



NOAA Fisheries Service

A tropical beach scene with a large, lush green mountain in the background. The mountain's peak is partially obscured by white clouds. The foreground shows a sandy beach with gentle waves washing onto it. The water is clear and turquoise, transitioning to a deeper blue further out.

**PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OFFICE
GRANTS PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT FY 2006**



Above: Heeia Fishpond students learning to use seine net to harvest Moi (Pacific threadfin). Moi prepared in ti leaves (right).



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
PROJECT AREA MAP	2
PROJECT FUNDING	3
GRANT PROGRAM FY 2006	4
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	9
CURRENT PROJECT PARTNERS	10

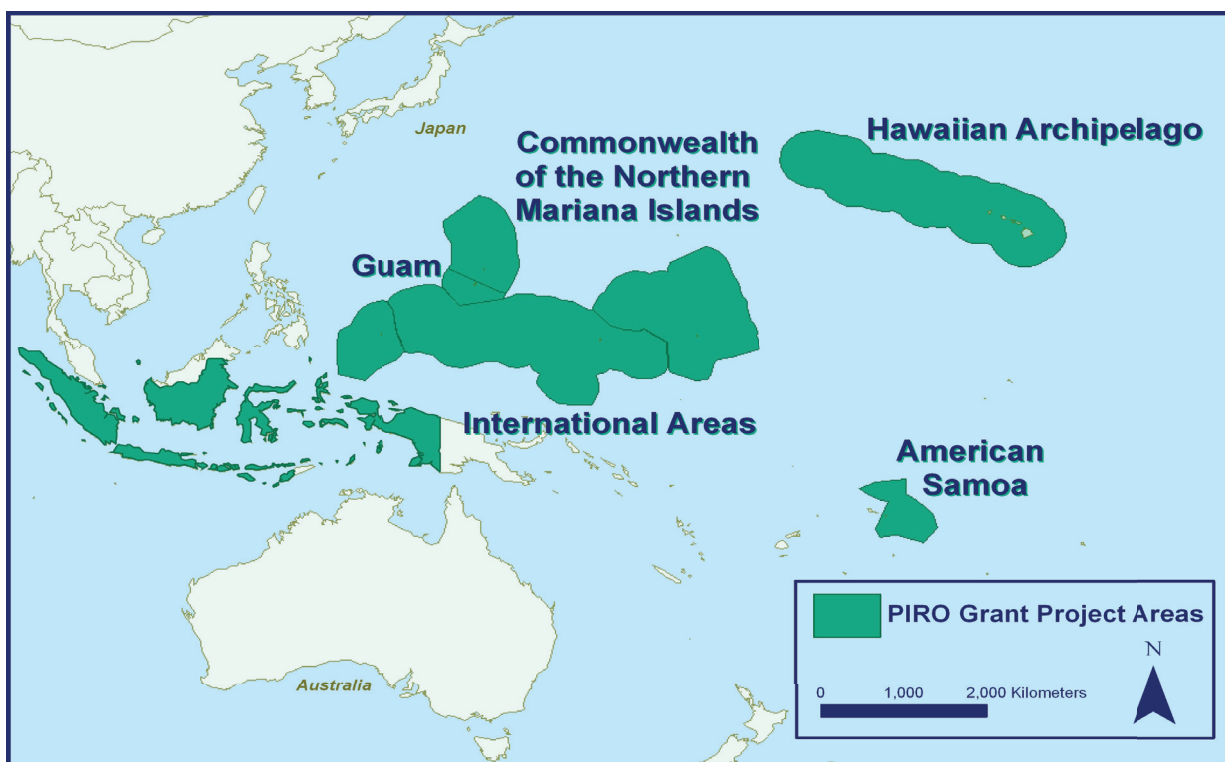
INTRODUCTION

The NOAA Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) is responsible for the conservation, development and management of marine resources in the U.S. Territorial Sea and the Exclusive Economic Zone throughout the Pacific including Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The Grants Program within the PIRO administers a broad range of financial assistance and program partnership activities directed at supporting the core mission of the NOAA Fisheries Service.

The PIRO Grants Program funds projects throughout the Pacific to conduct fisheries research, management and conservation. Regional interests include: 1) Sea turtle management within PIRO's area of responsibility and international areas such as Indonesia, the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands; 2) Traditional fishery development and marine education activities in American Samoa, the CNMI and Hawaii; 3) Fishery observer training; and, 4) Coral reef conservation from Guam to Hawaii. In addition, the PIRO Grants Program supports the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council and their efforts in the Pacific.



Above: Heeia Fishpond students are learning to prepare the makaha (or wier) which allows small fish to enter and grow. The fish are trapped within the fishpond and harvested.

