

## **Watershed Working Group Meeting**

**14 November 2012, 8:30-10am**

### *Dates to Remember:*

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (Wednesday) 8:30-10:30am – next Watershed Working Group meeting

### *Attendees:*

MINA: Rica Dela Cruz

CRM: Robbie Greene

DEQ: Gus Camacho, Steven Johnson, Clarissa Bearden, Avra Heller, Shelly Kremer, Kaitlin Mattos, Ryan Okano, Kaitlin Mattos, Jihan Buniag

Rare: Vanessa Fread

DPW: Geri Dela Cruz

Zoning: Therese Ogumoro

NOAA: Dana Okano

SWCD: Ike Cabrera

National Park Service: Mike Gawel

### *Meeting Notes:*

- I. Opening: sign-in, introductions
- II. Laolao Bay Rare Pride Campaign
  - a. Jihan Buniag from DEQ presented on her 2-year social marketing and outreach campaign to improve land-clearing practices by landowners and residents in the Laolao Bay watershed
  - b. Through a discussion of project recommendations, the WWG recommended community greening projects, incentive programs, neighborhood or individual recognition and incentives, and partnering with forestry or others to offer free trees and other materials.
- III. Garapan CAP Updates
  - a. Kaity Mattos presented on updates to the Garapan CAP and the current status of the plan, including revised target and threat lists, and upcoming meetings or steps.

- b. The WWG agreed that “Historic Sites” could be removed as a target but still included in the plan because it was not a conservation-oriented target and there was no participation yet from professionals qualified to discuss historical site concerns.
- c. The WWG was against removing “Water Quality” as a target and including the measurements in with other targets. Water quality is the most tangible improvement that the community will see, the easiest to measure and the first to respond. Instead of redefining the target to be “public health” or “swimmable waters,” the group agreed that the most straightforward way to include this concept while gaining community support was to leave “Water Quality” in the plan as is.
- d. The group recommended changing the way that turtles were represented, suggesting that it be listed as “Turtles and Fish” or “Rare Marine Species” which would include sharks and rays. The group recognized the importance of turtles but was concerned about dedicating to many resources to a low density species.
- e. Next steps being taken for the CAP include: following up with natural resource agencies, following up with infrastructure and planning agencies, evaluating and clearing out storm drains, and writing and finalizing the CAP document.

#### IV. Project updates

- a. DEQ Wastewater, Earthmoving and Erosion Control: approving a permit for a new commercial building on the old Samoan Housing site next to the Dai Ichi drainage. They are required to deal with stormwater on site, as are all new buildings. DEQ does not typically follow up on building plans regarding stormwater after their permit approval
- b. National Park Service:
  - i. AMP is keeping its greenspace (with regards to this target in the Garapan CAP)
  - ii. Mike Gawel has access to vegetative mapping data for the park, possibly installing a new weather station in coming years
  - iii. Park botanists are doing invasive plant studies and considering removal projects using volunteers
  - iv. Several WWG members are concerned about the constructed wetland habitat, functioning, stormwater flow, bacteria count, and heavy metal content. The park is working with WERI to analyze toxics and wants to find more money and conduct more studies. DEQ, DPW and others want to improve the function of the wetland for stormwater retention. Invasive water hyacinth are also a concern, they may be blocking drainages and are highly invasive
- c. CRM: The Climate Change working group is conducting a vulnerability assessment to determine 1) sea level affect on marshes, erosion and accretion, and 2) drainages, with an interest in mapping runoff. Robbie will share more information and is looking for data on wetlands and other coastal resources
- d. DPW is beginning the Beach Road Hazard Elimination Project from AMP to PIC along beach road which will include examining drainages. They also plan to do an erosion study along the beach side in Garapan. Geri will distribute the RFP to the WWG before it is released for proposals.

- e. MINA: New staff member Rica Dela Cruz is conducting a climate change workshop for teachers and students to boost local capacity and knowledge of environmental issues. May collaborate with AMP for a similar “camp” next year.
  - f. Zoning: The Garapan Revitalization Plan should be an integral part of the CAP. Short-term management recommendations have already been accomplished, mid-term are happening now (3-5 year term), and long-term recommendations should go into the CAP.
  - g. SWCD: The Kagman watershed project has completed another phase in October, which drains most of Kagman into a basin that overflows to Tank Beach during heavy rain, which may cause high risk for the reef there. They seek help from local monitoring agencies to provide justification from Congress and leverage local funding to complete the project which will include constructing the 70million gallon reservoir to stop stormwater overflows to Tank.
  - h. Laolao ARRA project: Nearly complete, they are looking to fix the stream crossing that is causing problems (undersized), revegetation is looking good but maintenance is ongoing. If you or a group would like to participate, contact Ryan Okano. You can see Laolao Storm Event Photos of the stream crossings working from Derek Chambers at <https://picasaweb.google.com/CNMI.DEQ.Drinkingwater/LauLauBayDriveLowWaterCrossings81512RainEvents>
  - i. DEQ Marine Monitoring Team: Reef resilience report will be finished in December and distributed. Contact Steven Johnson for a copy or to discuss recommendations
  - j. DEQ Water Quality: Finishing reef flat and seagrass monitoring which includes TSS, nutrients, nitrate, nitrite (new), and soon orthophosphate and ammonia. The data is available if you contact Clarissa. Preliminary findings indicate that the seagrass beds have less bacteria even though the near-shore sites were red-flagged, indicating that dilution is occurring in a short distance off shore.
- V. Next meeting
- a. February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Wednesday) from 8:30am to 10:30am
  - b. Main speakers may include
    - i. Robbie Greene of CRM discussing climate change work
    - ii. DEQ/CRM’s Marine Monitoring Team presenting their 10-years of data analysis
    - iii. The regional aquatic ecologist from the National Park Service discussing data and monitoring programs.
  - c. Other requested topics for future meetings included
    - i. Talks and program information from Forestry (e.g. Vic Deleon Guerrero, James Manglona)
    - ii. Discussion of the Surface Water Quality Assurance Monitoring Plan when it is completed