



182nd Meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
June 23-25, 2020

Community Engagement and Public Relations Report

This report summarizes education and outreach efforts conducted by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council since its 181st meeting in March 2020 and includes some plans for the next quarter.

Webpage

Council staff created a COVID-19 Update for the Fishing Community webpage on the Council website (www.wpcouncil.org/coronavirus). The COVID-19 related financial assistance information was provided to help fishermen, fishing communities and seafood businesses that may be experiencing negative impacts from the pandemic and related government actions. The page includes links to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, COVID-19 financial assistance resources by island area, COVID-19 regional news articles and more.

Publications

Pacific Islands Fishery News: The spring 2020 issue of the Council's quarterly newsletter was distributed in June 2020. Distribution was primarily electronic through the Constant Contact email list with approximately 2,000 subscribers. Less than 100 hard copies were direct mailed. A few hundred hard copies are being distributed through local agencies and fishermen throughout the regions. A large section was devoted to the COVID-19 pandemic's regional effects on fisheries and fishing communities.

US Pacific Territories Fishery Capacity-Building Scholarship

The 2020-2021 scholarship recipients were chosen: Aveipepa Fua (American Samoa) who will be pursuing a bachelor of science (BS) degree in marine science at the University of Hawai'i (UH) at Hilo; Jude Lizama (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, CNMI) who will be pursuing a BS degree in biology at the University of Guam (UOG); and Leilani Sablan (Guam) who will be pursuing a master's degree in biology at UOG. The scholarships are offered annually to college students with close connections to American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI who are pursuing degrees that will bolster the Territories' capacity to manage their fishery ecosystems. Students who accept a scholarship agree to work with their local fishery agency upon graduation for an equivalent amount of time that they receive the scholarship.

The Council's Education Committee made revisions to the scholarship program application and associated documents in order to update and streamline the program. The revised documents will be used for the next scholarship application cycle in 2021.



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1. The following programs were added to the Scholarship Announcement and Application as ones for which the scholarship may be used: UOG BS in biology; UH at Manoa BS in marine biology; and Hawai'i Pacific University BS in marine biology.
2. Language was added to the Contract to allow Council staff to easily obtain student financial aid and transcripts, commit to meet regularly with an advisor and address the tendency for students to take more than two years (four semesters) to finish their degree. Additional semesters equate to an additional time commitment at the student's local fishery agency upon graduation.
3. A new Advising Agreement, which was adopted by all universities in the scholarship program, was created to help guide students to graduate closer to the program's two-year estimate.

Education and Outreach (E&O) Plans

During spring and summer 2020, Council staff is making a concerted effort to increase E&O activities following various plans. The goal of the messaging in the general umbrella Council plan is to increase positive awareness of the Council, its role and actions to the general public. This plan aims to answer questions such as "Who is the Council?," "What does the Council do?" and "How can you/why should you participate in the Council decision-making process?" The plan encompasses other E&O plans and regional initiatives, which will be covered in subsequent sections.

The following activities supported the general Council E&O plan:

Webpage: Council staff created a Fisheries 101 webpage on the website (www.wpcouncil.org/fisheries101) that serves as a place where fishermen and the general public can easily find handouts, brochures, short videos and public service announcements (PSAs) that help people to understand fisheries and fisheries management on a basic level. The resources are grouped by topic and shown as clickable images on a bookshelf, as well as in a linked list below each topic.

Product Development: Council staff developed the following handouts, including the first three in a series of five Council 101 handouts:

- What Does our Council Do? – describes the Council's mandates under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, how many times it meets during the year and which regions, fisheries and stocks are managed.
- Get Involved in our Council Process – lists ways to participate in the Council's fishery management decision-making process through the Council's website, by attending a Council meeting and providing written or oral testimony.
- Who Are the Decision Makers? – describes the voting and non-voting Council members along with Council staff and advisory group's roles in the decision-making process.
- How Does the Council Work with Fishermen to Collect Good Fishery Data? - lists several Council-supported initiatives that address permitting and reporting gaps in Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam and CNMI and ways that the public can get involved.



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PSAs: The Council and NOAA-sponsored 2019 Hawai‘i (HI) summer fisheries course high school students completed a 30-second PSA to promote fisheries and answer the question, “What are fisheries, anyway?” The PSA will be shown on HI and other regional TV stations. In addition, Council staff worked with a contractor to develop the first in a planned series of four 30-second PSAs to briefly introduce the Council and highlight a Council-sponsored project done in HI, American Samoa, Guam and CNMI. The first video focuses on American Samoa and the Malaloa 450-foot dock extension project.

