Invasive Species Management Plan in Progress

The 2009 Mauna Kea Comprehensive Management Plan and policy documents such as the State of Hawaii's 2011 "The Rain Follows the Forest" plan emphasize the importance and value of invasive species control.

The Office of Mauna Kea Management, in collaboration with the Big Island Invasive Species Committee and Hawaii Ant Lab, is drafting an Invasive Species Management Plan which addresses the core principles of invasive species response including prevention, early detection, rapid response, control of established species, monitoring, and outreach and education. One of the key concepts in this effort is a pathways analysis, evaluating risks associated with invasive species and the range of pathways a non-native species may use to find their way on to Mauna Kea.

This effort to thoroughly plan a comprehensive invasive species strategy is informed by OMKM's ongoing invasive species response efforts. Several examples include:

- Preventative inspections and cleaning protocols, developed in collaboration with Haleakala National Park staff.
- Community-based invasive weed pulls at Hale Pohaku and along the Mauna Kea Summit Access Road corridor.
- Continuous monitoring for non-native arthropods at facilities.
• Collaboration with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture on honeybee colony health.

While planning efforts are, at least initially, more of an office-based effort; a wide variety of research, control, and prevention activities are also ongoing. A few highlights from recent months include:

• In collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, OMKM is monitoring for honeybees and varroa mites. While honeybees are surprisingly common, the good news is the varroa mite is not common. Through this collaboration we hope to learn more about how we might minimize the spread of varroa mites.

• To better inform our draft invasive species plan, we've been testing and comparing various inspection and cleaning procedures for permitted uses on Mauna Kea. These tests help improve existing procedures and have proven helpful in collaborations with similar sites such as Haleakala National Park.

• Community-based weed pulls at Hale Pohaku and along the Mauna Kea Summit Access Road pulled over 200 bags of weeds with over 800 hours of volunteer labor in 2012. The fruits of this labor can be observed with the lack of fireweed surrounding the "Onizuka Center for International Astronomy Visitor Information Station on Mauna Kea" (VIS). In 2013 we will maintain and expand these efforts in the Hale Pohaku area.

Stay tuned for future updates on invasive species management activities on Mauna Kea!

ABOUT
The Office of Mauna Kea Management is charged with day-to-day management of the Mauna Kea Science Reserve as prescribed in the Master Plan. The adoption of the Mauna Kea Science Reserve Master Plan by the University of Hawaii Board of Regents in June 2000 marked a critical milestone in the management of Mauna Kea.

Meetings and public hearings spanning a period of nearly two years went into the formulation of the Master Plan, which established management guidelines for the next 20 years. The Master Plan reflected the community’s deeply rooted concerns over the use of Mauna Kea, including respect for Hawaiian cultural beliefs, protection of environmentally sensitive habitat, recreational use of the mountain, and astronomy research. It places the focus of responsibility with the University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH). The UH-Hilo Chancellor established the Office of Mauna Kea Management and the Board of Regents established the Mauna Kea Management Board in the fall of 2000. The Mauna Kea Management Board in turn formed Kahu Ku Mauna, a council comprised of Hawaiian cultural resource persons to serve as advisors.
OMKM Mission

To achieve harmony, balance and trust in the sustainable management and stewardship of Mauna Kea Science Reserve through community involvement and programs that protect, preserve and enhance the natural, cultural and recreational resources of Mauna Kea while providing a world-class center dedicated to education, research and astronomy.

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