American Samoa Project Management Training
November 2-4, 2017
Pago Pago, American Samoa

Project Management Training

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introduction

This report is prepared by Berna Gorong, Partnership & Communications Coordinator with the Micronesia Program, The Nature Conservancy. This document specifically reports on actions and activities taken during the Project Management Training that took place in American Samoa on November 2nd to 4th 2016.

Background

This training was supported under cooperative agreement with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) for project titled "Building Capacity for Coral Reef Resource Management in Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, Guam and American Samoa. Specifically, this activity is covered under Task 3: Goal – To provide technical and capacity-building assistance to partners in American Samoa.

Staff from the TNC Micronesia Program were tasked under the agreement to carry out the activity. However, as planning got underway, unforeseen circumstances were encountered and initial staff identified from the Micronesia Program were not be able to travel to American Samoa for the dates identified. Alternate staff from the Micronesia Program and Hawaii Program were identified to step in and fill the gap so training could proceed on schedule. Manuel Mejia from the Community Based Marine Program (TNC Hawaii) joined up with Berna Gorong, Partnership & Communications Coordinator (TNC Micronesia) to travel to Pago Pago to carry out the 3-day training.

Contents for the training were drawn from tools and resources from "A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge" published by the Project Management Institute. Tools from TNC's Highly Effective Team (HET) templates were also incorporated into training and shared with participants.

Photo 1- checking up on group three's SMART objectives

Summary

Despite the initial challenges faced with the lead training facilitators unable to carry out the task at hand, day one of the training came and went without much of a hiccup. The rest of the days went by as well with great turnout by the participants and very active participation. Thinking back, we tried to fit in all the topics and did not spend too much time on group work and discussions. This showed up in the evaluation that participants responded to that more exercise and group work would have been beneficial to the participants. From a facilitator's perspective, it was truly a blessing that Manuel was able to travel to Samoa and be co-facilitator in the training. Another great partnership example between the Hawaii Program and Micronesia Program for a very successful training [*Please refer to Training Evaluation by participants*].

The main challenge encountered was securing of venue for the training. Upon arrival, it was determined that we still did not have venue confirmations for the 3-day training. Because arrangements were not made in advance, we had to pay for the Ocean's Center venue and also needed to utilize Sadie's venue for morning session of Day 3 since the Ocean's Center was already booked. Our local counterpart was able to secure catering arrangements in advance. Since we now have had several engagements in American Samoa, we should maintain the vendor contacts and make the necessary arrangements directly instead of relying on local counterparts for arrangements.

Local vendors encounter long delays with payments from American Samoa government; therefore, vendors preferred payment in cash. This became very evident as participants shared their challenges in implementing projects locally.

Training Goal & Objectives

The project management training provides participants with the skills to manage their projects and ensure they have the right systems in place to implement the project effectively and as efficiently as possible. During the training participants also have several opportunities to share challenges they experienced managing projects and receive feedback from both the facilitators and other participants.

Objectives:
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of project managers across the project life cycle
- Define and develop the foundations of a project plan, including the statement of work breakdown structure, cost, schedule, and other resources
- Identify the factors critical to creating and managing effective project teams
- Manage and control the project against the baseline
- Close out a project effectively

Photo 2 - the marshmallow challenge teambuilding activity
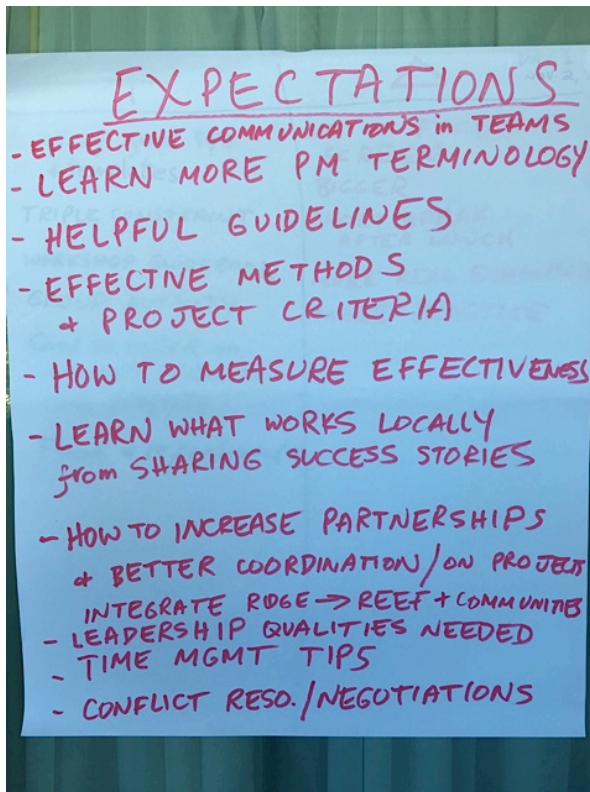
Expectations

At the very beginning of the training, participants were asked to describe their expectations of the training, what they expected to gain or get out from attending the training. This helped the facilitators in shaping and managing the expectations of the participants going forth with the 3-day training. These were captured on flipchart and shown here to the left.

