



**American Samoa Motu Lipoti
195th Council Meeting**

Recreational Report

AS Flag Day Tournament and Outreach-Department of Marine and Wildlife

The American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) successfully hosted the annual Flag Day Fishing Tournament on April 14-15, 2023. Despite rainy weather, the event had a fantastic turnout of fishers and community members. Participants showcased their fishing skills and passion, landing a good amount of fish in categories such as marlin, sailfish, and yellowfin tuna. The tournament provided an opportunity for the community to come together and enjoy the thrill of fishing.

The second day of the tournament began with a traditional fautasi race, a longstanding Samoan tradition that celebrates the country's history and culture. Teams from different villages competed in this exciting event, showcasing their strength, skill, and teamwork in navigating the waters with the traditional Samoan longboats. Manulele Tausala from Nu'uuli emerged as the victor, adding to the cultural significance of the race.

Fish landed was a 435 lb Blue marlin, the biggest fish of the year. More in chart below.

This was much more than the SIGFA tournament held in May 2023 (see website SIGFA)

Alongside the fishing activities, the tournament served as a platform to promote sustainable fishing practices and raise awareness about marine resource management in American Samoa. The community had the opportunity to visit the Malaloa Fishing Marina, where they could participate in boat rides, engage with educational booths, and enjoy various games and activities. The event featured educational presentations on protected species and coastal fisheries management, providing valuable information to the attendees. The presence of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and other organizations further enhanced the outreach efforts, encouraging active participation and learning.

Category	1st	2nd	3rd
Marlin	Deep Calling 428.8lbs	Peter Reid 146lbs	Southwind 131.6lbs
Sailfish	Anita Pier 87.2lbs		
Yellowfin	Noelani 126lbs	Blessing 111.4lbs	Keejana 103.8lbs
MasiMasi	Noelani 30.4lbs		
Dogtooth	Si'uoamouli 23lbs		
Wahoo	Anita Pier 23.8lbs	Si'uoamouli 20lbs	
Skipjack	Si'uoamouli 22.2lbs	Anita Pier 21.4lbs	
Misc.	Eaglet (Barracuda) 20.6lbs	Si'uoamouli (Barracuda) 15.6bs	



PRIA Sanctuary Designation Report

NMS Public Hearing, May 24, 2023

The meeting started at 4 pm but NMS spokesperson Atuatasi Lelei Peau took 50 minutes to explain the proposed sanctuary to the inside audience of over 100 people. There were over 200 protesters with banners and signs outside saying “No!” to the sanctuary, save our jobs, and more. Many were Star Kist employees and they were singing church hymns the same as they do while working at the cannery. Some of the arguments include the fact the Rep Ed Case lied saying he had talked to everyone and they were supportive – but he never talked to Samoans or to Guam and CNMI. Taotasi Archie Soliai, Director DMWR, also believes that we have already satisfied President’s Biden’s 30x30 initiative and questions why we continue to be discriminated. Taotasi goes on to say that there is no equity and environmental justice and that we are and continue to be underserved. Starkist representative Fa’afoi Palepua said that closing these waters the US Fishing Fleet will force them to increasingly compete against the highly subsidized Chinese fishing fleet in which the US fleet is already experience unfair competition. Lieutenant Governor Talauega was also present and offered his comments at his own capacity as a person of Samoan heritage and indigenous descent. He believes that the expansion is unjustified because there appears to be inconclusive data. From a cultural stand point, he believes fishing the proposed area expansion will have little impact on those lands. Lt. Governor Talauega went on to ask NOAA to confirm within their records what they have restated in recent statistics and studies given to them by PRI and other sources. One of the records as Talauega recalls cites studies that were done from 2013 to 2022 fishing records despite the fact that Starkist has been here since 1963 and those waters have been fished since the 1970s.

The feeling in the Tauese Ocean Center was calm but upset at the proposed sanctuary proposal which shocked the Hawaiians from the PRI Coalition. One said he felt threatened.

Photos of rally by Starkist employees outside of Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center:



Shipyard:

Here are photos of the Shipyard Team (before and after photos) after completion of the longest boat drydocked in this "new era" after stretching of the drydock cradle. MV Miss Lilly, 180 ft long boat, occupied 1 complete cradle (150ft) and part of the front cradle. MV Miss Lilly's role is to take the scrap fish out to the ocean, allowing less waste and bad odors at Starkist. They had 9 days to do the job, and they accomplished it. The teams are very proud of this work and asked for a group photo (below).

Shipyard is also completing the repair of the fenders on the main dock and preparing to work on ASPA water tanks while waiting for more business.

Shipyard is also work in ASPA water tanks while waiting for more ships to drydock.

Before and after pictures:





Super Alia Update:

Progress on Super Alia Construction and Shipping

The construction of the first Super Alia vessel is still on track for completion in July as scheduled. Preparations for shipping the vessel are currently underway. Additionally, construction activities for the remaining three vessels are also in progress, indicating steady advancement towards their completion.

Development of Training Program

The Department of Commerce (DOC) is actively developing a comprehensive training program. To ensure a well-rounded curriculum, the DOC has engaged with the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR). Furthermore, the DOC is making progress in securing master fishermen who will provide valuable support and contribute their skills to the training program.

Grant Received for Training and Business Incubation

In a recent announcement, the DOC revealed the receipt of a \$200,000 grant from the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (DOI OIA). This grant is specifically intended to support the training and business incubation program.

Photos of the first Super Alia to be completed in July:

