

# WATERSHED WORKING GROUP

JUNE 2020



Good morning, WWG!

In speaking with many of you I have been made aware of how COVID and austerity have affected many of our members' offices. Nevertheless, it is great to see progress and accomplishments in the realm of watershed resources management! Some of these are highlighted below, along with grant and learning opportunities that may be of interest.

Thank you all for your hard work!

## Scheduling our Next Meeting

Many of you have expressed interest in meeting soon, and with things getting back to normal locally—at least in terms of a return to normal business hours—we may certainly do so. I will send out a Doodle poll shortly, but also want to be aware of member safety and health. We may either meet digitally or in-person, or a hybrid of the two.

Aside from an outlet for updating and collaboration among WWG members, a meeting in early July will provide an opportunity for review and comment on the in-progress Garapan Watershed Management Plan.

## BECQ

### DCRM

We are excited to be joined by 15 Summer Interns later this month. Intern work plans include marine monitoring, wetland assessment, and DEQ water quality testing. We may see some new faces and future natural resource managers at our next meeting!

DCRM is looking for ten local artists to transform trash bins into unique artwork that showcases the importance of trash-free seas. The bins will be stationed at various beaches around Saipan in hopes to prevent improper waste disposal and reduce marine debris. If everyone makes a small change, we will collectively make a massive difference in our community. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer and paint a trash bin (art supplies will be provided as needed), please contact Colleen Flores ([cflores@dcrm.gov.mp](mailto:cflores@dcrm.gov.mp), 664-8310) or Mallory Muna ([mmuna@dcrm.gov.mp](mailto:mmuna@dcrm.gov.mp)). Volunteers will also receive a "Plastic-Free" Starter Kit from DCRM!

Development of updated Watershed Management Plans (WMP) continues for Laolao, Garapan, and Talakhaya, and the addition of Achugao. We would like to discuss the Garapan plan and receive feedback at the next WWG meeting. A near-final draft of the Talakhaya WMP is available for anyone interested in providing feedback; you may contact me (Zak Williams) directly at 664-8303 or [zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp](mailto:zwilliams@dcrm.gov.mp).

The latest 5-Year (2021-2025) Section 309 Assessment and Strategy has been submitted to NOAA Office of Coastal Management. The strategy focuses on wetlands and coastal hazards, and includes capacity building opportunities for DCRM and its partners such as wetland delineation training. There are many opportunities for collaboration, and we look forward to sharing the latest 309 Assessment and Strategy once approved.

A contractor has been selected for the Jeffrey's Beach Public Access Enhancement Project, and DCRM is awaiting their design proposal.

DCRM Permitting, Planning, and GIS teams are currently working on updating all Area of Particular Concern (APC) boundaries. Information on APCs, including a map of current boundaries, may be accessed online [here](#).

And lastly, respondents are needed for the Saipan Resident Satisfaction Survey. If you have already taken the survey, please circulate it among your family, friends, and network. All respondents are entered to win a free grill! The Saipan Resident Satisfaction Survey is funded by NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program to better understand community thoughts about several important coastal sites on Saipan. All responses are anonymous and will help resource managers identify opportunities to better manage our island's coastal resources. Please note that this survey is referring to tourism and recreational activities before the impact of Covid-19 on tourism and the CNMI economy. The survey may be accessed online [here](#).

### DEQ

The preliminary draft of the 2020 CNMI 305(b) and 303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report was completed and submitted to EPA in April. An exciting addition is the inclusion of separate sections for each of the Northern Islands. Once finalized the document will be shared with the group and available at DEQ's website.

Note: planned outreach activities (namely April Environmental Awareness Month) have been postponed. But will be achieved in the future under safer circumstances.

## OPD

The collaborative grant "Coastal Community Resilience Initiative for Wetlands and Corals in Saipan's Priority Management Watershed" was awarded by NFWF earlier this year. The interagency (OPD, BECQ, and DLNR) project will support terrestrial and marine restoration activities in the West Takpochao/Garapan watershed. Due to COVID, the start date was pushed back to October 2020, pending approval.