After discussing expectations, the participants were then provided with index cards and asked to list challenges they faced in their work as part of project management and implementation. Following were challenges identified by the participants, grouped into similar categories

Challenges

PROCUREMENT/VENDOR PAYMENT

- Need enough time to procure supplies and personnel planning
- Project timeline not met because of procurement
- Loss of trust between vendors and project managers
- Procurement of supplies/timely payments to vendors
- Purchase orders, delayed payments, follow through
- Slow processing of PO's by administrative personnel
- Highly vicious approval flow, takes long to get signature approvals that seem unnecessary
- Timely payments/funds
- Local procurement system

UPPER MANAGEMENT

- Superiors not working together with manager to ensure success of project
- Upper management involvement
- Upper management support
- After hour's vehicle permits hard to get
- Procurement; takes time to get equipment purchased and shipped here, especially if vendors are not US based.
- Lack of motivation
- Disorganized or not supportive management
- Short staff on all projects

PROPER PLANNING

- Last minute venue changes
- Project limitations/boundaries
- Identifying resources & existing data
- Executing design phase before conducting site inspections and thorough research
- Pre-planning needs to be done in advance of project starting
- Getting more resources and data
- Initiating a project, first step
- Funding sources for projects

TIME MANAGEMENT

- Time availability
- Following through
- Lack of urgency
- Manage time with work & school

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Managing & balancing – multitasking different projects at one time
- Tracking project timeline & progress
- Conflicts with other agencies on lack of doing their part/lack of time management
- Meeting expected/proposed deadlines
- Project resources/equipment problems
- Fail to achieve your project goal
- Some of project activities not accomplished
- Cost of material and equipment used for project
- Finalizing project

PARTNERSHIPS

- Attitudes and perceptions
- There are often good ideas but finding participants who are eager to get the job done is different.
- Lack of support from members involved
- Compliance
- Inconsistencies with desire to collaborate; no follow through; difficulties reaching partners via email/phone
- Miscommunication
- Limited local support
- Political/tenure (land) interference and cultural
- Cooperating with other organizations
- Getting the public involved/participation, promotion of event
- Working with partners
- Staying focused on project. Everyday other things come up that need to be taken care of which delay work on project.
- Lack of follow through on commitments/participation
- Land disputes

Training Evaluation Responses

A one-page evaluation consisting of 6 simple questions were presented to the participants at the ending of last day. Participants were asked to provide "tough love" answers so that future trainings can be improved upon. Participants took their time to answer the evaluation instead of just putting one word answers and running out the door. This was great to see. Following are the questions and answers provided by the participants.

1. Did this training meet your expectations? Yes or No? Please explain.

- Yes. Almost everyone attended the whole week! Very impressive for a slightly dry but important topic.
- Yes. Can never get over the triple constraint. It really help with time managing/cost/and scope.
- Yes. It was great to have experts provide structure and guidelines to the project management process.
- Yes. A broad range of topics were covered and questions were answered thoroughly.
- Yes. I didn't know anything about project management but this workshop definitely helped me.
- Yes. Improved planning, brain storming, and managing of project.
- Yes. There were very many useful tools and concepts taught that will be very useful to me in my work.
- Yes. I did not expect much. Just another training. I would have to attend. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot of tools I can apply at work.
- Yes. Learned a lot about how to manage projects.
- Yes. Highly detailed breakdown of step by step and who and who

- Yes. I've learned so many tools to help manage projects that I'm currently working on. The new tools that I've learnt from the training will help me be more organized, better planning and on track.
- Yes. It covered most issues which relate to my work.
- Yes. Definitely. My expectation of this training was moderate and vague. After the workshop it provided a lot of insight and great tools into planning and managing projects
- Yes. The training helped provide useful tips & templates on how to effectively manage deadlines (gantt chart), how to make great project objectives (SMART), and also helped in planning for a meeting (do's & don'ts).
- Yes. This training met my expectations by providing helpful tools and guidelines in managing projects.
- Yes. This training actually exceeded my expectations. It has given me tips not only to manage my grants but my staff as well. Tools learned here will help me plan accordingly.

