

Watershed Working Group

March 1, 2022: 9 – 11am; BECQ 2nd Floor Conference Room & via Zoom



Attendees:

Zachary Williams (DCRM), Robbie Green (PCRP), Mary Fem Urena (DCRM), Marlyn Naputi (DCRM), Colleen Flores (DCRM), Seamus Harrison (DCRM), Kylie Hasegawa (DCRM), Larry Maurin (DEQ), Rich Salas (DCRM), Jovahna Taitingfong (DCRM), Kelsey McClellan (PCRP), Ilan Bubb (OPD), Janice Castro (NOAA), Art Charfauros (DCRM), Olivia Tenorio (DEQ), Becky Skeelee (Koa Consulting), Patricia Fantanet (USACE), Elise Jarrett (USACE), Troy Phan (USACE), Chuck Mesa (USACE), Ruzel Ednalino (USACE), Valerie Hofschneider (DEQ), Travis Spaet (DEQ), Rodney Camacho (DCRM), Elly Perez (DCRM), Shannon Ruseborn (NOAA), Lani Watson (NOAA), Sheila Babauta (District 4 Representative)

Dates to Remember:

- Shoreline Stabilization & Enhancement Plan for the Beach Road Pathway – public stakeholder meeting
 - First week of April
- Intro. to Project Management
 - Week of March 15

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. Shannon Ruseborn & Lani Watson, *NOAA Restoration Center*

(Shannon.Ruseborn@noaa.gov, lani.watson@noaa.gov)

- Upcoming funding opportunity
 - <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/coastal-and-marine-habitat-restoration-grants>
 - Not yet updated for 2022, announcement few weeks out (at time of WWG meeting)
 - Increase in funding from Infrastructure Bill
 - ~\$492 million over 5-years
 - Minimum funding may be ~\$1 million per applicant (max previous years)
 - No pre-proposal stage
 - Examples of past projects:
 - <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/current-and-past-community-based-restoration-projects>
 - Contact for assistance [see emails above]

II. Patricia Rodriguez, *USACE*

- Post-Disaster Watershed Assessment
 - Focused on island-wide issues on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan

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- Not watershed specific
- Started January 2020
 - Scoping limited by COVID travel restrictions, accomplished via partner engagement
 - On-island now to confirm and ground-truth findings
- Ranked risks and prioritized interventions [see slides]
 - broad solutions/options
 - Not site specific (e.g. “sediment capture”)
- Next steps
 - Draft will soon be available for public review and comment [will be added to WWG page upon release]
 - Email comments to [CNMIWA@usace.army.mil]
- Questions/Comments
 - “How did you quantify the risk and uncertainty factors? Were you using qualitative or quantitative methods? How do you measure the stressors?”
Qualitative approach based on local agency (e.g. DEQ, DCRM, OPD) stakeholder feedback.
 - Reminder for those involved in other management plans (e.g. watershed, wildfire) to provide specific feedback related to those areas of the Assessment
 - “Does the plan address aquifer damage?”
Assessment takes “high-level” approach, recommending strategies (including groundwater measures), but needs more input (Data gaps? Needs?)

III. Kelsey McClellan, *Pacific Coastal Research & Planning*

- Shoreline Stabilization & Enhancement Plan for the Beach Road Pathway, Saipan, CNMI
 - Renovating beach road and walkway with improved drainage infrastructure, beach access, and green infrastructure alternatives (e.g. tree trenches, vegetated swales)
 - See slides for schematics of Atkins Kroll Intersection and Quartermaster Road
 - Working with DPW to ensure plans align with Stormwater Master Plan
 - Quartermaster Road
 - Beach renourishment proposed, along with revegetation (naturalized landscape)
 - Permeable parking
 - Finalizing schematics and concept designs for other sites (available soon)
 - Public stakeholder meeting planned
 - ~ first week of April
 - “Open house style”
 - More information soon [will be added to WWG page upon release]
 - Final product will be a comprehensive master plan
 - Questions/Comments
 - “Factoring in recent, active Beach Rd. construction and stormwater improvements?”

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Documented, and will be incorporated into designs.

IV. Robbie Greene, *Pacific Coastal Research & Planning*

- Nature-based Solutions for Hazard Mitigation
 - Substantial HUD funds in CNMI for hazard mitigation → potential future projects?
 - ~\$16 million
 - Encourage grantees to consider nature-based solutions
 - Local need for “project tracker” to document projects being done in CNMI, including project costs
 - Difficult to budget for new project ideas locally, comparative cost estimates are based on Hawaii or mainland costs (much different than CNMI)
 - Would inform future planning and grant budgeting
 - Inform cost-benefit analyses
 - Propose creating a “project tracker”

V. Zachary Williams, *DCRM* | Watershed Coordinator (zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp)

- Watershed Updates
 - 2020–23 DOI CRNR Grant projects update
 - Achugao Watershed Upland Reforestation
 - Final siting underway (survey/permitting with DFW)
 - Kagman Forestry nursery undergoing repairs
 - Questions/Comments
 - “What tree species?”
All native species. Utilizing species used elsewhere on-island in the past (e.g. daok, talisai) and novel species (e.g. *Pandanus*, breadfruit). Will try and emulated early forest succession when possible (knowledge gap).
 - Watershed Warriors
 - Year 2 started previous week (2/24)
 - Expanded to three 4th-grade classes at GTC

Roundtable Discussion

Zachary Williams, *DCRM* | Watershed Coordinator

- Grant: NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)
 - “The program offers technical and financial assistance to help local communities relieve imminent threats to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters that impair a watershed.”
 - Examples: removing debris from waterways, streambank restoration, establish vegetative cover, purchase floodplain easements
 - “\$300m to remain available until expended”
 - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/ewpp/#>
- Grant: NRCS Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO)

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- “to work together to prevent erosion; floodwater and sediment damage; to further the conservation development, use and disposal of water; and to further the conservation and proper use of land in authorized watersheds.”
- Examples: erosion and sediment control, flood prevention, water quality improvements, habitat enhancement
- “\$500m to remain available until expended”
- <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/wfpo/>
- Grant: NRCS Watershed Rehabilitation Program
 - “Rehabilitate aging dams that are reaching the end of their design lives. This rehabilitation addresses critical public health and safety concerns.”
 - “\$118m to remain available until expended”
 - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/wr/>
- Report: UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
 - Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaption & Vulnerability
 - assesses the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels. It also reviews vulnerabilities and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change.”
 - <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>

Travis Spaeth, *DEQ*

- Funding opportunities
 - <https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/CNMI-FEMA-Philanthropic-Resource-Report-bi-weekly-non-covid-highlighted.pdf>

Larry Maurin, *DEQ*

- Training opportunity: Intro. to Project Management
 - Graduate School USA Training Institute
 - Fully virtual and free to government employees
 - Week of March 15, 10am–1pm
 - Larry will follow-up with more information

Becky Skeele, *Koa Consulting*

- Achugao WMP
 - Draft expected this week for review [will link on WWG page as soon as available]
- Finalizing public survey covering Achugao and Laolao Bay watersheds
 - Online survey
 - For residents or users/visitors of watersheds
- Finalizing LWMP and AWMP in the next month or so