Regional Initiatives - HI

Go Fish! radio program: The radio show airs Saturdays from 4 to 5 p.m. and is repeated on Sundays from 7 to 8 a.m. with approximately 7300 weekend listeners on AM 690 and FM 94.3. Podcasts are available on the Council website (www.wpcouncil.org/educational-resources/educational-audio-files) and more recently on the radio station webpage (<https://theanswerhawaii.com/radioshow/659>). Recent interviews have featured COVID-19 effects on fisheries in American Samoa, Guam and CNMI with the help of call ins from Council members Archie Soliai, Michael Dueñas and John Gourley; fisheries in HI and the CARES Act; bottomfish in American Samoa; and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Hawai‘i Bottomfish Heritage Project.

Hawaii Fishing News magazine: Council staff provided articles for the April, May and June 2020 issues. The topics included an update on the saga of the HI swordfish longline fishery and sea turtles, a summary of outcomes from the pelagic small-boat public scoping meetings and the president’s Executive Order on promoting US seafood.

Lawai‘a magazine: Council staff submitted an article for the spring 2020 issue titled “Repurposing Old Bait or Fish Waste.”

HI Advisory Panel (AP) E&O Plans

In early 2020, the HI AP created a plan to participate in 6 fishing tournaments throughout the year to encourage fishermen to get involved in the fishery management process by donating fish to the biosampling program, voluntarily reporting catch data and attending public forums. During three of those tournaments, the AP also planned to address the need for non-commercial data in the uku fishery and sponsor an uku category as a data collection initiative to help with future uku stock assessments. However, COVID-19 related restrictions caused most tournament organizers in HI to cancel. The AP members’ current plan is to attend the following tournaments:

1. Hawaii Fishermen’s Alliance for Conservation and Tradition’s Fishing for Hawai‘i’s Hungry tournament, TBD
2. Maui Trailer Boat Club’s Hanapa’a Shootout, July 24-25, 2020
3. Atlapac’s Obake Tournament, Oct. 25, 2020

Product Development: Council staff developed several handouts to support this effort:



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- Uku and yellowfin tuna fact sheets – provides information on life history, stock status, fishery and market value, management measures and fishery issues.
- Commercial Import vs. Local Tuna Sources in Hawai'i – describes the importance of tuna in Hawaii, including its market value, and gives information about the local fishery.

Small-Boat Pelagic Fisheries E&O Plan

In May, Council staff discussed the pelagic small-boat fishery management options with fishermen, the State of HI, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and NOAA Office of Law Enforcement. Participants agreed to take part in public meetings to scope the options and provide information. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is unknown when large gatherings will be able to reconvene, but staff is working with the HI AP to potentially schedule public meetings in late August 2020. The E&O plan includes getting the word out to the community to increase participation in these meetings, as well as providing information on licensing and reporting to the community through social media in the months leading up to the meetings. Council staff developed a brochure to support this effort titled, “Summary of Participant Issues and Concerns from the Main Hawaiian Island Small-boat Pelagic Fisheries Public Scoping Sessions.”

2021 Lunar Calendar

Council staff and the HI AP are working together to highlight 13 fishing areas around the main Hawaiian Islands. Historical and current information, species commonly caught, gear used and reason the location is important to fishermen will be provided for each of the following areas:

1. Makapu'u Coral
2. Penguin and Middle Banks
3. Bamboo Ridge
4. Mama's Fish House Fish Aggregating Devices
5. Kane'ohe Bay
6. Cross Seamount
7. Aquaculture Cage
8. North Pacific (longline swordfish)
9. South Point
10. Maro Reef
11. The Grounds, Kona
12. Pier 38
13. Northwestern Hawaiian Islands – Mau & Ho'omalu

Regional Initiatives – American Samoa, Guam and CNMI eReporting App E&O Plan

The minimum viable product for the Catchit Logit app is complete and ready to launch in the Territories during summer 2020. Council staff developed an E&O plan with the goals of informing fishermen of the importance of accurate and timely data for fishery management,



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encouraging fishermen to participate in training workshops for eReporting and then using the app to regularly report their catch data.

Webpage: Council staff developed a Catchit Logit app webpage to provide information about the purpose of the app (www.wpcouncil.org/catchit-logit). A new logo was created to brand all associated outreach products.

Product Development: Council staff developed the following infographics (printed in poster, brochure and flyer formats) to support this effort:

- Annual Catch Limits: How do they work? (English/Samoan) - explains the annual catch limit establishment process from NMFS stock assessments through various analyses.
- Where Does my Data Go? (English/Samoan) - describes the fishery data flow from fishermen through scientists to managers and how fishery management decisions affect fishermen.
- Catchit Logit App Suite - describes features of the fisher and vendor apps.

