

## **Watershed Working Group**

October 21, 2020: 1:30pm – 3:30pm; DCRM Conference Room & via Google Meet

### *Attendees:*

Zachary Williams (DCRM), Ilan Bubb (DCRM – Coral Fellow), Becky Skeele (Koa Consulting), Mallory Muna (DCRM), Larry Maurin (DEQ, EPA), Becky Furey (MINA), Carlos Ketebengang (DEQ), Jovahna Taitingfong (DCRM), Leila DLGuerrero (DCRM), Manuel Camacho (OPD), Mary Fem Urena (DCRM), Olivia Tenorio (DEQ), Robbie Greene (NOAA), Brooke Nevitte (NPS), Sheila Babauta (CNMI House of Representatives), Steve McKagan (NOAA), Denise Perez (DCRM), Shannon Sasomoto (Hope Garden), James Manglona (DLNR Forestry), Pedro Tudela (DLNR Forestry)

### *Dates to Remember:*

- October 22, 2020: WERI Water Advisory Council Meeting

### *Meeting Notes*

#### I. Opening and introductions

<https://dcrm.gov.mp/our-programs/water-quality-and-watershed-management/watershed-working-group/>

#### II. Speaker – Larry Maurin (BECQ-DEQ-Water Quality; EPA): Water Quality Updates

2020 CNMI 305(b) & 303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report.

<http://deq.gov.mp/sec.asp?secID=71>

Summary of 2-years of water quality data and assessments. Water quality data collected from beaches and near-shore habitats (coral and seagrasses). Was out for public comment until very recently (Fr., Oct. 16). See “Impaired Waters List” section for list of impaired watersheds, with a list of pollutants found during data collection; this allows us to determine which watersheds should be prioritized, and may inform future management. Report includes Northern Islands. Updated document reflects work done on sewer infrastructure.

2020 Stream Visual Assessment Protocol

[https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/Stream-Visual-Assessment-Protocol\\_CNMI-2020-V2-Final.pdf](https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/Stream-Visual-Assessment-Protocol_CNMI-2020-V2-Final.pdf)

Rapid assessment methodology for characterizing streams, including hydrology, water quality, habitat, pollutants, channel erosion, etc. Based on Hawaii’s methodology, but adapted for CNMI. Started using the protocol to assess all Achugao streams (recently completed); starting analysis of this dataset. Next year W. Takpachao will be started, followed by Laolao.

Question: Were there any animal collections? Answer: No take of fauna, but there are notes on specific flora and fauna that were encountered on stream walks.

See McKagan et al. (2008) for stream species study (linked via WWG page).

III. Speaker – Shannon Sasamoto & Rep. Sheila Babauta (CNMI House of Representatives): Tanapag Community Garden Project

[https://m.facebook.com/HopeGardenCNMI/?ref=page\\_internal&mt\\_nav=0](https://m.facebook.com/HopeGardenCNMI/?ref=page_internal&mt_nav=0)

Education opportunity to show how gardens can increase public health, bond communities, and provide food. Type of gardening is agroforestry with technical assistance from NMC Forestry.

Garden plot located at Tanapag Youth Center (Achugao watershed). Plot was recently cleared for garden, lots of trash/litter. Sifting of soil has been started to remove additional litter. Currently rescheduling cleanup event due to weath. Additional opportunities for public service and volunteers. Information and guides will be helpful. Opportunities for WWG collaboration (e.g. Zak with rain collection / BMPs).

IV. Speaker – Zak Williams (DCRM Watershed Coordinator): Garapan & Talakhaya Watershed Management Plans (WMP) – “final internal draft” and next steps

[See PowerPoint slides linked via WWG page]

Next steps > [Public Law No. 20-20](#). WMPs have been submitted to OPD/PDAC (Sept. 30, 2020); awaiting further instructions, but will be presenting plans to public for comment (tentatively Nov. 2020). Hoping to get them finalized and approved/adopted by early 2021.

Achugao and Laolao WMPs still in development.

*Roundtable Discussion*

- Annual University of Guam – Water & Environmental Research Institute (WERI) CNMI Water Advisory Council Meeting
  - Tomorrow, Oct. 22, 2020 (9am-12pm). This year it will be online, and you may RSVP to Mark Lander ([mlander@triton.uog.edu](mailto:mlander@triton.uog.edu)) and the WERI Director, John Jenson ([jjenson@triton.uog.edu](mailto:jjenson@triton.uog.edu)). Topics include
  - WERI: Who we are and what we do (WERI Director)
  - 1-stop searchable repository for quality climatic data for Saipan
  - Stormwater studies for Saipan – Phase 1
  - Engineering design considerations for West Pacific
- >2,400 native trees planted in Talakhaya since July 2020.
- 2020 “[Manager’s Guide to Coral Reef Restoration Planning and Design](#)” published, with examples of restoration projects in the CNMI.

*Next meeting*

TBD January, 2021

Expect to hear more about PDAC and the Garapan/Talakhaya WMPs in the coming weeks — opportunities for comment!