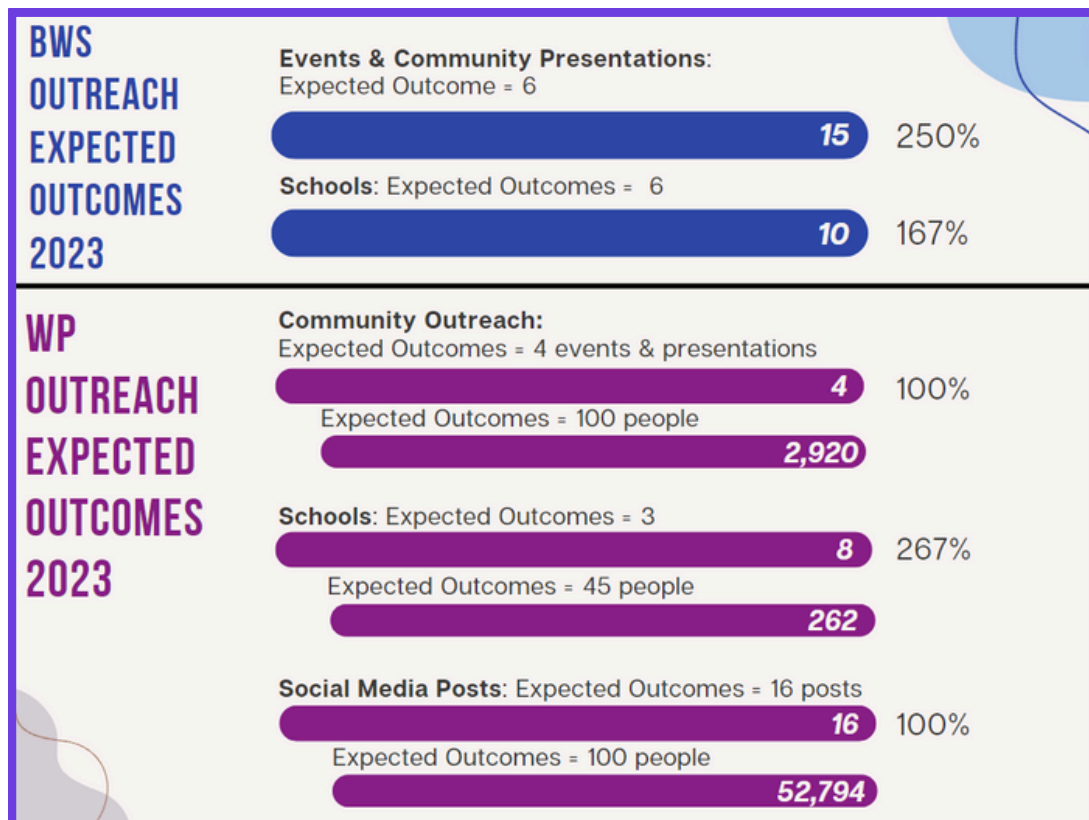
2023 FUNDER GOALS:

OISC received funding from the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC), the Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS), and the Watershed Partnerships (WP), Army Natural Resources Program- O'ahu (ANRP) for outreach activities in 2023.

We reached or exceeded all expected outcomes except for ANRP-O, which received an extension until March 31, 2024.

Funder	Expected Outcomes	Completed
HISC	Display at 15 events	34
	12 community presentations	24
	12 school presentations including Hoike LFA activity	36
	250 volunteer hours	273.5
	100 property owners contacted	139
	275 posts to social media	359
	Assist with Stop the Ant Month	Yes
	Assist with HISAM	Yes
	5% engagement rate (social media)	15%
BWS	Display at 6 community events	15
	6 school presentations	10
	HaSTA & HEEA watershed health curriculum	Yes
WP	16 social media posts (cane ti)	16
	>100 people engaged on social media (cane ti)	52,794
	3 school presentations (cane ti)	9
	>45 students at school (cane ti)	262
	4 events and/or community presentations (cane ti)	4
	>100 people engaged at event/community presentations (cane ti)	2920
*ANRP	3 agriculture related events	3
	Direct outreach to 6 farms/ranched	In progress
	Create & distribute materials for farmers/ranchers	In progress
	Webpage resource for chrodo	In progress

*ANRP Grant is extended until March 15th, 2024. At the time of this report all expected outcomes are on track to be completed by the extension date.



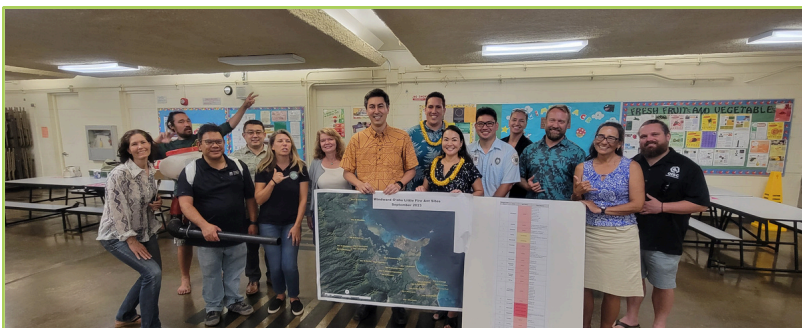
2023 OISC PROGRAM GOALS:

OISC outreach program has in-house goals and objectives that align with, and often go above our funding projected outcomes (AKA "deliverables/EOs"). Priority issues and messaging were identified at the beginning of 2023 and a strategy was developed to meet all our in-house and funder goals.

1. Increase awareness and knowledge about miconia impacts on environmental services provided by watersheds in Hawai'i.
2. Increase public understanding of OISC operations and messaging
3. Increase reporting (ED/RR).
4. Support Hawai'i Ant Lab in Little Fire Ant efforts.
5. Maintain and grow social media following and engagement.

SPECIES MESSEGING: HIGH PRIORITY

- Miconia (*Miconia calvescens*)
- Little Fire Ant (*Wasmannia auropunctata*)
- Devil Weed (*Chromolaena odorata*)
- Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (*Ceratocystis spp.*)
- Cane Ti (*Tibouchina herbaces*)
- ED/RR - Reporting



OISC staff attended numerous LFA Townhalls in 2023: here staff is pictured at the Kāne'ohe Town Hall hosted by Sen. Keohokalale on 9/20/2023.



OISC staff (L to R): Field Crew Leader, Meleana Kastner and Outreach & Education Associate, Jamie Miller interviewed on KHON's Living 808 on 8/7/2023.



REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES
643-PEST
643pest.org
CALL OR CLICK TO PROTECT HAWAII



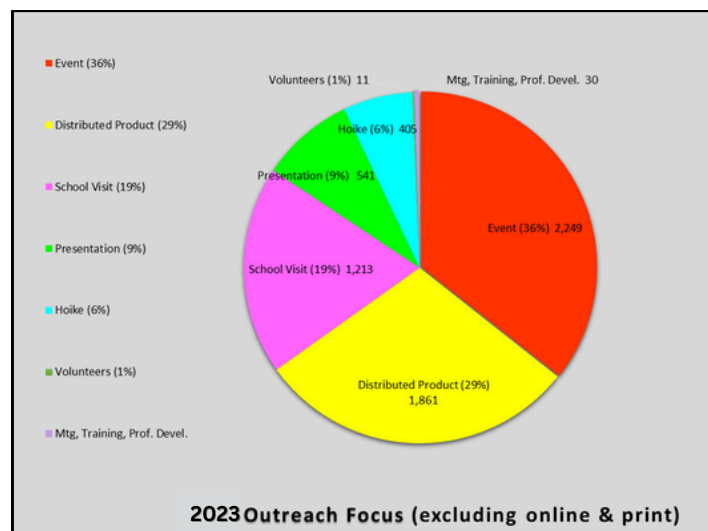
2023 COMPLETED OUTREACH: 596,226

The outreach team disseminated our message a total of 596,226 times throughout 2023. Subtracting the audience reached by the Stop the Ant Month ads (421,487) from this total reveals that the outreach for 2023 stood at 174,739. This marked a significant 74% surge from the previous year's total of 43,887.

Key factors contributing to this upsurge in outreach included the KHON “Living 808” interview, the LICH Magazine Article, product distribution efforts, and heightened engagement on social media platforms.

OISC participated in numerous collaborative efforts this year with HISAM 2023, Stop the Ant Month, 'Ōhi'a Love Fest, Earth Month and attended the ROD Outreach Symposium in Hilo (May 2023).

Type	Audience
Article - Ads	421,487
Article - Authored	6,000
Distributed Product	6,099
Events	3,636
Hoike	1,149
Interview	100,302
Meeting	34
Presentation	696
Professional Development	71
School Visits	1,492
Social Media (engagement)	41,944
Volunteer Trip (OISC)	31 (261.5hrs)
Volunteer Trip (AAP)	10
Website	13,240
TOTAL	596,226

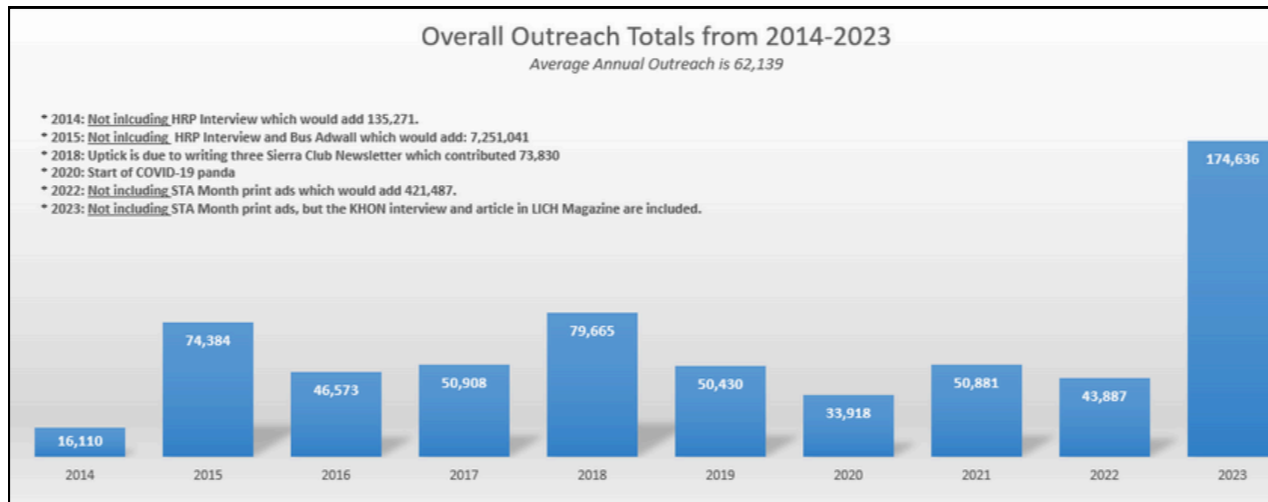


Detailed table of 2023 outreach in Appendix 1



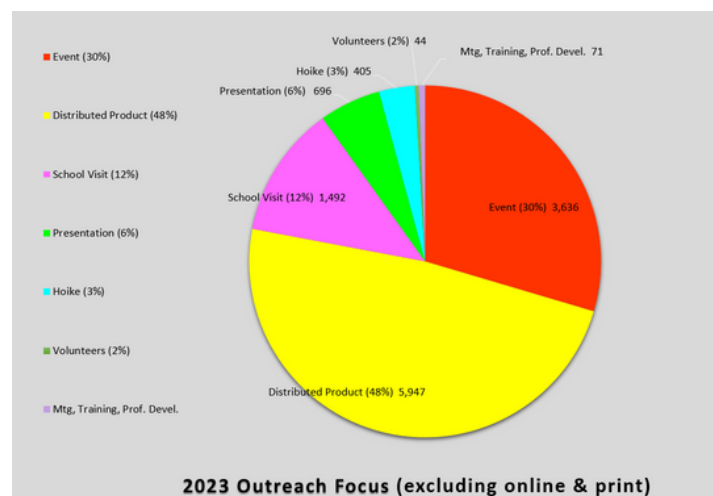
OISC Outreach Team at the 2023 ROD Outreach Workshop, Hilo, HI.

OVER THE YEARS: On average, outreach totals are around 62,000 annually. Some huge estimates spike totals when doing radio interviews or mass print ads...but those have been teased out (as described in the chart) to get a more realistic overview. In 2023, the audience reached with the KHON Living 808 interview and LICH magazine article were kept in the total since those topics were directly related to OISC outreach efforts.

