

NOAA FISHERIES

Pacific Islands Regional Office

Federal Programs Office 2014 Annual Report



A Message from the Regional Administrator

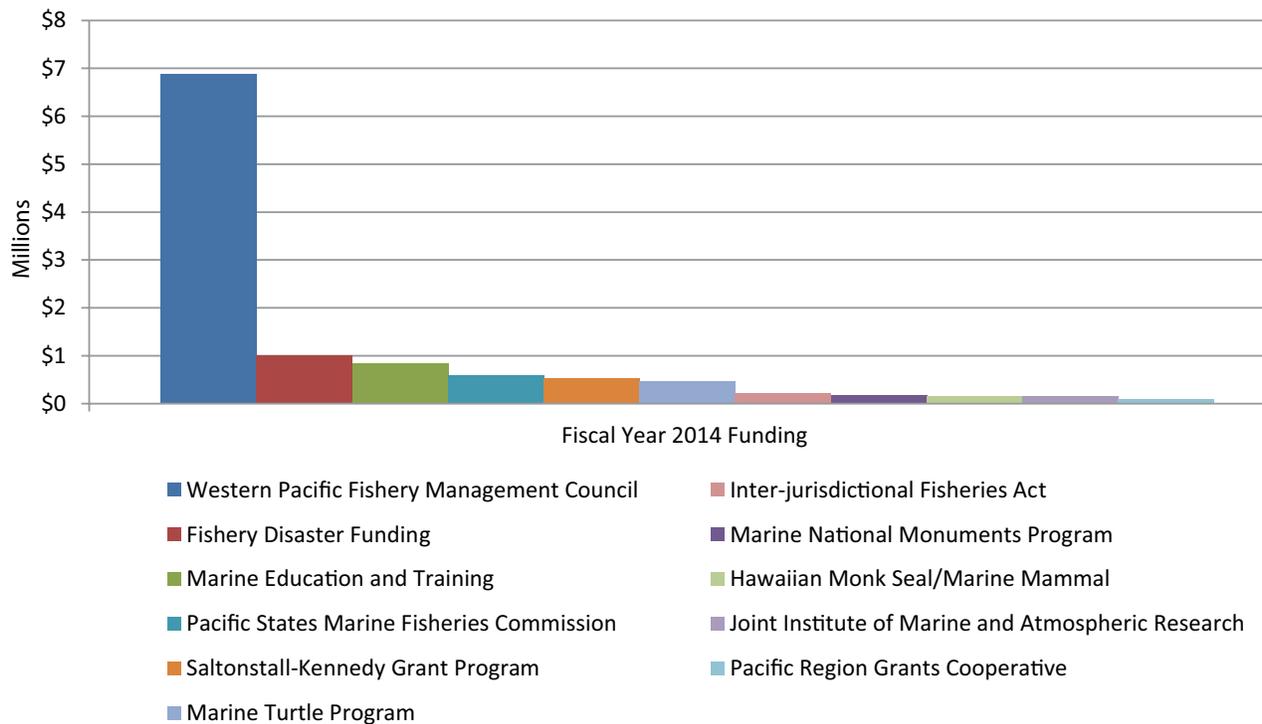
We are pleased to announce that in 2014, the PIRO Federal Programs Office processed 72 individual funding actions that resulted in 66 projects totaling \$11,119,506 in grants, cooperative agreements, and financial assistance to constituents in support of the NOAA Fisheries mission. These awards were issued through five competitive grant programs and various contracts and non-competitive processes. Recipients of the federal awards included over 30 agencies and organizations from Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the continental United States, and various international entities.

Our efforts in 2015 will continue to focus on capacity building, grant writing and proposal development training for the territories, and working with communities to develop innovative projects that help NOAA Fisheries provide stewardship of living marine resources through science-based conservation and management in our region.



Michael Tosatto

Summary of Fiscal Year 2014 Funding



NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) manages programs that support both domestic and international conservation and management of living marine resources within the Pacific. PIRO's vision is to achieve healthy marine ecosystems that provide stability for fishery resources, recovery of threatened and endangered species, and enhanced opportunities for commercial, recreational, and cultural activities in the marine environment. The Pacific Islands Region is comprised of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands, and other U.S. Pacific islands.

PIRO is responsible for assisting the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC) in the development of fishery management plans and amendments. In addition to PIRO and WPFMC, two other offices, the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, collaboratively support the conservation and management of marine fisheries, protected species, and marine habitat. Working together, these offices are committed to employing regional expertise to provide improved customer service and stewardship of living marine resources within this expansive geographic region.



*Turtle data collection DLNR,
the Northern Mariana Islands*

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Highlights of PIRO's Federal Programs Office Activities

- Maintained and expanded both partnerships and collaboration efforts with public and private partners in the Pacific Islands Region to further NOAA's mission through federal financial assistance
- Executed \$11,119,506 in grants, cooperative agreements, and other financial support to constituents



Federal Programs Office staff with visiting students

Federal Programs Office

The Federal Programs Office is located at the Pacific Islands Regional Office in Honolulu, Hawaii. Federal Program Officers (FPOs) ensure the timely processing of grants and cooperative agreements, from the initial solicitation through post award management. Technical assistance is provided by staff from both PIRO and PIFSC. FPOs work closely with the NOAA Grants Management Division, technical monitors and grant recipients throughout the award period, for each individual grant to facilitate the successful completion of project objectives.

The Federal Programs Office supports the NOAA Fisheries mission through both competitive and noncompetitive grants and cooperative agreements. Grant programs funded through PIRO during fiscal year 2014 include: Pacific Islands Region Marine Turtle Management Program, Partnerships for the Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response Program, Marine Education and Training Mini Grants Program, Marine National Monuments Program, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, Cooperative Institute Program, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and miscellaneous other projects that meet criteria published under the 2014-2015 Broad Agency Announcement.

The Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) is a NOAA-wide notice and request for proposals for special projects and programs associated with the NOAA strategic plan and mission goals. The BAA is a mechanism to encourage research, education and outreach, innovative projects, or sponsorships that are not addressed through NOAA's competitive discretionary programs.

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC) prepares, monitors and revises fishery management plans for domestic and foreign fishing within the 200-mile U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the western and central Pacific Ocean. These plans are based on the best available scientific information provided by PIFSC and is transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval. The Secretary of Commerce has stewardship responsibility for living marine resources in the EEZ. Under the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act (MSRA), commercial, recreational, and authorized foreign fishing enterprises benefit from WPFMC's activities. Management measures created by WPFMC and approved by the Secretary are implemented by NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office and enforced by NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, U.S. Coast Guard 14th District and local enforcement agencies.

In Fiscal Year 2010, the WPFMC was provided a 5-year base administrative cooperative agreement. This agreement serves as the mechanism by which funds to WPFMC are awarded and managed as defined in the MSRA. In addition to congressionally-directed funding, the WPFMC also receives NOAA Fisheries discretionary funding. In 2014, the WPFMC received \$6,883,554 for the following activities (1-13 below):

1. **Base Administration and Operations (\$2,657,718)**
2. **Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund IV (\$2,340,935)**
3. **Annual Catch Limits (\$197,614)**
4. **Scientific and Statistical Committee (\$130,789)**
5. **Regulatory Streamlining Program (\$94,604)**
6. **National Environmental Policy Act (\$89,037)**
7. **Council Peer Review (\$142,137)**
8. **Council Education Committee MOU Support (\$25,000)**
9. **Territorial Science Initiative (\$190,240)**
10. **Marine Resource Information Program (\$287,600)**
11. **eLOG Reporting (\$330,380)**
12. **Workshops (\$135,000)**
13. **High School Fisheries Summer Courses: Hawaii, Guam, CNMI and American Samoa (\$62,500)**
14. **Protected Species Conservation and Management Program (\$200,000)***

*The WPFMC Protected Species Conservation and Management Program aims to address fisheries interactions with protected species and has achieved significant reductions in sea turtle and seabird interactions in the Hawaii-based longline fishery through the adoption of various mitigation technologies. WPFMC also supports conservation projects at nesting beaches and foraging grounds for North Pacific loggerhead turtles and the Western Pacific leatherback turtles, both of which are high priority subpopulations due to historically high interactions with Hawaii-based fisheries. In FY14, the WPFMC received \$200,000 for this program as identified above.

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's high school summer course on fisheries science and management supports a keiki fishing tournament on Molokai. Photo credit: WPFMC



*UH QUEST 2014*

Marine Education and Training

In 2007, the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act was amended to include §305 (j) which provides guidance on the development of a marine education and training program. Public Law 109-479 states “the Secretary shall, in cooperation with the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, establish programs that will improve communication, education, and training on marine resource issues throughout the region and increase scientific education for marine-related professions among coastal community residents, including indigenous Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, and other underrepresented groups in the region.” The Pacific Islands Region Marine Education and Training Program was established to meet Congressional intent. In 2014, PIRO funded 18 marine education and training projects in the amount of \$834,886.

University of Hawaii – Supporting Pacific Islander Capacity Building through Training in Underwater Surveying Techniques (\$15,000)

To build interest in careers in fisheries and marine sciences, the University of Hawaii and American Samoa Community College will use the Quantitative Underwater Ecological Surveying Techniques (QUEST) program to train undergraduate students in American Samoa. The intensive six-day program will allow students to gain hands-on experience and learn technical skills that will make them more competitive in pursuit of a career in marine sciences or related fields.

University of Hawaii – Coastal Water Monitoring C-Water Tool Kit (\$15,000)

An online database will be created to monitor water quality and evaluate the effectiveness of on-going water improvement programs. The database will be populated by communities, school groups and organizations in and around the South Kohala region on the island of Hawaii who are trained to use these tools to measure, monitor and report water quality parameters.

Kona Community Cultural Educational Foundation, Inc. – “Citizens of the Sea” Marine Exploration Project (\$15,000)

A 2-day (1 night) open ocean educational field trip will be conducted for approximately 150 students (grades 5-12) and their teachers, administrators and parents from the North and South Kohala Districts of the island of Hawaii. The project employs an experiential hands-on multi-disciplinary marine science curriculum designed to introduce concepts of education, conservation, preservation, and ethical behavior toward marine resources. The field trip experience will also promote and encourage the pursuit of marine-related professions. In addition to increasing scientific understanding through an ecosystem approach to management, the field trip will provide participants with critical information that will enable them to conserve and improve their marine and coastal resources.

Mana Maoli – Halau Holomoana (\$15,000)

Fifteen students (grades 11-12) will participate in an intensive 30-day college and career readiness program designed to encourage and increase the number of native Hawaiian youth entering the maritime industry. The Polynesian Voyaging Society will teach students valuable hands-on skills in traditional Hawaiian navigation aboard the Hokulea. Students will have an opportunity to gain certification in CPR, first aid and lifeguarding, in addition to pursuing the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's Boating Skills and Seamanship Certificate. Successful participants will become stewards of the ocean and attain the cultural foundation needed to become lifelong learners and teachers of traditional native Hawaiian voyaging techniques.

Keolohilani Lopes – Snorkeling Assessment and New Discoveries (\$15,000)

To address the under-representation of native Hawaiian students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), the Snorkeling Assessment and New Discoveries (SAND) program will conduct a fun, hands-on summer course aimed at getting participants to apply to a 2 or 4-year college and pursue a degree and/or career in marine sciences. SAND's 10-day program for high school students (grades 11-12) on the island of Hawaii provides a hands-on curriculum that introduces current scientific sampling techniques of fish, invertebrates, algae, and maritime archeology. The students will gain a deeper understanding of the marine environment, anthropogenic influences, and traditional Hawaiian approaches to resource management.

