



Intensive Plant Conservation Training Workshop

07-364

Background:

The Center for Plant Conservation (CPC) developed a comprehensive course to address rare plants and their conservation and management. So successful was the general course and given the number of rare plants managed on Department of Defense (DoD) lands, a DoD-focused offering was developed. The interagency workshop environment also would promote positive collaborative work among federal agencies and their partners. The expected outcome of such workshops is a more confident, connected and effective workforce.



Workshop participants complete an exercise in monitoring

Objective:

The purpose of this Legacy-funded project is to provide an accessible, intensive 6-day course/workshop in plant conservation that brings expert scientists and useful support resource materials to 30 DoD personnel, contractors, and partners.

Summary of Approach:

The Workshop curriculum was developed collaboratively through participation of nearly 40 experienced botanists from agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations. Presentation included classroom presentations and exercises and one field day. Resource materials including literature, guidance, web resources, bibliographies and expert assistance were also provided. Two evening sessions including a local panel discussion and an evening for independent modeling exploration were included. The course site in Honolulu, HI was chosen because of the concentration of DoD facilities and the quantity of species of concern in the region. This location enabled us to offer a pre-workshop field trip with the assistance of the Makua Military Reservation to examine model successful projects led by the staff of the Oahu Army Natural Resource Program. In adapting the

workshop (which has been presented twice before to non-DoD participants) for the Legacy Program and the Department of Defense, CPC staff and workshop faculty highlighted the differences between and similarities to plant conservation in the Pacific Islands and elsewhere in the United States. The workshop included 9 PhD. faculty members who taught the 17 different topics presented. Those topics were:

The State of Conservation Biology, Concepts of Rarity & Imperiled Plants, Importance of Systematics: Species Concepts & Hybridization, Conservation Genetics, Population Evaluation: Demography Population Viability Analysis, Recovery Criteria: Biological & Functional Aspects of Recovery, Plant Protection and Legislation, Measuring Success & Planning to Measure Success, Tools and Partnerships, Restoration and Management – Ex Situ, Examining Community Structure & Species Signatures, Evaluating Threats and Threat Reduction, Fragmentation & Preserve Design, Restoration and Management – In Situ, and Surveying for Rare Plants: Inventory & Monitoring.

Benefit:

Attendees report increased confidence and access to extremely useful resources. A well-prepared workforce will be efficient and effective. Planning, execution and success of work to secure and manage plant biodiversity resources will improve, for healthier DoD lands. Ongoing compliance with legislative requirements will be facilitated.

Accomplishments:

Training and resources were provided to 17 military personnel and support staff and 15 military partners. Of evaluations turned in, 100% would recommend the workshop to others; said the workshop would help them in their careers; felt the workshop brought them resources they could really use; and said the instructors had experience and knowledge that was a good fit with their own work. In addition, 95% said the workshop filled a unique niche with content not available elsewhere and that they got a real benefit from contacts made during the week.

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