2. Name the 3 things you found most useful in this training?

- Templates, group work to try out skills, Miradi
- Triple constraint, WBS, managing up tips
- Practicing the templates as a group, discussing challenges and possible solutions, learning to manage expectations
- Miradi software, HET slides, managing up tips
- Communication skills, equilibrium triangle, WBS

- Group discussions, planning tools, project ideas
- Triple constraint triangle, WBS, creating/following a project charter
- Gantt chart, WBS, stakeholders analysis
- Handbook, files, group activities
- Time, cost, and scope
- Triple constraint, charter, Miradi
- Outcomes & results should be realistic, adjustment in your project would affect the whole process, not just a portion or section, your project should be: SMART
- The triple constraint, templates/smart sheets, Miradi, WBS
- SMART objectives (using SMART as a way to formulate objectives, well thought out), guideline & tips on how to have an effective meeting, triple constraint pyramid
- Triple constraint triangle helped with keeping the scope, cost and time of a project in focus, building an effective team, managing or assessing risks
- WBS to help breakdown my workload to better monitor and plan, charter which will spell out responsibilities for all parties, Miradi software will help me with threat analysis and reporting for supervisors and communities

3. What 3 things would you recommend to improve this training?
- More examples, less venue changes
- More examples, I think we need more tutorial with Miradi, more time maybe another week to follow up
- More interactive activities like the marshmallow challenge. That was great!, more real life story experiences
- Heavier emphasis on the importance of goals & objectives
- Presenter's tone (monotone), more activities
- More group discussions
- More group activities/discussion on failures/what worked best to solve such issues, I liked the participant guide just that some of the slides presented didn't follow when filling out the blanks in book
- Shorten power-point presentations with small breaks or activities, more real experiences & situations with pictures in power point presentation, at least 2 or 3 group activities or discussing per day
- Leave more blank areas that follow PPT more so participants can follow along and take notes, active learning, more group activities, less power point
- More individual input, breakout group, real life project samples
- More time on Miradi
- More experience to make alive, should be heavy breakfast & lunch, training should be in one venue
- A little bit more group work/interaction (group work really helped with learning about project management)
- Provide real life examples to keep a balance between power point & discussion. Also makes it feel more applicable to real-life challenges., need a break after lunch to keep audience up & going
- Provide more examples for the different project phases, maybe as a group build a project and present it at the end using some of the tools provided, more infographics and less words
- More activities to practice using tools

4. How will you use the information you used this week in your work?

- I hope to integrate the templates and practices into our operation
- Since I work mostly with community members, this information will help manage time not only for myself but my team and those I like to help
- It will help me manage my tasks.
- Will incorporate Miradi, HET, and managing tips into project planning & implementation
- Great guide to start a project and great tips
- Will be using all the information and learned experience to initiate potential and manage current projects
- I can apply the fundamentals of project management into all future projects. Time management and initial planning will help reach objectives better.
- I will use much of what I have learned to complete the current project I am working on before deadline and in producing proposals for future projects.
- Will use resources such as exercise sheets in project management
- To check current and new projects to see if it works
- Start using the Miradi software
- Bring your staff that you work with and share what you have learnt from the training
- Better planning of a new project that has just been assigned to me. Better planning, executing, and allocating time management
- This information will help me re-evaluate my project in terms of deadlines, cost breakdown, and planning out the overall project. I will also utilize tips on meeting etiquette and how to manage up (working with admin)
- Will use it in managing my marine debris project. I have realized that I need to work on redefining the scope of my project so that I close it with a bang.
- I will apply the tools learned to plan out my projects and monitor them from now on. Hopefully I can get a good grasp on the Miradi software to use in the future.

5. What are the main challenges you might face in implementing what you learned this week?

- Unsupportive management, time to put all projects into a project management system
- Maybe one challenge would be to share the knowledge with my team. I wish they could've make it to training so I don't have to train them. But more emails coming your way soon for any future questions
- Getting buy-in from people who have not participated in this workshop
- Working with people that didn't get it – don't want to change or have different definitions of terms or concepts
- Executing, shaping the project, finding the right people
- Budget tables, miscommunication
- Just the support of some management, hopefully they'll be supportive
- There are some things/people that I don't have control of, but there was much discussed on conflict management of relationships that I can use to influence others to work over projects more successfully
- Time to be thorough
- Just getting use to the steps and materials
- Multi-project, not sure which project to start with
- Procurement issues
- Trying to speed up procurement issues (systematic), having to adjust my team into project management practices

