

Watershed Working Group

15 August 2012, 8:30:10am

Action Items

- Review Working group MOA from 2004
 - Make suggestions of other agencies to include/invite
 - Review list of commitments and recommended deletions, additions or changes
 - Return comments to Kaity by September 17th
- Think about agenda items for next meeting (November). Volunteer if you'd like to give a presentation about a project that you are working on.

Dates to Remember

- Friday, August 17th at 8am: Storm Drain marking event at Fiesta, all are welcome to attend
- September 10-13th, 8am-4pm: Garapan CAP Workshop, Hafa Adai Hotel. See schedule in minutes. Contact Kaity with questions. Registration forms will come out next week.
- September 17th: Return MOA comments to Kaity
- November 14th: Next Watershed Working Group meeting at DEQ, 8:30-10am

Attendees

CUC: Brian Bearden, John Riegel

CRM: Rose Pangelinan

AMP: Nancy Kelchner

NOAA: Dana Okano

DEQ: Clarissa Bearden, Derek Chambers, Gus Camacho, Jose Quan, Ryan Okano, Vin Sablan, Olivia Tenorio, Steven Johnson, Kaity Mattos

Absent: USDA-NRCS, DPW, MINA, DPL, CIP, PMRI, SWCD, DLNR

Meeting Notes

- I. Opening: Attendance sheet, introductions
 - a. John Riegel – new chief engineer at CUC
- II. Project updates

- a. CRM
 - i. Rain garden at the Museum is being maintained by Ben Cabrera from enforcement. Plants are thriving.
 - ii. NMHC wetland maintenance project is awaiting NEPA clearance
- b. Laolao ARRA project
 - i. Final inspection on stream crossings is underway. They seem to be working properly and eliminating road erosion.
 - ii. \$10K of minor improvements (such as speed bumps) are being completed now
 - iii. Water quality sampling is underway to analyze the effectiveness of the ARRA improvements
 - iv. Maintenance of the upland revegetation project is ½ finished, the leftover maintenance is in hard-to-access areas which require a group that is prepared for difficult work. Ryan Okano has a graph of survivorship of the plants to distribute if anyone is interested. Overall, plants are doing very well.
- c. CUC
 - i. Lift station upgrades/elimination: The AMP intersection construction is going well but slowly, problems with dewatering in the Park mangrove has been resolved. The other station project has not started yet.
 - ii. Connecting more people to sewer lines
 - 1. CUC wants to partner with DEQ and others to go from a voluntary to mandatory program for connect people within 200 ft to the sewerline, especially in areas where leaking septic tanks are a problem. CUC will work with Jose, Derek and wastewater at DEQ to identify landowner candidates to connect. This could be a project for the Garapan CAP.
 - 2. Priority areas for connection are Chalan Laulau to Microl in South Garapan and As Lito area. Gualo Rai may be another area to look at. Initial connection will be cost-free for landowners as long as CUC has money for this. Landowners will be responsible for their monthly sewer fees.
 - 3. CUC would like to explore going from a voluntary to a mandatory connection program
 - iii. CUC can send information updates and individual project designs to anyone interested. Derek will receive these updates and disperse them to relevant staff at DEQ.

- iv. Two wastewater treatment plants have been cleaned and repaired, both will be 100% functional by the end of this week
 - v. Continuing to check on priority sites at DPW bridge in Lower Base and Smiling Cove – sites that had wastewater-related water quality problems that were thought to be resolved. Since rainy season has started, problems appear to persist. New DEQ WQ tool may help identify problems
- d. NOAA
- i. GPS meeting in June was successful with attendees from CRM, DEQ, DLNR. NOAA Pacific Services Center always shares all data layers for free, also has training and other tools available for GIS use. They are looking for historical pictures to georeference.
- e. DEQ
- i. Water Quality/Surveillance Lab:
 1. Lots of red flags in rainy season. New DNA water quality machine can identify Enterococci and E. coli to recognize differences between ambient bacteria and bacteria due to human or animal sources. This will make red flags more accurate (fewer false positives), and could decrease the number of red flags. EPA releases data standards in October and then the tool can become active.
 2. Clarissa will send out more information about the tool and Enterococci.
 3. Water quality and the surveillance lab are announcing two open positions soon to better staff both sections
 - ii. Marine monitoring: the monitoring and mapping program is taking off mapping water quality (similarly to Laolo ARRA data) near Barcinas (Tinian) and Talakhaya (Rota). They will work with Clarissa to choose sites based on reef flat survey site at Rota.
 - iii. Rain garden site at NMC is being pursued, resulting from intern project this summer
 - iv. Blue starfish: campaign has identified BMPs of rain gardens, planter boxes and permeable parking to emphasize to businesses; will release a list of contractors to help businesses with these projects. Partnering with PDM and Kinpache restaurant for first project
 - v. Surface Water Quality Assurance Project Plan: Nimbus Environmental Services was chosen and project will be starting around November.

