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Combatting the Shrieking Coqui Frog on Oahu's East Side

By Rep. Gene Ward, R-Hawaii Kai, 12/1/2008 9:06:46 AM



My first order of business following my reelection to the Hawaii State House of Representatives is the creation of a Coqui Frog Task Force to prevent the spread of the coqui frogs to Hawaii Kai.

Nearby Kailua has already had an infestation and unless we do something now it is just a matter of time before they're in our backyards keeping us awake at night.

According to the Department of Agriculture, a coqui frog has been found and removed from Hawaii Kai, and we have no time to waste to get vigilant and aggressive against this invasive pest.

The purpose of the task force is two-fold:

- First to establish a monitoring system in key locations in the community to be on the lookout and listening for any sign of the coqui frog's presence.
- The second purpose of the task force is the mobilization of volunteers as quickly as possible for removal of the frogs wherever they are found.

The structure and functions of the task force will be similar to the Neighborhood Watch system and be comprised of neighborhood volunteers who will occupy 'listening posts' and work with the Department of Agriculture and the Oahu Invasive Species Committee.

These people on the task force are our early warning system or trip wire alert from the community to then call out the experts and our community volunteers to contain and eliminate the pests.

If we can alert and educate the community while establishing these 'Coqui Frog Listening Posts,' we'll be really on top of the situation before it starts. There's a pest hotline that we'll be using and my office will be assisting the monitoring and mobilization phases until eradication is completed.

A membership drive for volunteers to participate in the task force is now being conducted by my office. Following the recruitment of volunteers, the first order of business of the Task Force is the education of its members and the dissemination of information to educate the community about the coqui frog.

I envision a Coqui Frog Listening Captain in major locations throughout Hawaii Kai to Kalama Valley.

If enough people step forward to lend their eyes and ears to this problem, we can maintain the peace and tranquility of our beautiful community.

Some of us naively thought that the feral chickens were our biggest noise problem in Hawaii Kai, but this is a real wake up call to the tune of potentially. thousands of shrieking frogs in our back yards.

Reach Rep. Gene Ward, R-Hawaii Kai to Kalama Valley, at <mailto:repward@capitol.hawaii.gov>

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