- I think I would need more practice to utilize the guidelines/tips
- Challenge that I might face is trying to share these tools with team member who have not done the training
- The challenge will be introducing it to other staff members who are not familiar with tools

6. Additional comments or suggestions for improvement.
- Thank you for a well-organized and useful training, hoping for more useful trainings in the future to share & exchange knowledge.
- Great workshop. Awesome participation and great visual aids. The power point and booklet was very helpful and great food.
- Overall a great training and learning experience. Hope to see more workshops from TNC in the near future.
- Next training should be in week or more days added and make us come over to Honolulu.
- Overall great training. Really learned a lot. Will and looking forward to implementing lessons learnt to projects.
- Thank you for a great training. I hope to attend another in the future.
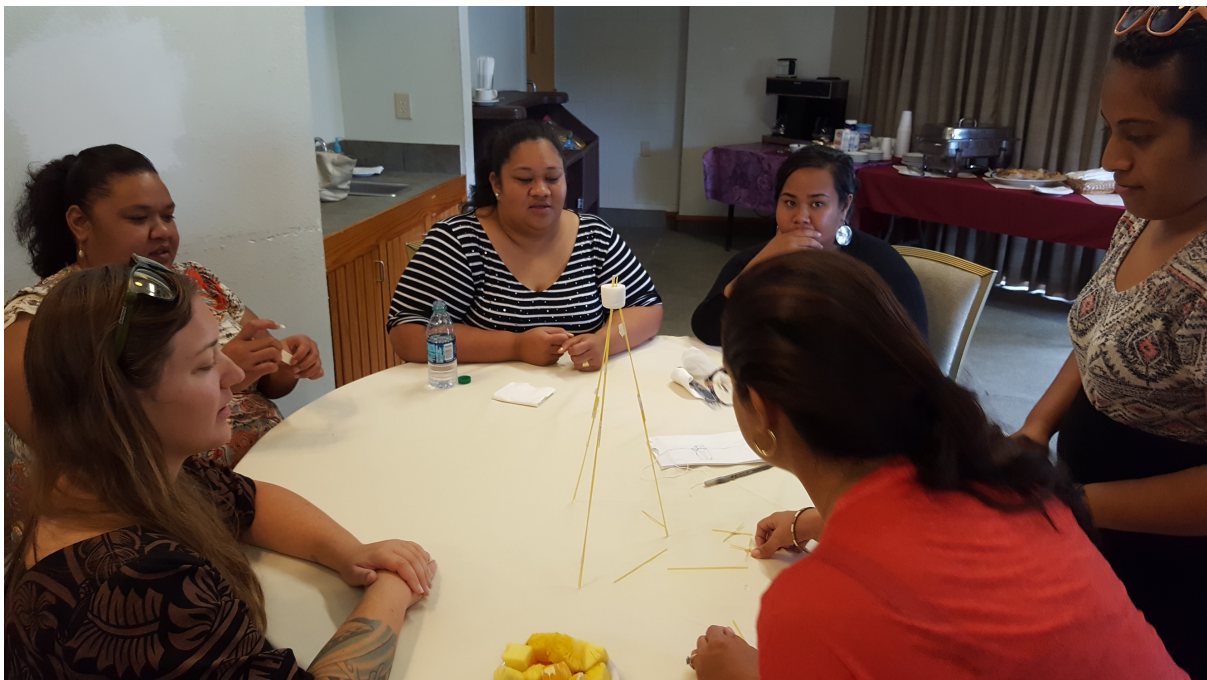- Thank you so much for everything. Would love to have more workshops.

Photo 3 - the winning women's team, sturdiest marshmallow structure

Annex

Participants Agenda

Project Management Training
November 2nd to 4th 2016
Venue: Nov. 2- Sadie's by the Sea/ Nov. 3&4-Ocean Center, American Samoa
8:30 am-3:30pm
AGENDA

Objectives:
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of project managers across the project life cycle
- Define and develop the foundations of a project plan, including the statement of work breakdown structure, cost, schedule, and other resources
- Identify the factors critical to creating and managing effective project teams
- Manage and control the project against the baseline
- Close out a project effectively

DAY 1: Wednesday November 2nd 2016 Establish expectations, Discuss challenges, roles and responsibilities of project managers	
8:30-10:00	Welcome Overview of Agenda Participants introduction Discuss expectations of the workshop
10:00-10:15	**BREAK**
10:15-12:15	Project manager roles and responsibilities Presentation on the discipline of project management, the project life cycle, and understanding the triple constraint and how it impacts projects. Activity to identify internal and external factors that impact your projects and the the skills sets and roles of a project manager. Specifics of the federal funding project life cycle will also be discussed.
12:15-1:15	**LUNCH**
1:15-2:15	**Initiating process** Presentation and activity on understanding the role and expectations of the project sponsor and developing a project charter.
2:15-2:30	**BREAK**
2:30-3:15	**Facilitate great meetings** Presentation and activity to build skills in effective facilitation of meetings
3:15-3:30	**Wrap Up** Feedback on the day's activities