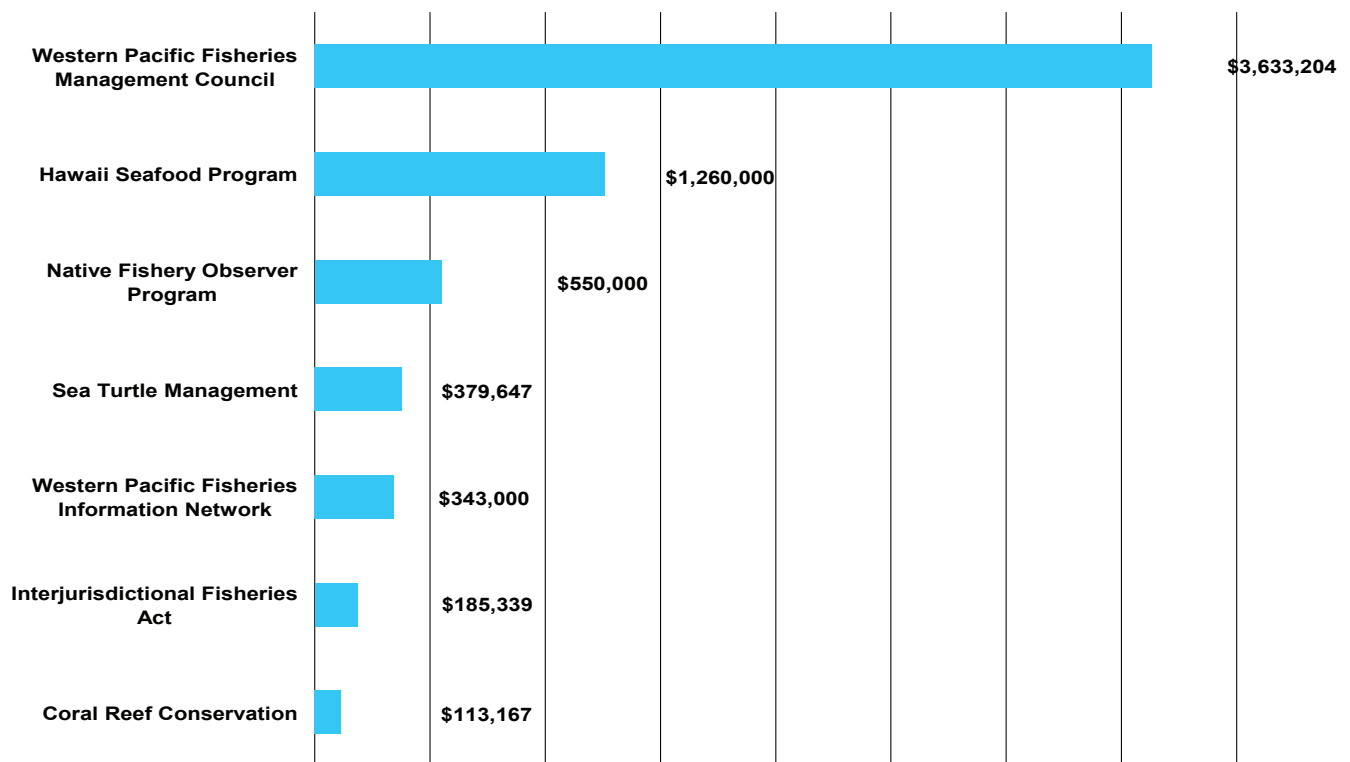




Youth on Rota in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands learn canoe carving and fishing techniques from local practitioners (above).

PROJECT FUNDING

In Fiscal Year 2006, the PIRO Grants Program processed 21 awards totaling over \$6 million to recipients from Hawaii, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Indonesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.



GRANT PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2006

The PIRO Grants Program supports the NOAA Fisheries Service mission through competitive and noncompetitive grants, and cooperative financial assistance programs. Grant programs funded through PIRO during Fiscal Year 2006 include: Western Pacific Fisheries Information Network, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, Native Fishery Observer Program, coral reef conservation projects, and sea turtle management projects. Eleven new projects and ten multi-year grants were funded. The new projects included a grant to the Women United Together in the Marshall Islands, a non profit group based in Majuro for sea turtle data collection. This project marks the first concentrated effort to get valuable information on sea turtles throughout isolated atolls in the Marshall Islands.

Continuing projects from the Saltonstall-Kennedy and the Western Pacific Community Demonstration programs have yielded several successful stories. The Heeia Fishpond Revitalization and the Ewa Beach Limu projects on Oahu have been successful with community involvement and student participation. Classrooms of students from around the island participated in marine education, hands-on science and traditional marine conservation. Grassroots efforts were successful in the Olosega Village project in American Samoa, where longline fishing was developed for the small underserved community in the Manua Islands. On the island of Rota, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the local college and PIRO supported educational activities for the local youth on traditional fishing methods and stewardship and management of their important marine resources.

