

Rapid Carbon Assessment comes to Hawai'i

by Cynthia Stiles, Pacific Islands Area NRCS Assistant State Soil Scientist



Pictured left to right: UH's Michelle Lazaro, volunteer Alex Beaton, Amy Koch, and Mike Kolman on Hawaii Island. Photo by Kari Sever.

The carbon stocks of Hawai'i soils are being evaluated in FY 2013. Hawai'i and Alaska are the last two states in the US to collect soil carbon data for USDA-NRCS sponsored Rapid Carbon Assessment (RaCA). Soil scientists Mike Kolman and Amy Koch from the USDA-NRCS Kealahou Soil Survey Office, along with Michelle Lazaro from the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa, are the primary team members working this summer on soil sampling. They are being trained in RaCA methods this week by Kari Sever, a soil scientist and RaCA Coordinator from Ft. Collins, Colorado, MLRA Soil Survey Office. Support for Ms. Lazaro and

for Dr. Susan Crow, also at UH-Mānoa, to help with collection and processing of the many samples is being provided by an agreement through the Conservation Ecosystem Studies Unit Network. Funding for travel and logistics for the sampling personnel is provided by the National Soil Survey Center (NSSC) in Lincoln, NE. Soils will be sampled from at least 50 locations distributed across the Hawaiian Islands, using special sampling protocols provided by the NSSC. The samples are returned to UH-Mānoa for further processing and analysis and the data will be incorporated into summary tables that will be provided to Soil Survey Offices and other users. It is anticipated that these data will be incorporated into the national soils database for use in conservation planning, particularly to inform effects of conservation practices on soil carbon stocks for global carbon accounting as well as addressing soil condition resource concerns.

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