

2020

JAN. 25, 2020–FEB. 11, 2021



Amerika Samoa Lunar Calendar

Western Pacific Regional
Fishery Management Council





The Council provided a **seafood handling training** for local fishing crews from longline and *alia* fishing boats in 2014. John Kaneko, head of the Hawaii Seafood Council, joined Nelson Aberilla from the United Fishing Agency to conduct the training in Pago Pago. Participants were given fish handling training by Kaneko, and a hands-on fish cutting demonstration by Aberilla. The Council also assisted local seafood vendors by supporting a week-long **Sanitation Control Procedures course** presented by Kaneko for stores, fish markets and restaurant owners in American Samoa. The course combined classroom lessons and on-site visit to local businesses. Participants received a critical control points certification from the Hawaii Seafood Council for completing the course.

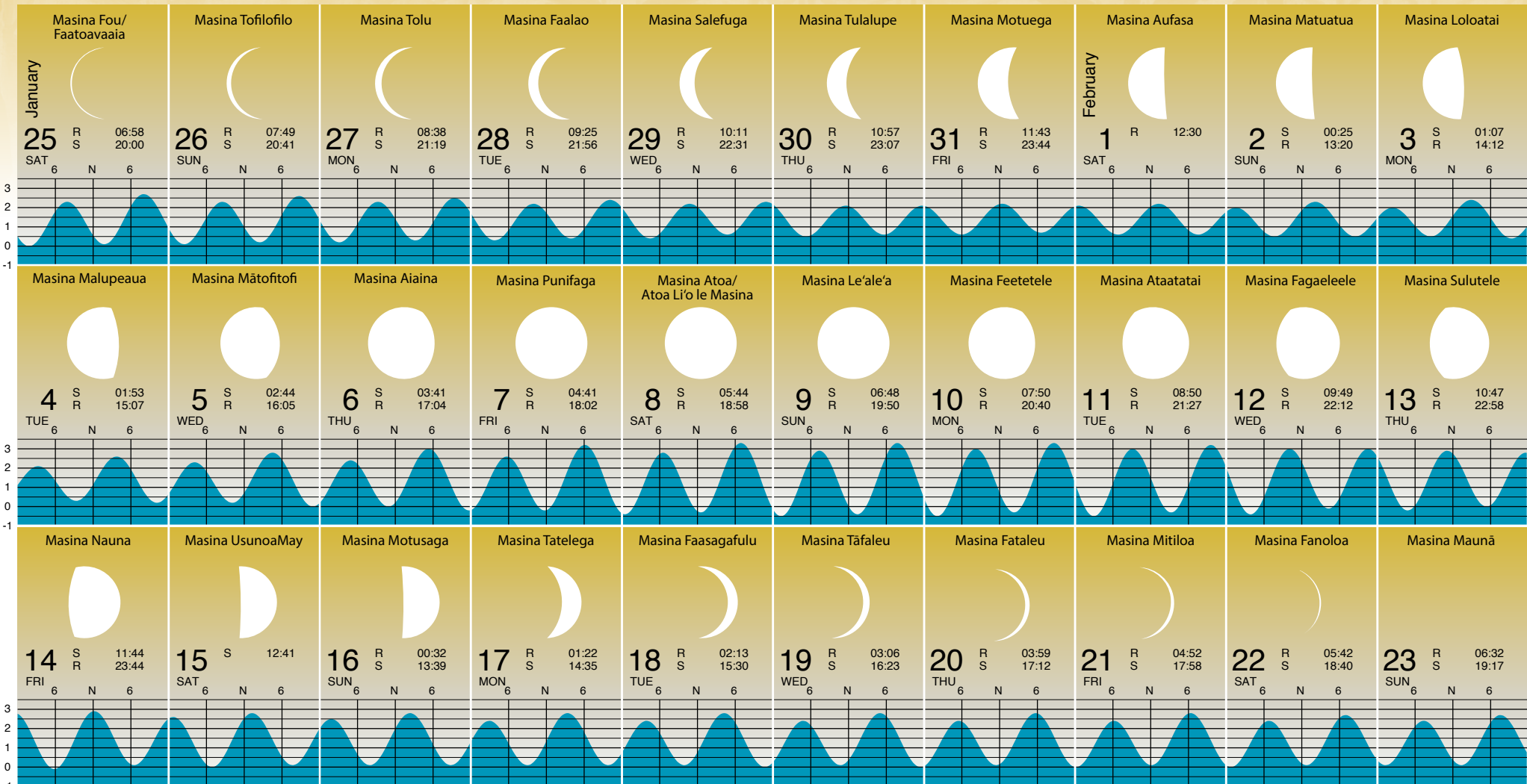


Above and inset: Nelson Aberilla preparing to conduct a demonstration of cleaning and filleting a yellowfin tuna for longline and *alia* fishermen. **Right:** Longline owners and crew members with Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds (in red), John Kaneko (front row, third from left), Nelson Aberilla (front row, second from left) and Council staff after a training exercise. PHOTOS: ETENAU GA LUTU



Toeutuvā

Ianuari 25–Fepuari 23, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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The first customers at Island Fisheries Inc.'s grand opening in 2019. *Inset: Matalapo'a & asiasi* (bigeye and yellowfin tuna) and *saula-oso* (marlin) fillets for sale shown in display cases. PHOTOS: COUNCIL STAFF

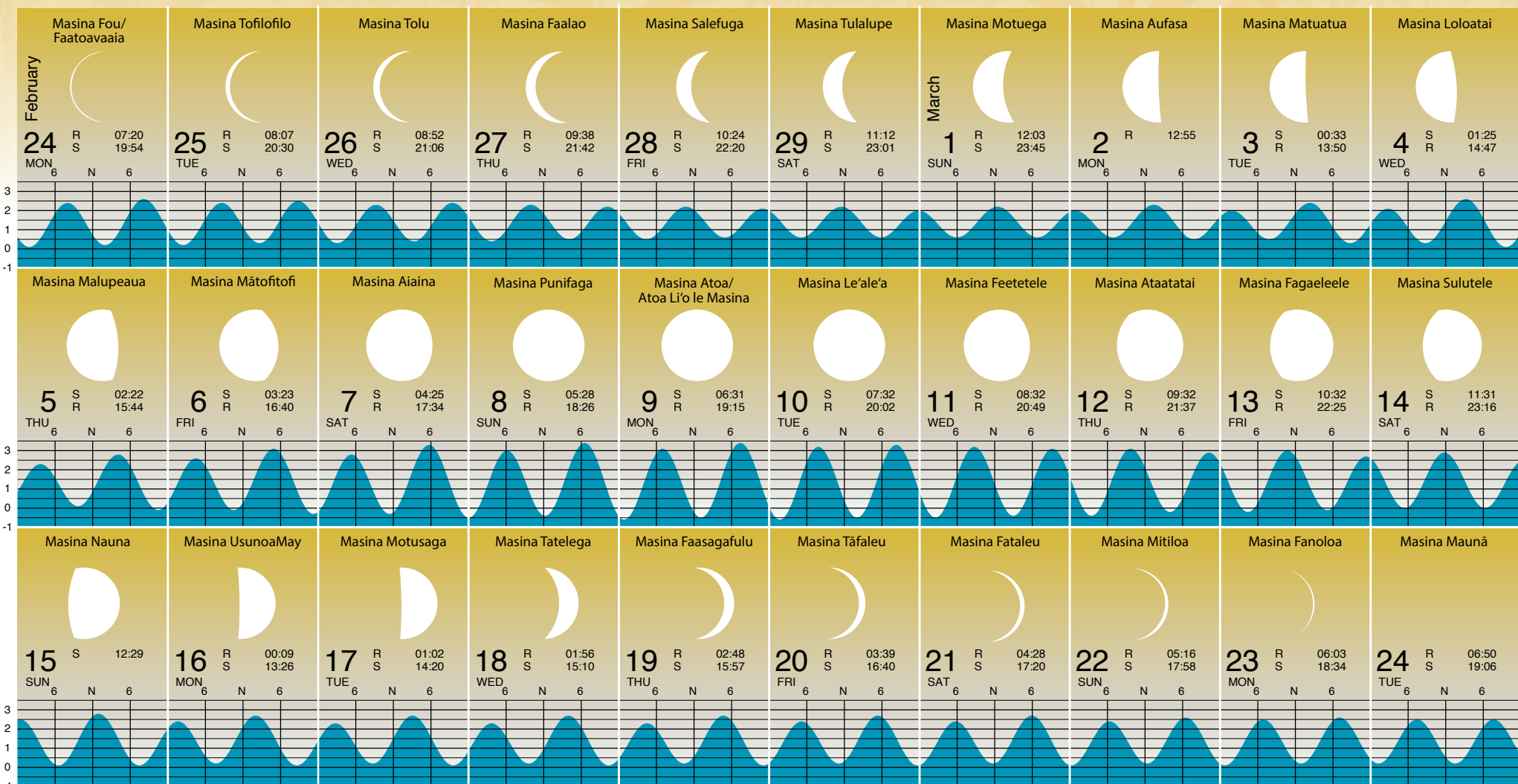


The Council supported the construction of a fish market at the Fagatogo Marketplace in 2009 designed to provide a hub for American Samoa fishermen to sell their catch and eliminate the need for roadside cooler stands. The market allowed fishermen to sell whole fish or to prepare value-added products. It was equipped with a walk-in freezer, a table saw for cutting large fish, and heavy duty displays to hold fish and ice. The Council also worked with the local government to renovate the market in 2014, adding a walk-in refrigerator, floor drainage, a stainless steel prep area and glass cold displays. The market is currently leased by Island Fisheries Inc., a company that buys fish from local fishing boats for retail and export to off-island markets.