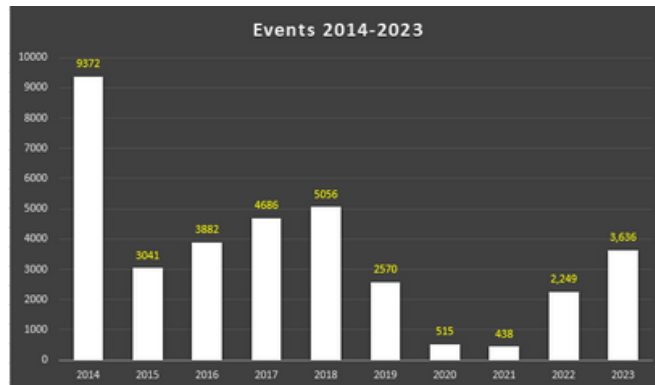


The primary outreach methods utilized for both OISC objectives and fundraising initiatives include events, community presentations, school visits, social media engagement, website utilization, and volunteer programs. Additionally, secondary outreach methods encompass written articles, radio or television interviews, print advertisements, and product distribution. Although the latter garners broader reach and increased engagement, the efficacy of the outreach primarily focuses on raising awareness of the issues rather than facilitating a deep understanding of the problem and the necessary actions to address it.

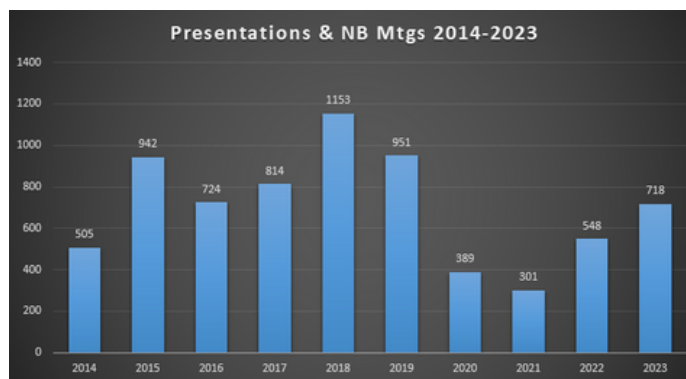
When used collectively, employing diverse messaging techniques can efficiently prompt desired actions, such as reporting incidents, advocating for legislative support, securing access for field operations, or promoting practices like decontamination.



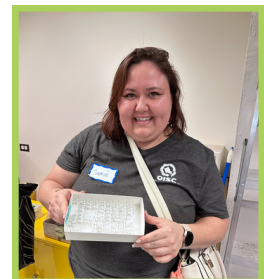
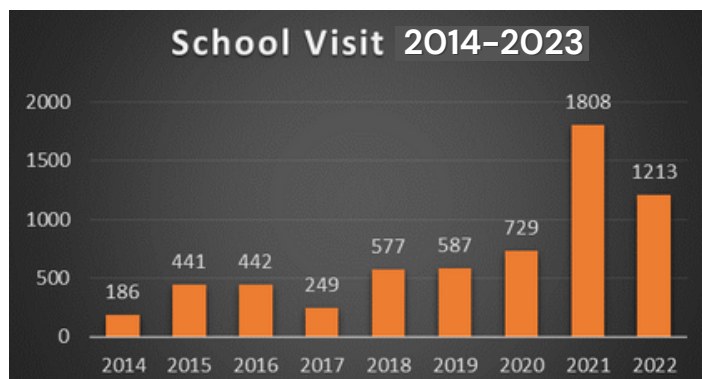
OISC attended **35 unique events, reaching 3,636 people** in 2023 reaching approximately 3,636 people. We are pleased to see our outreach is climbing back towards pre-COVID rates. Events attended this year include the Pest World Conference and HI Pet Expo.



OISC reached over **700 people with 25 unique community groups** in 2023 including LICH Conference, DOD Pesticide Training, Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture Conference, and numerous town hall and neighborhood board meetings.

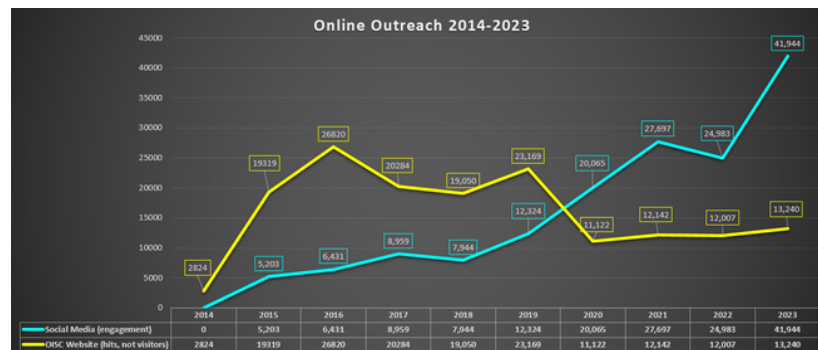


OISC delivered presentations to fifty classes at K-12 and university levels, engaging with 1,213 students across 20 schools in 2023. The Hō'ike LFA Activity is separately accounted for and is not included in the school visits data.



OISC OUTREACH TOTALS -2023

The OISC website encountered a significant decline in traffic in 2019 and has since sustained lower visitor numbers. Last updated in 2014, the website became outdated and lacked mobile responsiveness. Towards the end of the current year, OISC initiated a website redesign in collaboration with Websites with Aloha. The relaunch, scheduled for 2024, aims to deliver a more mobile-friendly, succinct, and user-centric website. Additionally, the revamped site will feature additional pages showcasing community initiatives focused on addressing invasive species.



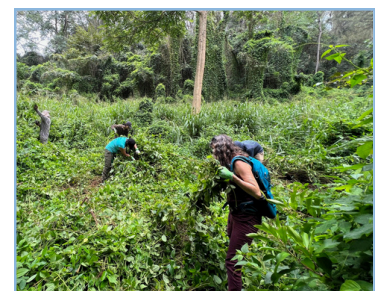
Throughout the year, OISC monitors our online presence closely. We have observed a consistent growth in our social media reach. After appointing the OISC Outreach & Education Associate to handle social media, we have noticed an increase in interactions. This report includes details on OISC's social media strategy and performance metrics.

Volunteer programs at OISC have evolved over the years. Currently, OISC has partnered with HI State Parks Adopt-A-Park program that allows us to conduct volunteer trips at Pūpūkea-Paumālu State Park Reserve. In 2023, we conducted ten trips, dedicating 181.5 hours to survey 71 acres and removed 1533 devil weed plants, 4 of which were mature.

In addition to monthly AAP trips, OISC devil weed crew added 80 hours to survey 141 miles of trails and remove 811 plants. OISC also partnered with MCBH to survey for devil weed at Camp Smith.



OISC volunteers with the Adopt-A-Park program at Pūpūkea-Paumālu (devil weed surveys).



DWC

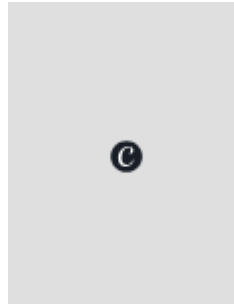
Beginning in 2021, COVID-19 restrictions and PCSU's new volunteer policy had significant impacts on how we conduct volunteer opportunities. To compensate, OISC developed the self-led volunteer program "Devil Weed Crew (DWC)" implemented and revamped with a "DWC Challenge" in 2022 to include incentives such as stickers, cups, and t-shirts. We launched another challenge in late summer 2023, but promotion for the challenge lagged as little fire ant outreach took priority. The majority of data is from Conservation Dogs of Hawai'i and we continue to get requests for DWC Field Guides, mailing out 13 guides in 2023.



How to use AllTrails to record & report surveys.



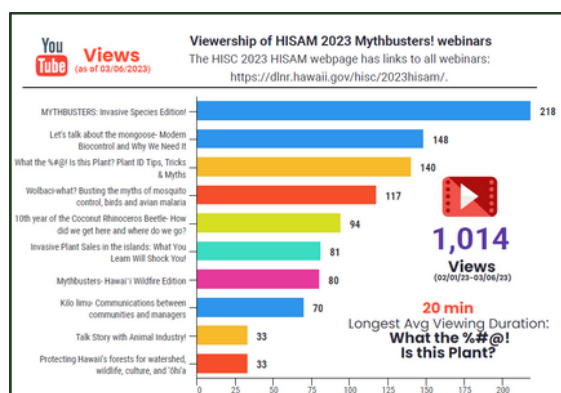
2023 Devil Weed Crew	
Volunteer Hours	80
DWC Guides Mailed	13
Unique Trails	9
Miles of trails	141
Hours	80
Unique Vols	6
Imm	777
Mat	34



Devil Weed Crew

- Launched in February 2021.
- Annual Summertime DWC Challenge
 - Survey 5 mi...get a hat (gave away 7 since 2021, 1 in 2023)
 - Survey 15 mi...get a 20oz tumbler. (gave away 7 since 2021, 1 in 2023)
 - Survey 20 mi...get a t-shirt.(gave away 3 since 2021, 1 in 2023)
- List of trails to be surveyed on website (kept up to date with latest surveys).
- Look-a-like guide for volunteers upon request (114 since 2021, 13 in 2023).
- Rack card on how to use the AllTrails app to survey.
- Five (5) videos for YouTube
 - DEVIL WEED SEEDS AND FLOWERS
 - DEVIL WEED CREW...HOW TO FOR EARLY DETECTION TRAIL SURVEYS FOR DEVIL WEED
 - DEVIL WEED CREW VOLUNTEER PRESENTATION
 - ID ME CHROMOLAENA ODOARATA
 - INVASIVE SPECIES AND AGRICULTURE: A CLOSER LOOK AT DEVIL WEED

The Hawai'i Invasive Species Awareness Month (HISAM) is an annual campaign organized by the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC), in which OISC participates. Overall, HISAM 2023 hosted 10 webinars and live feeds during the month of February. There were a total of 342 live participants and 1,014 views on YouTube.



During HISAM, OISC participated in 3 HISAM Webinars; "Mythbusters", "Wolbaci-what?", and "Invasive Plant Sales in the Islands".

- Links to HISC 2023 HISAM webinars: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/2023hisam/>.
- Link to HISAM 2023 Stats Report: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gkbn7i83HZr_gjLuCCU109kZpc7IBqnkG/view?usp=sharing.

Watershed Curriculum developed by OISC in early 2019 is designed for students grades 3-5 and adheres to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The lesson consists of four sections; Plants, Watersheds, Hawaiian Land Divisions, and Threats. Each section is accompanied by a recorded webinar, PowerPoint, classroom activity, and three vocabulary worksheets.

The Watershed Curriculum is available for download on OISC Website and links are posted on the Hawaii Science Teachers Association (HaSTA) website and the ClimbHI Bridge, an online portal that connects businesses, educators, and students. OISC also attended the HaSTA Conference on Sept. 16, 2023 promoting the Watershed Curriculum. The curriculum has been viewed on OISC website 208 times in 2023, and 902 times since it was posted in 2019.

**The Hawaii Environmental Education Alliance (HEEA) has not been consistently active since 2018. Updates to their website have lapsed and it is unclear whether or not they have any active staff.*



- OISC: <http://www.oahuisc.org/watershed-curriculum/>
- ClimbHI Bridge: <https://climbhi.org/portals/>
- HaSTA: <https://hasta.wildapricot.org/Learning-Resources>
- * <http://heea.org/resource/about.aspx?s=131711.0.0.89929>: LINK NO LONGER WORKING

Stop the Ant Month (STA) is an annual statewide outreach campaign led by CGAPS with each island's ISC taking leads for their respective county. The actionable request to the public was to request an ant collection kit and submit ants for identification. On O'ahu, distributed kits increased by 41% from last year, kit requests by mail decreased by 16%, and samples submitted increased by 9%. This shows that even though kit requests dropped a bit, samples submitted and kits distributed are increasing.



Kits Requested	Oct 2021	Oct 2022	Oct 2023	% increase of Oct from 2022
Hawaii Is	68	126	203	38%
Maui	23	135	35	-286%
Oahu	224	340	294	-16%
Kauai	18	98	300	67%
TOTALS	333	684	832	18%

STA Month October 2023	Kits Requested 2023	Samples Submitted 2023	Return Rate 2023
Hawaii Is	203	26	13%
Maui	35	62	177%
Oahu	294	92	31%
Kauai	300	15	5%
TOTALS	832	195	23%

Outreach Type (Oct. STA Month)	Type Total
Article/Print (Star & Midweek)	421,487
Distributed Product (294 mailed LFA KITS)	832
Events (4)	221
Hoike (4) Sept 1-Oct 31	151
Presentation (4)	175
School Visit (1)	115
Social Media (posts)	11
Social Media (engagement)	9%
Social Media (reach)	5,993
Samples Submitted	92
Legislator Outreach	30

OISC was responsible for creating and placing ads in a Sunday Star-Advertiser and printing of The Midweek. OISC conducted 4 Hō'ike LFA Activities during October and some part 2 of the activity carried into November. OISC sent LFA updates and STA Month letters to 30 C&C and State Legislators, providing them with outreach materials to share with their constituents. OISC also created social media templates for the statewide group and had nearly 6,000 engagements across our social media platforms.

**OCTOBER IS...
STOP THE ANT MONTH!**

CHECK YOUR PLANTS FOR STINGING ANTS!



Little Fire Ants (LFA) are one of the world's WORST invasive species as they are spreading.