Village chief and aumaga (untitled men) prepare for training day (below). The grant is developing the small scale longline fishery for communities on Olosega and Ofu islands. (Right) Village fishermen off-load the catch after a day of training.



WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERIES INFORMATION NETWORK

Western Pacific Fisheries Information Network (WPacFIN) is a cooperative program that provides support to State fishery agencies to enhance their data collection and analysis systems in response to Pacific insular area fisheries management needs. The program supports fisheries data collection and analysis projects that provide catch, effort, economic and biological data on federally managed species to the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council as needed for continuing management of Pacific fisheries.



In Fiscal Year 2006, PIRO issued funding via five cooperative agreements with the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife and Guam Department of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources and Bureau of Statistics and Planning. WPacFIN funding supports fishery data collection, analyses, reporting programs, and data management system activities to support fisheries management under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management. The cooperative work is intended to provide marine fisheries data to satisfy data requirement for all federal fishery management plans (FMP's) used by NOAA Fisheries and the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council to develop, implement, evaluate and amend FMP's for the Pacific Region.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL FISHERIES ACT

Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IFA) authorizes a grant program that assists States in managing their interjurisdictional fisheries resources. Funds can be used for research and enforcement of fishery resources, for the development of Fishery Management plans, and for restoration of resources damaged by a natural resource disaster.

PIRO funded four cooperative agreements in Fiscal Year 2006 with the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife and Guam Bureau of Statistics and Planning. Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act funds provide both technical and financial support to the states to assess and monitor the status of interjurisdictional fish species caught within US EEZ. The data are one of the main sources of information that address local and Federal requirements for Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) per NOAA Fisheries and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. For Example, the goal of the State of Hawaii project is to properly maintain all of the licensing workstations and Internet applications. This enables the Hawaii Department of Aquatic Resources (DAR) to service commercial fishers by issuing fishing licenses over-the-counter or by mail.

WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The objectives of the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils are to prepare, monitor and revise fishery management plans and data collection programs for domestic and foreign fishing within the 200-mile U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This is done with approval and implementation by the Secretary of Commerce who has stewardship responsibility for living marine resources in the EEZ under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). In the Pacific Islands region, the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WESPAC) works with the NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center Offices to promote and conserve fisheries within the western Pacific jurisdiction.

Fiscal year 2006, the WESPAC was funded to work on regional sea turtle issues, NEPA compliance, coral reef habitat management and fishery management plans.



CORAL REEF CONSERVATION

Coral Reef Conservation programs provide grants and cooperative agreements for biological, economic, sociological, public policy, and other research, administration, and public education projects on the coastal environment to benefit U.S. fisheries, conserve protected resources, and add to the economic and social well being of the Nation. Research and management includes determining the effects of habitat modifications and contaminants on populations of living marine resources, restoring depleted stocks that have been adversely impacted by habitat modifications, determining if artificial or restored habitat fulfills essential habitat needs of living marine resources, and quantifying contaminants and debris that pose a hazard to these animals.

PIRO funded three projects in Fiscal Year 2006 to Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources, Guam Department of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Coastal Resource Management Office. A mooring buoy project in Saipan will help the Marine Protected Areas resist coral reef damage from anchors due to recreational diving operations. The Guam project focuses on law enforcement education and outreach to help increase awareness and support of important regulations protecting Guam's marine resources. In Hawaii, researchers and managers focus on efforts to reduce the destructive and invasive octocoral, *Carijoa riseii*, in harbors and around the state.

NATIVE FISHERY OBSERVER PROGRAM

The Native Fishery Observer Program falls within an industry related grant program mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management Act to provide grants and cooperative agreements for biological, economic, sociological, public policy, and other research and administration projects to benefit U.S. fisheries industries and contribute to the economic and social welfare of the Nation; and moreover to support the implementation of community-based demonstration projects in the U.S. western Pacific that promote the development of fishery-related industries and the economic self-sufficiency of native Pacific islanders and their communities.



This Fiscal Year 2006, PIRO funded the Alu Like Inc. (Alu Like), to provide a project which fulfills the community-based project promoting fishery industries for native Pacific Islanders. The program covers the training and placement of native Pacific islander observers on fishing vessels operating in the Pacific region. Since 2002, the Alu Like project for the Native Fishery Observer Program has achieved remarkable success in the recruitment, selection, and training of Pacific natives to become fishery observers. As native residents of Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Territories these trainees are instilled with the cultural tradition of marine stewardship. The Native Fishery Observer Program has evolved over its five years of operations strengthening several components to add rigor to the screening, testing, and evaluation processes. Tougher screening ensured that recruits selected for training possess the special qualities that match the job requirements of a Fishery (Biological) Observer.