Fa'aafu

Fepuari 24 – Mati 24, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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Scholarship graduate Valentine Vaeoso conducts a coral survey as part of her work as a marine ecologist with the National Park of American Samoa. PHOTO: VALENTINE VAEOSO



The US Pacific Territories Fishery Capacity-Building Scholarship Program was developed by the Council's Education Committee to address the lack of local capacity in fisheries management in the US Pacific Island territories. The Council, with National Marine Fisheries Service funding support, provides scholarships to qualified students with the agreement they return to the Territories to work for the local government after graduating. Five students from American Samoa have been accepted to attend Universities in Hawai'i to earn degrees in marine-related areas. The first graduate of the program from American Samoa, Fa'asalafa Kitiona, received her degree in marine science and returned to work for the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources in 2018 serving as the priority watershed coordinator in the Department's Coral Reef Advisory Group Division. Also in 2018, Valentine Vaeoso graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and returned to work for the National Park of American Samoa as a marine ecologist.

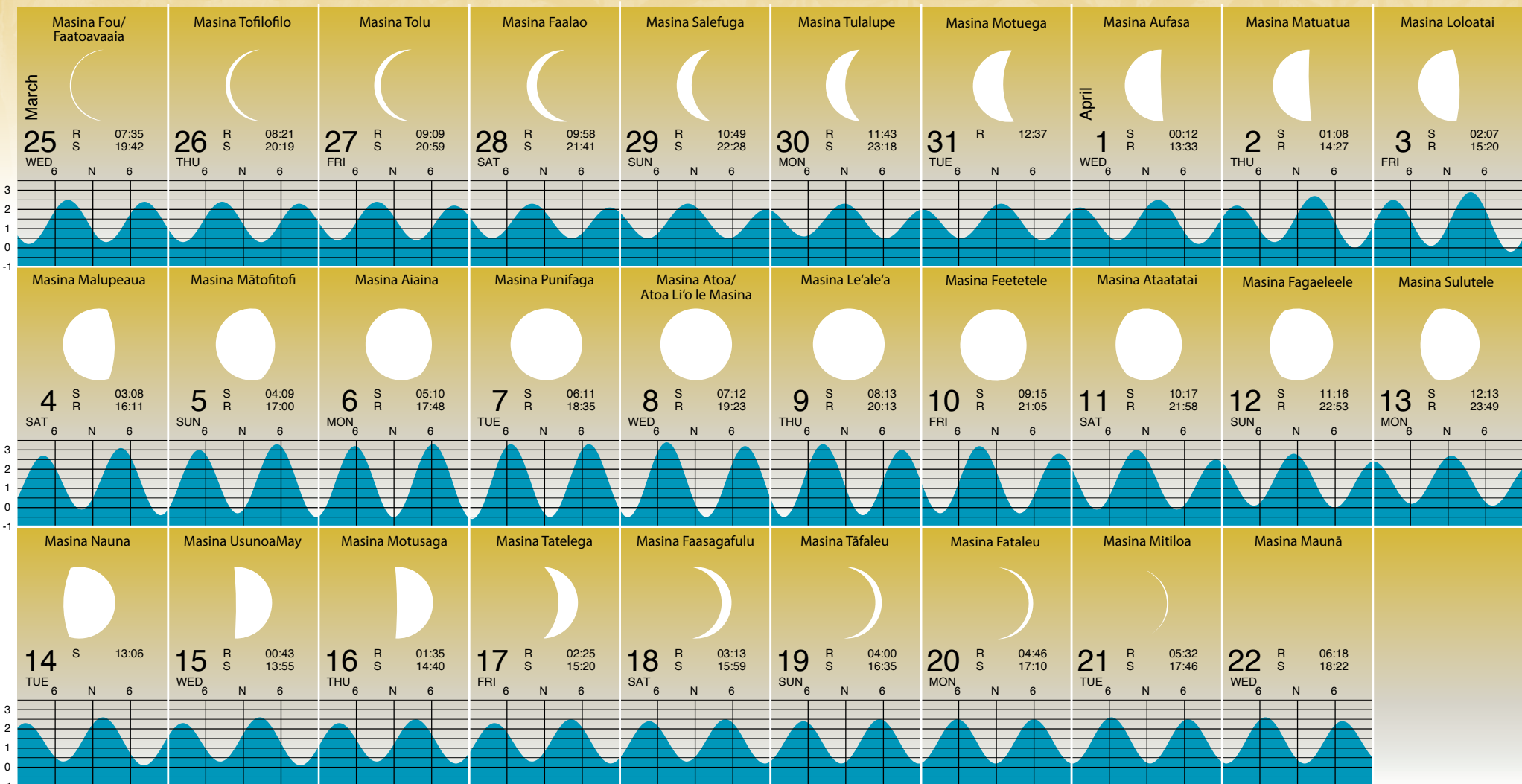
Check out the Council website in early 2020 to find information and an application for scholarships starting in academic year 2020-21, www.wpcouncil.org.



Valentine Vaeoso (left) and Fa'asalafa Kitiona (right), graduates from the Council's scholarship program, have returned to American Samoa to work in local marine management capacities. Also pictured is Council member Henry Sesepasara, director of the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF

Fānoga

Mati 25– Aperila 22, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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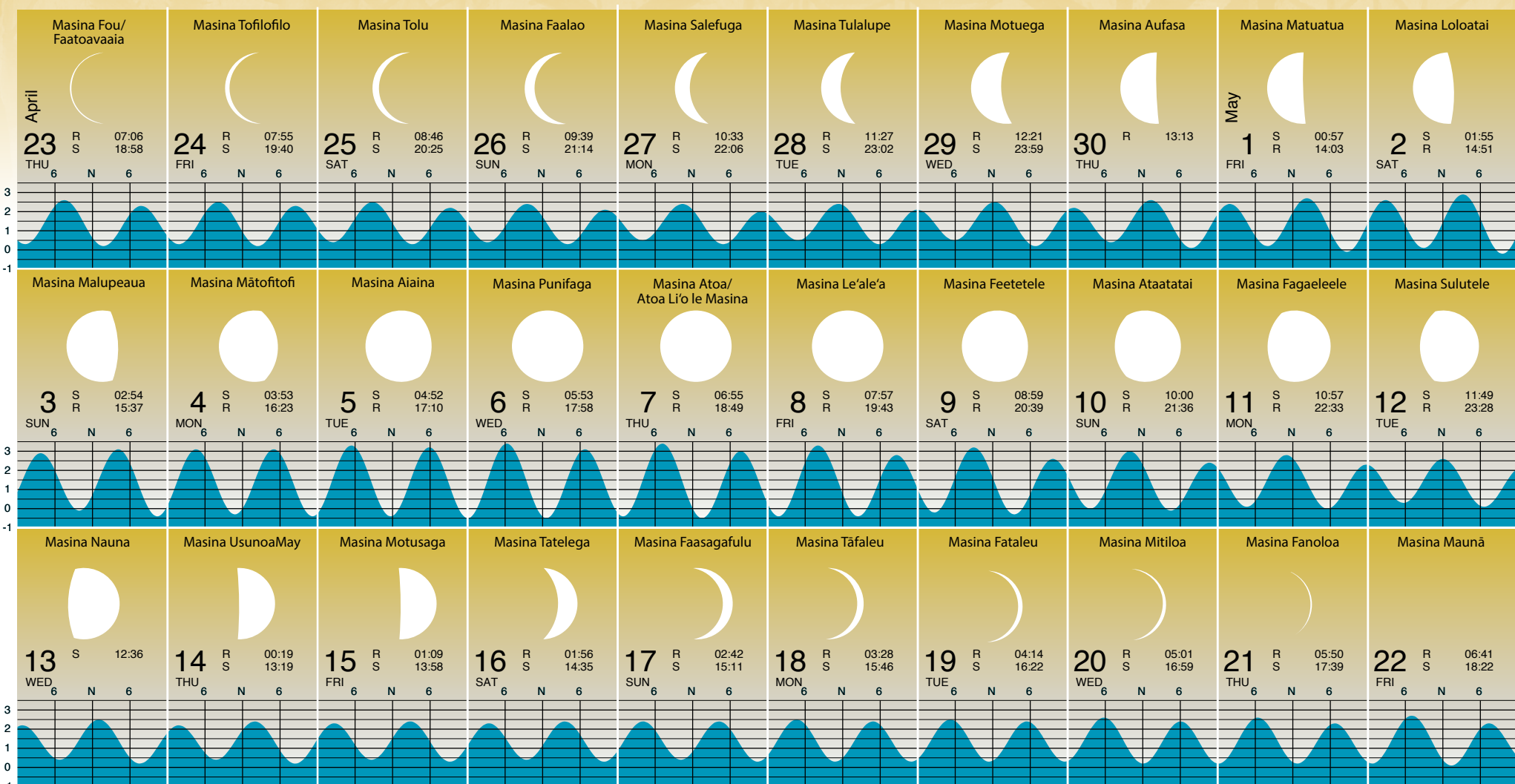
The Council, with assistance from the National Marine Fisheries Service, funds an **annual summer high school program in American Samoa** that introduces students to fisheries and how marine resources are managed by the Council, the local and federal governments, and community members. This three-week program features a mix of classroom and field settings. The Council supports an instructor who works with various partners to give hands-on lessons in fishing methods, data collection, resource management, sailing and wayfaring and aquaculture. Students also receive first aid and CPR certification and learn to prepare and cook with locally caught fish.

