

## Watershed Working Group

November 3, 2022: 9 – 10am; DCRM Learning Center & via Zoom



### *Attendees:*

Zak Williams (DCRM), Rich Salas (DCRM), Olivia Tenorio (DEQ), Becky Skeelee (Koa Consulting / PCRP), Travis Spaeth (DEQ), Elly Perez (DCRM), JD Herndon (DFW), Steve McKagan (NOAA), Janice Castro (NOAA), Marlyn Naputi (DCRM), Merrill Ayuyu (DEQ), Enice Kikku (NMC/DCRM), Robbie Green (PCRP), Jolly Ann Cruz (MINA)

### *Dates to Remember:*

- Bring Back Our Trees
  - Planting events Nov. 11 and 17, 2022
- Achugao DRAFT Watershed Management Plan
  - Feedback by Jan. 1, 2023
- Shoreline Enhancement Plan for the Beach Road Pathway Corridor
  - Feedback by Dec. 2, 2022

### *Speakers*

[See PowerPoint slides linked via WWG page]

### Opening and introductions

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

- I. Zachary Williams, *DCRM* | Watershed Coordinator ([zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp](mailto:zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp))
  - Achugao Watershed Management Plan (AWMP) Final Draft
    - Boundaries shifted slightly
      - Lower Base stream basin included in West Takpochao watershed
    - 10-year goals
      1. Reduce urban pollutant loads to Tanapag Lagoon by managing 30+ acres of existing impervious cover, applying better land use controls on new development, and maintaining infrastructure.
      2. Adopt predicted rainfall, sea level rise, groundwater elevations, and storm surge levels for a minimum 30-yr planning horizon (year 2050).
      3. Protect or restore 30% of the terrestrial and wetland habitats in the watershed through invasive species management, native reforestation, and land conservation.
      4. Empower community-based watershed stewardship by conducting at least 30 engagement, advocacy, and educational outreach activities.
        - AWMP includes potential project concepts/designs (see Appendix D)
      5. Adapting and expanding program in 2023 (final year under DOI grant)
        - more focus on climate change suggested
  - Next steps
    - Draft review (WWG and other interested parties)
      - **Submit feedback by Jan. 1, 2023**

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- After feedback is incorporated, AWMP will be submitted to OPD in accordance to Public Law 20-20
- All master plans... prepared for public agencies shall be submitted to the [OPD] Director for processing as part of the comprehensive planning program.
- Once adopted, signed by relevant parties to finalize plan.
- Aiming to have complete by (along with Saipan Wildfire Plan) by Q1 2023
- Q&A
  - How are signatories selected?
    - Based on parties responsible for specific goals/objectives/actions listed in AWMP.
  - PSS should be a signatory
  - Suggested that signatures may be sought during OPD PDAC meeting (most parties present)

## II. Jolly Ann Cruz, *Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA)*

- Achugao Tasi Watch Rangers
  - Additional rangers hired
  - Trainings ongoing
  - Assisting DLNR Forestry twice a month
  - Regular watershed surveillance
- Bring Back Our Trees
  - Partnering with Bank of Hawaii to plant 200 native trees by end of 2022
  - Planting event Nov. 11, 4–6pm
    - Carolinian Utt with 4H Marianas
  - Planting event Nov. 17, 9–11am
    - Susupe Beach Park with BECQ

## *Roundtable Discussion*

Zachary Williams, DCRM | Watershed Coordinator

- Grant: NPS Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWFC)
  - <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/stateside.htm>
  - [www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/upload/LWCF-Description-and-Notification-Form.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/upload/LWCF-Description-and-Notification-Form.pdf)
- Grants: USDA NRCS funding for agricultural producers
  - Environmental Quality Incentive Program
    - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives>
  - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
    - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/acep-agricultural-conservation-easement-program>
  - Agricultural Management Assistance
    - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/ama-agricultural-management-assistance>
  - Conservation Stewardship Program

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- <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/csp-conservation-stewardship-program>
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
  - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/rcpp-regional-conservation-partnership-program>
- Conservation Innovation Grants
  - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/cig-conservation-innovation-grants>
- Scholarship & Training Grants: The Women Divers Hall of Fame
  - “WDHOF provides educational, mentorship, financial, and career opportunities to the diving community throughout the world.”
  - Seventeen (17) scholarship categories offered for 2023 (e.g. undergrad/grad school, fellowships)
  - <https://www.wdhof.org/scholarships/scholarship-descriptions>
- Publication [Guam]: “Nutrient thresholds to protect water quality, coral reefs, and nearshore fisheries” (Houk *et al.* 2022)
  - <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X22008268>  
(copy included on WWG page)

Rich Salas, *DCRM*

- Scholarship: NOAA Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program
  - “provides support for master’s and doctoral degrees in oceanography, marine biology, maritime archaeology—these may include but are not limited to ocean and/or coastal: engineering, social science, marine education, marine stewardship, cultural anthropology, and resource management disciplines—and particularly encourages women and members of minority groups to apply.”
  - Applications due by Dec. 22, 2022
  - [https://fosterscholars.noaa.gov/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=GovDelivery](https://fosterscholars.noaa.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=GovDelivery)
- Watershed nomination for US Coral Reef Task Force
  - federal partners support nomination
  - AWMP will help with nomination process
  - ongoing, will provide updates on process to WWG going forward

Olivia Tenorio, *DEQ*

- Water quality integrated report submitted to EPA
  - 30-day review, published by early December
  - will share with group when available
- Non-point source (NPS) pollution 5-year plan submitted to EPA
- 401 certification (EPA permit) for treatment plants finalized



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JD Herndon, *DFW*

- NFWF restoration grant
  - RFP for wetlands work submitted
  - planning for work during upcoming dry season

Travis Spaeth, *DEQ*

- DPW awarded OSG grant
  - annual, reoccurring
  - intended to address stormwater and sewer overflow

Robbie Green, *PCRP*

- CNMI highlighted in USDA Forestry newsletter
  - Oct. 2022 Forest Stewardship Program

Janice Castro, *NOAA*

- DOI MAP/TAP/CRNR grants
  - deadlines Jan. 31 and March 17, 2023
  - <https://www.doi.gov/oia/press/Department-of-the-Interior-Technical-Assistance-Program-Grants-Now-Open-to-U.S-Insular-Areas>
- Center for Watershed Protection 2023 National Stormwater & Watershed Conference
  - “a forum for watershed and stormwater professionals throughout the nation to learn how to increase the resiliency of our communities in response to emerging and persistent threats to our water resources — from headwaters to coasts.”
  - April 24–27, 2023 in San Diego California
  - <https://cwp.org/2023-national-conference/>

Becky Skeele, *PCRP*

- Shoreline Enhancement Plan for the Beach Road Pathway Corridor – final draft
  - “we would kindly request one final bit of feedback as you review the document and provide us with any comments, questions, or edits, no later than Friday, December 2”

Janice Castro, *NOAA*

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Mary Urena, *DCRM*

- Eco-Tour Operator Best Practices Course (Eco-to-BP)
  - “For CNMI's tour and marine sports operators to learn environmental, safety best practices for their operations so they can reduce tourism's impact on land and ocean environments.”
  - Free for all attendees
  - Earn a DCRM permit discount upon successful completion
  - Register: <https://forms.gle/6dJ2qmsLwz1tHhYs6>