- vi. Talakhaya project: 30 volunteers worked for 7 weeks to plant 20,000 plants. 2012 fire burned almost half of the badlands area. This will be evaluated when we continue planting in future years. The No-Burn campaign will begin this year to educate stakeholders.
- vii. Garapan CAP:
 1. Sept 10: Define vision for watershed, focal conservation targets and threat priorities (all stakeholders and resource agencies)
 2. Sept 11: Determine threat rankings and target status and viability (mainly resource agencies, and anyone else interested)
 3. Sept 12: Determine marine-based strategies for reducing threats, get buy-in from all participants (all marine-based participants)
 4. Sept 13: Determine land-based strategies for reducing threats, get buy-in from all participants (all land-based participants)

f. RARE campaign in Laolao Bay

- i. Jihan Buniag is working on a PRIDE campaign for the Laolao Bay watershed addressing sedimentation with a target audience of landowners within the watershed.
- ii. When she returns from Palau, she will be doing qualitative and quantitative research.
- iii. She is looking for assistance in doing a demonstration site at Laolao bay for the community on simple erosion control practices. She will be looking for technical expertise and to see who would like to be a part of this project.

g. Laolao Bay BMPs:

- i. MOU was signed with Jerry Kramer for improvements to be made to permeably pave the dive site and possibly realign Gaggap Rd. Dana and Fran will make sure this is enough to use NOAA money on the projects.

III. Reef Resilience Monitoring Report and Watershed Results

IV. MOA for Watershed Working Group: Group chose to evaluate these separately and return notes by September 17th to Kaity. Please evaluate WHO needs to be included (other than the people already listed) and WHAT we want to commit to. The following suggestions come from the 2004 MOA. We can keep, delete, change or add whatever we want to this. The 2004 MOA is attached for reference.

- a. WHO: In addition to the bodies already represented (listed above), should we invite/include the following agencies? Can you suggest a contact person to start with and pass along their contact info?
 - i. DCCA
 - ii. Marianas Public Lands Authorities

- iii. NMC – CREES (We have Lawrence from Tinian participating)
 - iv. MVA
 - v. DLNR – Forestry, Agriculture, Fish and Wildlife
 - vi. HPO
 - vii. Mayor’s Offices
 - viii. Rota and Tinian
- b. In 2004, bodies agree to the following. What can we agree to? Add or suggest changed language to the following: “Cooperatively and mutually agree and dedicate their respective agencies as follows:
- i. Coordinate long range Commonwealth-wide work plans on specific resource management and environmental protection issues consistent with the goals and spirit of this MOA.
 - ii. To appoint a representative to attend and participate in quarterly interagency meetings to review resource management and environmental protection issues throughout the Commonwealth.
 - iii. Coordinate efforts to identify and cooperate in the CNMI’s competition for resource management and environmental protection grants and other project funding mechanisms available.
 - iv. Provide joint, project-necessary, in kind services and technical assistance to the maximum extent feasible.
 - v. Lend assistance to and utilize the existing Soil and Water Conservation District’s administrative networks for project and program coordination.
 - vi. The Watershed Group shall serve as technical committee in accordance with Governor’s Executive Directive No. 220, dated September 20, 2002.
 - vii. To implement a public forum to reach out to the public annually.

V. Close:

- a. Next meeting date: November 14th, 8:30am at DEQ
- b. Agenda items: Please suggest presentations or projects that you would like to see discussed. If you would like to do a 15-30 minute presentation, let Kaity know in advance.