Eradication may still be possible, but we need your help to find them.

**GET YOUR FREE
ANT COLLECTION
KIT TODAY!**

WWW.STOPTHEANT.ORG

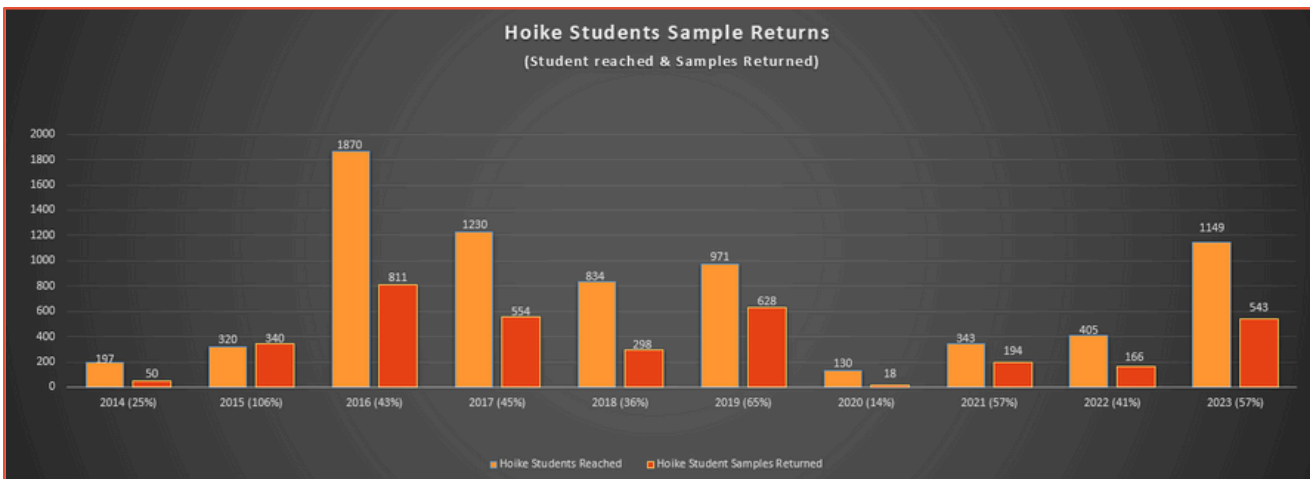
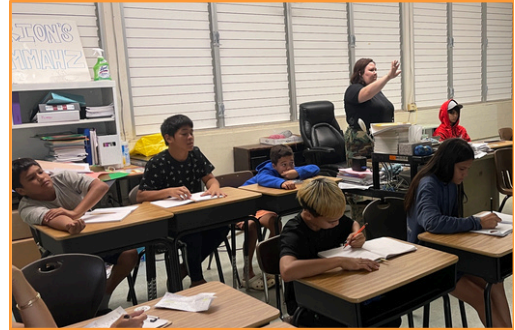
OR CALL: 808-286-4616



Ad in the Star Advertiser (10/8/23) and Midweek (10/18/24).

Hō'ike LFA Activity Update: The Hō'ike initiative shows signs of recovery as in-person activities resumed in 2023, garnering significant participation.

The internal target set by the OISC was to reach 12 unique schools, an objective nearly met with 11 schools. In 2023, Jamie Miller conducted the Hō'ike sessions in 77 classrooms, interacting with 1,149 students and collecting 543 ant samples, resulting in a remarkable 57% return rate surpassing our goal of 50%.



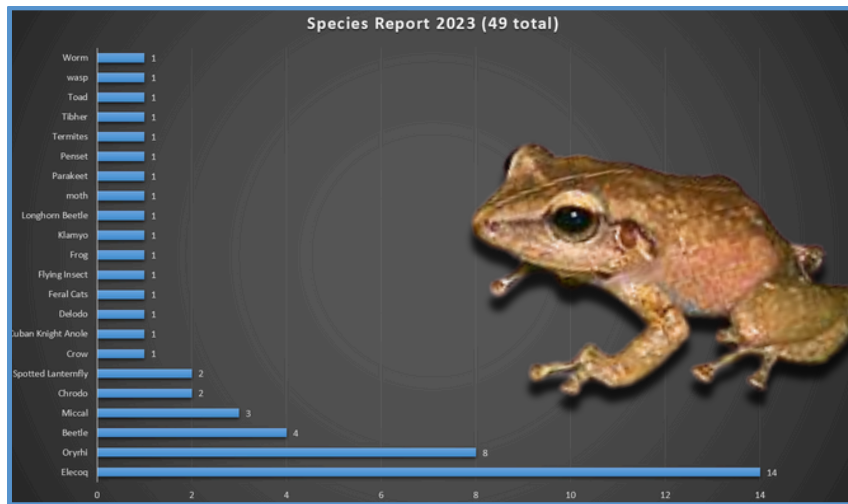
One of the student samples from Kahuku came back positive for LFA. The address is near a known LFA site (Kahuku), but it expanded the intended delimiting area. OISC is working with Hawai'i Ant Lab to plan for future outreach to this site.



Boy Scout Troop participating in the 2022 Hō'ike LFA Activity.

Hō'ike 2023	
Unique schools	11
Students reached	1149
Days	28
# of times presentation given	77
Samples rec'd	543
Return Rate	57%
Pos LFA	1

- PUBLIC REPORTS:** This year, OISC received 49 public pest reports, not including ROD and LFA reports. The majority of reports were for coqui suspects at 14, with CRB following closely at eight. Out of these reports, 11 pertained to OISC or HDOA targets, and only two miconia reports required action by OISC field crew. These two reports were situated in the Mānoa Valley within our current survey buffer zone. In all other instances, either the species was misidentified or it wasn't a pest that required action.




Actionable Reports 2023 (11)	
Coqui	3
Devil weed (chrodo)	2
CRB (oryrhi)	3
Miconia (miccal)	2
Cuban Knight Anole	1

- ANTS/LFA:** In 2023, HAL, OISC, or 643Pest received 1,362 inquiries regarding ants or requested an LFA kit. OISC handled 1,331 (98%) of those inquiries and sent out 1,144 kits. Additionally, OISC received 333 ant samples, with 36 positive detections and identifying 16 new sites.

The OISC Outreach staff conducted training and facilitated the testing of over 1,000 donated plants for the Punahou Carnival plant sale, finding no LFA.



Ant Inquiries 2023 	
All Calls	1,362
OISC response	1,331 (98%)
Mailed kits	1,144
Samples (36 pos)	333
Submitted samples using an LFA Kit	267 (80%)
Kit requested AND sample submitted	153 (13%)

Presentation Evaluations: Outreach staff sends evaluations to teachers and attendees of our presentations to gauge how our content and messaging are being received. In 2023, our overall performance was evaluated 26 times for 21 unique presentations with an overwhelmingly 95% satisfaction rate. Feedback consistently highlights the popularity of our specimens.

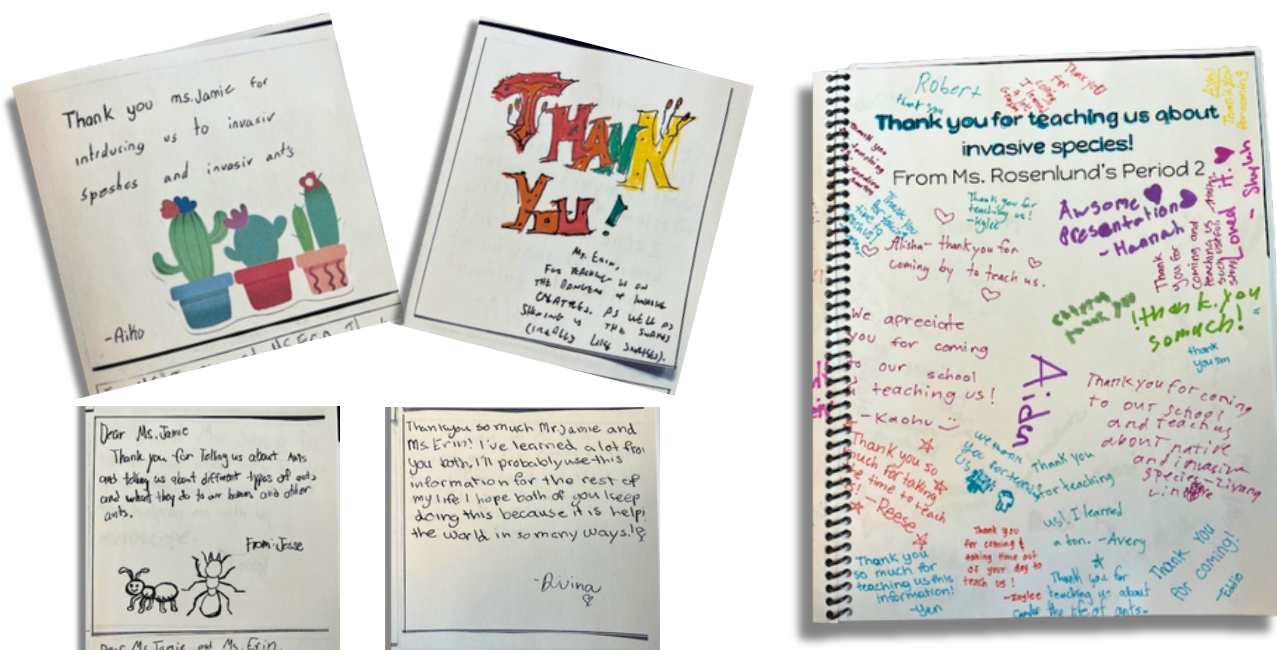
The presenter delivered the material in a clear and structured manner.	The presenter was knowledgeable about the topic and any related issues.	The presenter maintained audience interest during the entire presentation.	The presenter was well organized and prepared.	The presenter was enthusiastic about the topic.	The presenter was confident and well spoken.	The visual aids were effective.	The presentation was concise and informative. Knowledge was imparted.
98%	99%	96%	99%	99%	99%	98%	98%

"Ms. Jamie was engaging and well informed; as well as her slide show presentation. Both students and adults alike can't wait for Ms. Jamie to come back so we can learn more." - Aliamanu Middle School, 7th grade Hō'ike

"Jamie was really great! and my students enjoyed her presentation and activity so much that they told me we should have more speakers like her." - Kahuku Intermediate, 7th grade Hō'ike

"As always, Erin did a wonderful job. The students loved (or were disgusted) with some of the specimens, but that's part of what makes it so engaging. Mahalo nui for coming out and educating my students." - Kamehameha High, 10 grade

"Erin Bishop is consistently one of the most impactful guest lecturers at our pesticide applicator trainings. She has mastered the material and is an exceptional speaker and educator. I am so grateful for Erin's and OISC's support over the years." - NAVFAC Pacific, DOD Pesticide Training



2023 SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

O'AHU INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE



Prepared by Jamie Miller, Outreach and Education Associate
Approved by Erin Bishop, Outreach Coordinator



INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2023, we continued to share information about the important work we do on O'ahu. Through this effort, we posted a total of 359 times on our combined channels. Last year, we improved our reach, engagement, and fanbase while posting less content. This means we are creating better content more tailored to our audiences!

This report breaks down our messaging and performance on each channel, including goals as we move forward in 2024.

PROFILES DISCUSSED IN THIS REPORT

- @oahuisc Instagram profile
- @oahuisc Facebook profile
- @oahuisc TikTok Profile
- Oah'u Invasive Species Committee YouTube profile



CROSS-CHANNEL PERFORMANCE

Different platforms offer us various ways to connect with the public online. Depending on the content and observing what performs well on each channel, we determine which platforms are the best for sharing our message. We have a regular audience of almost 7,300 individuals who subscribe to our content. Highlighted below are key metrics for the year, including how many times we mentioned some of our main messages. Areas where we saw increases are highlighted in green and decreases are highlighted in red.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2023

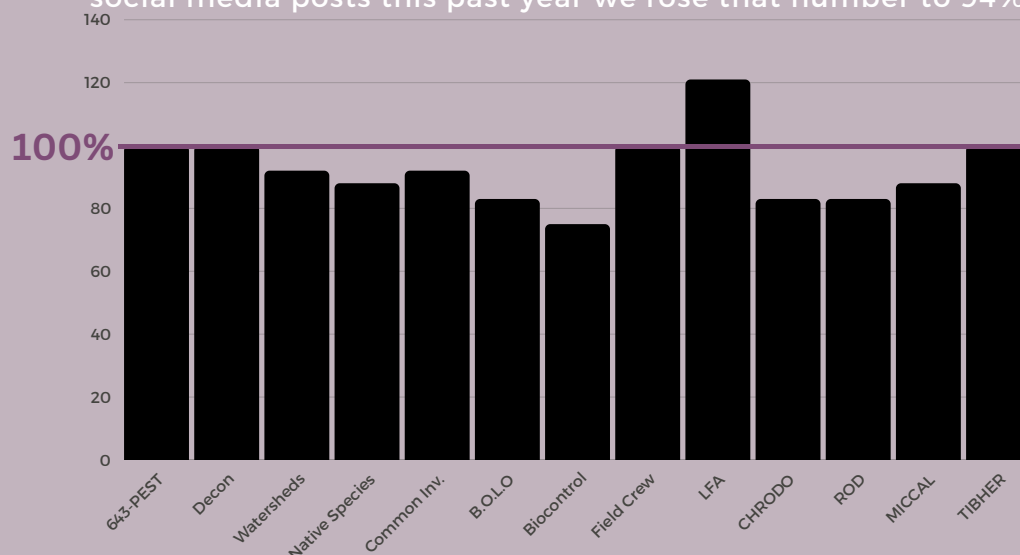
TOTAL REACH	791,880
TOTAL POSTS	359
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS	41,927
TOTAL FAN BASE	7,294
INCREASE IN FAN BASE	27.50%

2022

TOTAL REACH	165,961
TOTAL POSTS	491
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS	29,443
TOTAL FAN BASE	5,721
INCREASE IN FAN BASE	15.85%

KEY MESSAGES OF 2023

In 2022 we met 92% of our goals to talk about key messages through our social media posts this past year we rose that number to 94%!