[1] Students Jared Nu'u and d'Angelo Yamson reel in a wahoo on their first ever fishing trip. See the boys' catch on the calendar's back cover. PHOTO: RUSS COX [2] Students learn how to prepare locally caught fish at a cooking demonstration. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF [3] Gataivai Talamoa provides a scuba gear demonstration at the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center's Lion's Park compound PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF [4] Paula McDonald teaches students to paddle outrigger canoe at the South Pacific Water Sports & Fitness. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF [5] Program participants learn about the tuna industry at StarKist cannery. PHOTO: JOSEPH FA'AITA

The announcement for the summer program is posted in the spring on the Council website and distributed locally on a flyer. For more information, contact Nate Ilaoa: nate.ilaoa@wpcouncil.org, (684) 272-2630.

Aununu

Aperila 23–Me 22, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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[1] The public tours the longline and purse-seine vessels that supply the local cannery with tuna. [2] Visitors learn about soil and water conservation. [3] Council member Michael Dueñas (Guam) and Council advisory panel member Basil Oshiro (Hawai'i) give a bottomfishing line demonstration. [4] Families enjoy a fishing boat tour. PHOTOS: COUNCIL STAFF

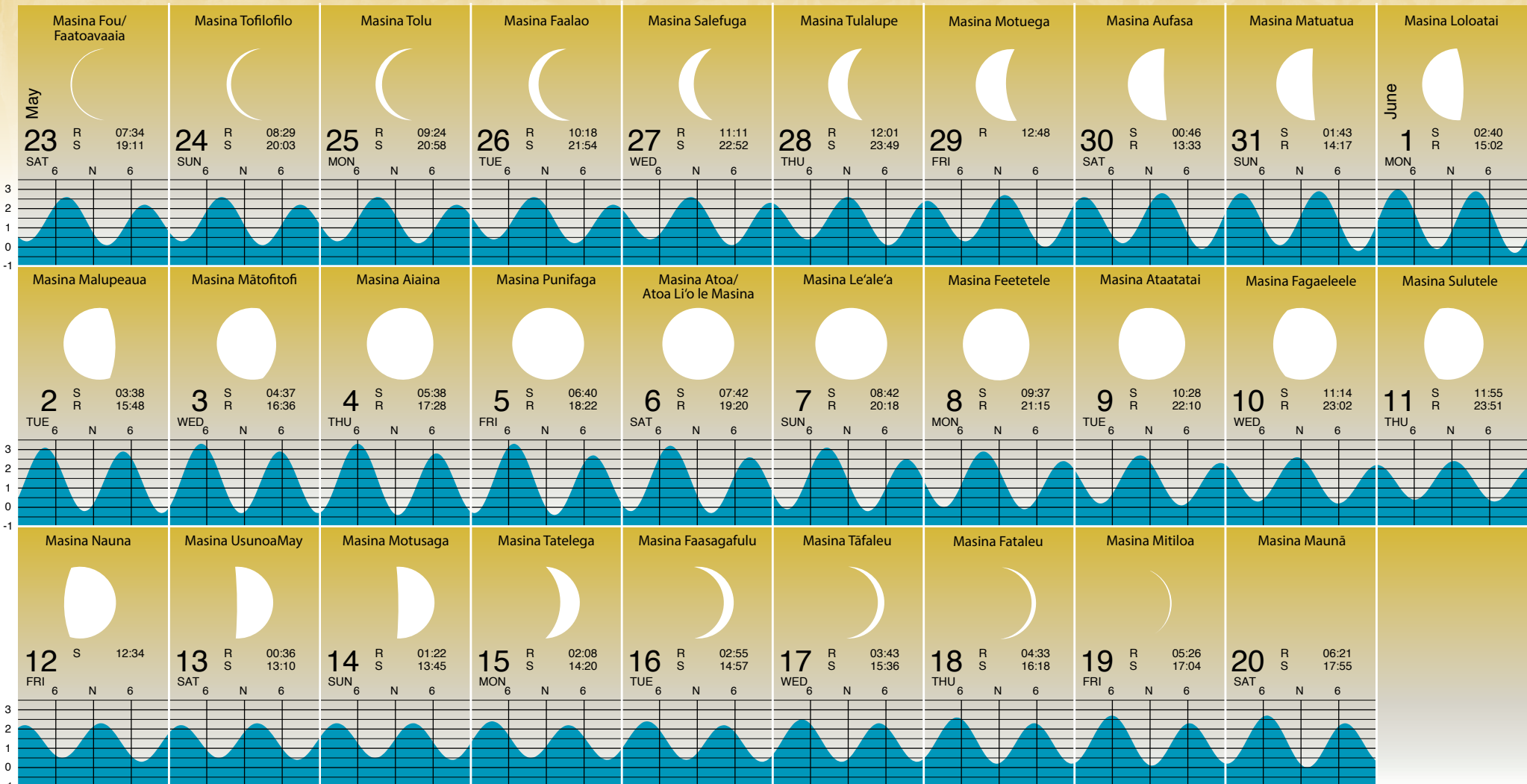


In October 2015, the Council hosted a **Fishers Forum event** at the main port dock in Fagatogo Village. The event educated the public about the different fisheries in American Samoa and provided information on the various vessel and gear types associated with those fisheries. The public toured tuna fishing vessels and visited many agency, industry and community booths to learn about fisheries-related activities in the territory.



Oloāmanu

Me 23–Juni 20, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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The Council partnered in the **Exploring Muliava from a Ta'ū Perspective project** funded by a NOAA Marine National Monument grant in 2015 to expose students from Manu'a High School to environmental monitoring skills. The project was organized by the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources (DMWR), the Council and NOAA Ocean Watch-Central Pacific with the cooperation of the American Samoa Department of Education, American Samoa Community College and Manu'a District Governor Paramount Chief Misaalefua Hudson.

Muliava is the traditional name for Rose Atoll, which became a Marine National Monument in 2009. Because funds and permission to visit Rose Atoll are hard to come by, the project aimed to teach the students about Rose Atoll by teaching them about Ta'ū. Muliava is considered a part of the Manu'a Islands, which also includes the islands of Ta'ū, Ofu and Oloseaga.

The project entailed staff members from the American Samoa DMWR leading the high school students in three modules:

- 1) Coral reef monitoring methods utilized by Reef Check: The trainers led the students through classroom lectures and water safety lessons before the group headed to the ocean to count fish and measure reef coverage.
- 2) Geological formation of the islands and anticipated impacts of climate change: Students were given hands-on lessons on water quality testing and constructing beach profiles.
- 3) Creel surveys: Conducted throughout the Territory, these surveys are completed in order to estimate catch and effort of the coral reef and bottomfish fisheries. DMWR and the Council use the data to manage the fisheries and set annual catch limits.



