

A Review and Update of the Multi-Agency Program to Support the Use of Rodenticides in Hawai‘i for Conservation Purposes

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Background

Rats and mice are among the most damaging invasive species in Hawai‘i. Before we can routinely treat large areas of the main Hawaiian Islands to control rats, mice and mongoose, we must engage in extensive public dialogue and outreach to ensure that nearby communities and other interested parties have accurate information with which to evaluate the risks and benefits. To provide a formal framework for this process, and to comply with environmental review laws, state and federal agencies are working on a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document.



Rat eating rat bait pellet *photo courtesy of Jack Jeffrey Photography*



Loulu hiwa (*Pritchardia martii*) *photo courtesy of Cheryl Phillipson* (Top). Close up of rat predation on Loulu hiwa fruit and seeds *photo courtesy of Cheryl Phillipson* (Bottom left). Rat predation on a Wedge-tailed shearwater egg *photo courtesy of Eric VanderWerf* (Bottom right).

Milestones from 2008-2009

- National conservation label for diphacinone licensed by the State of Hawai‘i for hand and aerial broadcast, bait stations, burrow and tree-crown baiting
- World’s first aerial applications of diphacinone on offshore islands (Mōkapu and Lehua) to eradicate rats



Aerial application of diphacinone on Mōkapu Island *photo courtesy of Heather Eijzenga*

Accomplishments for 2008-2009

- Formation of Outreach Steering Committee
 - U.S. Army
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
 - Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR)
 - Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)
 - The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
 - Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC)
- Community outreach specialists contracted
 - Ku‘iwalu – Dawn Chang
 - McNeil Wilson – John Williamson
- Baseline telephone survey conducted
 - Qmark Research – Barbara Ankersmit, Craig Togami
 - Statewide with area prefixes weighted
 - Gauge public opinion prior to initiation of outreach efforts
- Lehua aerial broadcast outreach
 - Extensive outreach to key members of the Kaua‘i community
 - Collaborated with Ke Kula Ni‘ihau O Kekaha school (students and staff)
 - Ni‘ihau students currently employed by the National Tropical Botanical Garden to assist with plant restoration on Lehua Island



Ni‘ihau students, employed by the National Tropical Botanical Garden, assist with plant restoration for Lehua Island *photo courtesy of Jackie Kozack*

Identification of Sites for Current and Future Rodent Control

- General locations and site characteristics needed for community outreach and NEPA document
- Requesting information from the conservation community on:
 - sites where bait stations and/or traps are currently used
 - sites where hand or aerial broadcast of rodenticides may be used
 - Input on sites still being sought
 - Site selection criteria will be drafted
 - Community feedback will help determine sites for hand and aerial broadcast

2009-2010 Timeline

July

- Survey of conservation community at the Hawai‘i Conservation Conference to assess awareness of and support for rodenticide use

July-August

- Design and produce outreach materials

August - October

- Utilize statewide survey results to guide outreach efforts
- Ku‘iwalu meets with individuals and organizations throughout the state for “talk story” sessions
- Steering Committee members coordinate presentations on all islands to assist with identifying potential sites

November - December

- Follow-up phone survey to gauge effectiveness of outreach

2010

- Formal public scoping meetings for NEPA
- Broad participation and representation from the conservation community will be sought for these meetings