University of Hawaii – Mini-observatories for Kauai Reef Health, Science, Community Service and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Outreach (\$15,000)

Two underwater marine observatory systems will be designed, built and installed along the coasts and reefs of the island of Kauai. These low-cost near-shore systems will provide long-term data on coral reef health by collecting imagery of marine organisms and information on seawater properties. In addition to providing observational and research data, local students from the Kauai Junior Lifeguard program will become scuba certified so they can participate in the underwater deployment and monitoring of the two individual observatories. Kauai Community College students will be involved in the design, assembly, testing, placement, and monitoring of the mini-observatory systems, including data collection and analysis.

Malama Loko Ea – Loko Ea Fishpond Marine Education Program (\$15,000)

High school students will gain the knowledge and skills needed to assist in developing and executing the Loko Ea Fishpond restoration and management plan. They will participate in monthly outdoor activities at Loko Ea Fishpond in Haleiwa, Oahu where they will collect and analyze water quality samples, create a water quality database that measures the variations of the fishpond, gain cultural knowledge in the traditional use of Hawaiian fishponds, and practice sustainable natural resource management.

University of Hawaii – Multicultural Marine Conservation Exchange Phase II Project: Community Event Series and Videography (\$15,000)

The Multicultural Marine Conservation Exchange Phase II Project builds upon a project conducted by the University of Hawaii (UH) Sea Grant College Program on the island of Hawaii. The goal of the project is to enhance the science-based management of fishery resources through the sharing of local and traditional knowledge of Pacific Islanders and native Hawaiians. UH Sea Grant has been conducting outreach among these groups to improve communication and to increase the capacity of community leadership networks among immigrant Pacific Islanders, Hawaiian traditional practitioners, and natural resource managers. Na Kilo Aina Network Initiative, an island-wide group, consists of participants from various cultural and geographic communities on the island of Hawaii and is designed to foster the development of community leaders who: are knowledgeable about existing federal and state fishery rules and regulations; understand, respect, and develop trusted relationships with each other; and promote the stewardship of fishery resources through their participation in education and outreach activities between and within their respective communities.

Pacific Island Fisheries Group – PIFG Fishing Day (\$15,000)

The Pacific Island Fisheries Group (PIFG) will conduct Youth Fishing Day workshops and activities to inspire young people to become responsible citizens through hands-on interactive lessons focused on Hawaii's marine and coastal resources. The target audiences, Boys and Girls Club and other youth organizations in the State of Hawaii, will benefit from a series of fishing, water safety and resource conservation lessons supplemented by educational materials that teach youth basic fishing skills and general ocean resource awareness. The youth interact directly with PIFG volunteer experts and professionals who engage the participants in fun, hands-on, and informative learning activities. In addition, these lessons introduce participants to potential career opportunities in the fishing, seafood, and natural resource management fields.

University of Hawaii – Ike Kai - Increasing Marine Science and Traditional Fisheries Knowledge with the State of Hawaii’s Makai Watch Program through a Community-based Curriculum and Training (\$14,923)

The State of Hawaii Makai Watch Program is a collaborative statewide program where citizens and non-governmental organizations (systematically assist the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) in its mandate to manage marine and coastal resources. Eight Makai Watch communities across the state will receive unique place-based materials in a field kit and hands-on training to support and improve outreach and monitoring activities in their area. The goal of the Ike Kai project is to help DLNR fulfill its mandate by increasing volunteers’ baseline knowledge of marine science and marine resource management. The new Ike Kai curriculum will promote and support monitoring projects, outreach activities, and marine fishery and habitat conservation projects being undertaken by these communities while strengthening relationships with resource management agencies.



American Samoa QUEST coral quadrat exercises
Photo credit: WPFMC

Malama Learning Center – Hawaii Green Collar Institute 2015: Student Education (\$14,500)

The Malama Learning Center (MLC) will conduct a workshop that focuses on ocean conservation and careers in March 2015. In partnership with Leeward Community College, the MLC created the Hawaii Green Collar Institute, which encourages local youth to pursue “green” careers that benefit Hawaii’s environment and people. Building on the success of previous programs that engaged students and educators from West Oahu, MLC will lead a new experiential marine-related careers program which targets native Hawaiian and Pacific Island high school students (grades 10-12). The program will facilitate the students’ understanding of major issues related to marine resource management in Hawaii and allow them to interact with professionals working in marine-related fields. New program topics include ocean safety and awareness, sustainable fishing practices and regulations, community-based management, coastal habitat restoration, marine debris and pollution, and climate change.



ALU LIKE native fishery observer program training - learning how to measure tuna

Rufin Inos Jr. – Marine Educational Outreach and Supplementary Assistance to Marine-Related Professions (\$15,000)

Hands-on training and education in marine and fisheries resources will be provided to approximately 50 high school students (grades 9-12) on Saipan (Northern Mariana Islands) by Mr. Rufin Inos, Jr. and a team of local fishing experts who have excelled in their professions. The training will focus on topics such as: types of fishing and preparation of equipment needed – including vessels and fuel budgeting, fish retrieval and proper storage procedures, and local fishing areas - including the role of marine protected areas.

American Samoa Community College – Ocean Current Monitoring of Pago Pago Inner Harbor (\$15,000)

American Samoa Community College (ASCC) students will be trained to monitor Pago Pago’s inner harbor water currents to develop an understanding of its circulation in order to facilitate the management of local fisheries and other marine resources in the face of biologically damaging events such as harmful algal blooms. These students will build, deploy and monitor tracking drifters to collect data on a range of meteorological conditions. This project provides ASCC students with valuable field experience and training, as well as supplemental material for classroom projects for the ASCC Marine Science Department.

