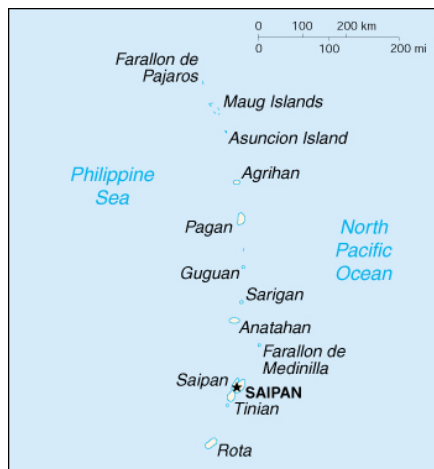


2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statement of Work

Location of the Project

The project will take place principally on two of the southern populated islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), a territory of the United States. The fellow will reside and carry out much of the project on the island of Rota. However, the fellow will also work closely with partners and programs located on the island of Saipan, the capital island of CNMI. The lead host agency for the 2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship in CNMI is the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), located in the Office of the Governor. In addition to DEQ, the Coastal Resources Management (CRM) office, located in the Office of the Governor, and the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), located in the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, will co-host the CNMI Coral Management Fellowship. The main offices of all three agencies are located on the island of Saipan; however, each also has a regional office on Rota.

CNMI is a chain of 14 tropical islands in the Western Pacific totaling less than 185 square miles, but stretching over 375 miles north to south. Only three of the islands—Saipan, Rota, and Tinian—have sizable human populations, with approximately 75,000 people on Saipan, 3,000 on Rota, and 3,000 on Tinian. Made of coral and volcanic rocks, the islands have developed rugged rocky cliffs, and white and black sand beaches. Inland areas are forested. The islands have a tropical climate with year-round sunshine and an average temperature of 84°F. All the islands have coral reefs, with those off the southern populated islands being the oldest and most well developed.



Program/Agency Background

The people of CNMI value coral reefs and are dedicated to their conservation. Coral reefs are important to CNMI because they provide traditional and subsistence uses, production of commercial food products, recreational opportunities for a healthy tourist economy, physical protection of the coastal zone from storms, diversity, rarity, and uniqueness of life forms, and, educational and research uses. Coral reefs also are an important part of CNMI's cultural heritage.

2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statement of Work

Increased population and development over the past decade in the CNMI has exacerbated the threats to the coral reef ecosystems and has led to the destruction and reduced health of coral reefs and coral reef-associated habitats. These effects are most noticeable on the island of Saipan, where approximately 90 percent of CNMI's population resides. Therefore, most coral reef management efforts have focused on Saipan. However, the other southern populated islands also have important coral reef ecosystems that are threatened by human impacts. From a long-term perspective, the decline in coral reef coverage and marine health threatens CNMI's cultural heritage, traditional ways of life, and physical protection from storms. This decline, however, also immediately impacts CNMI's tourism and fisheries industries, and thus its economy. The CNMI government considers coral reef ecosystem conservation and management a high-priority concern.

DEQ, CRM, and DFW are the three primary agencies involved in coral reef-related issues and activities in CNMI. DEQ is the primary environmental regulatory agency on CNMI. It is responsible for developing, implementing, and enforcing programs and regulations designed to protect human health and the environment. Its mission is to "develop, implement, and maintain programs that eliminate or minimize threats to CNMI's land, air, and water." Among the government agencies, DEQ is a leader in environmental outreach and environmental (including marine) monitoring.

CRM was established to promote the conservation and wise development of coastal resources. CRM works to encourage land-use master planning, floodplain management, and the development of zoning and building code legislation. It also promotes, through a program of public education and participation, concepts of resource management, conservation, and wise development of coastal resources, and more efficient resource management.

DFW enforces regulations governing hunting, fishing, and the conservation of fish and wildlife in the islands. To this end, DFW works to develop and enforce hunting and fishing regulations, license requirements, and minimal licensing fees, and conduct biological research and education programs. DFW was established to provide for the conservation of fish, game, and endangered species.

DFW, DEQ, and CRM conduct a variety of coral reef projects and activities, and acquire coral reef funds through collaborative grant proposals generated by three interagency coral reef committees.

To address immediate key threats to CNMI's coral reef ecosystems, the coral reef committees, in collaboration with multiple diverse stakeholders, developed a three-year Coral Reef Protection Local Action Strategy (LAS). The LAS provides a road map of projects focused on the four major threat areas of land-based sources of pollution, public awareness and involvement, recreational use, and fisheries management. The LAS is currently entering its second year of funding, and many projects have already been completed or are underway.

2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statement of Work

Historically, the implementation of the LAS and other efforts to reduce threats to coral reef ecosystems have been targeted primarily at Saipan. Rota and Tinian have not received as much attention due to their smaller populations and proportionately smaller resource bases.

Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of this fellowship is to assist in the implementation of the LAS and other coral-related activities in Rota. The fellow will assist in some or all of the following activities:

- Improve and expand current education and outreach efforts to Rota, possibly including the creation of new outreach projects and the implementation of a RARE Pride educational campaign on Rota
- Work with the interagency marine monitoring team in ongoing monitoring activities on Rota and in establishing additional long-term monitoring sites around the island
- Assist in watershed management activities, possibly including implementation of a watershed erosion control and monitoring program with volunteer assistance
- Assist in conservation area planning efforts on Rota as identified by the CNMI government, possibly including organizing and getting public input into planning efforts and collecting needed data

Project Description

The fellow will communicate and collaborate with DEQ, CRM, DFW, and other partner organizations and agencies to complete this multifaceted project. The fellow will be based in Rota, but will be expected to spend up to a week every month in Saipan for the first four months of the fellowship, and on an as-needed basis afterwards. The fellow will be involved in the following tasks, some of which will be accomplished concurrently.

Orientation (3 months)

The fellow will be introduced to staff members and management of DEQ, CRM, and DFW, as well as other partners on the islands of Rota and Saipan. The fellow will review background information regarding CNMI's coral reef initiative and other coastal management issues, such as nonpoint source pollution and fisheries management. The fellow will participate with program staff members in field visits, interagency meetings, and outreach activities. After participating in these activities, the fellow, with input from the mentor, will write a project work plan that will be reviewed and revised after the first year of the fellowship.

Outcomes:

- Familiarity with staff, operations, and resources of the state coastal program
- Integration into the Rota DEQ office and other resource agencies offices on Rota; incorporation into DEQ, CRM, and DFW outreach and education programs,

2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statement of Work

marine and watershed monitoring programs, and conservation planning programs

- Development of a project work plan

Research existing projects and plan coral reef protection efforts on Rota (3 months)

In conjunction with Rota and Saipan's DEQ, CRM, and DFW staff, the fellow will research and identify existing outreach and education materials and programs. (S)he will identify needs and collaborate with Saipan staff members to provide materials for Rota. In conjunction with Saipan staff members, (s)he will develop plans for watershed and marine management and monitoring activities involving both government staff members and the public. The fellow will also establish contacts with school and community groups that may wish to become part of coral reef protection efforts on Rota.

Outcomes:

- Familiarity with existing programs
- Plan for coral reef protection activities on Rota 2006–2008
- Database of potential partners and volunteers

Implement LAS and other coral-related projects on Rota (15 months)

Working with input from DEQ, CRM, and DFW staff, and other project partners, the assistant will develop appropriate materials and messages for the public and other audiences related to coral reef protection. The fellow will implement LAS projects, some of which may include contributing to ongoing awareness campaigns and community participation in controlling erosion in Rota's Talakaya region, and implementing other coral outreach projects in Rota. The fellow will also work with Saipan staff members to implement the RARE Pride campaign on Rota, and will recruit, train, and supervise volunteers for watershed or marine monitoring programs. The fellow will work with the marine protected area (MPA) manager and assistant to locally coordinate MPA planning activities.

Outcomes:

- Completion of a coral reef-focused environmental campaign with follow-on and transfer of information plans
- Implementation of LAS projects in Rota
- Baseline data collected from newly established watershed and volunteer monitoring programs
- Contribution to marine protected area planning efforts on Rota

Evaluate fellowship program, pass on relevant information to new fellow (3 months)

The fellow will evaluate the successes and challenges of the programs implemented

2005–2007 Coral Management Fellowship Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statement of Work

during the fellowship program. (S)he will prepare documents outlining lessons learned, important projects and programs to continue, and information to pass on to partners on Rota and Saipan and a new coral management fellow.

Outcomes:

- Guidance documents for partners and future coral reef fellow
- Evaluation of programs

Eligibility Requirements

- Master's degree with 2 years experience in outreach and education, marine monitoring, or conservation planning OR a bachelor's degree with 2 years experience in the above areas, plus experience living and working in Micronesia
- Valid driver's license

Desired Background and Skill Sets

- Demonstrated oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills
- A proven ability to be well organized, and to manage and prioritize multiple tasks
- Public speaking, events planning, and meeting facilitation experience
- Ability to work independently
- Experience working with multiple user groups
- Experience, through an internship, fellowship, or part-time job, in tropical ecosystems and coral reefs
- SCUBA certification, or comfort in the water and willingness to become certified
- Experience in marine and watershed monitoring and data collection
- Experience developing environmental education and outreach materials
- Experience with PowerPoint, Excel, and Microsoft Word