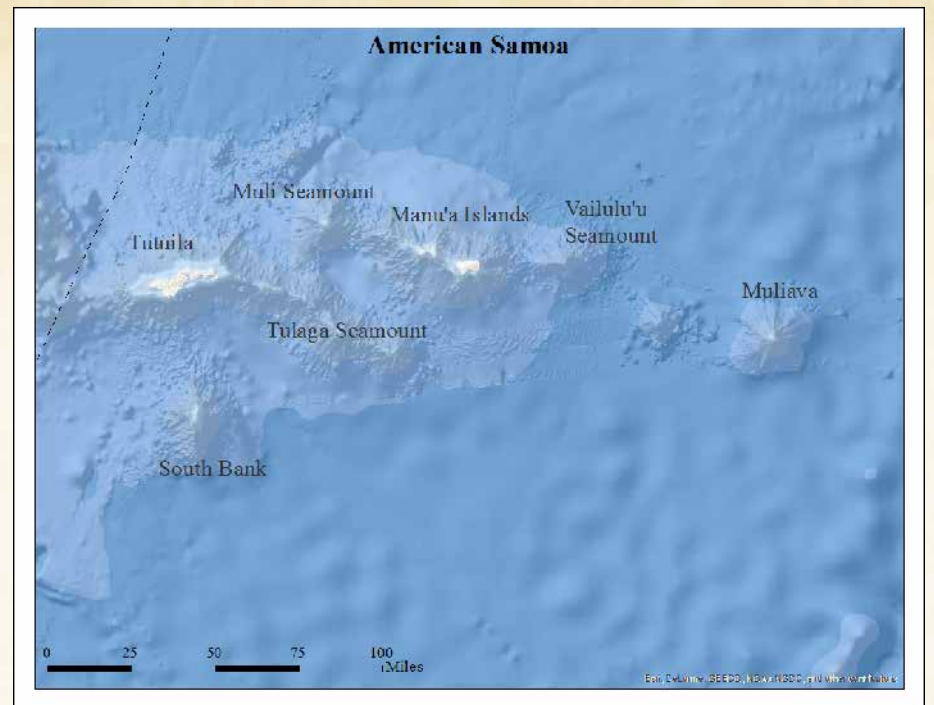
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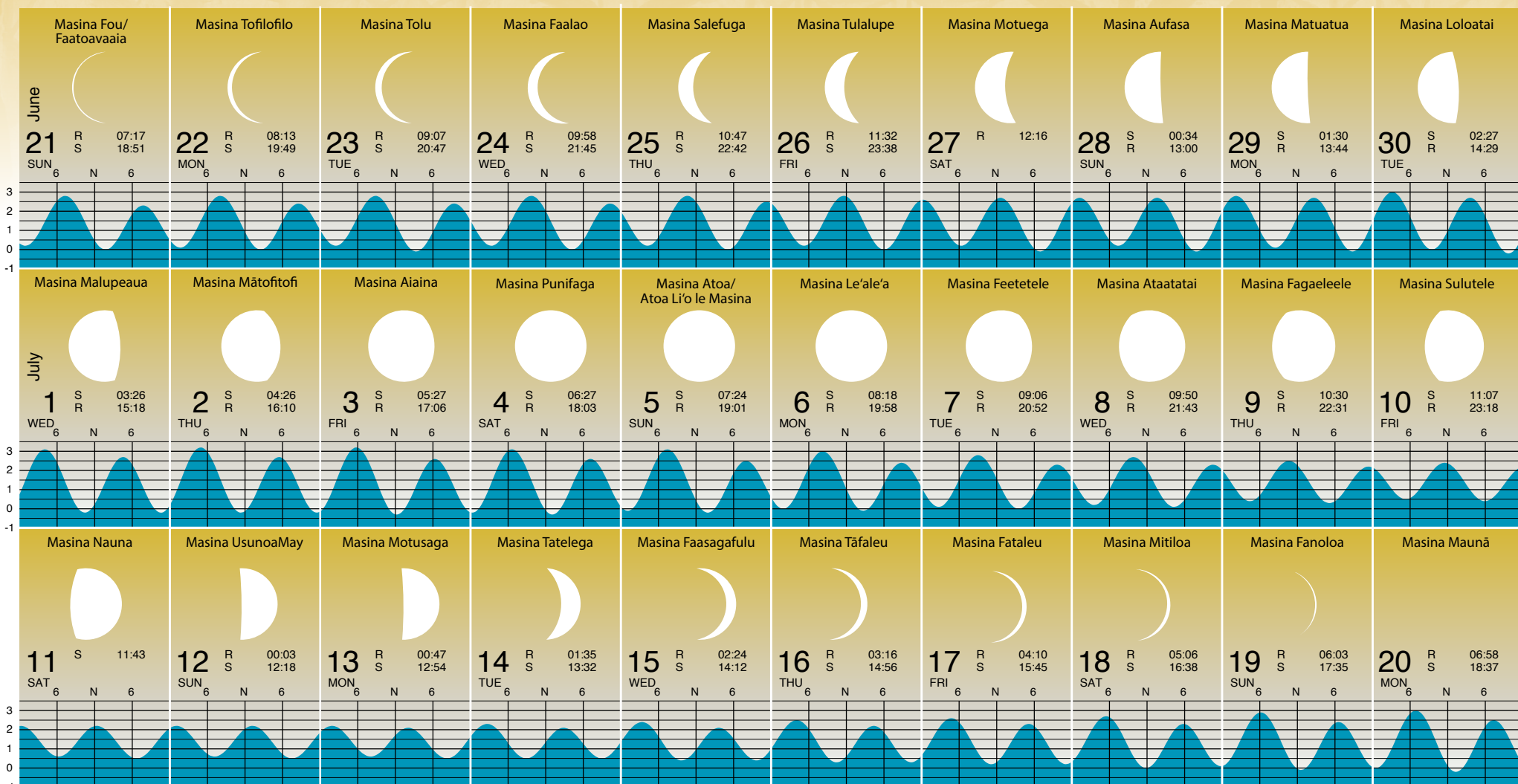
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[1] American Samoa DMWR staff members Mareike Sudek, Trevor Kaitu'u and Alice Lawrence with Manua High School students during the Muliava Outreach Project's first module on Ta'ū Island. [2-3] Students gather and record data as part of the ocean module of the Ta'ū education project. PHOTOS: TREVOR KAITU'U

Lotuaga

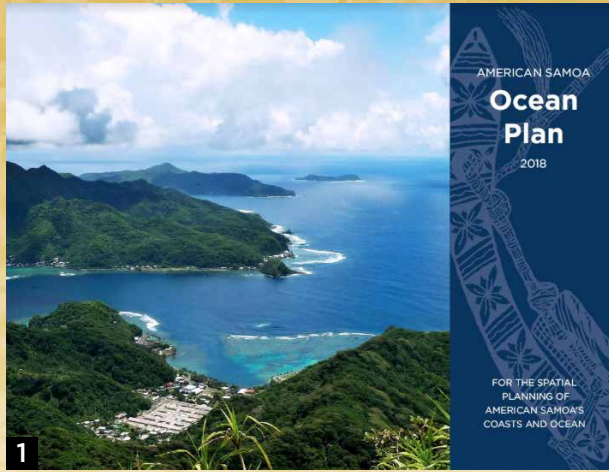
Juni 21–Iulai 20, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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[1] The American Samoa Ocean Plan was officially published in November 2018. [2] Community engagement meetings were held in the Eastern, Central and Western Districts of Tutuila and in the Manu'a Islands. [3] The American Samoa Ocean Planning Team included representatives from local and federal agencies, fishing industry and Council Family members.