Conservation International – Lawaia Ohana Camp Program (\$69,780)

Conservation International Hawaii will conduct family-focused fishing camps to teach traditional and modern fishing techniques that promote sustainable fisheries management at the community level. The Lawaia Ohana Camp Program will support ten camps in eight communities on the islands of Hawaii, Lanai, Maui and Molokai. Youth campers from each community will learn traditional fishing techniques from elders and participate in hands-on activities. The expected long-term outcome of the program will be an increase in voluntary

compliance with existing marine policies and reduced degradation of fish habitat. The long-term objective will yield an increase in fish for recreational and subsistence near-shore fishing for the participating communities.

ALU LIKE, Inc. – Native Fishery Observer Program (\$250,000)

The Native Fishery Observer Program targets native Hawaiian, American Samoan, and other Pacific Islander residents for employment as fishery observers in the Hawaii and American Samoa longline fisheries. The training program provides recruits with the practical knowledge and fundamental technical skills needed to successfully pass the NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) observer training program and become certified fishery observers. Activities involve the monitoring and counseling of recruits during their enrollment in the PIRO observer training program, and after recruits become employed, as full-time observers with NOAA Fisheries.

Cognitive Dissonante Studios – TIES THAT BIND: Pacific Islands Fisheries Documentary (\$95,984)

Cognitive Dissonante Studios will develop a feature-length video to introduce communities and the public to fishery management issues. The project seeks to make a meaningful impact on the way people understand the processes and roles involved in managing the Pacific Islands Region commercial fisheries while enhancing public understanding of what it takes to successfully manage such an economically vital, culturally significant, and dynamic resource. Through engaging industry, scientists, managers, and local communities, TIES THAT BIND: Pacific Islands Fisheries Documentary will use the Pacific Islands region to demonstrate why uniting behind a common purpose and embracing a cooperative and collaborative spirit is critical in the implementation of effective fisheries management. Filming will take place in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. It is anticipated that the film will gain broad exposure throughout the region at film festivals, community meetings and other venues.

University of Guam – Enhancing Marine Science Capacity in the Western Pacific through High School Science Internships at the University of Guam (\$24,699)

The University of Guam will provide summer internships to high school students competing in local science fairs. A committee of Guam Science and Discovery Foundation and University of Guam officials will review student abstracts, oral presentations, and displays during the annual science fair and based on predetermined criteria will award internships to students. Each intern will work under the supervision of a qualified scientist engaged in marine research at the University of Guam and receive a stipend of \$2,160 for their five-week internship plus \$500 for purchasing research supplies. Although participation in science fairs helps to foster a desire to become scientists in the future, providing hands-on opportunities through internships promotes understanding of the scientific process that books and lectures can't adequately demonstrate.

University of Hawaii – Support for the University of Hawaii Marine Option Program (\$200,000)

Funding for the University of Hawaii Marine Option Program (MOP) will allow continued guidance and marine-related career path support to approximately 360 student participants throughout the University of Hawaii system each year. The MOP provides experiential, marine-oriented opportunities for high performing college students and prepares them for specific ocean-oriented careers through classroom and field experiences. This unique, on-going program helps students identify and implement hands-on internships and research projects to meet their MOP Certificate requirements. MOP funding also helps students find project mentors, monitors student progress, manages the MOP office, and maintains student records within the program. An important aspect of the program will be the continued facilitation of scientific diving opportunities as well as teaching aspects of underwater surveying practices and principles.

Malama Loko Ea volunteer work day



*Green sea turtle*

Marine Turtle Program

The Pacific Islands Region Marine Turtle Program supports specific programmatic activities for the conservation, protection, and management of listed sea turtle species in the Pacific Islands Region (PIR). These species may occur within the PIR or have documented linkages to the PIR, such as turtles that originate from areas outside of U.S. jurisdiction but migrate through, or forage within, the PIR or interact with PIR fisheries managed by NOAA Fisheries. In 2014, PIRO issued federal assistance awards in the amount of \$458,970.

Marine Research Foundation – Operationalizing Malaysia’s Turtle Excluder Device Program (\$50,000)

To reduce the accidental catch of turtle populations during commercial fishing activities, an experimental turtle excluder device (TED) will be deployed in the Malaysian shrimp trawl fishery. These devices will help to reduce the mortality of turtles accidentally caught in commercial fishing efforts. Workshops and educational outreach to fishermen will be conducted as part of NOAA Fisheries PIR efforts to conserve and recover sea turtle populations.

Marine Research Foundation – Community-based Leatherback Sea Turtle Conservation in the Solomon Islands (\$15,500)

To address the decline of leatherback sea turtles in the Pacific Ocean and promote conservation of the species, the Marine Research Foundation will implement a grassroots community-based nesting-beach monitoring program along the Wairaha coast in the Solomon Islands. The monitoring program seeks to reduce human-caused and environmental impacts to nesting leatherback sea turtles. The program will train Wairaha community members to monitor and collect seasonal nesting data to determine the amount of seasonal nesting occurring and the capacity of the local community to implement more comprehensive conservation and monitoring programs.

Pro Delphinus – Monitoring and Mitigating Small-scale Fisheries Bycatch of Leatherback Sea Turtles in the Southeast Pacific Ocean (\$59,730)

To promote long-term population stability of leatherback sea turtles in the Pacific Ocean, Pro Delphinus will support research to improve understanding of leatherback distribution in the Southeastern Pacific Ocean and reduce or mitigate interactions with small gillnet fisheries. Funding will support research on: (1) quantifying leatherback sea turtle interactions in northern Peru using onboard observers; (2) conducting sea turtle bycatch mitigation trials (net illumination); (3) assessing leatherback movements and vulnerability to fishery interaction using satellite telemetry; (4) collecting tissue samples to clarify the proportions of individuals from different breeding stocks; and (5) raising awareness and promoting action among gillnet fishermen regarding the conservation of leatherback sea turtles.

