



FACT SHEET

CORAL REEF CONSERVATION PROGRAM **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** *www.coralreef.noaa.gov*

Mission: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) was established in 2000 to implement requirements of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000. The CRCP mission is to support effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems. The CRCP works with a variety of partners to fulfill this mission.

Structure: The CRCP is a cross-NOAA partnership that brings together expertise of four of NOAA's Line Offices (National Ocean Service; National Marine Fisheries Service; Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; and National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service) to support activities by NOAA and many partners to conserve coral reef ecosystems. The CRCP includes three main components:

1. National Program: The National Program provides resources, tools and services to coral reef managers, scientists and communities to improve the effectiveness of coral reef management. For example, the CRCP supports a variety of coral reef mapping, monitoring, research, training and management to provide information and tools that help solve key coral reef management issues. The Program also provides support and hosts the Secretariat for the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (www.coralreef.gov).

2. Coral Reef Conservation Grants Program: The Grants Program makes available matching grants to government agencies, non-government organizations and academic institutions for coral reef conservation projects in six grant categories: (1) State and Territory Coral Reef Ecosystem Management; (2) State and Territory Coral Reef Ecosystem Monitoring; (3) Coral Reef Ecosystem Research; (4) Projects to Improve or Amend Coral Reef Fishery Management Plans; (5) General Coral Reef Conservation; and (6) International Coral Reef Conservation. From 2002 to 2005, the CRCP provided over \$21 million (M) in NOAA funds for matching grants through this program.

3. Coral Reef Conservation Fund: The Fund is administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to help build public-private partnerships to reduce and prevent degradation of coral reefs and associated reef habitats (e.g. seagrass beds, mangroves etc.). To date, the Foundation

has leveraged \$4.7 M in NOAA funds with \$7.5 M in non-federal resources for more than \$12 M to 140 coral conservation projects in 28 countries, five U.S. territories or commonwealths, and four U.S. states. For information on the Fund see web site <http://www.nfwf.org/programs/coral.cfm>.

Funding History: The CRCP received approximately \$8 M in Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 and approximately \$28 M each year in FY 2001-2006. The FY2007 President's budget includes a request of \$26.4 M for the CRCP (\$25.7 M National Ocean Service, \$0.74 M National Satellite Data and Information Service).

Goals and Priorities: From mapping and monitoring to managing reef resources and removing harmful debris, the CRCP addresses a variety of the goals and priority actions identified in the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, the National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs, the National Coral Reef Action Strategy and other sources. The CRCP focuses on priority areas where NOAA has expertise or ability to address key threats to reefs directly or through the work of partner organizations. These areas are shown below along with percent FY2006 CRCP funding for each area:

1. Assess and Characterize U.S. Coral Reefs (28.9%)
2. Improve Use and Effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (17.9%)
 - a. Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Operations (14.4 %)
 - b. Other (3.5 %)
3. National and Regional Program Implementation (13.8%)
4. Reduce Adverse Impacts of Fishing (12.9%)
5. Support Coral Reef Institutes (9.9%)
6. Reduce Impacts of Pollution & Coral Disease (6.6%)
7. Reduce Impacts of Coastal Uses (5.2%)
8. Reduce Threats to Coral Reefs Internationally (3.5%)
9. Address Emerging Issues (0.8%)
10. Address Impacts of Climate Change on Reefs (0.6%)

Tools: The CRCP invests in the following key tools to address the goals and priorities listed above (percent FY2006 CRCP funding shown in parentheses):

1. Management & Stewardship (30.9%)
2. Monitoring & Assessment (29.2%)
3. Research (Incl. Socioeconomic) & Modeling (20.5%)
4. Mapping (7.3%)
5. Outreach & Education (4.0%)
6. Other (8.1%)

Geographic Focus: The CRCP supports activities related to coral reef conservation in the U.S. Pacific region (e.g., American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and Hawaii), U.S. Atlantic/Caribbean region (Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and international areas (including the Freely Associated States). Some CRCP projects contribute to multiple regions (listed as "National" below). The following shows percent FY2006 CRCP funding by region:



1. U.S. Pacific Region (49.0%)
2. U.S. Atlantic/Caribbean Region (29.3%)
3. U.S. National (multiple regions) (16.5%)
4. International (5.3%)

Accomplishments: Working with many partners, the CRCP has accomplished a number of significant actions to better understand and conserve coral reef ecosystems. Some of these accomplishments are listed below (information on these and other accomplishments is available at www.coralreef.noaa.gov):

Completed comprehensive habitat maps of shallow coral reef ecosystems of most U.S. coral reefs including US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, Guam, Northern Marianas, American Samoa (http://ccma.nos.noaa.gov/about/biogeography/biogeo_projects.html). Efforts are underway to map the remaining shallow reef systems in Florida.

Completed a 5-year effort with many partners to successfully remove all major accumulations of derelict fishing gear and other marine debris from Northwestern Hawaiian Island coral reefs. Over 550 tons of debris have been removed (<http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/cred/mdr.php>).

Supported development and operation of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (<http://hawaiireef.noaa.gov/>).

Expanded coral reef monitoring and assessment efforts with State and territory partners (http://ccma.nos.noaa.gov/ecosystems/coralreef/coral_grant.html), and established a comprehensive NOAA-led assessment and monitoring program for coral reef ecosystems of the U.S. Pacific (<http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/cred/>).

Led production of the 2002 and 2005 reports on “The State of Coral Reef Ecosystems of the United States and Pacific Freely Associated States” (<http://www.coris.noaa.gov/>).

Provided funding and technical assistance to States and Territories, Fishery Management Councils, international and other partners to plan and implement a wide range of coral reef conservation actions.

Provided funding, training, research, and technical assistance used to establish new coral reef protected areas and increase the effectiveness of existing protected areas.

Established the NOAA Coral Reef Watch system to provide coral reef managers worldwide with information and forecasts of coral bleaching events using satellite derived sea surface temperature and other information (<http://coralreefwatch.noaa.gov/satellite/>).

Established the NOAA Coral Reef Information System (CORIS) designed to be a single point of access to NOAA coral reef information and data products, especially those derived from NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program (<http://www.coris.noaa.gov/>).



2005 Highlights: In fiscal year 2005, the CRCP received \$29.2 million (including \$3 million for Coral Reef Institutes in Hawaii, Florida and Puerto Rico) to support activities to conserve, manage, and understand coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. and around the world. This funding allowed NOAA to support over 125 projects within the agency, and to provide grants for an additional 60 projects. In FY 2005, for example, the CRCP support resulted in many significant achievements including:

- Release of two major reports on the status of coral reef health and coral reef management efforts;
- Launch of an automated coral bleaching alert system;
- Production of coral reef maps for all US Pacific Island territories;
- Establishment a new coral reef research institute in Puerto Rico;
- Completion of major research and monitoring expeditions in the Main and Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, Mariana Archipelago, and Wake Island;
- Investigation of coral disease outbreaks in the Florida Keys and Flower Gardens National Marine Sanctuaries;
- Restoration of a coral reef damaged by a ship grounding in Hawai'i;
- Development of a model for predicting coral reef resiliency to bleaching;
- Completion of numerous training efforts aimed at building local capacity to manage coral reefs;
- Extensive research and other efforts through Coral Reef Institutes in Florida, Puerto Rico and Hawai'i; and
- Awards of over \$10 million in grants for on-the-ground coral reef conservation activities through the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program and the Coral Reef Conservation Fund.

Information: For additional information on the CRCP please visit www.coralreef.noaa.gov.

NOAA data and information on coral reef ecosystems is available through the Coral Reef Information System (CORIS) at www.coris.noaa.gov.

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