Taskforce (virtual) meetings are back on track for Resources Report discussion, and development of SMART objectives and actions that will support progress towards CNMI's Sustainable Development Goals. All meetings will occur on June 10; the schedule is as follows:

- 8-9:30am, Socio-Economic/DRR
- 10-11:30am, Built Environment
- 1:30-3pm, Natural Resources

Please contact Erin Derrington to RSVP: [erin.derrington@opd.gov.mp](mailto:erin.derrington@opd.gov.mp).

## DLNR

### Forestry

Staff continues revegetation and forest management work in the following watersheds As Matuis, Banaderu, Kalabera, Talofofu, Kagman, Laolao, Dandan, Isley, Susupe, West Takpochao/Garapan, Achugao, and Toalakhaya.

## MINA

Tasi-Watch rangers continue to do maintenance on recycling bins, water planted saplings, and investigate revegetation survival to inform future planning.

A big congratulations to MINA for their awarded 2020 DOI Coral Reef and Natural Resources Initiative grant to support their efforts in invasive vine removal on Saipan! We are excited to hear of their work and progress in the future, and any opportunities for cooperation with WWG members. More information is available via their [press release](#).

## Webinars

Coastal Wetland Restoration and Planning: Tools for Tidal Restriction Avoidance and Removal

June 11, 2020; 1-3pm EST—June 12, 2020; 3-5am ChST

"Tidal restrictions occur when a structure or built landform limits or prevents tidal exchange between upstream and downstream habitats. This can lead to wetland loss through hydrologic alteration or can impact wetland function through changes in salinity, vegetation, water quality, and habitat for wetland fauna. Removal or avoidance of tidal restrictions therefore provide an opportunity for restoration or planning at a watershed scale. Please join us for this webinar to hear about tools from state, federal, and academic entities that aid in tidal restriction identification, assessment, prioritization, restoration planning, and project funding."

Flyer: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/tidal\\_restrictions\\_webinar.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/tidal_restrictions_webinar.pdf)

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/536644544127072271>

## Grant Opportunities

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (F20AS00057)

Closing date: June 26, 2020

\$125,000—\$1,000,000

"to acquire, restore, and enhance wetlands in coastal areas"

**Matching requirement waived up to \$200,000 for CNMI**

Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production Competitive Grants Program (USDA-NRCS-NHQ-UAIP-20-NOFO0001013)

Closing date: July 6, 2020

\$100,000—\$300,000

"to accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers or gardeners"

**No cost sharing or matching required**

NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant for Pacific Islands Area (USDA-NRCS-PIA-CIG-20-GEN0010774)

Closing date: June 8, 2020

\$10,000—\$150,000

"to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production"

Cost-share amount at least equal to funding requested

NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant (USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CIG-20-GEN0010808)

Closing date: June 29, 2020

\$150,000—\$2,000,000

"to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production"

Cost-share amount at least equal to funding requested

NRCS Wetland Mitigation Banking Program (USDA-NRCS-NHQ-WMBP-20-NOFO0001002)

Closing date: July 6, 2020

\$100,000—\$1,000,000

"supports the establishment and development of wetlands banks to make credits available for agricultural producers" 25% minimum partner contribution

Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction Project (USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CCFWR-20-NOFO0001018)

Closing date: June 26, 2020

\$45,000—\$90,000

"to develop and test strategies for planning and implementation that will 1) generate compost; 2) increase access to compost for agricultural producers; 3) reduce reliance on, and limit the use of, fertilizer; 4) improve soil quality; 5) encourage waste management and permaculture business development; 6) increase rainwater absorption; 7) reduce municipal food waste; and 8) divert food waste from landfill"

25% minimum partner contribution

Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ)  
Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM)

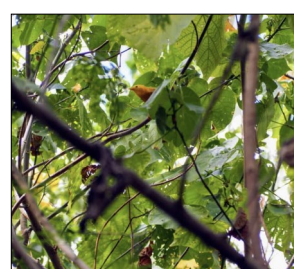
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Instagram: [@GoingCoastal\\_CNMI](#)

Facebook: [Division of Coastal Resources Management](#)