Ocean Discovery Institute – Proposal to Test Sensory-Based Methods to Reduce Bycatch of Sea Turtles, Elasmobranchs and Finfish in Small-Scale Commercial Gillnet Fisheries (\$61,702)

To increase selectivity in gillnet fisheries and reduce bycatch of sea turtles, the Ocean Discovery Institute will test the effects of orange light emitting diodes (LEDs) on green sea turtles and target and bycatch fish in a coastal gillnet fishery. Additional research will test the effects of auditory deterrents on green sea turtle catch rates and to survey fishermen for their thoughts on the research.

Wan Smolbag Theatre Company – Vanuatu Marine Turtle In-water and Nesting-Beach Surveys, Conservation and Awareness Raising 2014-2015 (\$26,036)

To increase awareness and promote the conservation of sea turtles in Vanuatu, the Wan Smolbag Theatre Company will conduct nesting-beach surveys of green, hawksbill, and leatherback turtles and provide educational outreach to local communities. Specific activities will include conducting in-water surveys of foraging green turtles, strengthening the capacity of community monitors, and increasing general knowledge on sea turtles and conservation efforts in the area.

The Kohala Center, Inc. – Engaging Community Members in Sea Turtle Monitoring for Sustainable Place-based Management (\$16,936)

To build capacity for conservation and management of green sea turtles along the Kona coast of the island of Hawaii, the Kohala Center will develop an in-water monitoring program in heavily congested areas where humans and turtles regularly interact. In addition to collecting data on turtles and human activities, education and outreach will be conducted to help communities understand how they impact foraging turtles and ultimately, how they can protect and manage turtles in their natural marine habitats.

Hawaii Wildlife Fund – Researching and Protecting Maui and Lanai’s In-water Hawksbill Populations (2014-2015) (\$32,172)

To support research that increases survivorship and aids in the recovery of nesting and in-water Hawaiian hawksbill turtles, the Hawaii Wildlife Fund will monitor, identify, document and address threats to these critically endangered turtles. In Hawaii, the ecology and population numbers for this critically endangered species is not well known, therefore, outreach and education activities will be conducted for local communities on and around the islands of Maui and Lanai.

Malama Na Honu – Malama Na Honu Educational Outreach and Volunteer Support (\$15,000)

To support the education and research of basking Hawaiian green sea turtles at Laniakea Beach on Oahu, Malama Na Honu volunteers will continue to provide sea turtle education for visitors and monitor and record daily sea turtle behaviors for the NOAA Fisheries Marine Turtle Research Program. Laniakea Beach is a prime venue for public education that reduces sea turtle-human interaction and promotes respectful wildlife viewing.

Michael Graham White – In-water Assessment and Management of Sea Turtle Habitats at Tongareva Atoll, Northern Cook Islands (\$35,000)

To increase scientific data and promote sea turtle conservation in the Northern Cook Islands, Michael Graham White will conduct sea turtle nesting-beach monitoring activities at Tongareva Atoll. Although six of the seven sea turtle species have been reported in this region, limited scientific data there has made it difficult to determine the degree to which these animals are endangered. This grant will address two important reasons for the absence of data - lack of resources (including scientific expertise) and very limited transportation links between remote atolls.

Guam Department of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources – 2014 Guam Sea Turtle Recovery Program (\$20,000)

To address the limited availability of information on population dynamics of sea turtles in Micronesia, the Guam Department of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources will conduct sea turtle nesting beach surveys that include tagging, sampling and monitoring activities in waters surrounding Guam. These activities will be complimented by stranding and recovery efforts and community awareness-raising activities coordinated by Hagan (Turtle) Watch volunteers.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Department of Lands and Natural Resources – Stewardship of Northern Mariana Islands Sea Turtles through Conservation and Management (\$66,894)

To provide vital baseline data and a strong foundation for science-based conservation and management practices in CNMI, the CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources will increase their conservation education and public awareness campaigns. Saipan green and hawksbill turtle populations are threatened by the



Malama Na Honu volunteers

increased use of beaches for recreation, fishing pressures, human population growth and coastal development. Funding will enable the development of a more robust region-specific curriculum for elementary school students, an increased anti-poaching/stranding response advertising campaign, and more training for volunteers of the Sea Turtle Program.

World Turtle Trust – Hawaii Island Hawksbill Turtle Education and Conservation (\$60,000)

To understand population trends and spatial and temporal nest distribution on the island of Hawaii, the Hawaii Island Hawksbill Turtle Recovery Project (HIHTRP) will continue nightly monitoring, nesting-habit management, and onsite education activities at hawksbill nesting-habitats and throughout the community on the island of Hawaii. This long-standing turtle monitoring, education, and conservation effort dates back to 1989. To protect turtles and their habitat, HIHTRP will continue to survey potential nesting sites for signs of activity and control non-native mammalian predators and non-native vegetation. In addition to hawksbills, threatened green sea turtles, endangered Hawaiian monk seals, endangered nesting sea birds, and other marine life benefit from HIHTRP protection and management of coastal habitat and educational outreach efforts.



Hawaiian monk seal resting on beach

Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response Program

The Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response Program supports specific programmatic activities related to the recovery of endangered Hawaiian monk seals and to marine mammal “takes” (stranding, harassment, entanglement and hooking) responses in the main Hawaiian Islands. This program supports community-based and community-integrated projects with an educational component designed to elevate public awareness and build capacity from the community for Hawaiian monk seal recovery and marine mammal response. In 2014, PIRO issued federal assistance awards in the amount of \$161,926.

The Kohala Center – Management of the West Hawaii Marine Mammal Response (\$31,000)

The Kohala Center will provide support to the West Hawaii Marine Mammal Response Network (WHMMRN) by assisting in training and deploying team volunteers and compiling and reporting project data to NOAA. WHMMRN is a team of volunteers who are trained to facilitate appropriate wildlife viewing opportunities and provide education to residents and visitors on the leeward coast of the island of Hawaii in an effort to reduce negative human-seal interactions.

