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EPA awards \$100,000 grant to Honolulu Clean Cities for biodiesel project

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(03/14/07) HONOLULU – Today at the Oceanic Institute, U.S. EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Air Division Director Deborah Jordan announced \$100,000 in federal funding to Honolulu Clean Cities for a biodiesel project as part of the West Coast Collaborative.

The “Biodiesel from Fuel Crops in Hawaii” project will explore and evaluate a number of crop materials currently available in Hawai’i to determine their suitability for producing biodiesel. The project is led by Honolulu Clean Cities with partners Pacific Biodiesel, Aloha Green, University of Hawaii – Hilo, College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management, Oceanic Institute, Hawaii Agricultural Research Center, and Grace Pacific.

The project will evaluate crop properties, feasibility of oil extraction, oil properties and biodiesel manufacturing limitations. The environmental benefits of biodiesel fuel use are well documented as a cleaner-burning, safe and easy-to-use renewable fuel.

“The information gathered from the project will be valuable for identifying which crops have the greatest potential to support biodiesel production in Hawai’i,” said Jordan. “The ultimate goal is reducing Hawai’i’s dependence on imported petroleum fuels and reducing diesel emissions throughout the state.”

Crop materials to be evaluated may include avocado, kukui nuts, palm oil, coconut, and castor beans. The project’s main goals are:

- * Extraction of various crop oils acceptable for use in locally produced biodiesel and identification of a possible high protein byproduct.
- * Comparative analysis of the quantity and quality of biodiesel obtained from various crop oils as opposed to waste cooking oil, as well as the evaluation of byproducts.
- * Generation of emission testing data.

The overall outcome of the project is to provide data for an economic model that will encourage Hawaii farmers in the production of oilseed crops and demonstrate the feasibility of seed-crushing, biodiesel manufacture and co-product processing.

The West Coast Collaborative represents a partnership between leaders from federal, state, and local government, the private sector, and environmental groups in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Arizona, Alaska, Hawaii, Canada and Mexico committed to reducing emissions from heavy duty engines along the West Coast. The collaborative seeks to leverage significant funds to reduce emissions from the most polluting sources in the most affected communities and to significantly improve air quality and public health, reduce green house gas emissions, decrease energy dependence and promote economic development. For more information, please visit: www.westcoastcollaborative.org. For more information about biodiesel please visit: www.epa.gov/region09/waste/biodiesel.

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