



WESTERN
PACIFIC
REGIONAL
FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL

**181st. Meeting of the
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Laniakea YWCA, 1010 Richards St.
Honolulu, HI 96813**

CNMI Community Report

Community Activities and Issues

a. Bottomfish Fishery Development Project:

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR) has hired (2) project support staff to assist in all Marine Conservation Projects to include the bottomfish vessel the *Kirida*. The individuals are tasked with ensuring that all projects timelines are met to include the management and operations of *Kirida*.

Staff are now working with the Administration in conducting bottomfish training for the Island of Rota. Previously, obtaining NEPA clearance delayed the use of the vessel, however on January 15th, DLNR received clearance. Currently, weather has been a factor in delaying the use of the vessel.

Also with the help of council staff and DLNR updates were made on the insurance coverage of the *Kirida* with Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. Update included adding all parties involved within the insurance policy. The vessel is and continues to be insured under Pacifica Insurance.

Furthermore, maintenance of the vessel has been maintained to include an open account with Micronesian Marine for maintenance and technical assistance.

b. Mandatory License and Reporting Regulation:

With the help of the Council a request for assistance from Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Director to support the implementation of CNMI's Mandatory Data Reporting Regulations as well as improving the DFW Permitting Process by providing an ID Card Machine was met. The Council provided DFW with a ID Card Machine with supplies and identification software that

will be used to create identification cards for fishers as well as streamline their permitting process electronically. DFW has indicated that with the new machine they will purchase a dedicated computer in order to provide security with regard to confidentiality of fishers. In addition, DFW will also train and assign a staffer to operate the machine.

c. Marine Conservation Plan:

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Office of the Lt. Governor conducted outreach activities within the CNMI with regard to updating CNMI's Marine Conservation Plan. Activities included meetings with community members, Mayor's from each Island as well as obtaining recommendations from CNMI's Advisory Panel Members. DLNR also conducted an electronic Survey (Survey Monkey) which was sent to resident emails and social media platforms. Survey collected 100 completed responses. A total of 77 written responses were also collected on how MCP funds would be spent.

A draft report and recommendations was submitted to Lt. Governor Arnold Palacios for his review and approval. Upon receiving approval from the Lt. Governor Palacios, DLNR Secretary forwarded CNMI's Marine Conservation Plan to the Council on February 5, 2020.

d. DLNR \$64,000.00 Sub-Award Agreement with Saipan Fishermen's Association (SFA)

With the support CNMI's Governor's Office, DLNR has awarded \$64,000.00 to the Saipan Fishermen's Association Community Outreach Program to conduct youth outreach activities with regard to fisheries. SFA will hold classroom activities and outdoor practical exercises to include conservation of the environment, fish identification, vessel safety, CPR and First Aid, Tournament planning and fundraising, fishing techniques from trolling, deep and shallow bottomfishing, shoreline casting, net throwing skills and spear fishing. Lastly SFA will use the funds to promote fisheries by funding (4) issues of the SFA Marianas Pond Magazine.

e. CNMI Austerity Measures

Governor's office has reported that due to the lingering economic effects of Super Typhoon Yuta and the Novel Coronavirus, tourism has dropped and has affected CNMI's economy greatly. The Governor's office issued a directive on February 7, 2020 to all departments implementing a 64-hour work schedule and cost-containment measures beginning March 15, 2020.