Monk Seal Foundation – Hawaiian Monk Seal Response Team Management: Volunteer Coordination (\$40,000)

The Monk Seal Foundation will continue to build and manage a volunteer monk seal response network on the islands of Oahu and Molokai. Working closely with PIRO, these volunteers are trained and equipped to handle a variety of seal responses including seal haulouts, pupping events, reports of injury or death, and special needs responses.

Monk Seal Foundation – Hawaiian Monk Seal Response Team Management: Volunteer Management and Response Equipment (\$40,000)

In addition to volunteer coordination, the Monk Seal Foundation will continue to provide approximately 150 volunteers with equipment needed to appropriately respond to monk seal activities. These volunteers will also be trained on preferred outreach and education strategies to engage the public at these events. The Monk Seal Foundation will continue to build organizational capacity by undertaking efforts to increase volunteer recruitment and retention.

Malama Learning Center – Engaging the Public to Care for the Hawaiian Monk Seal through Outreach and Education (\$21,000)

The Malama Learning Center will work with Hawaii residents to improve awareness and understanding of Hawaiian monk seal biology, endangered species status, and recovery issues and opportunities. The project objectives include reducing human-seal interactions and increasing volunteerism for Hawaiian monk seal recovery efforts. The project will target students and families in West Oahu with outreach activities and products (television stories, mobile apps and a coloring book) developed by the Center.

Hawaii Pacific University – The Continuation of HPU's Stranding Response Program: Investigating Mortality in Hawaiian Cetaceans (\$20,000)

Hawaii Pacific University (HPU) Stranding Response Program will continue to conduct cause of death investigations when dolphins and whales strand in the PIR. Stranding investigations include extensive necropsy examinations, collection of biological specimens, and follow-up analysis that provide the means to evaluate cause of death and/or establish factors contributing to the stranding event. These stranding studies also provide a greater understanding of the biology of marine species and how they utilize their habitat in Hawaiian waters. HPU will also continue its disease surveillance program that identifies infectious diseases such as morbillivirus and Brucella in stranded cetaceans in Hawaii and in the greater Pacific.

University of Hawaii, Hilo – Hilo Marine Mammal Response Network (HMMRN) 2014-2015 (\$9,926)

University of Hawaii at Hilo will continue to conduct timely and effective marine mammal stranding responses for entangled or out-of-habitat cetaceans along some of the longest and most difficult shorelines on the island of Hawaii. This partnership will ensure that marine mammals in the area receive timely and professional assistance.

Pacific Islands Region Marine National Monuments Program

In 2009, three Marine National Monuments (MNM) in the PIR were designated by Presidential Proclamation to protect the relatively undisturbed marine ecosystems that are flourishing with healthy coral reefs, large numbers of apex predators, significant fish biomass, and vigorous seabird populations. NOAA Fisheries PIRO supports the management objectives of the three MNMs and is developing management plans for the Marianas Trench MNM, Rose Atoll MNM, and Pacific Remote Islands MNM that will guide managers in the preservation and protection of the resources in these isolated locations. NOAA annually solicits proposals for projects to fulfill the objectives of the Proclamation and MNM management goals. In 2014, the PIRO issued federal assistance awards in the amount of \$179,995.

Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi – Impacts of the Changing Climate on the Marianas Trench, Rose Atoll, and Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monuments (\$89,997)

Texas A&M University will develop climate change models for the Marianas Trench, Rose Atoll, and Pacific Islands Marine National Monuments that will help managers begin to describe and assess the rate of climate change for several ecological categories including ecosystems, ecological guilds (a group of species that exploits the same kinds of resources in similar ways), and select priority species, as identified by local experts and communities. The models will account for climate threats, biotic vulnerability and adaptive capacity. The project also aims to conduct data and management prioritization and analysis to rank the most critical gaps based upon need.



Red coral, Marianas Trench MNM

University of Hawaii at Manoa – Marine Invasive Species and Vector Pathways of the Pacific Marine National Monuments (\$89,998)

University of Hawaii at Manoa will conduct an assessment of known marine invasive species (MIS) in the Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments. The effective management and conservation of biological resources within the U.S. Pacific Marine National Monuments requires a comprehensive evaluation of the presence of MIS, vector pathways, and recommended control measures. Additionally, the project will identify and characterize vectors for MIS, such as maritime vessel corridors, and will recommend potential control measures for prevention of MIS introduction into the Monuments.

Inter-jurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986

The Inter-jurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986 assists states in managing inter-jurisdictional fisheries resources. Apportionment to states is based on the average value and volume of raw fish landed by domestic commercial fishermen. The data obtained is the principle source of information and analysis of fisheries activities and management options used to address federal requirements for fisheries management plans under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries. In 2014, PIRO allocated \$220,497 to this program.

CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife – Data Collection and Entry in the Management of CNMI's Inter-jurisdictional Fishery Resources (\$11,206)

CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) will collect, process and share important fisheries monitoring data during fishing tournaments for use in federal and local fisheries management programs. The data obtained by DFW during tournaments will be the principle source of information for analysis of fisheries activities and development of management options for pelagic species landed. The analysis and management options developed will be used to address federal requirements for Fishery Management Plans under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries.



Boat in harbor, Guam

American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources – American Samoa Fisheries Stock Assessment and Monitoring Program (\$131,491)

American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources will assess and monitor fish species caught within the American Samoa Exclusive Economic Zone. This program will provide the fisheries information needed to develop, implement and evaluate Fishery Management Plans for the territory of American Samoa in a timely manner.

Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans – Data Collection and Data Entry in the Management of Guam's Inter-jurisdictional Fishery Resources (\$11,206)

Guam Pacific Fisheries Data Program will develop management and conservation plans for Guam's inter-jurisdiction fishery within its Territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone by monitoring and documenting transshipped species of fish that are offloaded by foreign longliners within Guam's commercial port. The program is designed to help address the information requirements needed by both state and federal governments.