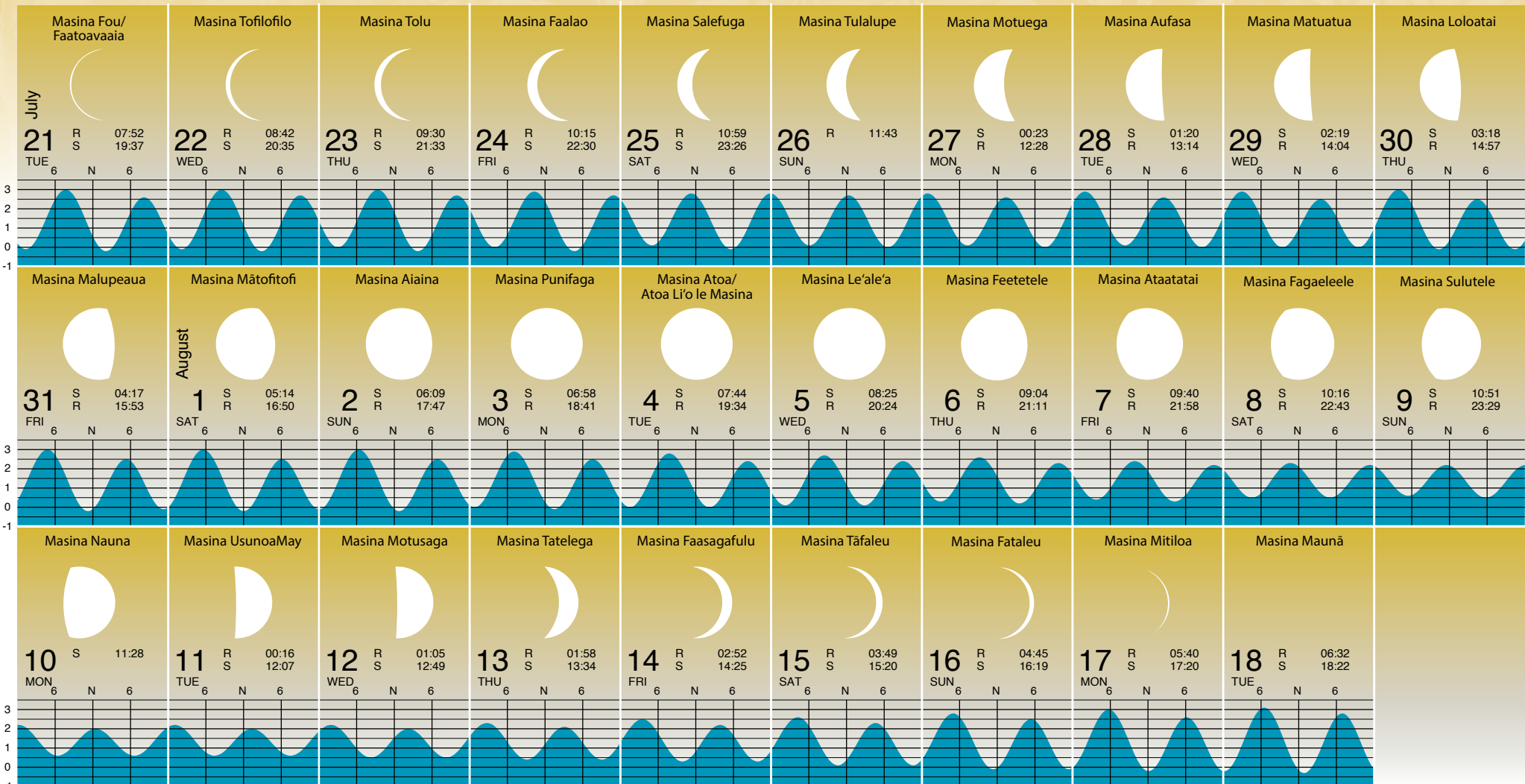
ALL PHOTOS: SARAH PAUTZKE



The Council assisted NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service and the Territory's Regional Planning Body (RPB) in developing an **Ocean Plan for American Samoa**. Previous to the plan development, the Council organized a Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) workshop in Utulei Village for local government and federal agency representatives in American Samoa. The Council also provided travel funds for the American Samoa Departments of Port Administration and Commerce staffs to attend CMSP training in Hawai'i and the mainland United States to be a part of the team that would drive the Ocean Plan development.

Tu'iefu

Iulai 21–Aukuso 18, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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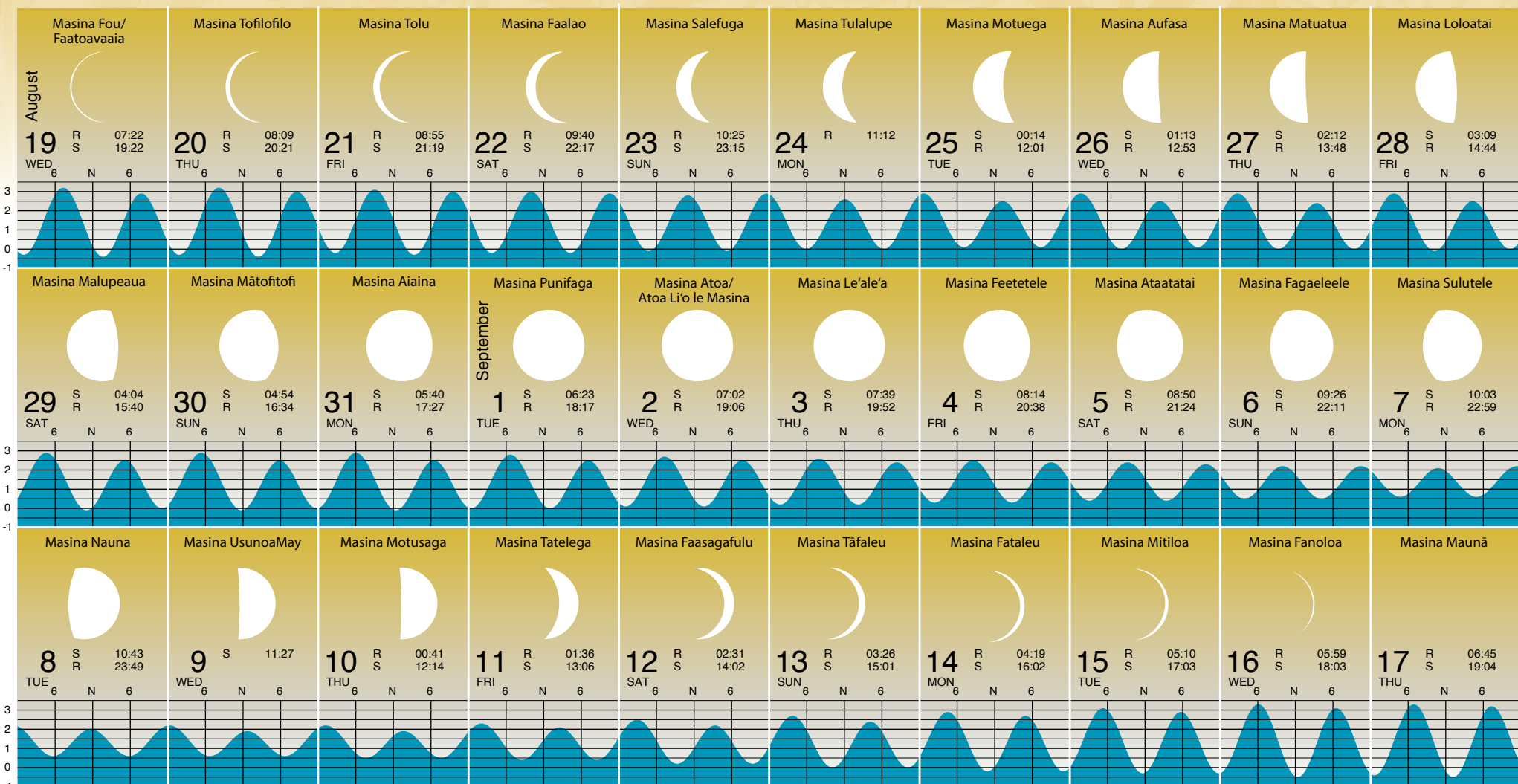


[1] Priti Smith, contracted under the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), assists DMWR by interviewing a *kili* (net) fisherman. [2] Territorial Science Initiative contractor Mac Aveina assists a Western District fish market owner with completing his account of seafood purchased from local fishers. [3-5] Mac Aveina trains local store owners on completing commercial receipt log books. [6] Priti Smith collects data from a shore fisherman. PHOTOS: MAC AVEINA AND PRITI SMITH

The Council assisted the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources (DMWR) with its **data collection efforts** by supporting two contractors to work within the department to increase creel survey collection in areas that were normally not covered, as well as during hours that the department was unable to cover due to government restrictions on overtime. The contractors collected information on American Samoa's seasonal run fisheries and conducted structured interviews of local fishermen. This assistance helped DMWR establish its commercial receipt book program. The contractors worked with local vendors to enroll and train them in the program, while also developing an identification card system that DMWR utilized to implement its new requirement for fishermen to have a valid identification card to sell catch to seafood vendors.

Mulifā

Aukuso 19–Setema 17, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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The Council, StarKist Samoa Co. and the NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) collaborated to help the American Samoa longline fleet receive **certification from the Marine Steward Council (MSC)**. The certification promotes sustainable practices in the longline fishery and allows the local fleet to deliver MSC albacore to support StarKist and its new MSC Blue Harbor Co. label.

[1] American Samoa's longline fleet now delivers MSC-certified tuna to the StarKist facility. PHOTO: KRISTA CORRY

