NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NOAA In Your Territory

Northern Mariana Islands

***NOAA** is an agency that enriches life through science. Our reach goes from the surface of the sun to the depths of the ocean floor as we work to keep citizens informed of the changing environment around them. From daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings, and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration and supporting marine commerce, NOAA's products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product. NOAA's dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information they need when they need it.*

The following is a summary of NOAA facilities, staff, programs, or activities based in, or focused on, your state or territory: Starting with highlights, then by congressional districts and cities or towns, and then territory-wide programs.

Highlights of NOAA in the Northern Mariana Islands

National Marine Fisheries Service Field Office	Garapan
Coral Reef Conservation Program	Entire Territory

Garapan

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - Pacific Islands Regional Office and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

NMFS is responsible for the management, conservation, and protection of living marine resources within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. The Pacific Islands Region includes the waters surrounding American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as well as the Pacific Remote Island Areas. It is the largest geographic area within NMFS jurisdiction, with a U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone of more than 1.7 million square nautical miles of ocean. Using the tools provided by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, NMFS

monitors and assesses fish stocks, promotes sustainable fisheries, develops and ensures compliance with fisheries regulations, restores and protects habitats, and works to reduce wasteful fishing practices. Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act, NMFS regulates and conducts research supporting the recovery of protected marine species. NMFS also co-manages four marine national monuments in the Pacific Islands Region: Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, and Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument. Regional Office staff provide support to maximize collaboration, funding and information exchange with state, territorial, commonwealth governments and their stakeholders. They work to maintain healthy fish stocks for commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing, protect and recover populations of protected species, preserve and restore marine habitat, and coordinate with international organizations to implement and monitor fishery agreements and treaties. The Regional Office also fosters sustainable aquaculture in the region. The regional aquaculture coordinator assists federal and state agencies with permitting and other activities. They also support aquaculture outreach and education, and work with industry, academia, and other stakeholders on a variety of regional marine aquaculture topics. Science Center staff conduct scientific research and monitoring programs that support the domestic and international conservation and management of living marine resources. Staff provide logistical and coordination support for all science center research in the area and scientific support to the CNMI Biological Sampling Program and the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument's science program. Both the Regional Office and Science Center have offices in Hawaii and field offices serving American Samoa, CNMI and Guam.

Entire Territory

National Ocean Service (NOS) – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is helping coastal communities build the future they want to see. The legislation provides a historic investment in coastal protection and restoration that will increase community resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, and improve how we manage our ocean resources. Projects funded under this law protect and restore ecologically significant habitats, including conserving lands that play a critical role in helping communities become more resilient to natural hazards. The Northern Mariana Islands received funding in FY22 to build the commonwealth's capacity to protect its coastal communities and resources.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - Marine Debris Projects and Partnerships in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) in the Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) leads national and international efforts to reduce the impacts of marine debris. The program supports marine debris removal, prevention, and research projects in partnership with state and local agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, academia, and industry. The MDP Pacific Islands Regional Coordinator supports coordination efforts with regional stakeholders, provides support to grant-funded projects, tracks progress of projects, and conducts regional marine debris outreach to local audiences. In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the MDP is working with the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance to assess, remove, and dispose of marine debris from Typhoon Yutu in Tinian Harbor, the north shore of Tinian, and the south shore of Saipan, preventing further damage to coral reefs and other sensitive coastal habitats. The MDP is currently expanding its partnership and involvement in this territory, including the collaborative development of a marine debris emergency response guide.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System)

The U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System, or IOOS®, is a federally and regionally coordinated observing system with 17 interagency and 11 regional partners. The System addresses regional and national needs for coastal, ocean, and

Great Lakes data and information. This includes gathering and disseminating regional observations; data management; modeling and analysis; education and outreach; and research and development. IOOS regional partners provide coordination with regional stakeholders while contributing data and other outputs to the national system. The Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS) empowers ocean users and stakeholders throughout the Pacific Islands, by providing accurate and reliable coastal and ocean information, tools, and services that are easy to access and use. Fishermen, commercial operators, surfers, resource managers, scientists, and many others rely on PacIOOS' real-time, model, and coastal and archival ocean information to make well-informed decisions and to enhance our understanding of the Pacific Ocean. The PacIOOS wave buoy off Tanapag, Saipan, for example, provides real-time information on wave height, direction and period, and sea surface temperature.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – Regional Geodetic Advisor
The Regional Geodetic Advisor is a National Ocean Service (NOS) employee that resides in a region and serves as a liaison between the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and its public, academic and private sector constituents within their assigned region. NGS has a Regional Geodetic Advisor stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii serving the Pacific region including the Northern Mariana Islands. The Geodetic Advisor provides training, guidance and assistance to constituents managing geospatial activities that are tied to the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS), the framework and coordinate system for all positioning activities in the Nation. The Geodetic Advisor serves as a subject matter expert in geodesy and regional geodetic issues, collaborating internally across NOS and NOAA to ensure that all regional geospatial activities are properly referenced to the NSRS.

National Weather Service (NWS) - Automated Surface Observing Systems Stations
The Automated Surface Observing Systems (ASOS) program is a joint effort of the National Weather Service (NWS), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Department of Defense (DOD). ASOS serves as the Nation's primary surface weather observing network. ASOS is designed to support weather forecast activities and aviation operations and, at the same time, support the needs of the meteorological, hydrological, and climatological research communities. ASOS works non-stop, updating observations every minute, 24 hours a day, every day of the year observing basic weather elements, such as cloud cover, precipitation, wind, sea level pressure, and conditions, such as rain, snow, freezing rain, thunderstorms, and fog. There is an ASOS station on Saipan.

National Weather Service (NWS) - NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards Transmitter
NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service (NWS) forecast office. NWR broadcasts official NWS warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Working with the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Emergency Alert System, NWR is an "All Hazards" radio network, making it the single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information. In conjunction with federal, state, and local emergency managers and other public officials, NWR also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards – including natural, environmental, and public safety. Known as the "Voice of NOAA's National Weather Service," NWR is provided as a public service by the NWS. NWR includes 1,100 transmitters covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories. There is one NWR transmitter in the territory.

National Weather Service (NWS) - Pacific Region Headquarters
Located in the Mauka Tower of the Pacific Guardian Center in downtown Honolulu, Hawaii, this regional office has administrative and management responsibilities for all National Weather Service (NWS) field operations in Hawaii and the territories of American Samoa, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These areas include NWS offices in Honolulu, Hilo, Kahului, and Lihue, Hawaii; Guam; Pago Pago, American Samoa; Koror, Republic of Palau;

Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands; and Pohnpei, Yap and Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia. The NWS Pacific Region operates its five Micronesian offices in cooperation with the Republic of the Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia in accordance with the provisions of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and each Micronesian government. The five Micronesian Weather Service Offices provide the United States with critical Upper-Air Data and Aviation Weather Observations. These offices also provide adaptive weather forecasts and warnings to their local constituents. The Pacific Region Headquarters also oversees the Central Pacific Hurricane Center and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, and it hosts the International Tsunami Information Center.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – National Coastal Zone Management Program
Through a unique federal-state partnership, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management works with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Division of Coastal Resources Management to implement the National Coastal Zone Management Program in the Northern Mariana Islands. NOAA provides the state coastal management program with financial and technical assistance to further the goals of the Coastal Zone Management Act and ensure coastal waters and lands are used in a balanced way to support jobs, reduce use conflicts, and sustain natural resources. The funding also supports ongoing coastal permitting, enforcement, and public outreach events, including the annual International Coastal Cleanup and CNMI Ocean Month. The liaison between the CNMI Coastal Management Program and NOAA is located on Saipan.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – Digital Coast
The Digital Coast is a focused information resource developed to meet the unique needs of coastal communities. Developed and maintained by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, content comes from hundreds of organizations, including federal, state, and local agencies, plus private sector and non-profit contributors. The Digital Coast website provides not only site-specific coastal data, but also related tools, training, and information needed to make these data useful for coastal decision makers. The Digital Coast Act authorizes the Digital Coast as a standing national program and supports NOAA's efforts to increase access to authoritative data, tools, and training that enable coastal communities to plan for long-term resilience, manage water resources, and respond to emergencies.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - Coral Reef Conservation Program
NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program brings together multidisciplinary expertise from over 30 NOAA offices and partners to protect, conserve, and restore coral reef resources. The program focuses on three threats to coral reefs - climate change, unsustainable fishing practices, and land-based sources of pollution - as well as coral reef restoration. In response to identified threats and management priorities developed by coral reef managers in CNMI, the program invests in initiatives to develop watershed management plans and reduce sediment and nutrient loads to CNMI's watersheds, research the response of benthic and reef fish communities to stressors, evaluate reef resilience, and monitor short- and long-term impacts of climate change. NOAA's Coral Management Liaison (also the Coastal Management Program liaison) is located on Saipan.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – National Coral Reef Management Fellowship
The National Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program is a partnership between NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, the U.S. Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs, Nova Southeastern University's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography, and the U.S. Coral Reef All Islands Committee. The program recruits Coral Reef Management Fellows for the seven U.S. coral reef jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The Fellow for CNMI is working to develop and implement a Coral Bleaching Response Plan and resilience-based management strategies to address acute disturbances of bleaching. This includes raising community

awareness regarding impacts of climate change on the island reefs and working towards developing a monitoring program to assess long and short-term impacts of coral bleaching.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – National Coastal Resilience Fund
The National Coastal Resilience Fund is a partnership effort between NOAA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to restore, increase, and strengthen natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities, while also enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife. In the Northern Mariana Islands, the NCRF awarded two projects in FY22.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund
The Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund is a partnership effort between NOAA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to increase the resilience of coastal communities within federally-declared disaster areas impacted by hurricanes and wildfires in 2018, 2020, and 2021. The Northern Mariana Islands received funds for three projects in 2019.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - Cooperation with States Program and Species Recovery Grants
Under the authority of section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, the Cooperation with States Program brings states, NMFS, and other partners together to recover threatened and endangered species. A total of 25 coastal states and U.S. territories, including the Northern Mariana Islands, currently participate in this program. Competitive grants are awarded to states through the Species Recovery Grants to States Program to support management, monitoring, research and outreach efforts for species that spend all or a portion of their life cycle in state waters. The funded work is designed to prevent extinctions or reverse the decline of species, and restore ecosystems and their related socioeconomic benefits. The CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources has received funding through this program to support the recovery of green and hawksbill sea turtles.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - Office of Law Enforcement
NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is the only U.S. conservation enforcement agency that is exclusively dedicated to Federal fisheries and marine resource enforcement. Its mission is to protect global marine resources by enforcing domestic laws, international treaties, and regulations dedicated to protecting wildlife, and their natural habitat. Our special agents and enforcement officers ensure compliance with these laws and take enforcement actions if there are violations. In addition, the Cooperative Enforcement Program gives OLE the ability to leverage its resources with the assistance of 27 coastal states and U.S. territorial marine conservation law enforcement agencies in supporting its Federal enforcement mission. Effective fisheries law enforcement is critical to creating a level playing field for U.S. fishermen and enabling sustainable fisheries to support all the communities throughout the Pacific Islands. The Office of Law Enforcement's Pacific Islands Division, which covers the Northern Mariana Islands, is headquartered in Honolulu, Hawaii.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - Deep-Sea Coral Research and Technology Program -
NOAA's Deep Sea Coral Research is administered by NOAA Fisheries' Office of Habitat Conservation. Mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, it is the nation's only federal research program dedicated to increasing scientific understanding of deep-sea coral ecosystems. Deep-sea corals occur off of every coastal state in the country, and create important habitats for countless species, including many fish species. The Program collaborates closely with partners, including other NOAA offices, to study the distribution, abundance, and diversity of deep sea corals and sponges. This work then informs critical management decisions in the waters of the United States and its territories. These decisions enhance the sustainability of deep-sea fisheries and other ocean uses, while conserving deep-sea coral and sponge habitats.

The Program works with partners to complete multi-year regional fieldwork initiatives, as well as smaller projects around the country, centered on integrating new and existing information on these vulnerable and biologically diverse habitats. The first research initiative took place from 2009 to 2011 in the U.S. South Atlantic region and provided valuable

information to help decision-makers refine protected area boundaries. To date, the Program has completed one or more initiatives in each region of the United States.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - Students for Zero Waste Week
Students are inviting their local communities to "Go Green and Think Blue" by joining them in the annual *Students for Zero Waste Week campaign*. During this campaign led by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, students focus on reducing land-based waste in order to protect the health of local marine environments. These young leaders are raising awareness of how single-use plastic and other types of litter affect the health of local watersheds, national marine sanctuaries, and the ocean. In addition, some schools are looking at ways to reduce their energy use on campus with hopes of raising awareness of how the burning of fossil fuels also impacts the health of the ocean.

National Ocean Service - National Marine Sanctuary Nominations
NOAA has determined that the Mariana Trench sanctuary nomination has successfully met the national significance criteria and management considerations described in the sanctuary nomination process. The area under consideration by NOAA for national marine sanctuary designation may be selected for designation, but being on the inventory does not guarantee that the nominated area will become a sanctuary.