State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources (Hawaii DAR) – Maintain Online Commercial Fisheries Reporting System Applications for the State of Hawaii (\$66,594)

Hawaii DAR will use this grant to maintain two web sites used for managing fisheries reporting in Hawaii. The Commercial Marine Licensing System is an online platform for issuing and renewing commercial fisheries marine licenses and permits. It also supports tracking fish and fish-dealer report log history files. The Online Fish Report web site allows all fish and fish-dealer reports to be filed online.

Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program

The Saltonstall-Kennedy (S-K) Grant Program is a competitive program administered by NOAA Fisheries. The program provides financial assistance (grants or cooperative agreements) for research and development projects that benefit the U.S. fishing industry. Projects that primarily involve business start-up or infrastructure development are not eligible for funding under the S-K Grant Program. The program's statutory authority is the S-K Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. 713c-3). In 2014, PIRO awarded \$531,819 in federal funds via the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program.

University of Guam – Age-validated Life History using Bomb Radiocarbon Dating in Support of Territorial Science and Bio-sampling of Fisheries in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands (\$196,112)

Management updates based on validated life history parameters are important in setting effective catch limits and in determining whether conservation measures are necessary. University of Guam will use bomb radiocarbon dating to validate life history information for marine food fishes of the Mariana Archipelago (Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands). Life history parameters for reef and bottomfish fisheries of these areas are either unknown or inadequately described. Important aspects of population dynamics have not been fully utilized in marine resource management of the Mariana Archipelago because validated estimates of vital rates are not available. To facilitate the pursuit of validated life history information for fisheries of the Mariana Archipelago, this project will use an existing coral core from Guam as a bomb ^{14}C benchmark (a type of carbon dating) for use in extensive and long-term age validation studies. To immediately begin using the novel bomb ^{14}C tool, the study utilizes fish otolith collections from the Mariana Archipelago. Validated estimates of longevity and age at median maturity allow assessment scientists to calculate population turnover, adult natural mortality, reproductive output, and assess stock productivity leading to a more informative stock assessment.

Pacific Marine Resources Institute – Stakeholder-Driven Management and Economic Valuation of Regional Micronesian Coral Reef and Nearshore Pelagic Fisheries (\$174,225)

Pacific Marine Resources Institute (PMRI) will conduct a storefront market assessment of the Pohnpei coral reef and near-shore pelagic finfish fishery and perform an economic assessment using cost-income data. PMRI will further develop and implement a stakeholder-driven marine advisory council (MAC) to assist in finfish management and enforcement that can serve as a blueprint for expanding MACs within the region. The project seeks to highlight the importance of the Pohnpei finfish fishery to local economies and food security while also revealing the consequences of ineffective management and/or management inaction by providing an economic valuation of the fishery. In addition, the project promotes stakeholder-driven decision-making and governance (such as MACs and fishing cooperatives) to improve management and enhance long-term finfish sustainability.

Bishop Museum – Rapid Increases in Reproductive Information for Exploited Reef Fishes and in Research Capacity on U.S.-associated Pacific Islands (\$161,482)

The Bishop Museum will train a cadre of natural-resource professionals from U.S.-associated Pacific Islands to independently conduct reproductive analysis on exploited reef fishes. This group will be trained to use the Longenecker et al. (2013) method for rapid, low-cost, on-site, histology-based reproductive analysis on reef fish that requires minimal research infrastructure. Project participants will be recruited from a broad expanse of the Pacific and the training will take place in Papua New Guinea—chosen because it is located in the Coral Triangle and because it is much more cost-effective. This will provide a single location where all project participants can study species also found on their home-island reefs. The participants will collect data on life histories of fish not currently under Federal Fishery Management Plans for the Regional Fishery Management Councils. This information will also be used to determine the feasibility of a new federally managed fishery that could provide new fishing opportunities. The project will improve territorial fishery science through the expansion of bio-sampling data analysis for reef-fish species most relevant for management in the U.S.-associated Pacific Islands. In addition, it will build critical on-island scientific capacity to conduct life history studies. Developing a new crop of fish reproductive biologists who can independently use this method will increase the rate at which new reproductive information is generated, therefore increasing the potential to effectively manage and conserve Pacific coral-reef fishes.



Butterflyfish and bumphead parrotfish

American Samoa Fishery Disaster Relief Funding

On January 26, 2012, Secretary of Commerce John Bryson determined, pursuant to Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, that a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster occurred for the territory of American Samoa. This determination was based on a 2009 tsunami that resulted in damage to fishing vessels and caused a significant loss of access to the fishery resource and revenue declines that greatly affected the commercial fishery. In FY14, \$999,000 was awarded to the American Samoa Government, Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) to support disaster relief activities.

American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) – Disaster Relief Funding for the American Samoa Bottomfish Fishery that Collapses after the 2009 Tsunami (\$999,000)

Disaster relief funding provided to American Samoa DMWR in response to the 2009 tsunami will provide: (1) direct compensation to fishermen whose boats were lost or damaged; (2) construction of a boat ramp in Malaloa to provide easier access for bottomfish fishing; (3) funding for the maintenance of the floating dock in Malaloa that is used by alia boats; (4) construction costs and funding for equipment, fishing gear and supplies for an alia boat maintenance, repair and training facility; (5) a workshop on boat repair for alia boat owners and crew; and (6) contract personnel to assist in the administration of the grant.



Abandoned alia boat, American Samoa

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

In FY14, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) was awarded a NOAA Fisheries multi-regional umbrella cooperative agreement to manage, enhance, restore, and maintain the shared fisheries, protected species and fisheries habitat of the participating jurisdictions. PSMFC staff work to support specific objectives of the proposed activities, including: 1) providing services and research support relating to Pacific fishery stakeholders consistent with the mission of NOAA Fisheries; 2) coordinating training, workshops, and meetings to gather and convey information; 3) collecting and maintaining electronic data, tools, and data gathering mechanisms to effectively and efficiently collect and report on fish stock and fishery management information; 4) assisting with treaties and international agreements implementation; and 5) assisting fishery stakeholders and NOAA Fisheries by providing administrative support to accomplish the above objectives. In 2014, PIRO provided \$592,684 to support activities administered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Support (\$120,000)

Coastal planning and climate change adaptation is a process that allows agencies to better plan activities that occur within and across coastal and marine areas. Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) is based on sound science and is comprehensive, integrated, ecosystem-based and transparent. A workshop will be held to synthesize the available scientific data from NOAA Fisheries and partner agencies and to develop a science-based adaptive U.S. Pacific Islands CMSP plan.

Marine National Monument Program Support (\$83,000)

In FY14, PIRO provided funding for a technical writer/editor to collaboratively draft and polish a Marine National Monument management plan that brings together the initiatives, disciplines and cultures of multiple agencies and non-governmental organizations to effectively manage three monuments in the Pacific. The Marine National Monument Program coordinates the development of management plans, scientific exploration and research programs within the Marine National Monuments in the Pacific Islands Region. Under NOAA's existing authorities and the Antiquities Act, the program works with federal and regional partners and stakeholders to conserve and protect the marine resources in these large marine protected areas. This work helps assure that the marine monuments are protected and made accessible, and that inter-agency communication and cooperation is maintained to facilitate a broad base of support for such activities.

International Fisheries Division Endangered Species Act (ESA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Support (\$389,684)

In FY14, PIRO's International Fisheries Division (IFD) was provided funding support for completion of Section 7 ESA consultation and NEPA work. Negotiations for the South Pacific Tuna Treaty are ongoing and these negotiations may result in changes to the current management regime for the U.S. purse seine fishery. Formal consultation under Section 7 of the ESA must be reinitiated when certain criteria are met. Support to PIRO's IFD, the action agency in Section 7 consultations, will implement an action plan to satisfy the Section 7 ESA consultation requirements and provide additional human resources to complete the consultation.

*NOAA Fisheries PIR Summer Science Camp, 2014*

Joint Institute of Marine and Atmospheric Research

The PIRO Grants Program supports initiatives under the Cooperative Institute Program through the Joint Institute of Marine and Atmospheric Research (JIMAR). In 2014, a total of \$153,127 was provided to JIMAR.

Outreach and Education Program Initiative (\$153,127)

Funding for this initiative will support outreach and education efforts that help bridge the gap between NOAA Fisheries scientists and the general public. The Outreach and Education Program facilitates the transformation of science and regulation into materials that are visually appealing, easily understandable, and suitable for public consumption. Program staff will work closely with scientists and managers to appropriately select topics for interpretation that contribute to the scientific endeavors of NOAA. Materials developed will include brochures, scientific posters, displays, presentations, and outreach and education activities. Public understanding and support are key elements to NOAA's success in protecting living marine resources through science-based conservation and management.

Pacific Region Grants Cooperative

The NOAA Pacific Region Grants Cooperative (PRGC) provides increased grants management services and engagement with Pacific Island NOAA grantees. The PRGC supplies regular, real-time, and geographically-based grantee training opportunities for the Pacific. Other capacity-building activities include sharing useful information and resources regarding financial management while collaborating, coordinating, and communicating regularly across NOAA line office grants management staff. The PRGC continues to maintain a presence in communities and participates in conferences, workshops, and outreach events throughout the PIR. In 2014, the PRGC collaborated on spending \$103,048 in federal funds.

Iterashima Environmental Services - NOAA Grant Writing Workshops (\$68,048)

Iterashima Environmental Services conducted a series of grant writing and proposal development workshops on the islands of Oahu, Lanai, Molokai, and the island of Hawaii for about 150 participants. The objective of these workshops was to improve the quality of grant applications submitted in the Pacific region. The workshops provided a hands-on approach to writing grant proposals and

guidance on refining future applications. During the workshops, NOAA Fisheries grant staff were available to answer questions about the overall grant process and future competitions. Additional grant writing workshops are being planned for American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands to help communities, policy makers and researchers become successful grant writers.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - NOAA Grants Online training (\$35,000)

NOAA Grants Online training was conducted for NOAA Fisheries staff and grantees in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands to improve grant administration and management. Grants Online is a complex web-based tool that tracks and monitors financial assistance awards. The training taught participants how to use the tools of the Grants Online website more efficiently and effectively.

2014 Unfunded Federal Programs

The following programs were not funded in FY14 due to budgetary constraints:

Western Pacific Demonstration Projects: Public Law 104-297 (16 U.S.C. 1855) authorizes grants for Western Pacific Demonstration Projects that foster and promote the involvement of communities in the western Pacific.

Hawaii Seafood Program: The Hawaii Seafood Program is an effort to help strengthen the economic viability of Hawaii's fishing and seafood industry through activities that promote Hawaii fisheries as high-quality and safe domestic seafood produced by a responsible and well-managed fishery.

PIRO's Marine Underwater Techniques Training Course (Internal program): The Marine Underwater Techniques Training program is a partnership between NOAA Fisheries PIRO Habitat Conservation Division, the Federal Programs Office, the NOAA Restoration Center, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, the University of Hawaii, and the State of Hawaii. This program provides a crucial link to young scientists entering the workforce by giving them technical skills which will allow them to develop into effective marine resource researchers and managers. This cross-cutting endeavor creates a synergy of knowledge that provides a unique and powerful learning experience for the students of the Marine Option Program at the University of Hawaii.

Aquaculture Program: The mission of PIRO's Aquaculture Program is to: foster marine aquaculture that creates employment and business opportunities in coastal communities; provide safe, sustainable seafood; and support healthy ocean populations and ecosystems. Aquaculture is one of a range of technologies needed to meet increasing global demand for seafood, support commercial and recreational fisheries, and restore species and marine habitat.



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