

Watershed Working Group

June 30, 2020: 930 – 1130am; BECO 2nd Floor Conference Room & via Google Meet

Attendees:

Becky Skeele (Koa Consulting), Travis Spaeth (DEQ), Larry Maurin (DEQ), Atdao Rosario (DCRM), Merrill Ayuyu (DEQ), Jovahna Taitingfong (DCRM), Carlos Ketebengang (DEQ), Colleen Flores (DCRM), Mallory Muna (DCRM), Zak Williams (DCRM), Ilan Bubb (DCRM), Arthur Charfauros (DCRM), Brooke Nevitt (NPS), Becky Furey (MINA), Erin Derrington (OPD), Robbie Greene (NOAA), Jolly Ann Cruz (MINA), Leila Deleon Guerrero (DCRM), Mary Fem Urena (DCRM), Janice Castro (DCRM), Sheila Babauta (Representative, District No. 4), Roberta Guerrero (MINA), Efraim Atalig (Rota Mayor), Pedro Tudela (DLRN Forestry), James Manglona (DLRN Forestry), Wayne Dawe (MINA), Tatianna Babauta (MVA); Wileen Mongami, Logan Mister, Thomas Benavente, Richelle Ramon, Lance Tudela, Britney Espinosa, Marvin Sablan, Sheila Mae Ruiz, Esther Huh, Jefferzon Sagum, Maria Terlaje, Natalie Montano, Eloise Lopez (DCRM)

Dates to Remember:

- July 8, 2020: comments due for OPD's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) document
- July 17, 2020: final comments for Garapan watershed management plan

Meeting Notes

I. Opening and introductions

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

II. Speaker – Ilan Bubb (DCRM Coral Fellow): “Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Fire on Saipan”

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2020.6.30_Spatial-and-Temporal-Patterns-of-Fire-on-Saipan_Bubb-Ilan.pdf

Members provided feedback regarding fire maps (e.g. IPI and Forbidden Island appear misclassified). Project ongoing, future work includes mapping Tinian and Rota, and understanding contributing factors and relationships to extreme weather events.

III. Speaker – Zak Williams (DCRM Watershed Coordinator): “

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2020.6.30_-2020-Laolao-Sediment-Chamber-Cleanout_Williams-Zak.pdf

Sediment chambers allow for collection of sediments out of runoff water, preventing it from reaching the ocean and causing siltation on reef. 2014 had a lot of sediment, some illegal dumping, and dead animals. Over time the amount of sediment has fluctuated (see graph on last slide). Volume of sediment collected in 2020 (June 12) = 5.7 cubic yards.

IV. Garapan Storm Drain Cleaning / Island-wide Maintenance

Problems in coordinating with DPW. Need long-term solution so that this does not continue being an annual problem. Highly important because of the negative impacts to infrastructure, public health and safety, and environment; Garapan is the urban center and tourism hub. This task [storm drain maintenance] is under DPW's core responsibilities. BECQ is willing to help, but DPW has to have the funding and manpower to lead. Possible grant opportunities would help on the funding issue (e.g. DOI OIA MAP). Lots of great interagency cooperation led by BECQ with Parks & Rec, CUC, MINA, and OPD, including equipment, water access, supplies, funding, and volunteer manpower. However, no follow-through by DPW. Noted that DPW (and other agencies) impacted by COVID and related furloughs.

Need to reach out to DPW leadership for future discussions and long-term solutions. More immediate need to clean drainages this year before rainy season.

Storm drain infrastructure a focus of OPD's Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan and DCRM's Garapan Watershed Management Plan.

V. Speaker – Becky Skeelee (Koa Consulting): “

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2020.6.30_Garapan-Watershed-Management-Plan_Skeelee-Becky.pdf

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2020.6.30_Garapan-WMP-Draft-Objectives-Activities_SKeele-Becky.pdf

Becky Skeelee and Meghan Gombos (Sea Change Consulting) are writing the Garapan Watershed Management Plan – with funding from DCRM via NOAA, and TNC – to update management priorities and align with EPA requirements; Horsley Witten Group providing environmental data. All local priority watershed plans currently being updated in 2020 (i.e. Garapan/West Takpachao, Laolao, Talakhaya) with the addition of Achugao; Talakhaya WMP currently under review by US Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) EPA representative in order to meet A-1 criteria.

During February watersheds planning workshop, it was decided that Garapan watershed boundaries should be changed to better represent water catchment.