As of March 2007, Alu Like accounted for 42% of the active observers operating in the Hawaiian fishery. Kahikina Kaawaloa, the first woman observer graduate of the Alu Like Observer Preparatory Training Program, has successfully completed approximately 540 days at sea on 30 trips and has become a highly respected observer in the NOAA Fisheries regional office. She paved the way for 5 other women from Hawaii, Guam, and Samoa, who are graduates and essential members of the observer workforce.

HAWAII SEAFOOD PROGRAM

The Hawaii Seafood Program Projects represent industry-driven efforts to help strengthen and sustain the economic viability of Hawaii's fishing and seafood industry through activities that promote Hawaii fisheries products as high quality and safe domestic seafood produced by a responsible and well-managed fishery. Projects focus on promotion of the Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Islands fishing and seafood industries to become more competitive in the U.S. seafood market and to address current concerns about the sustainability of the fishery and the safety of its seafood products.

The Fiscal Year 2006 Hawaii Seafood Program funded PACMAR, Inc. for projects that provide research data on the seafood industry as it relates to the issue of histamine (scombrototoxin) control on fishing vessels. The FDA Seafood Histamine Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) regulations affect the fish auction, the Hawaii fishing fleet and each of the seafood processors that buy fish at the auction. In addition, the funds supported training and educational programs that reinforce the Hawaii Seafood brand as high quality, safe domestic seafood produced by a responsible U.S. fishery operating under an exemplary fishery management system.

SEA TURTLE MANAGEMENT

The Sea Turtle Management Projects provide economic, sociological, public policy, and other information needed by Federal and State natural resource administrators for conserving and managing fishery resources and protected species and their environment in Federal, State, and U.S. territorial waters. Funds are used by recipients to support a wide variety of management activities for high-priority marine resources.



In Fiscal Year 2006, three grants were issued to U.S. flag areas including American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife and Guam Department of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources for turtle work within their jurisdiction. Three additional international projects were funded in Indonesia, the Republic of Palau and the Republic of Marshall Islands. The work ranges from turtle tagging and genetic sampling to observer training and nest monitoring.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The PIRO Grants Program has been growing since the inception of the new region in the Pacific. With innovative grants and community support, the grants have been diverse and successful. Examples of projects completed this year include the Northern Mariana Remote Fishing Station Project which supported fishing efforts in the remote areas of the Northern Mariana Islands and developed new economic opportunities for residents living there. Another success was the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (GFCA) Deep-Set Longline Fishery Demonstration Project which was completed in FY06. Its long-term goal was to create the opportunity for Guam residents to participate in a fishery historically dominated by foreign fishers. The GFCA demonstrated to the community that a small-scale longline fishing industry can be successfully owned and operated by indigenous people of Guam.

In addition to issuing grants, the PIRO Grants Program created a local grants webpage to include newsletters, grant forms, and presentations to help grant applicants and recipients. As NOAA grant management evolves into an online process, multiple users will have access to the grant at any one time. In response to these new technical demands on the grantees, the PIRO Grants Program supported and hosted the first "One NOAA" grants management effort. Federal Program Officers from PIRO, Pacific Islands Fishery Science Center, and the National Ocean Service-Pacific Coastal Services Center brought the Grants Online database training to Honolulu. Over 60 grantees participated in this one-of-a-kind training. Following the success of the Grants Online training, another "One NOAA" training was discussed to involve more participants from other line offices and headquarters. Plans for training opportunities in Guam and Saipan were requested and will be priority sites for Fiscal Year 2008.



FUTURE FOCUS

As the regional grant opportunities increase, the PIRO Grants Program is planning for the future. Plans include supporting the expansion of the Sea Turtle Conservation program to other important domestic and international areas and preparing for the Saltonstall-Kennedy grants in the Pacific Region for Fiscal Year 2008. Moreover, the National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007 is highly anticipated legislation that may provide financial support to research the development of offshore mariculture opportunities in the Pacific. As the future of fisheries and marine resources develop, the role of the PIRO Grants Program will be to forge new and innovative partnerships with dedicated local governments, communities and individuals across the Pacific.

MAHALO TO ALL OF OUR CURRENT PROJECT PARTNERS



AMERICAN SAMOA

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES
OLOSEGA VILLAGE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS
PAGO PAGO, INC.
SAMOA BUSINESS AND CULTURE

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

CAROLINIAN OFFICE OF AFFAIRS
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OFFICE
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
SAIPAN FISHERMEN'S COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

GUAM

BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND PLANNING
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
GUAM FISHERMEN'S COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

HAWAII

ALU LIKE, INC.
HAWAII DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES
JAMES CAMPBELL HIGH SCHOOL
PACMAR, INC.
PAE PAE O HEEIA
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

INDONESIA

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND-INDONESIA

REPUBLIC OF PALAU

BUREAU OF MARINE RESOURCES

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

WOMEN UNITED TOGETHER IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
MARSHALL ISLANDS MARINE RESOURCES AUTHORITY