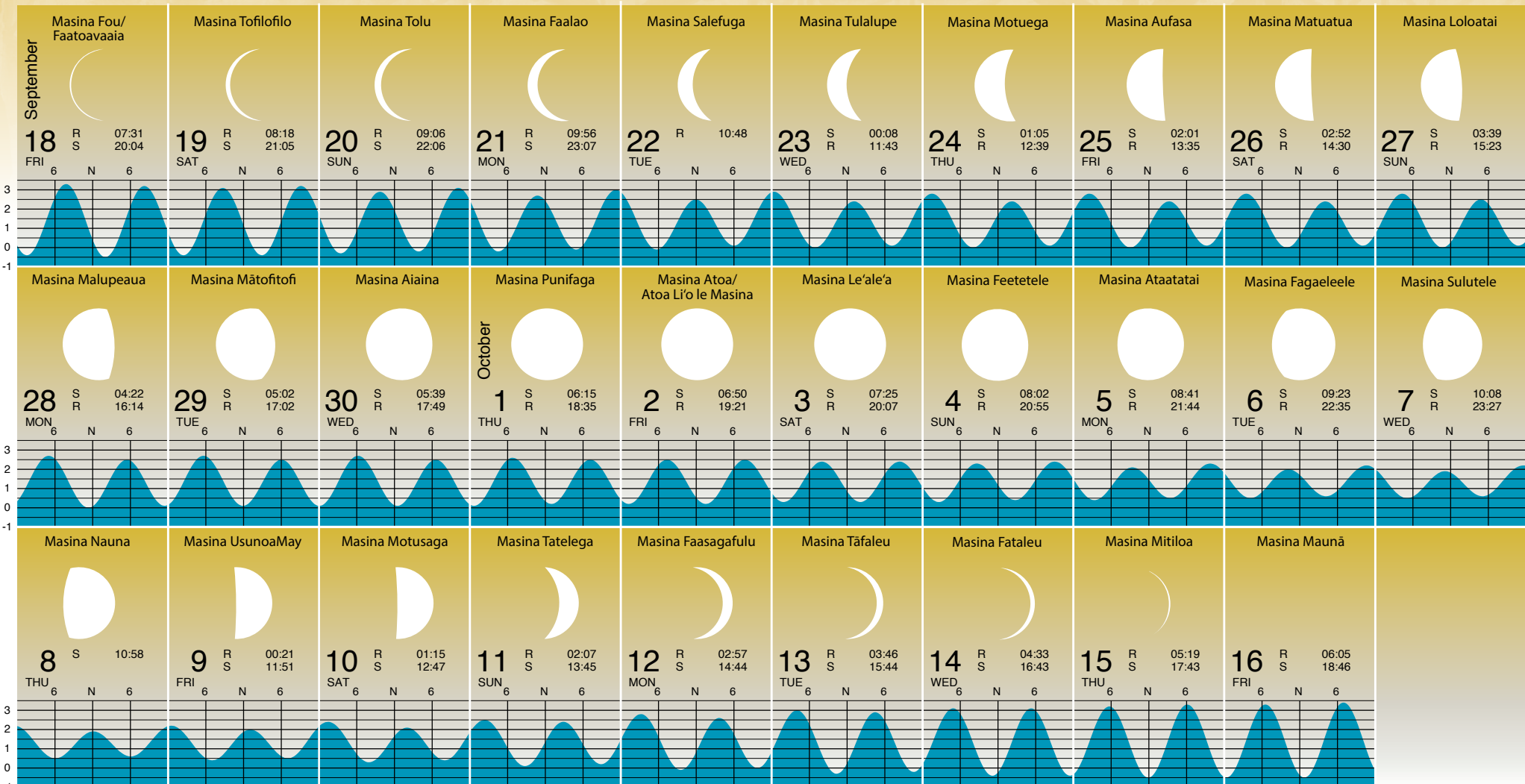
[2] Crew members of the *Sivaimoana* offload their MSC-certified catch at the StarKist dock in Atu'u Village. PHOTO: KRISTA CORRY

[3] The crew of the *Mana O Le Moana* at the main port dock. PHOTO: KRISTA CORRY

[4] StarKist Samoa, the Council and NOAA PIRO supported the local longline fleet's Marine Stewardship Council certification. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF

Pālolo mūa

Setema 18–Oketopa 16, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities

Palolo harvest dates: Oct 6–7.



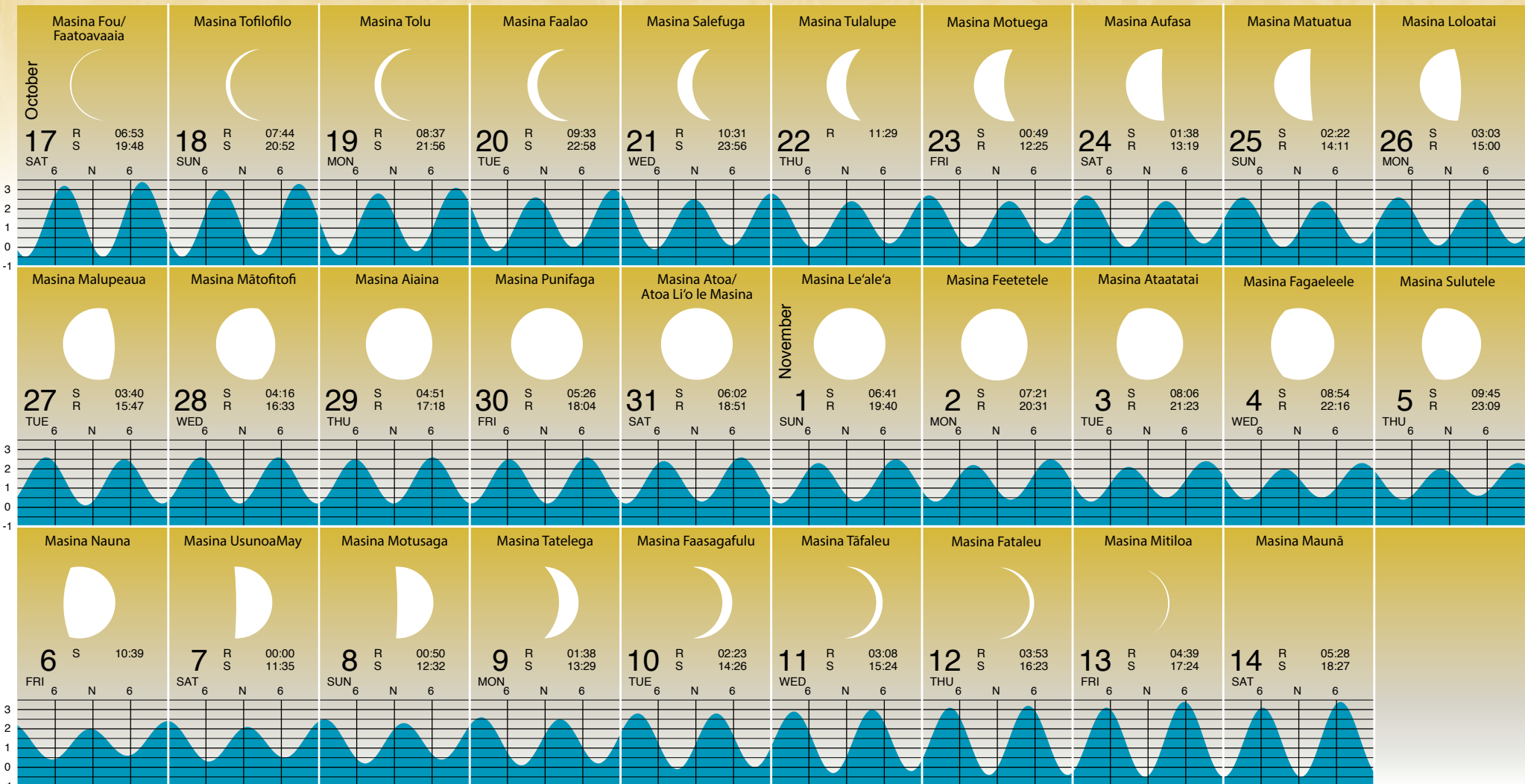
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To address a lack of docking space for the American Samoa longline fleet, the Council supported local government efforts to create a **dedicated dock space** for the fleet. The Malaloa Marina dock was previously restricted to sports fishing and transient vessels as it was built with Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration funds. The Council assisted the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources in coordinating with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to conduct an appraisal of the cost of the outer edge of the Malaloa Marina dock and come to an agreement on the purchase of that section of the dock for longline vessels. The area that will be made available to commercial boats is 11,631 square feet, or roughly 39 percent of the total dock area. **Above:** The Malaloa Marina dock's outer edge will now be available to the local longline fleet. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF

Pālolo muli

Oketopa 17–Novema 14, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities

Palolo harvest dates: Nov 5–6.