INSTAGRAM: STATS AND TRENDS

Instagram remains our best tool for engaging with the public online. Our fan base continues to grow, and in 2023, we surpassed our goal of 4,000 followers! Our top posts this year have numbers that are double or triple those of our top posts from last year. Native plants and short, sweet, useful information were some of the most popular posts in 2023. Despite posting less frequently, we saw an increase in impressions, engagements, and reach! To me, that indicates an improvement in the quality of our content, which is a significant achievement. I look forward to continuing to grow our fan base and reaching 5,000 followers next year, while also fine-tuning our content to better serve our audience.

Wins for 2023:

- The engagement rate remained consistent.
 - Range **3% - 12%** with Avg. **8%**
 - Avg in 2022 was **8%**
- Engaged an avg. of **1131** accounts/mo.
- Easy to read shareable graphics.
- **398,000+** Impressions. That is how many times our content was seen. This includes accounts that saw the same content more than once. That is up from 288,000+ impressions last year.

Goals we met in 2023:

- New icons and organization for the story threads that live on our home page.
- Increase Reel creation! Our goal was **12** and we made **21**.
- Increase fan base to **4,000** followers.

Goals to meet in 2024:

- Try collaborating with 2 new profiles of popular conservation creators.
- Increase reel creation to 24.
- Increase fan base to 5,000 followers.

IG STATS	2023
Total Posts	139
Total Stories Posted	632
Engagements	31,722
Impressions	398,209
Total Followers	4,062
Average Reach Each Month	7,345

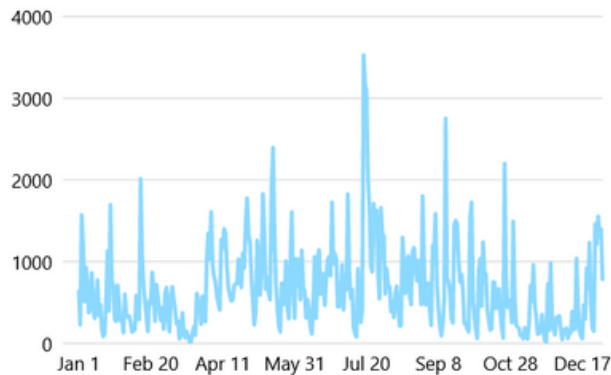
LAST YEAR IG STATS	2022
Total Posts	170
Total Stories Posted	403
Engagements	18,555
Impressions	288,000
Total Followers	3,172
Average Reach Each Month	6,497



INSTAGRAM: STATS AND TRENDS

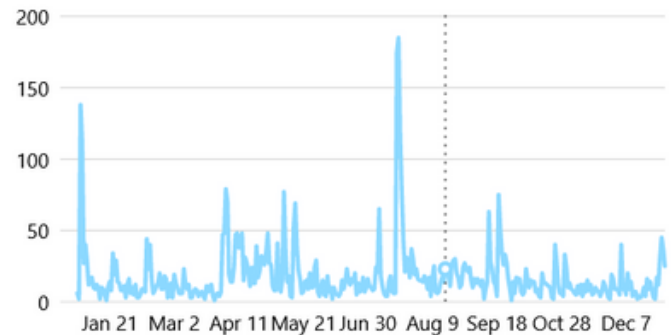
Instagram reach ⓘ

47.0K ↑ 3.3%



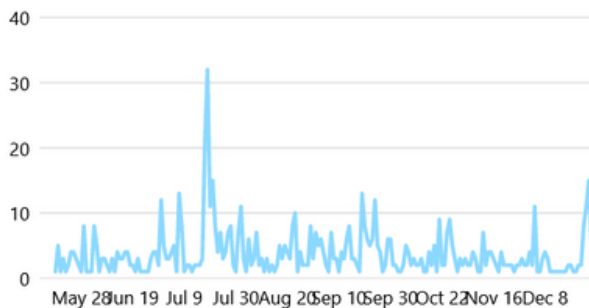
Instagram profile visits ⓘ

6,397 ↑ 40.7%



New Instagram followers ⓘ

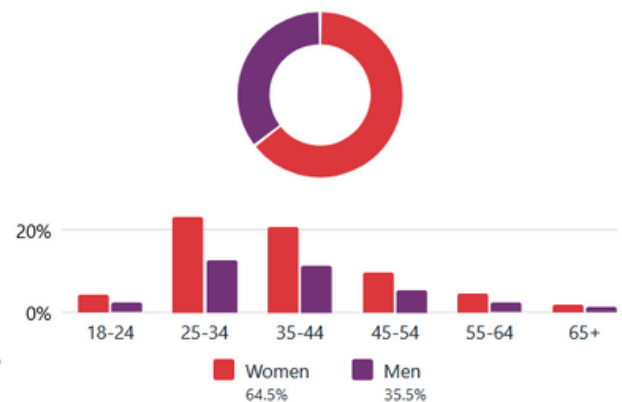
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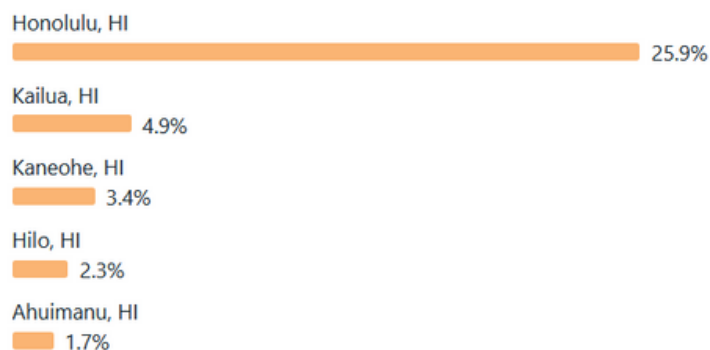
Instagram followers ⓘ

4,136

Age & gender ⓘ



Top cities



INSTAGRAM: TOP POSTS

These were the top posts of 2023 based on likes.

	<p>Kick off NHPM Reel with Jazzy Notorius BIG Song</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 718 • Comments: 4 • Shares: 48 • Reach: 6,254 		<p>Native Hawaiian Plant Color Pallettes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 666 • Comments: 24 • Shares: 90 • Reach: 4,946
	<p>West Indian Wood Nettle Sold as Māmaki</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 610 • Comments: 34 • Shares: 138 • Reach: 4,053 		<p>'Ōhi'a Narrative 1st Person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 559 • Comments: 12 • Shares: 100 • Reach: 2,325
	<p>Centipede in 'Ōhi'a Tree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 526 • Comments: 63 • Shares: 269 • Reach: 5,288 		<p>Weekly Dose of Views from the Bird</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 483 • Comments: 15 • Shares: 12 • Reach: 2,477
	<p>Healthy Watersheds Waterfall Reel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 443 • Comments: 2 • Shares: 28 • Reach: 3,595 		<p>Guinea Grass Invasive Highlight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 372 • Comments: 47 • Shares: 12 • Reach: 2,434
	<p>June 2023 LFA Detections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 365 • Comments: 31 • Shares: 230 • Reach: 5,658 		<p>B.O.L.O. Spotted Lanternfly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes; 334 • Comments: 12 • Shares: 104 • Reach: 2,392

FACEBOOK: STATS AND TRENDS

Facebook continues to prove itself as a vital tool for sharing information, especially for longer posts with multiple links (on Instagram, you can only share one link). Similar to Instagram, we posted less content this year (20% fewer posts). With our fan base continuing to grow and our content more finely tuned, we witnessed significant improvements in statistics in 2023 compared to 2022. We are experiencing much higher engagement with our content and received **over 900 shares**, which is double the amount from 2022.

Wins for 2023:

- We received about **1,400 link clicks** on links within our content.
- Reached an avg. of **1,845 accounts per post**. That is 6x the number from last year.
- We only had **22 unfollows** all year.

Goals for 2024:

- Learn how to prevent spam comments
- Make webinar ads more engaging.
- 3,000 followers
- To have another viral post that gets a ton of reach. See below...

One post that stands out based on reach:



Strawberry Guava Biocontrol

- Likes: 104
- Comments: 31
- Shares: 20
- Reach: 179,982

Our strawberry guava post may rank fourth in most-liked posts, but it went viral when you consider its reach. This post was shared 20 times, including in the Facebook group 808 Green Thumbs (a private group with almost 20,000 members), earning it a reach of almost 180,000. That one post alone accounted for 53% of our reach for the year. So crazy!

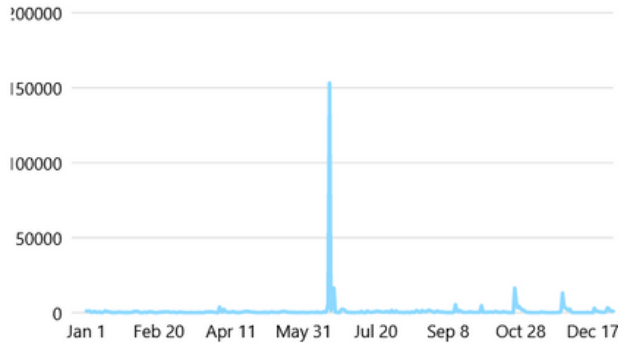
FB STATS	2023
Total Posts	185
Total Post Shares	911
Engagements	8,589
Average Reach Each Month	28,441
Total Followers	2,636

FB STATS	2022
Total Posts	230
Total Post Shares	417
Engagements	4,677
Average Reach Each Month	5,629
Total Followers	2,230

FACEBOOK: STATS AND TRENDS

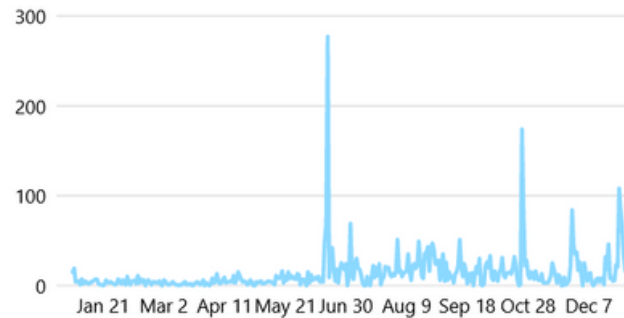
Facebook reach ⓘ

293.4K ↑ 556.7%



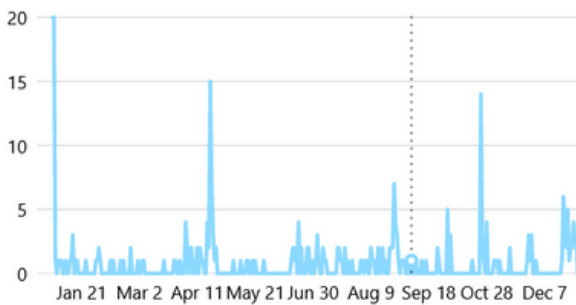
Facebook visits ⓘ

4,754 ↑ 436.6%



Facebook Page new likes ⓘ

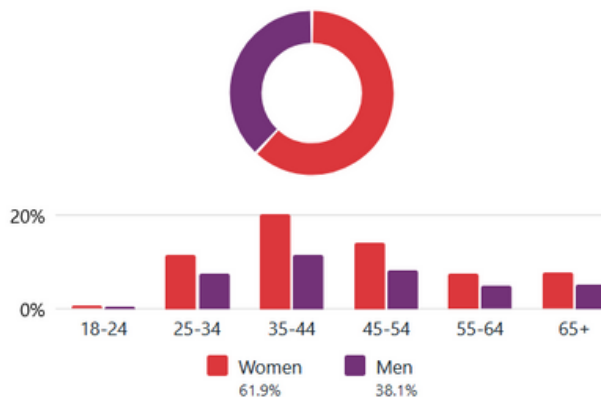
290 ↑ 35.5%



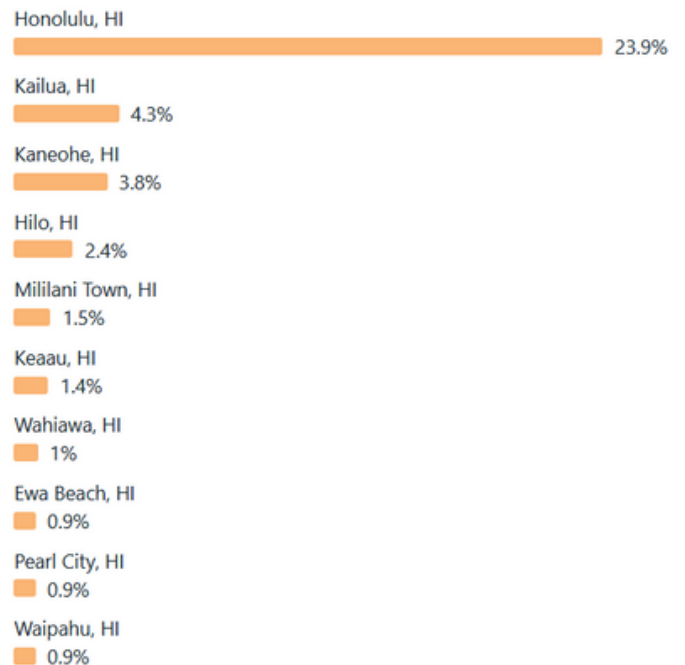
Facebook followers ⓘ

2,664

Age & gender ⓘ



Top cities



FACEBOOK: TOP POSTS

These were the top posts of 2023 based on likes aka reactions.

