

Watershed Working Group

February 23, 2021: 9am – 11:30am; DCRM Conference Room & via Google Meet

Attendees:

Zachary Williams (DCRM), Ilan Bubb (DCRM – Coral Fellow), Becky Skeelee (Koa Consulting), Mallory Muna (DCRM), Pam Sablan (USDA-NRCS), Becky Furey (MINA), Jovahna Taitingfong (DCRM), Leila DLGuerrero (DCRM), Mary Fem Urena (DCRM), Olivia Tenorio (DEQ), Robbie Greene (NOAA), Brooke Nevitte (NPS), Sheila Babauta (CNMI House of Representatives), Steve McKagan (NOAA), Anne Navarrete (DCRM), Arthur Charfauros (DCRM), Chad Cherefko (USDA-NRCS), Jedidiah Dunn (USDA-NRCS), Collen Flores (DCRM), Jolly Ann Cruz (MINA), Kika Sablan (DCRM), Rich Salas (DCRM), Tehani Kirby (DCRM), Wayne Dawe (MINA), Kathy Yuknavage (DEQ), Jihan Younis

Dates to Remember:

Speakers

I. Opening and introductions

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

II. Zak Williams (DCRM Watershed Coordinator): Garapan & Talakhaya Watershed Management Plans (WMP)

[See PowerPoint slides linked via WWG page]

Talakhaya Watershed Management Plan (TWMP)

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/Talakhaya-2020-WMP_final-internal.signed.pdf

Document signed and nearing completion, just waiting for PDAC approval.

Garapan Watershed Management Plan (GWMP)

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/Garapan-WMP_final-internal-draft.pdf

Still awaiting signatures and final PDAC approval. Watershed Coordinator will begin pursuing signatories.

III. Pam Sablan, Chad Cherefko, Jedidiah Dunn (USDA-NRCS): Targeted Conservation Delivery (TCD)

<https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/TCD-Pitchbook.pdf>

Discussed Targeted Conservation Delivery (TCD) Model. The model is partner-centric, working closely with local, state, and federal partners, and with non-governmental organizations (NGO). It is cost-effective, through collaborations with partners NRCS can leverage additional funding sources from other groups to stretch limited federal conservation dollars while putting them towards pressing needs. The framework is focused and targeted, and results-oriented. This process is being repeated across all ten NRCS Pacific Offices; all of these are setting up long-range plans to describe resource concerns and setup actionable conservation steps to fulfill long range plans.

See TCD document (above) for images of how TCD works and flowcharts showing how locally-led processes produce conservation actions.

Please complete survey and send to Pam Sablan (pamela.sablan@usda.gov): <https://dcrm.gov/wp-content/uploads/crm/NRCS-CNMI-FY-21-Priority-Resource-Concern-Survey.pdf>

Roundtable discussion of what conservation issues are most pertinent to the CNMI. Issues described include erosion, sedimentation, infrastructure, shared property/mismatches with federal funding and long-term funding, marine debris, litter/illegal dumping sites, lack of access to water, soil contamination by

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military, sheet and rill erosion, pest management, soil quality (contaminants), plant degraded quality and conditions. See listed priorities:

<https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/NRCS-Priority-Setting-Board.pdf>

NRCS requests current management plans be sent to help inform conservation priorities.

If you have any questions, please contact Jebidiah Dunn (jebidiah.dunn@usda.gov) or Chad Cherefko (chad.cherefko@usda.gov).

IV. Becky Skeelee (Koa Consulting): Achugao Watershed Updates

[See PowerPoint slides linked via WWG page]

An interim report has been created showing the existing conditions and opportunities in the watershed.

https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/201215_Achugao_Existing-Conditions-and-Opportunities.pdf

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kGSU22z4rq5eo8_aRvaaBi0-7ANNzSL6/view?usp=sharing

This interim plan overviews the land use, hydrology, geology, infrastructure, ecology, climate vulnerability, and water quality of the watershed. It goes into the various types of restoration projects that are possible, providing draft project overviews. Also provides pollutant loading models, including how BMPs can reduce such loading. Stakeholder engagement in ongoing.

Mapping of infrastructure shows 60% require maintenance or repair. Field notes provide pictures, sketches, and descriptions of the infrastructure observed. Initial modeling shows San Roque catchment has highest sediment loads in watershed.

Feedback is requested for the following:

1. Habitat restoration
 - a. Should there be a focus on specific habitats or species?
2. Stormwater retrofits
3. Environmental programs and policies
4. Watershed stewardship

Data needs

1. Stream walk data (DEQ)
2. Wetland assessment data (DCRM)
3. Priority habitats
4. Status of OPD plans
5. Fire history (DCRM)
6. Kensington hotel site plans

WWG members are requested to read report and provide feedback over the next few weeks. Please submit feedback to Becky Skeelee (becky@koaconsultingllc.com), Anne Kitchell (akitchell@horsleywitten.com), and/or Zak Williams (zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp).

Next steps are to conduct community stakeholder engagement and continued priority setting (Tanapag and San Roque events planned for March 2021).

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V. Ilan Bubb (DCRM): Achugao (Wireless Ridge) Revegetation

[See PowerPoint slides linked via WWG page]

Overview of project scope and site. DOI-funded project is intended to plant six acres of native tree species within degraded ~130 public land plot. DCRM Watersheds team is seeking input from partner agencies and stakeholders regarding final siting, minimizing conflicts with Historic Preservation, Critical Habitats, public use, etc.

Please provide feedback regarding final siting to Ilan Bubb (ibubb@dcrm.gov.mp) and/or Zak Williams (zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp).

Roundtable Discussion

- DOI Grants now available (close April 1, 2021): CRNR, TAP, MAP
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=15.875>
- Pacific Island GIS & RS User Intermediate Conference
 - picgisrs.org/2021-intermediate-conference/
- DCRM Better Buildings Guidance Stakeholder Questionnaire
 - <https://forms.gle/9p9S7mLyfsJDYbCY7>
- DCRM-CRI
 - NOAA CRCP 2021-22: Talakhaya Watershed Technician and Mangrove Reintroduction projects funded
- MINA installed ten monofilament tubing around fishing areas on Saipan for fishing line disposal
 - Funded by NOAA

Next meeting

TBD May, 2021