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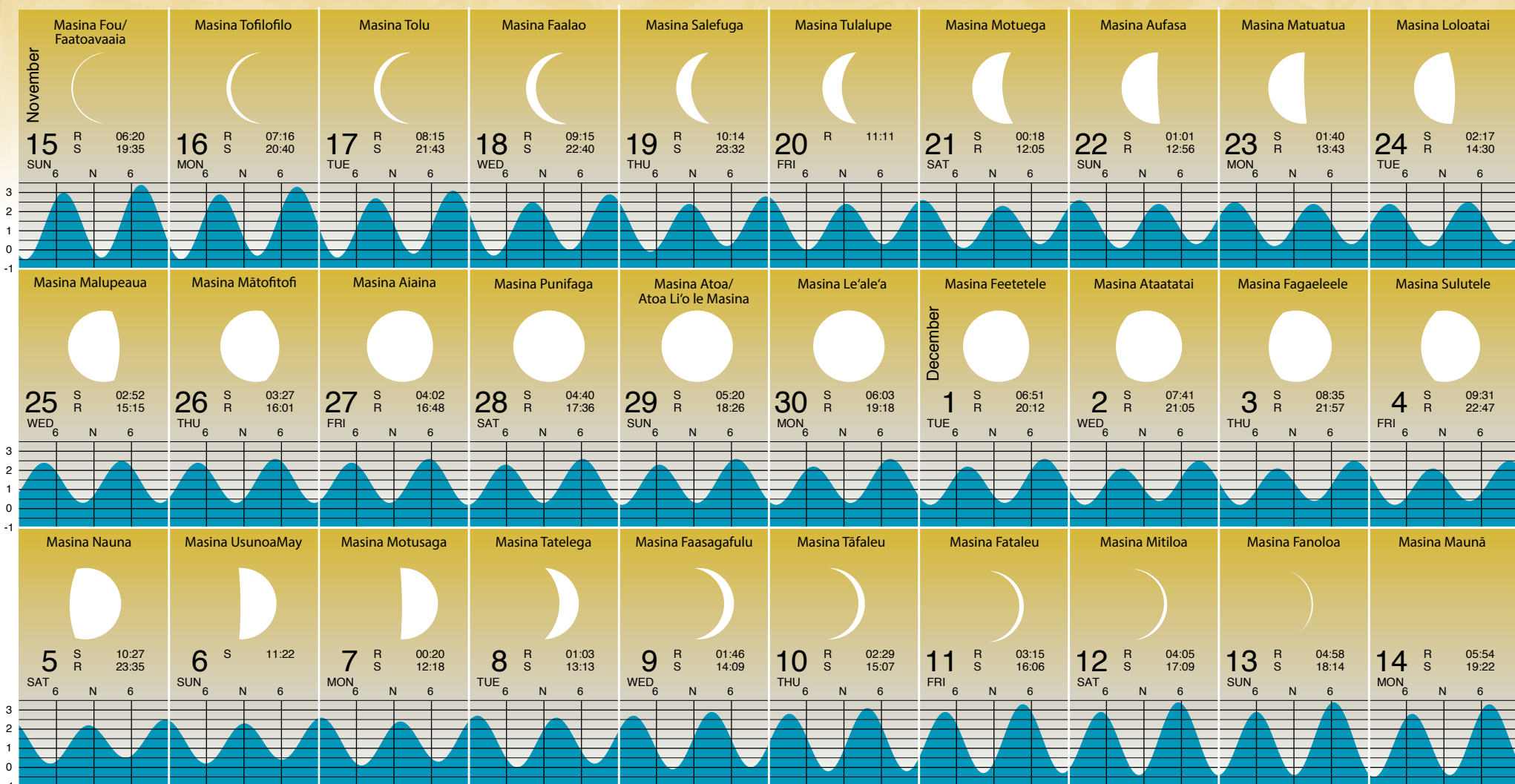
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- [1] DMWR staff member Tepora Lavatai collects catch data on this black marlin caught by the crew of the *Double Trouble*.
PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF
- [2] Captain Leuma Sue (second from left) and the crew of the *Salvation* took home the grand prize of a Penn International 80 gold reel for the heaviest fish—a 124.2-pound marlin.
PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF
- [3] One crew from Manu'a made the trip to participate in the tournament—Captain Clint Ilaoa and the *Avaiki*.
PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF

The 2nd Pago Pago Open Fishing Tournament was held in October 2019, just prior to the 180th meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. The Council and the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources coordinated and hosted the tournament, which received sponsorship support from Pago Pago Trading Company, American Samoa Power Authority, StarKist Samoa, POP Fishing and Marine and the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group. The free tournament was open to all small fishing vessels in American Samoa. Fifteen vessels competed, including one from Manu'a Islands. Some of the participating captains invited Council members from Hawai'i, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to fish with them.

Taumafamua

Novema 15–Tesema 14, 2020



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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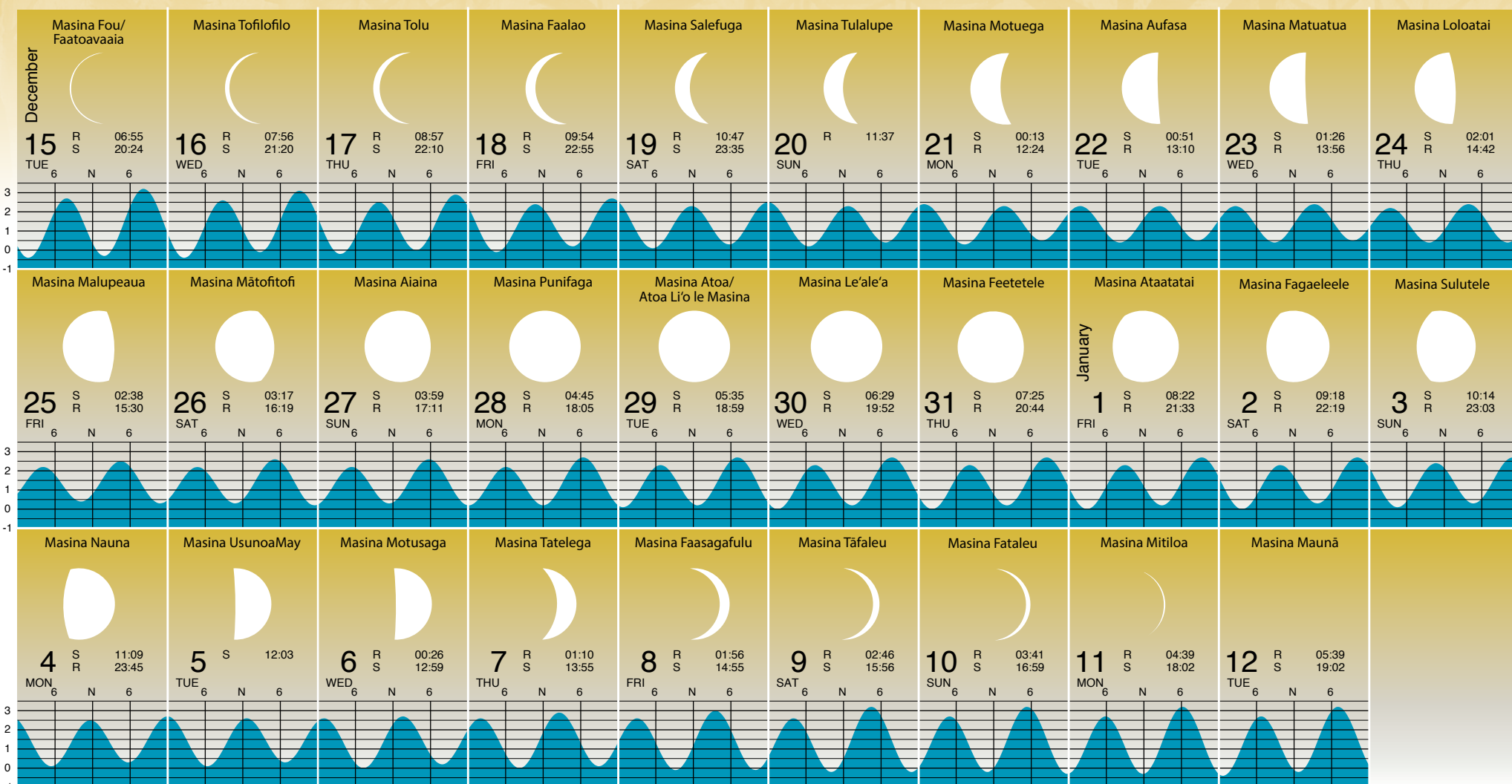
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[1] *Alia* are used for both fishing and transporting residents between Aunu'u and the main island of Tutuila. [2] Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds, DMWR Director Henry Sesepasara and Lt. Gov. Lemanu Peleti Mauga at the dedication of the boat ramp at Faga'alu Village. [3] Simonds and Mauga cut the ribbon to dedicate the Faga'alu Village boat ramp. [4] Dedication of the Ofu Harbor boat ramp and fuel and ice facilities. [5]: The Council supported 500-gallon fuel tanks and trailers for Manu'a-based *alia* fishermen. PHOTO 1: MARY LANSING MANUA. PHOTOS 2-5: COUNCIL STAFF.

The Council has partnered with American Samoa to help **develop its *alia* fishery** in various ways. The Council supported fishermen and chiefs on Aunu'u island by providing an ice machine and storage bin for the fishermen who depend on fish for both subsistence and commercial uses. The machine was installed at the Department of Public Works building adjacent to the Aunu'u boat ramp. In addition, the Council assisted *alia* fishermen with boating access throughout the territory by funding the boat ramp construction in Manu'a, and on Tutuila in the villages of Faga'alu and Tafuna. Fuel and ice-making facilities were also provided for Manu'a fishing boats on Ta'ū and Ofu Islands.