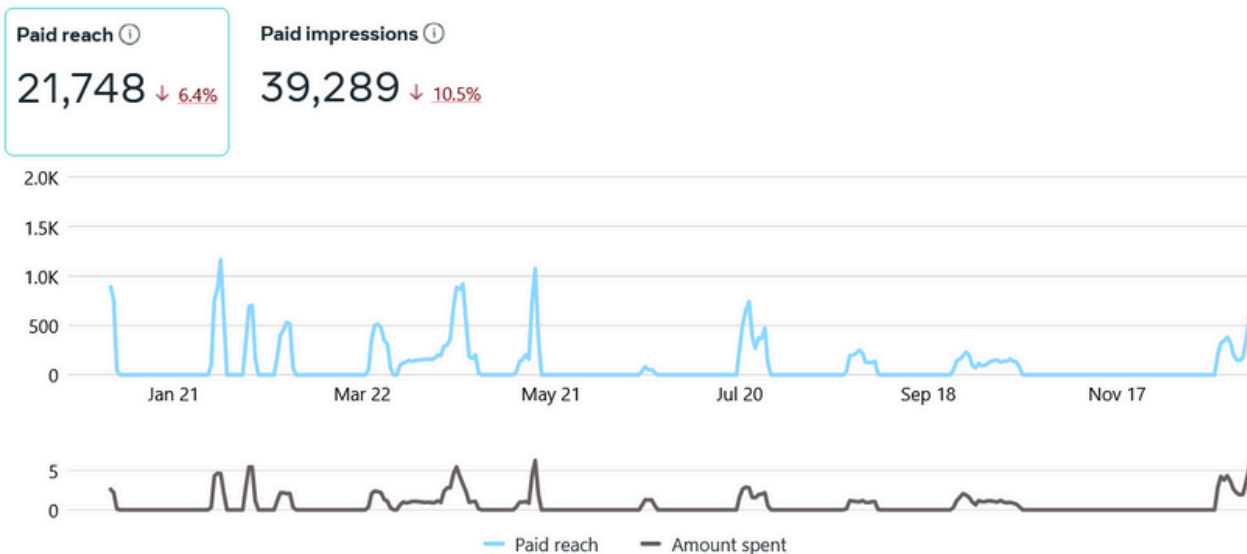
<p>1</p> 	<p>Mean Mug Cane Ti in Native Forest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 262 • Comments: 24 • Shares: 25 • Reach: 26,664 	<p>2</p> 	<p>West Indian Wood Nettle Sold as Māmaki</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 134 • Comments: 31 • Shares: 170 • Reach: 36,734
<p>3</p> 	<p>Centipede in 'Ōhi'a Tree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 112 • Comments: 27 • Shares: 32 • Reach: 9,550 	<p>4</p> 	<p>Strawberry Guava Biocontrol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 104 • Comments: 31 • Shares: 20 • Reach: 179,982
<p>5</p> 	<p>PK and Cane Ti Elimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 86 • Comments: 5 • Shares: 4 • Reach: 920 	<p>6</p> 	<p>Staining & Sampling on ROD Positive Tree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 58 • Comments: 3 • Shares: 4 • Reach: 5,371
<p>7</p> 	<p>NSM, Medinilla, and Melastomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 56 • Comments: 12 • Shares: 6 • Reach: 4,340 	<p>8</p> 	<p>'Ōhi'a Narrative 1st Person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 54 • Comments: 7 • Shares: 62 • Reach: 9,035
<p>9</p> 	<p>Sleeping Grass Invasive Highlight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 50 • Comments: 11 • Shares: 10 • Reach: 2,954 	<p>10</p> 	<p>Last Known Glory Bush Removed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes: 50 • Comments: 7 • Shares: 14 • Reach: 1,737

AD BOOST

Throughout the year, we use funds to boost some of our social media posts to reach more of our target audiences. We prioritize spending this money on posts with higher priority messages. In 2023, we spent a **total of \$230 on boosting posts** on Instagram and Facebook, compared to **\$290 in 2021**. These funds helped us reach a total of **21,748 additional accounts**. Many of these accounts are from people who do not already follow us, which serves as a useful tool for growing our fanbase.

Month	Budget (\$)	Spent
Jan	15.00	10.98
Feb	40.00	42.58
Mar	15.00	11.51
Apr	45.00	48.04
May	15.00	17.68
Jun	15.00	5.23
Jul	15.00	20.70
Aug	15.00	6.94
Sep	30.00	6.42
Oct	50.00	21.60
Nov	15.00	0.00
Dec	15.00	37.94
TOTAL	285.00	229.62

For 2024, I would like to maintain the budget at \$300. In 2023, we initially allocated \$250 and reserved \$50 for flexible spending. This approach enabled us to adjust our budget as needed, resulting in a total expenditure of \$230. Toward the end of the year, I did not utilize as much of the budget as I could have for boosting posts. This resulted in not utilizing the full \$300 we could have. My goal for 2024 is to come closer to fully utilizing the \$300 budget by year-end.





TIKTOK: STATS AND TRENDS

On TikTok in 2023, we did not post as much as I had anticipated, but we still experienced significant increases in statistics. Our total likes rose by 395%, and our video views surged by 770%! Most of the increase in views stemmed from a single video in November, describing Miconia and its impacts. It was captured in the field and narrated by Mele Ana. That video alone garnered 39.8K views!

TIKTOK STATS	2023	TIKTOK STATS	2022
Total Posts	9	Total Posts	9
Total Likes	648	Total Likes	131
Video Views	43,320	Video Views	5,626
Total Followers	478	Total Followers	456



YOUTUBE: STATS AND TRENDS

Once again on YouTube, we witnessed growth in our channel despite not actively engaging with it. YouTube continues to serve as an educational hub for our longer videos, offering content that differs significantly from other platforms. Frequently, we use our other platforms to direct followers to our YouTube channel, where they can access presentations, identification videos, and more. Although we only uploaded one video last year, our total views increased by 17%, and our watch time rose by 31%. Next year, we plan to enhance our video content and expand our YouTube channel.

YOUTUBE STATS	2023	YOUTUBE STATS	2022
Total Posts	1	Total Posts	1
Total Views	1,294	Total Views	1,102
Watch Time (Hours)	49.8	Watch Time (Hours)	38.1
Total Subscribers	43	Total Subscribers	35

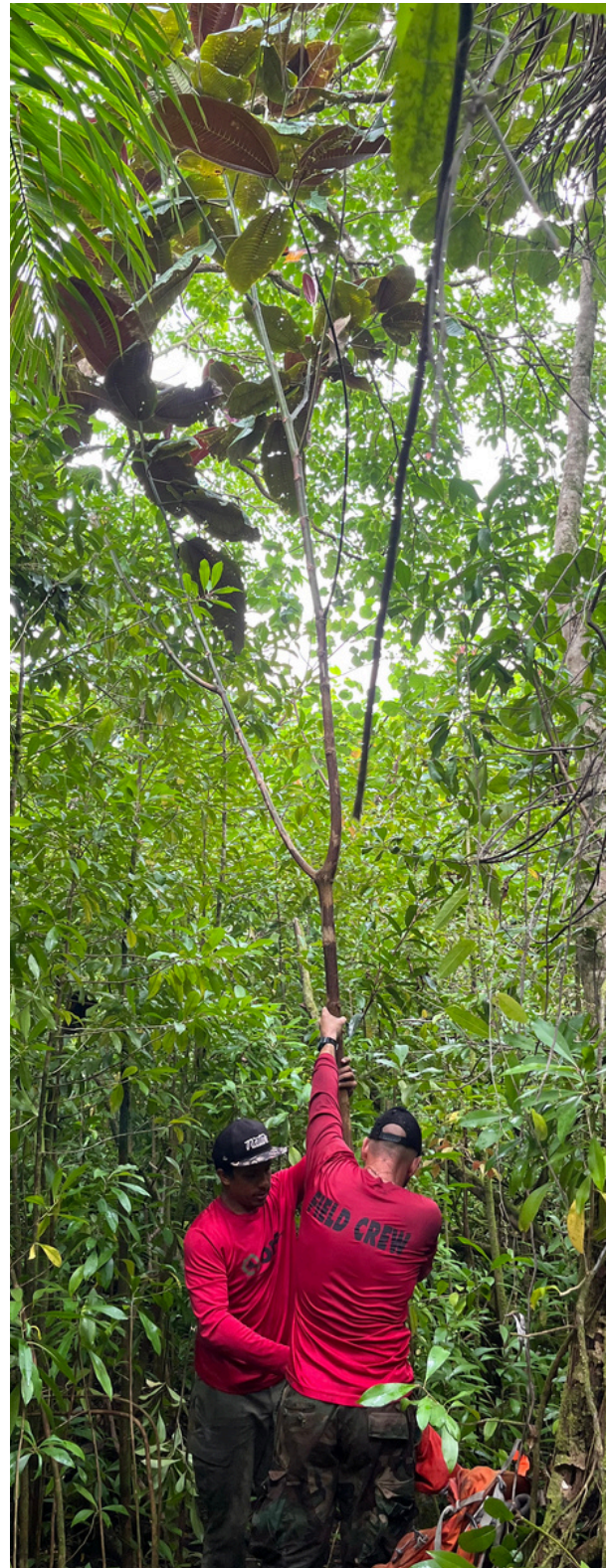


LOOKING FORWARD

Looking forward to 2024, we will continue to use social media to spread awareness and gain support for the important work we do. We aim to expand our video content across all platforms, including YouTube. Additionally, I intend to strengthen our outreach relationship with the field crew and improve our photo content. The more we can collaborate with them to identify the types of photos and videos that resonate best, the better equipped they will be to gather top-notch content.

FOCUSED GOALS

- Growing our fanbase on all platforms.
- Taking a class in May from Olelo on creating video content with your cellphone.
- Continuing to use the goal tracking sheet.
- Creating more engagement with field crew and photo-taking.
- Continuing to align messaging with the current objectives of our organization.
- Posting less while maintaining the same level of reach and engagement.



APPENDIX...DETAILS OF ALL OUTREACH 2023

TOTAL REACH: 596,226

Article - authored	427487
Two (2)LFA Ads for STA Month and Pampas grass article in LICH	
Distributed Product	6099
DWC Guides	13
LFA Kits Passed Out	2352
LFA Kits Mailed	1144
LFA Postcard	2590
Event	3636
(35 events over 39 days)	
Hoihe	1149
11 schools	
28 days to 77 classrooms	
543 samples (57% return)	
Interview	100302
KHON - LFA	
KITV - West Indian Wood nettle	
KHON - Living 808 - OISC	
KITV-Evening News-LFA Oahu	
Meeting	34
Presentation	696
27 presentations to 25 unique groups	
Professional Development	71
Attended ROD Outreach Symposium (Hilo)	
HAL Ant ID, Apimel, and CRB training	
School Visit	1492
Presented to 50 classes at 20 unique schools	
Social Media	41944
Avg Annual Engagement rate across all platforms	8%
New Followers	1860
Posts	359
Volunteer Trip OISC (hrs.)	261.5
OISC vols hrs.	181.5
DWC hrs.	80
DWC Miles surveyed	141
71 acres	71
Imm	2306
Mat	38
Volunteer Trip Other	31
Partnered with MCBH and Waihee Community	
Website	13240
Total	596,226 encounters/message delivered
	174,739 w/out STA ads

Link to Google Drive for detailed outreach information:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1m0yT-b_LfcTIXkVI2Y6urjAGfkb9I5mu/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=108814632114028959927&rtopf=true&sd=true



2023 Report to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council



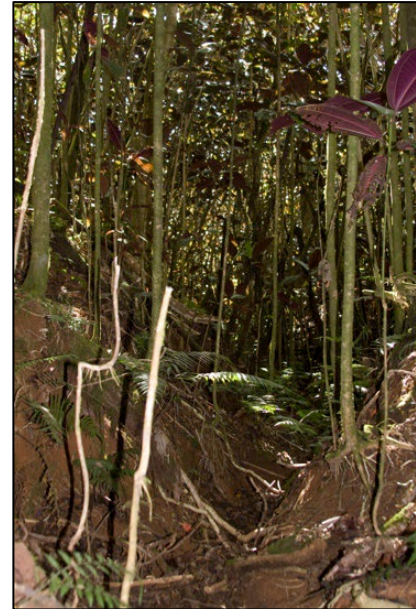
OISC field staff hiking down Mau'umae ridge from a Himalayan blackberry worksite.