Purpose of presentation is to update WWG, and discuss goals/objectives and review load reduction modeling. Draft document will be shared with WWG (via Watershed Coordinator) by next Monday (7/6). Final comments will be due Friday, July 17. Goal is to have the Garapan watershed management plan finished by end of the month (July 2020).

The integrated watershed management plan (WMP) follows a similar layout to the previous conservation action plan (CAP). The Garapan WMP contains 12 objectives (see PowerPoint above). Horsley Witten Group (HWG) modeling shows that TSS, TN, and TP sources are mostly from urban land, but for bacteria the largest source is from illicit discharge. For clarification, please see HWG methodology document. HWG modeling showed that eight actions would be able to reduce these pollutants.

Clarify whether “livestock” includes all animals (e.g. dogs).

Include adoption of storm water management plan.

Objective 1: By 2025 20 Green Infrastructure or storm water mitigation projects have been implemented through a pilot program that provides funding and technical assistance to homeowners or businesses.

Building 20 green infrastructure projects. Add partners: MINA, Rotary, HANMI. This objective should probably be thought of as small, such as putting organic material on land to hold water. CID legislation could be a potential funding mechanism.

Objective 2: By the end of 2025 three public restroom facilities will be open, maintained, and available for public use during regular daytime hours Three existing facilities IDed were: AMP bathrooms, either Smiling Cove or Peace Park, and one new one at or near Fishing Base.

Three restrooms opened, \$500,000 proposed. Might be able to tap into hotels to alleviate strain on public restrooms. (Maybe IPI has available restrooms.) HANMI as a potential partner, Sheila is working with Kensington for a Pau Pau Beach restroom. CAO also has a public restroom. NPS Micro Beach public restroom will reopen with AMP post-COVID. Potentially refocus objective to refurbishing existing restrooms.

Funds (\$500,000) for how long? How to fund maintenance long-term? Suggested that maintenance contract be privatized, rather than government.

Objective 3: By the end of 2025 a baseline inventory of individual waste disposal systems (IWDS) and education program has been completed and show willingness to repair.

Educating public should include CUC as a lead as they are mandated to tell people where sewer connections can/should be made. Cost estimate ~\$300,000. Possible grants that will allow existing systems to hook-up to the sewer systems. Home owners cannot come afford connection themselves, so grants would help incentive this. Also need to fund public education about importance of connecting. Sewer hookups should be prioritized.

Objective 4: By the end of 2025 an inspection program for IDDE has been implemented and there is removal/elimination of discovered connections in 30% of the watershed.

BEH should be listed as lead enforcement. Potential funding needed is \$250,000/year.

Objective 5: By the end of 2025, Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOGs) disposal program is established and implemented.

BEH listed as an enforcement role.

Objective 6: By 2025 a minimum of two affordable spay neuter clinics are completed in Garapan and to include stray animals.

Need to estimate funding still. Clarify if these are two annual events or two events total before 2025.

Objective 8: By 2025 guidance on BMP's for invasive species/vegetation developed and integrated into agency specific permitting and enforcement processes.

DLNR has an invasive species coordinator (Frank Aldan), Forestry has admin assistant to Forest Health Invasive Program (Michelle Sablan). DFW as enforcement. MINA has granny for invasive vines removal.

Objective 9: By 2024 up to 8 priority CRM permitting regulations (i.e. marine sport, major siting, and APC) have been reviewed and updated with legal guidance.

DCRM Planning should look at this objective and discuss what it would take to make it achievable. Need additional feedback. 9.1 – 9.5 objectives need review, want to make lofty but still achievable.

Objective 10: By end of 2025 all development projects incorporate smart, safe growth (SSG) principles. Check “SSG Manual” for implementation framework.

OPD will look into a funding estimate.

Objective XX

WWG members should look over these possible new objectives for people to go over and review.

Final draft Garapan WMP and WTM analysis distributed by Monday morning, July 6.

Roundtable Discussion

- OPD’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and objectives are being circulated through agency partners on the Task Force and with the PDAC for review. Comments are requested by July 8. Revised copy to be shared with public for comment. If you would like to comment at this time and were not part of the Task Force or PDAC, please contact Erin Derrington (erin.derrington@opd.gov.mp). For more information, see the [Resource Report](#).
- DCRM Planning has submitted the [CZM Section 309 Assessment & Strategy Report \(2021-2025\)](#) to the Office of Coastal Management for review, and it is currently open for public comment. Your comments are appreciated, and may be sent to the Planning team at planning@dcrm.gov.mp
- Welcome to the team, DCRM Summer Inters!

Next meeting

TBD September, 2020