Toetaumafa

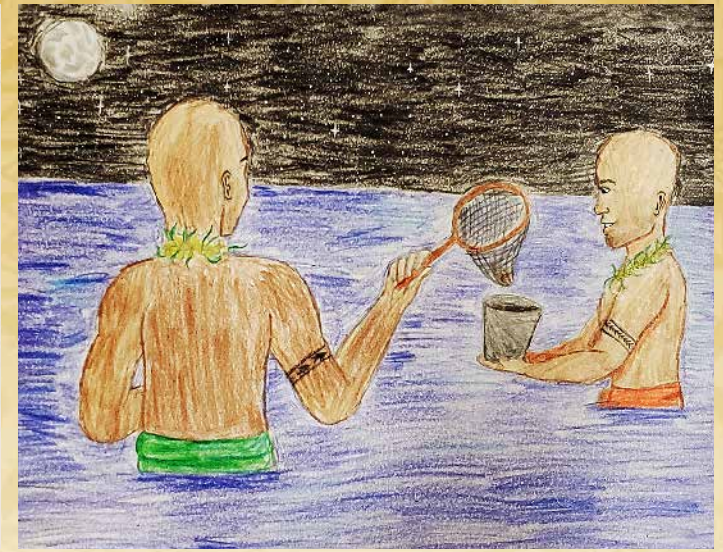
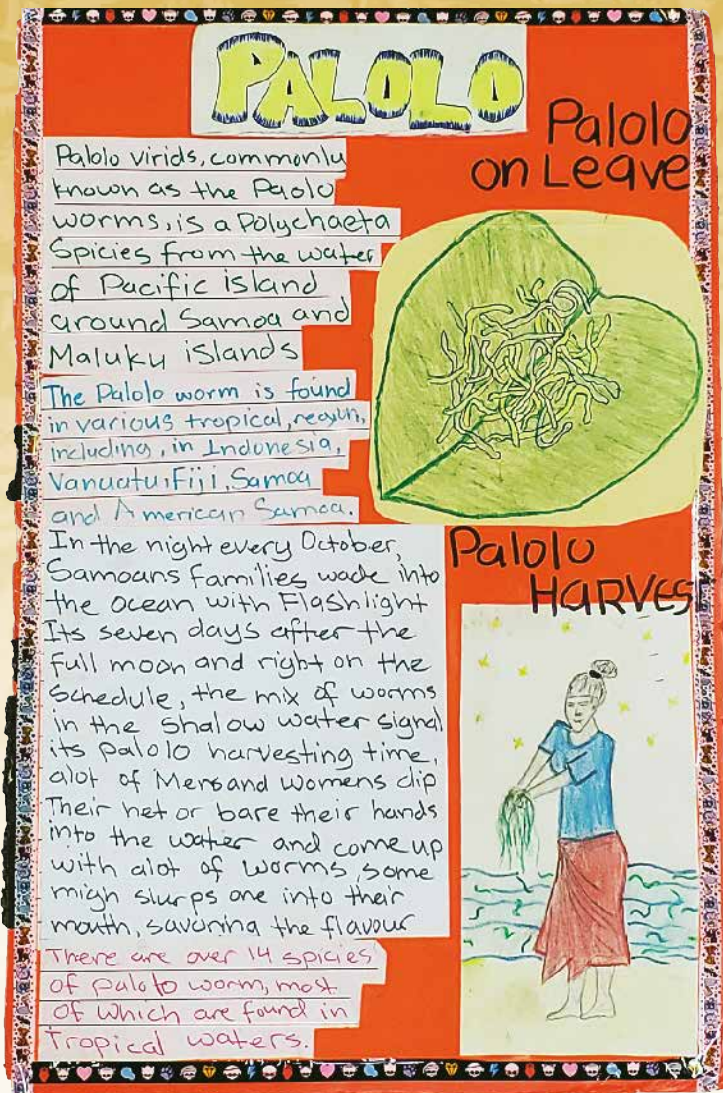
Tesema 15, 2020–Ianuari 12, 2021



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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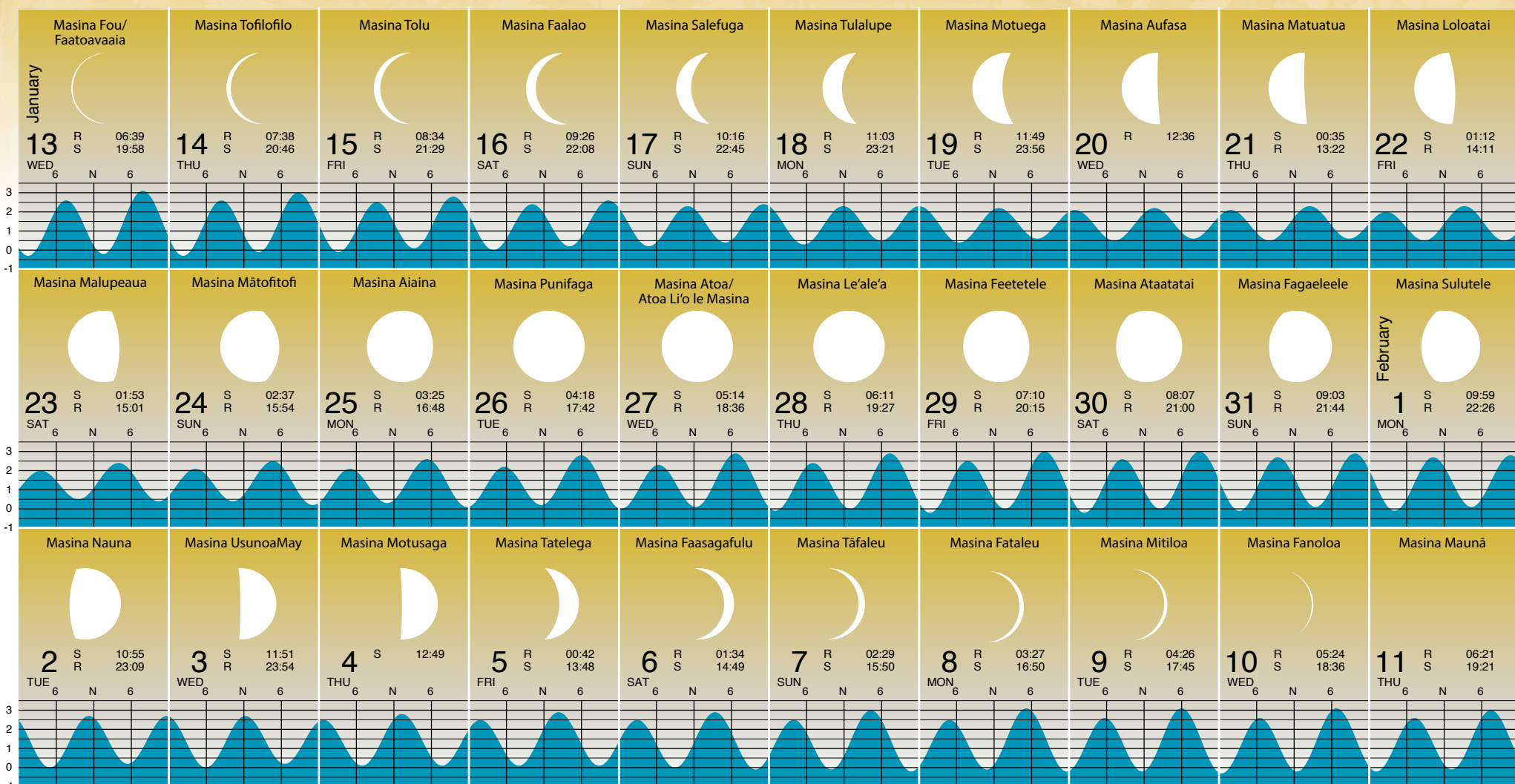
Palolo harvest poster contest entries from students in grades pre-K to 12 in American Samoa addressing the theme "American Samoa Palolo Harvest: Science and Tradition."

ARTWORK: AMERICAN SAMOA STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE 2019 PALOLO HARVEST POSTER CONTEST SPONSORED BY THE COUNCIL.

The Council promotes traditional knowledge and fishing practices by highlighting special occurrences, such as the spring **palolo (*Palola viridis*) harvest in American Samoa**, through its newsletters, lunar calendars and community-centered Fishers Forums. Palolo are burrowing worms that live in the corals around the shallow areas of American Samoa and other South Pacific islands and spawn en masse during October and November. For its October 2019 Fishers Forum in American Samoa, the Council created a palolo harvest poster contest and invited public and private school students to submit entries. The posters were displayed and the top two winners from each grade were announced at the Forum, which also featured palolo and fisheries-related informational booths and speakers from local and federal agencies and organizations.

Utuvāmua

Ianuari 13–Fepuari 11, 2021



Moon-related Observations & Activities



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About the Council

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council was established by Congress in 1976 to manage fisheries in the offshore waters surrounding Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Hawai'i and the US Pacific Remote Island Areas. The fisheries in federal waters surrounding American Samoa are managed under the American Samoa Archipelago and Pacific Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plans. Traditional knowledge and wide community involvement are integral parts of the ecosystem-based approach to fishery management.

About This Calendar

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has produced traditional lunar calendars for American Samoa since 2007. The intent is to raise awareness about traditional ecological knowledge and enhance community involvement in fishery management. Special acknowledgments to Brian Thompson for the Samoan language editing and to the National Park Service (NPS) and others who are noted in this calendar for their photo contributions.

The 2020 Amerika Samoa Lunar Calendar highlights Council-sponsored and related projects in American Samoa. The lunar months, moon phases, and traditional calendar months are given in Samoa, the native language of the people of American Samoa.

The moon phases in this calendar are for Pago Pago harbor as calculated by the HM Nautical Almanac (astro.ukho.gov.uk/websurf). The tide charts with moon rise and set times were provided by OceanFun Publishing, NZ.

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Front cover: Participants raise a large 'ie tōga (fine mat) during a traditional cultural ceremony. PHOTO: COUNCIL STAFF



Students from the Council-sponsored summer high school course celebrate the result of their efforts and show off their first catch of the summer—a nice sized *pa'ala*. PHOTO: RUSS COX



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