The O‘ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) protects O‘ahu’s watersheds, ecosystems and agriculture by preventing harm from invasive species before those species become uncontrollable. The OISC field crew conducts surveys and control for invasive species that have not yet become abundant enough to damage the island’s agriculture and ecosystems, but likely would cause harm if not controlled. By removing invasive species before the effects are felt, we can prevent labor-intensive and costly remediation measures later.

OISC operations are guided by the OISC steering committee, which is made up of representatives of conservation organizations and land managers island-wide. Many of the people who serve on OISC’s steering committee today were giving up their weekends to control invasive species as volunteers when OISC was first formed back in 2001. For 2023 operations, HISC awarded OISC \$700,000 for surveys and control of priority invasive species and outreach. OISC raised an additional \$1,298,351 from other sources. The deliverables and accomplishments described below include HISC-funded activities and leveraged funds.

In 2023, OISC continued steady progress towards stopping the spread of incipient invasive species, including: miconia (*Miconia calvescens*), devil weed (*Chromolaena odorata*), cane ti (*Tibouchina herbacea*) Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), and Cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*). OISC served as the co-lead for the multi-agency effort across O‘ahu to detect the two fungal pathogens that cause Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (ROD). In partnering with the Ports of Entry/Exit Monitoring Program (formerly Māmalu Poepoe), OISC facilitated early detection trap checks for coconut rhinoceros beetle (*Oryctes rhinoceros*) and Africanized honey bee (*Apis mellifera scutellata*) [insert additional species] at Honolulu’s Daniel K. Inouye International Airport and Honolulu Harbor. OISC assisted the Hawai‘i Ant Lab (HAL) with little fire ant (*Wasmannia auropunctata*) surveys and outreach. OISC is the primary outreach agency for little fire ant on O‘ahu and coordinates outreach efforts with the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), the Hawai‘i Ant Lab (HAL) and the Coordinating Group for Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) in order to stay ahead of the invasion front. In addition to little fire ant outreach, OISC continued providing vital invasive species information to students, teachers, the landscape industry, recreational groups and other stakeholders throughout the island and state regarding watershed health and OISC target species.

In order to combat the threats posed by these target species, OISC deploys teams of field biologists with expertise in off-trail hiking, survey and control methodologies, helicopter safety, and species identification. Areas with historic species locations and the areas adjacent to historic locations as informed by OISC’s buffering system, are surveyed regularly until regional eradication is achieved. The eradication timeline varies by species and is determined by a number of environmental and biological factors specific to each target species. Typically, field staff will systematically scour survey sites along transects, by ground or air, and will control species immediately upon discovery. This system allows OISC to adapt our strategy to any species that the committee deems necessary for our organization to control.



Above: Miconia destroys the understory and promotes erosion, this photo is from Tahiti where miconia has taken over vast amounts of forest.

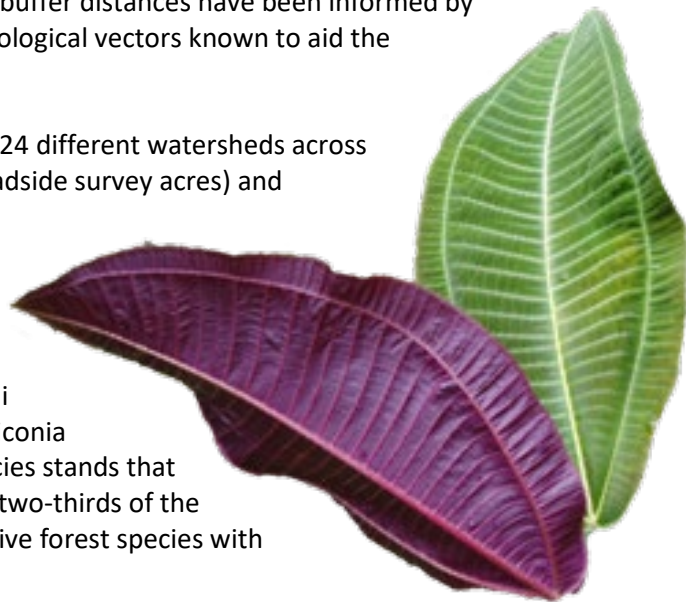
Miconia (*Miconia calvescens*)

Miconia is the highest-priority target for OISC because once established, it will severely degrade O'ahu's watersheds. Miconia's shallow root systems and leaf morphology promote excessive soil runoff during heavy rains by funnelling rainwater to the ground with tremendous force, thereby reducing soil retention. These characteristics indicate that a miconia-dominated forest is more prone to detrimental flooding impacts, including erosion and landslides, moreso than a native-dominated forest. More landslides will mean more opportunities for weed invasion in our upper watersheds and the effects of increased landslides and flooding hazards will be felt throughout communities surrounding forests invaded by miconia.

Miconia incursion will not only harm our terrestrial ecosystems and surrounding communities, but this species will also damage our marine ecosystems. Increased stream sedimentation and stormwater runoff will deposit excessive nutrients and nonpoint source pollution into our nearshore waters, aiding the spread of invasive algae and decreasing prime habitat characteristics for native marine species. Characteristics like higher turbidity and lower dissolved oxygen from excess sedimentation and runoff will push native species out of these areas and invite non native species who thrive in these conditions to invade these areas.

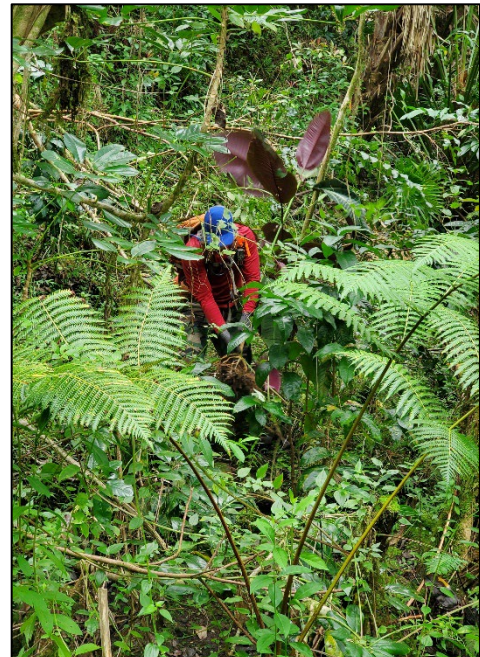
Unfortunately, miconia seeds remain viable in the soil for at least 18 years, making this a project that requires long-term financial commitment. OISC's strategy is to survey the entire estimated seed bank of miconia every two to three years to find and remove trees before they mature. OISC utilizes a 1,600 meter buffering system around known plant locations. The inner 800 meter buffer is surveyed by ground, must be surveyed on a 3-year rotating schedule, and is the preferred method for detecting individual trees. Any areas deemed too steep to safely survey within the 800 meter ground buffer are surveyed by helicopter. The outer 800 meter buffer is surveyed once and then every 7 years when possible. This is the preferred method for detecting stands of miconia that have gone undetected in order to discover any outlier spread. These buffer distances have been informed by dispersal distance analysis and studies on biological vectors known to aid the spread of miconia.

In 2023, OISC conducted miconia surveys in 24 different watersheds across 3,525 acres by ground (including 1,088.2 roadside survey acres) and 4,839 acres by air. Crews controlled 1,814 immature and 5 mature miconia trees in 2023, protecting a total of 8,364 acres of forest across the island over 7,386 total work hours. The mature miconia trees were removed from the Ka'alae'a, Kalihi, Kawainui watersheds. OISC's systematic control of miconia continues preventing the type of single-species stands that occur in Tahiti where this species threatens two-thirds of the forest and is directly threatening 25% of native forest species with extinction.





Left: staff hold bunches of immature miconia removed from the watershed.



Right: staff hand pull a large immature miconia.

The long-lived seedbank makes this species difficult to eradicate. Trees are sometimes missed because of thick vegetation and we have not been able to meet our goal of preventing maturation of trees in all watersheds. However, we have been able to prevent this species from establishing. When OISC first began surveys in 2002, we removed 40 mature and 3,347 immature trees from 2,042 acres. In 2023, OISC removed 5 mature trees over 8,364 acres, a drop in mature tree densities by 95% since 2002, while reducing the number of mature trees by 87.5% and more than doubling the number of acres surveyed.

Devil weed (*Chromolaena odorata*)

Chromolaena odorata is known as “devil weed” and for good reason. It is toxic to livestock and humans and a weed of conservation and agricultural concern throughout Africa and the Pacific. Populations of this species are currently known to occur at the Kahuku Training Area (KTA), ‘Ahupua‘a ‘O Kahana State Park, ‘Aiea Loop Trail, Camp Smith, and a multitude of locations between Malaekahana and Pūpūkea on O‘ahu’s north shore. Additionally, individual plants have been detected in Hau‘ula and Mākaha, but no reproducing populations have been discovered during follow-up surveys. A lone plant on the outskirts of Lanikai Beach was also detected several years ago, but subsequent surveys revealed no additional recruitment.

In 2023 OISC continued early-detection surveys across 97.5 acres of Mākaha valley trails over the course of this reporting period during our annual camping operation with a team of seven to survey along trails and around historic point locations for detection and control of devil weed. Field crews detected no devil weed plants from the watershed across 280 hours of staff time although a single individual was detected by partner agency staff from the Wai‘anae Mountains Watershed Partnership along a fenceline that they maintain and reported it to OISC after treatment. Staff from partner agencies who work in this location have opportunistically found individual plants in the area, which has helped to direct OISC’s efforts to focus on trails in addition to historic locations within the valley. Although our surveys have not revealed large patches of devil weed in Mākaha valley, this plant’s ability to hitchhike on clothing and disperse itself has resulted in multiple detections in the area.



In addition to devil weed survey and control operations in Mākaha, OISC conducted annual surveillance and control efforts in Kahana and at KTA. Field teams survey areas known to have recurring historic devil weed populations twice per year. Staff remove flowers and seed heads of any mature plants they encounter and any seedlings too small for adequate field disposal. All vegetative material that cannot be disposed of in the field is hiked out in sealed containers and incinerated at waste facilities to ensure this species is not spreading through the transportation of green waste. Locations with high population densities in these two areas are chemically treated using a truck mounted power-sprayer or precision helicopter spray with low concentrations of non-toxic herbicides. All other plants are hand-pulled and hung securely to dry out roots leading to plant death.

Due to the expansion of devil weed at KTA, OISC shifted strategies to focus on treating hotspots and some trail and road surveyes at this site. OISC power-sprayed known and marked densley populated locations via trailer-mounted power-sprays over fewer camping operations. With less funding going toward this species due to its expanded establishment, OISC crews conducted two camping operations with six staff members. In the future, OISC will direct more effort toward outreach in areas adjacent to KTA while reducing field efforts. The strategy for devil weed in Kahana valley remains the same, and OISC staff will continue to ground survey and aerially treat the historic dense populations at this site. Steady population delcines continue at Kahana valley.

Some devil weed infestations on O'ahu are now too large for OISC to be able to eradicate this species island-wide. Therefore, OISC has partnered with the Army Natural Ressources Program (ANRP), the

Department of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) and the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to test a biocontrol agent for future release. This gall-forming fly, *Cecidochares connexa*, has been released within several other Pacific countries as a means to help control devil weed and has shown promising results. Currently, this biocontrol agent is undergoing host-specificity testing at the Pacific Basic Agricultural Research Center's (PBARC) biocontrol facility in Hilo. OISC continues collecting data on island-wide populations and plans to assist with the release of the biocontrol agent when it becomes available for distribution.

In combatting the spread of this tenacious species, OISC will continue to focus efforts on the edges of the infestation zones and move forward with supporting the biocontrol process. In total across O'ahu, OISC controlled 602 mature plants and 5,481 immature across 295 survey acres in 2023, including 1,548.5 total work hours.

Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (*Ceratocystis huliohia* and *Ceratocystis lukuohia*):



Staff felling an 'ōhi'a tree that tested positive for *C. huliohia*

Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) is a forest disease caused by two species of fungal pathogen within the genus *Ceratocystis*. The pathogens have killed 'ōhi'a trees across thousands of acres on Hawai'i Island. So far, only the less virulent of the two species (*C. huliohia*) has been detected on O'ahu. Utilizing high-resolution aerial imagery and data collected during biannual reconnaissance helicopter flights, OISC and its partners collect wildland samples of the most symptomatic and safely accessible trees. Staff also responds to public reports of dead or dying 'ōhi'a, most often on private residential properties. A total of 14 trees since 2019 have tested positive for *C. huliohia*, and of the three positive detections in 2023, all three came from trail surveys within Mākaha valley.

In order to maintain a robust early detection and rapid response effort for ROD, OISC co-leads the O'ahu ROD working group with staff from DOFAW, CGAPS, and ANRP. This working group implements strategies determined at the statewide level and addresses any island-

specific considerations for response. Distributing sampling efforts between multiple partner agencies allows for a more complete effort across multiple land-ownerships to ensure that all safely accessible symptomatic trees are sampled. In 2023, OISC continued facilitating bimonthly meetings and will continue to co-lead this multi-agency partnership.

OISC performed early detection surveys over 122,504 acres of O'ahu's 'ōhi'a forest by ground and air in 2023. Forest health surveys using the United States Forest Service Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping (DMSM) software allowed for one full island-wide surveys across 122,491 acres of 'ōhi'a forest throughout the Ko'olau and Wai'anae Ranges. Additionally, staff surveyed 13.1 acres of O'ahu trails and responded to 3 positive *C. huliohia* detections. In coordination with staff from ANRP and DOFAW, OISC

assisted in felling one positive detection in Mākaha but left the other two infected trees standing as felling would've damaged surrounding 'ōhi'a and opened those healthy trees up for infection.

The work on O'ahu is part of a statewide effort that is conducting early detection using the same methodology on all islands and is done in close cooperation with the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership (KMWP), DOFAW, and other partner agencies. In total, OISC collected 20 samples of 'ōhi'a, including 15 samples from 15 public reports of dead or dying trees.



Staff using Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping (DMSM) technology to map single trees and stands of 'ōhi'a forest showing signs of ROD.

Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*)

Cape ivy invades dry forests on the Big Island and can smother native plants. The OISC crew has been monitoring and controlling a cape ivy infestation in Pālehua in the Wai'anae Mountains since 2009. Through persistent treatment, the infestation has been drastically reduced from patches that were too numerous to count to only 8 individual immature plants and zero mature plants in 2021. Despite an uptick last year from discovering a previously unknown patch of cape ivy likely resulting from habitat modification from the homeowner, the population appears to be again in decline. In total during 2023, OISC surveyed 44.8 acres at known sites across the 100-acre region, detecting and removing 31 immature plants, down from 192 in the previous year.

OISC also assisted the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) in the release of a cape ivy biocontrol agent that has already been approved for release. *Secusio extensa* is a species of moth native to Madagascar and southern Africa, and was released as a biocontrol agent for fireweed (*Senecio*

madagascariensis). Fortunately, this agent is also known to control cape ivy, another well-known invasive weed that remains incipient on O‘ahu. This moth substantially reduces the fitness of target species via defoliation, thereby reducing a plant’s ability to photosynthesize.

A table showing the decline in plants is shown below:

Year	Mature	Immature	Acres
2023	0	31	44.8
2022	0	192	53.92
2021	0	8	52.80
2020	0	27	85.65
2019	0	44	79.46
2018	0	150	78.85
2017	1	503	217.59
2016	1	1,365	291.36
2015	6	1,384	126.11

Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*; syn: *Rubus armeniacus*)

Himalayan blackberry is a thorny vine that is a serious problem in the Pacific Northwest. OISC staff have been told that it was planted on public land by a resident of Pālolo for fruits and to dissuade trespassers. It has since spread up the valley into the native ‘ōhi‘a forest, threatening the native species there. Himalayan blackberry is difficult to control since it is resistant to available herbicides and re-grows easily from cut stems and roots. Despite these challenges, OISC has drastically reduced Himalayan blackberry numbers. Staggered chemical treatments reduced population numbers enough that OISC now focuses on manual removal for this species. OISC conducted 28.8 acres of ground surveys in 2023 around known accessible sites, detecting no Himalayan blackberry plants.

A table and graph demonstrating the decline in plant numbers for each location is shown below:

Action Year	Mature	Immature	Acres	Total People Hours
2023	0	0	28.87	294
2022	0	1	29.31	250
2021	0	4	32.73	250
2020	0	4	33.11	240
2019	0	7	28.76	184
2018	0	5	29.28	248
2017	0	23	58.23	485

Cane Ti: (*Tibouchina herbacea*)

Cane ti threatens priority native watershed habitat in Poamoho, an area in the northern Koʻolau Range. ANRP staff discovered the highly invasive cane ti (*Tibouchina herbacea*) in the Poamoho region in 2008. This aggressive weed was not known to be naturalized on Oʻahu, but it is widespread on both Hawaiʻi island and Maui where it is beyond the scope of eradication. On these islands, cane ti forms dense thickets that crowd out native plant growth and can proliferate in pockets of intact native forest. In 2023, OISC surveyed 211.5 acres by ground and air, controlling a total of 215 mature and 283 immature plants within the Poamoho region.

Field staff conducted aerial helicopter surveys across 188.3 acres on the windward and leeward sides of the Poamoho summit, adjacent to core populations, in order to delimit outlier populations and inform aerial treatment locations in areas inaccessible by ground. Utilizing the helicopter precision spot spray method, OISC treated 204 mature and 53 immature cane ti individuals within these outlier areas. Both aerial and ground operations are conducted in conjunction with control efforts from the Natural Ecosystems Management & Protection (NEPM) sector of DOFAW, and staff from KMWP.



Staff inspecting a large cane ti plant while wearing Tyvek suits to prevent contamination.

EARLY DETECTION & RAPID RESPONSE

Early-detection and rapid-response (EDRR) is a critical component for the biosecurity of our island and our state. Despite funding shortfalls in 2023, OISC continues to fill a crucial role in EDRR activities for Oʻahu. Mostly through outreach until more funding becomes available, OISC responds to public reports of target and high-priority pests and responds either with direct field intervention or delegation to partner agencies.

PORTS OF ENTRY/EXIT SPECIES

Africanized honey bee (*Apis mellifera scutellata*):

OISC conducts early detection surveys via trap checks for Africanized bees at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu and Honolulu Harbor as part of a collaborative statewide effort coordinated by the Ports of Entry/Exit Biosecurity Monitoring Program (formerly, the Māmalu Poepoe

Program). This Ports Biosecurity program is a partnership between the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) and the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) established to conduct early detection of high-priority pests at Hawai'i ports of entry and exit. In past years, OISC has facilitated trap checks at the airport but expanded in late 2022 to include areas at Honolulu Harbor.

OISC conducted trap checks for this species once per month during what historically has been the low bee activity season (October – April) and twice per month when bee activity tends to increase (May – September). This strategy resulted in a total of 12 traps checked a total of 20 times at the Daniel K. Inouye Airport and 13 traps checked 19 times at the Honolulu Harbor. OISC staff did not detect any Africanized honeybees in 2023.

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (*Oryctes rhinoceros*)

Coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is becoming widespread on O'ahu but initial detections have occurred on Kaua'i, Maui, and Hawai'i Island. A separate CRB response team is taking the lead for the response but OISC assists with tree surveys and trap checks at the ports of entry/exit, Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu, to supplement the island-wide efforts. CRB damage can kill coconut and other palms and is a widespread problem on neighboring Pacific Islands. In 2023, OISC conducted 14 trap checks of 11 unique traps and conducted 1 palm survey to check for beetle damage. One CRB was confirmed in a trap and the palm survey yielded potential damage that will continue to be monitored at regular intervals. OISC also sent outreach and field staff to a training organized by the CRB Response Team to develop detection skills for larvae in mulch piles and identifying CRB damage on palms. Unfortunately, CRB has now become widespread across the island and the statewide strategy is shifting to preventing this species from infiltrating neighbor islands. OISC will continue checking traps in order to help prevent this species from travelling through O'ahu ports and infesting novel locations statewide.



Staff training with the CRB Response Team to learn CRB larval detection protocols for mulch piles.

Japanese Beetle (*Popillia japonica*)

Japanese beetle is a high-profile invasive pest that feeds on more than 300 species of host plants, including some turf species. OISC staff checks Japanese beetle traps twice per month during the active season of May through the end of October at both Honolulu Harbor and the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu. In 2023, OISC scouted, identified, and selected trap locations with staff from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC). OISC staff checked 13 traps 12 times at Honolulu Harbor, and 10 traps 12 times at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, detecting no Japanese beetles in 2023.

Foreign Trade Zone Species

In partnership with the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Ports of Entry/Exit Monitoring Program, OISC has expanded surveillance of species not yet detected on Oahu, some not yet detected in the state, to the Hawaii Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). Located at the entrance of Honolulu Harbor, the FTZ is a secured-access building with very strict rules, including no photographs and no moving of any items within the building while on survey. OISC assisted in identifying appropriate sites for sticky traps and putting up and checking those traps for a variety of high-priority pest species outside of the building with the idea that future operations beyond 2023 may include surveillance within the building as well.

In 2023, OISC selected sites and erected three different types of sticky-traps for detection of five distinct invasive pests: brown marmorated stink bug (*Halyomorpha halys*), Asian longhorned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), Queensland longhorned beetle (*Acalolepta aesthetica*), spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar*), and spottend lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*). Over the course of 11 trap checks, OISC staff detected none of these species outside the FTZ.

OTHER EDRR SPECIES

Little Fire Ant (LFA) (*Wasmannia auropunctata*)

LFA is a tiny stinging ant that is established on Hawai'i Island and was accidentally introduced to O'ahu in two separate locations. OISC has primarily focused on outreach for this species since 2019, but has increased field assistance to OISC partner agency Hawai'i Ant Lab (HAL) as infestations have expanded across the island, despite no specific funding for LFA operations. In 2023 OISC assisted in 30 days of surveys and 29 treatment days, an increase of over 328% for surveys and 190% for treatments since 2022. These efforts took place island-wide, mostly along the windward coast where the species continues to spread, but also throughout the urban core and one survey at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport.

Additionally, OISC provided field capacity for two vegetation maintenance days in preparation for survey and treatment while having one treatment day cancelled due to weather. Outreach staff assisted HAL staff regularly with access permission and community response coordination throughout the year. Several OISC staff members also attended an ant species identification workshop hosted by the HAL. The primary responding agency for LFA survey and control is the HAL, and OISC has worked diligently to secure additional funding to assist in the face of increasing LFA populations. In 2024, OISC will have more staff to assist HAL more regularly and increase outreach capacity.



Attendees practice ant identification in a training hosted by HAL.



