

Public Comment: Qamar Schuyler

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Mariana Islands Nature Alliance

In response to the document prepared by Dave Raney and his earlier public comment, I would like to add to his report on Pacific Non-Governmental Organizations and their activities. I am speaking not as the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Coral Management Fellow, but as a founding member of the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA). MINA is the newest member of CNMI's fledgling environmental NGO community. With the help of Bill Raynor of The Nature Conservancy Micronesia Program and Willy Kostka of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei, we have formed a diverse board, completed strategic planning efforts, and are now seeking funding sources. To paraphrase, our mission is to protect the CNMI's natural resources through partnerships with government and community members through support of research, enforcement, and education.

MINA's proposed projects over the next three years include establishing an hotline for anonymous reporting of environmental violations, developing an educational campaign targeting illegal fishing, conducting week-long environmental education camps for teachers to improve their capacity, and lobbying for trash pick-up at popular beach sites. We are looking forward to forming partnerships both locally and regionally and welcome your input, involvement, and assistance.