Radio PSAs: Council staff developed radio PSA messages to educate fishermen on the importance of submitting catch data which will air in the Territories.

App Training Workshop: Council staff will lead an eReporting app training workshop in American Samoa in July and in Guam and CNMI in August 2020.

Regional Initiatives – American Samoa (AS)

AS AP Curriculum and Community Outreach Project (Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund XI)

The AS AP created a project that will address areas the members identified as priority E&O targets in their 2020 plan. The curriculum side of the project will produce a 12-episode PSA series focused on AS fisheries for students in the Territory. The AP will collaborate with the local Department of Education and local marine management agencies to conduct a series of teacher workshops to introduce the PSAs and provide resource materials to help teachers include fishery information in their lesson plans.

The other portion of the project is an outreach strategy for public outreach events in AS to deliver information about the fisheries and fishery-related issues to the general public. The AP has identified several events to attend later in 2020 such as fishing tournaments, festivals and outreach events hosted by local and federal resource management agencies. As part of this outreach campaign, the AP will produce a “Know Your Fisheries” brochure focused on the socioeconomic benefits of the fisheries and use a spin the wheel game for the public to answer trivia questions on topics such as fish species identification and anatomy to win “prizes” or Council promotional materials.



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2021 Lunar Calendar

Council staff and the AS AP are working together to gather information and photographs for the 2021 lunar calendar. The theme will be well-known fishing grounds and locations around AS. Highlighted information will include the various fishing methods and gear types used as well as historical and cultural ties to fishing in those locations. Below is a list of the draft locations that have been identified:

1. Ofu Village - enu trap fishing for i'asina
2. Faga'alu Beach - spearfishing for reef species
3. Alao Village - kili (throw net) fishing for lo, akule and i'asina
4. Fagasa Village - village lau fishing for large schools of akule
5. South Bank - bottomfish fishing for deep snappers
6. Aunu'u - bottomfishing for shallow water bottomfish
7. Vaitogi Village - slide bait fishing for sapo'anae (giant trevally)
8. Fatumafuti Village - reef gleaning for invertebrates and fish
9. Runway Point - palolo boat harvest
10. Amouli Village - harvesting of limu fuafua (sea grapes)
11. Tulaga-Malumalu Seamount - alia pelagic trolling
12. Coconut Point - ula-sami (lobster) fishing
13. Leone Bay - fe'e (octopus) spearfishing

Regional Initiatives – Guam

2021 Lunar Calendar

Council staff and the Guam AP are collaborating to gather content. The theme is fishing sites, spots and grounds around Guam with a comparison between historic and current species found and fishing methods. The following locations will be highlighted:

1. Haputo Fish Aggregating Device (FAD)
2. Facpi FAD
3. Hospital Point
4. Galvez Banks
5. Rota Banks
6. 45 Degrees Bank
7. Tumon Bay Marine Protected Area
8. Urunao Point
9. Paseo Platform
10. Cocos Lagoon
11. Asan Cut
12. Agat Bay and Marina
13. Inarajan Seafront



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Regional Initiatives – CNMI

2021 Lunar Calendar

Council staff, island fishers and the CNMI AP are working together on next year's calendar theme—popular fishing grounds around the Marianas. Council staff has started collecting photos and descriptions for 13 areas on and around Saipan, Tinian and Rota:

1. Pona Point, Rota
2. Marpi Reef, Saipan
3. Aguiguan (Goat Island)
4. Chalan Kanoa Double Reef
5. Wing Beach Drop-off
6. Tinian-Saipan Pinnacle
7. Reef Coke
8. Tatsumi Reef, Tinian
9. Fleming Point, Tinian
10. Outside Teteto Beach, Rota
11. As Matmos, Rota
12. Mañagaha Drop-off
13. Esmeralda Bank

Fishing Tournaments

The CNMI had planned 16 fishing events for 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lack of funding, the majority of the fishing tournaments have been canceled. Council staff plans to attend two fishing tournaments in Saipan, if not canceled:

1. Saipan Fishermen's Association International Fishing Tournament, July 25, 2020
2. Apnea Spearfishing Tournament, Aug. 8, 2020

Social Media and Social Chat Groups

Council staff has aggressively utilized social media and social chat groups, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, to share Council updates and regional news.

Facebook (# followers in parenthesis):

- CNMI Fishery AP (826)
- Saipan Deep Bottom Fishing (2,526)
- Saipan Fishermen's Association (24,971)

WhatsApp (# members in parenthesis):

- CNMI Fishery AP (17)
- CNMI's Fishing Community (39)
- CNMI's Fishing Group (63)
- Fisherman's Advisory (33)
- SFA CNMI (18)
- WesPac Island Coordinator (9)