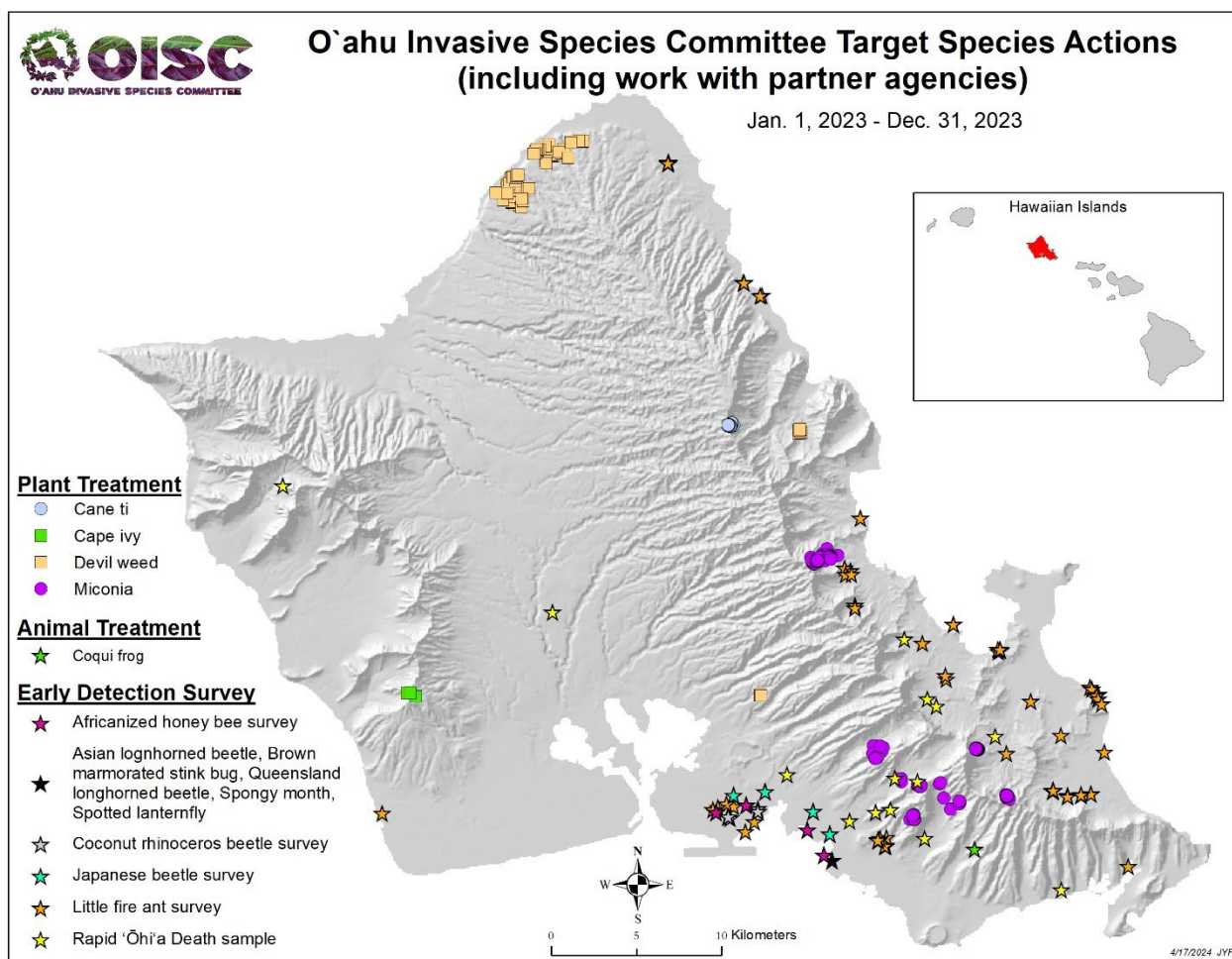
Staff showcasing LFA testing supplies (peanut butter and chopsticks) at the annual Punahou Carnival Plant Sale.

Coqui Frog (*Eleutherodactylus coqui*)

OISC provides support to the HDOA for early detection of coqui frogs by responding to public reports and passing on that information along to appropriate points of contact. Coqui frogs can be stowaways on plants and other items such as vehicles, boats and construction materials from areas on Hawai'i Island with large coqui frog populations. Whenever possible, OISC assists with response to these public reports on O'ahu through coordinated monitoring and subsequent control efforts with HDOA staff.

In 2023, OISC was not awarded funding specific to coqui frog control operations but did assist in the ongoing response led by HDOA, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), and the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC). After some helicopter treatments in 2022, OISC consulted with the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) since they have an extensive coqui control program as the strategy for the Waimānalo population shifted back to utilizing a citric pipeline for extensive treatment. Utilizing partner funds for supplies, OISC constructed the initial leg of the citric pipeline but none of the partners could resolve the lack of pressure in propelling the citric acid formulation to the work site. OISC consulted with a retired fluid dynamics engineer to determine the necessary specifications needed to

finish the pipeline, but the project is more complex than originally thought and beyond that engineer's expertise. OISC will continue consulting with engineering experts in order to get the pipeline functioning. OISC staff also assisted with two power-spray operations in Palolo, two site visits to the Waimānalo population to plan the pipeline, and six days in the field constructing the initial leg of the pipeline.



A spatial overview of all OISC field operations taking place across O'ahu.

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:25:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, I am co-chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i. On behalf of the Green Party of Hawai'i we **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

We urge you to **PASS HB299 HD1**.

Sincerely,
Susan RobertsEmery
Co-chair GPH
Green Party of Hawai'i
Paauilo

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:30:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffani Keanini	Kauai Invasive Species Committee	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Support of HB299

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:53:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Kwan	Carol Kwan Consulting LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HD299 HD1. HISC desperately needs an increase in funding to fulfil its mission. I recommend at least doubling the amount that it currently receives. This will help to fund early detection of entry and eradication efforts. The sooner a pest is caught, the cheaper it is to eradicate it, and we need to be eradicating invasives, not just controlling them.

I have my own consulting business as a Certified Arborist. I work in the industry.

Mahalo,

Carol

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 9:16:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Takakuwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee, My name is Kathryn Takakuwa and I SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS HB299. I strongly agree with the opening section of this bill, regarding the need to increase funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and the island Invasive Species Committees that have been the core foundation of our all-hands-on-deck fight to protect our islands and future generations from invasive species. However, this bill appears to provide HISC with far less funds than it received last year - \$3M over the next fiscal biennium - in a moment when we clearly need to invest more than ever before in shoring up our biosecurity defenses. Please amend this measure to increase, rather than decrease, the funding that will be provided to HISC. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants, HISC and its Committees have proven their great effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources. It is necessary to both eradicate invasives and restore the vibrancy of native plants and species in order to restore the health of our 'āina ecosystems. Native flora and fauna systems are uniquely evolved to sequester carbon and stabilize soil aggregates allowing our watersheds to effectively capture, collect, and store rainwater, which recharges our aquifers and also results in cleaner air and healthier oceans. HISC has prevented millions of dollars' worth of damages and negative and irreversible degradation of our 'āina. They serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands. With the Department of Agriculture struggling to expend the historic funding it received last year for biosecurity programs, and with no clear Department of Agriculture plan to fulfill its own unique roles in preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species, it is absolutely critical that we increase HISC's funding so that it can continue and even expand its essential work. I urge you to PASS HB299 with AMENDMENTS to increase, and not decrease, HISC funding for the next fiscal biennium, sufficient to fully meet its core needs and anticipated programmatic requests. Sincerely, Kathryn Takakuwa

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 1:13:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee, as a botanist actively working with and researching invasive plants in Hawai'i, I am in strong support of increased funding to HISC to control invasive species such as LFA, Miconia, CRB, etc as they are an existential threat to our islands, both agriculturally and ecologically. HISC has shown itself to be very effective at managing and eradicating invasive species and a stable funding source is essential for HISC to continue their work.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion on this bill.

Kevin Faccenda, PhD

Honolulu, HI

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 5:03:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Kiefer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Agriculture Committee:

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Kiefer and I SUPPORT HB299 and its goal of providing essential funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program. Warmer temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns can accelerate the spread of pests like coqui frogs, little fire ants, and the fungi causing rapid ‘ōhi‘a death. Meanwhile, invasive insects such as the coconut rhinoceros beetle threaten to decimate our tree canopies, diminishing our natural shade and exacerbating the heat island effect—a serious concern as Hawai‘i works to protect communities from rising temperatures and resulting heat-related illnesses.

In addition to these ecological harms, invasive mosquitoes stand out as a pressing public health threat. Mosquitoes capable of carrying dengue fever already pose a risk in Hawai‘i; should new mosquito species arrive—potentially those that transmit malaria—our communities would be especially vulnerable. Effective biosecurity and robust, well-funded invasive species programs are critical for detecting, monitoring, and eradicating these vectors before they gain a foothold and create outbreaks of mosquito-borne illnesses.

Central to addressing these challenges is HISC’s collaborative, multi-agency approach, which enables targeted strategies for pest control, ecosystem restoration, and community engagement. However, these essential efforts have long been under-resourced, forcing many initiatives to focus on containment instead of eradication. By appropriating greater, more consistent funding, HB299 would empower HISC to expand its competitive grant programs, invest in innovative technologies, and strengthen on-the-ground efforts that protect our native forests, agricultural lands, and the health of our residents.

Ultimately, this measure addresses not only the ecological and economic impacts of invasive species but also the intertwined reality of climate change and public health. When our native canopy is compromised, our ability to mitigate rising temperatures is diminished, leaving our keiki and kūpuna increasingly susceptible to heat-related illness. When mosquito populations flourish unchecked, communities face an elevated risk of vector-borne disease. By supporting

HB299, the legislature has an opportunity to fortify Hawai'i's defenses against these growing threats, ensuring the long-term health and resilience of our islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kiefer, MD MPH

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:49:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharde Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Sharde Freitas and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to **PASS** HB299 HD1.

Sincerely,
Sharde Freitas

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 8:30:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ella Aki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 8:42:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Protect Hawaii from invasive pests.

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 8:58:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Culbertson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Rob Culbertson. I live on Hawaii Island and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua‘i to Hawai‘i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

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Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to **PASS** HB299 HD1.

Sincerely,

R A Culbertson

Honokaa, HI

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 9:56:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Andrew Isoda and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to **PASS HB299 HD1**.

Sincerely,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:24:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Schwab	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Amy Schwab and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to **PASS HB299 HD1**.

Sincerely,
Amy Schwab

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:07:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aiko Yamashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Aiko Yamashiro and I grew up in Kāneʻohe, Oʻahu, where I still live today. I strongly agree with the opening section of this bill, regarding the need to increase funding for the Hawaiʻi Invasive Species Council (HISC) and the island Invasive Species Committees. It was wonderful to read all the testimony in support on the first hearing, from diverse sectors of our community.

I support increasing the funding that will be provided to HISC. Invasive species continue to pose a major threat to the health of our environment, our agriculture and other natural resource-based industries, and our cultural practices and connection to land. As a Pacific Islander, I have seen the decimation of coconut trees in other places like Guam as a result of slow and uncoordinated responses to the invasive coconut rhinoceros beetle. As a new parent, I am greatly saddened to think that my child may grow up fearful of playing outdoors or with a strong connection to 'āina because of little fire ants. Success with invasive species eradication depends on strategic, strong, and early response. Trying to remediate the problem too late will be hugely expensive or futile. The organizations and agencies leading us in this important work need to be fully resourced. Thank you for your careful consideration of this issue.

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:05:25 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees. Their work has prevented millions upon millions of dollars’ worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands’ environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life.

I urge you to **PASS** HB299 HD1.

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 5:04:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill; please give the HISC as much money as possible before it is really too late!

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 6:56:57 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Breanne Fong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Breanne Fong, and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to PASS HB299 HD1.

Sincerely,
Breanne Fong

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 6:56:57 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Breanne Fong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Breanne Fong, and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

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Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to PASS HB299 HD1.

Sincerely,
Breanne Fong

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:34:31 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Leonberger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Laura Leonberger and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands. I saw first hand the devastating effects of CRB to palms and other native vegetation on the north shore of Oahu last fall, and we must do all we can to prevent further spread of CRB and other invasive species.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to **PASS HB299 HD1**.

Sincerely,
Laura Leonberger

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:47:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua‘i to Hawai‘i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars’ worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands’ environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to PASS HB299 HD1.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Executive Commission Member

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

Kanaka Maoli/Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:55:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lana Brodziak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The work of the HISC is critical to our economic prosperity.

Who wants to visit Hawaiian beaches without coconut trees?

How can Hawaii farmers make a living providing food for our residents if they don't have support for combating invasive species that decimate their farm crops?

Who wants to buy a house in Hawaii, knowing that their palm trees will be eaten, they will get bitten by little fire ants when trying to enjoy thier backyards or not being able to enjoy the quiet of the night by little frogs?

The work of the HISC is very important to the economic prosperity and the personal enjoyment of our wonderful islands.

Please support this bill. Mahalo

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:17:05 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madison Owens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Madison Owens and I **strongly support HB299 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and its partners, including the island Invasive Species Committees.

HISC and its partners are an indispensable part of our biosecurity framework, utilizing specialized expertise, research, field knowledge, interagency collaboration, and well-established community partnerships to help hold the line against invasive pests and their potentially devastating impacts. With dozens of successful eradications from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island of pests and noxious weeds - ranging from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants - HISC and its partners have proven their effectiveness in fighting invasive species with extremely limited resources.

Their work has undoubtedly prevented millions upon millions of dollars' worth of harm and the potentially irreversible degradation of our islands' environmental and cultural integrity, and our quality of life. Meanwhile, they continue to serve as an integral foundation of community-driven efforts to detect, eradicate, and manage myriad invasive species across our islands.

Much greater funding for HISC would allow it and its partners to double down on their vital work, as one of the few effective but under-resourced strategies we have in our existing biosecurity toolbox.

I urge you to PASS HB299 HD1.

Sincerely,
Madison Owens

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:46:19 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emilio Prado	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Viability Funding

Native Resources and Fire Protection Program

Tuesday, February 11, 2024

Support for H.B. No.299

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the Native Resources and Fire Protection Program, My name is Emilio Prado and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of H.B.No. 299.

I am testifying in support of the appropriating funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection program. I believe it is necessary to implement this bill for the health of the environment and the preservation of native plants and animals on Oahu. Without implications of this bill, we risk the safety of our islands native plants and lack proper protection against wildfires. If this bill is passed, the future of the island is ensured and is more likely to be preserved with native plants.

I hope you will consider passing H.B. No. 299 because it is necessary to ensure the growth and future of Island. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Emilio Prado

Mililani High School

HB-299-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:50:19 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.