Day 2: Thursday November 3th 2016 – Foundations of Project Planning	
8:30 -8:45am	Welcome
8:45-10:45am	**Initial Project Planning** Presentation and activity on how to develop meaningful project ideas and good project objectives. Specifics will be provided on conducting stakeholder analysis and developing a statement of work.
10:45-11:00	**BREAK**
11:00-12:15	**Project Planning** Presentation on how to develop a realistic and robust project proposal. Information will be provided on how to plan for the scope of a project, including the schedule, costs and resources. Participants will complete an activity to develop their own project plan.
12:15-1:15	**LUNCH**
1:15-1:45	**Project Planning (continued)** Continued discussion and work on the development of a project plan
1:45-3:00	**Implementing Project** Presentation on tracking performance of a project and responding to changes and risk during the project life cycle. Activity to determine and interpret a project baseline.
3:15-3:30	**Wrap Up** Feedback on the day

Day 3: Friday November 4th 2016 – Driving accountability and Closing the Project	
8:30-8:45am	**Welcome**
8:45-10:00	**Creating and Managing Effective Teams** Presentation, discussion and activity on how to put in place system to drive accountability and constructively engage team members
10:00-10:15	**Break**
10:15-11:45	**Project Closing** Presentation and activity to identity and complete tasks required for proper close out of a project including interpreting and communicating lessons learned.
11:45-12:45	**Lunch**
12:45-1:15	**Tools to support effective Project Management** Overview of the Maradi
1:15-1:30	**Wrap Up** Comments on the day's activities Workshop evaluation & closing

Project Management Training Workshop
November 2nd to 4th 2016
Venue: Nov. 2- Sadie's by the Sea/ Nov. 3&4-Ocean Center, American Samoa
8:30 am-3:30pm
WORKING AGENDA

Objective:
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of project managers across the project life cycle
- Define and develop the foundations of a project plan, including the statement of work breakdown structure, cost, schedule, and other resources
- Identify the factors critical to creating and managing effective project teams
- Manage and control the project against the baseline
- Close out a project effectively

Wednesday November 2nd 2016 - Establish expectations and discussion on challenges and roles and responsibilities of project managers		
		Presenter/Facilitator
8:30-10:00	Welcome Overview of Agenda Participants introduction (20-30 minutes) Expectations of the workshop (25 minutes) Mapping expectation exercise (group exercise) will compile expectation into major themes (45 minutes) Report back (15 minutes)	Participants Berna/Manuel
10:00-10:15	**BREAK**	
10:15-12:15	Project manager roles and responsibilities Presentation (30 minutes) Group exercise (60 minutes) Report back (30 minutes) *Focus:* Define a project as distinct from ongoing work Define the discipline of project management Describe the triple constraint and how it impacts projects Understanding/meeting expectations of leadership, grantors, and partners (project outcomes, disseminating and submitting promised products, project timelines, communicating changes) Describe the project life cycle and specifically relate to federal funding Identify the internal and external factors that impact your projects List the skill sets and roles of a project manager	**Berna/Hideyo**

12:15-1:15	**LUNCH**	
1:15-2:15	**Initiating process** Presentation (15 minutes) Group exercise (30minutes) Present back (15 minutes) *Focus:* Describe the role of project sponsor Develop a project charter	**Berna/Manuel**
2:15-2:30	**BREAK**	
2:30-3:15	**Facilitate great meetings** Presentation (15 minutes) Group exercise (15 minutes) Present back (15 minutes) *Focus:* Create team meeting plan/calendar Establishing meeting objectives & outcomes Establishing meeting roles	**Berna**
3:15-3:30	**Wrap Up** Comments on the day's activities – big issues, findings, etc. and Plus/Delta	**Manuel**

Thursday November 3th 2016 – Foundations of Project Planning		
		Presenter/Facilitator
8:30 am	Welcome to the day	**Berna**
8:45-10:45	**Initial Planning** Presentation (30 minutes) Group exercise (60 minutes) Report back (30 minutes) *Focus:* How to solicit/develop meaningful project ideas. What makes a project worth proposing/pursuing? Conduct a stakeholder analysis Develop good project objectives based on assessed needs (business requirements) Develop a statement of work Distinguish between functional and technical requirements and under the role of both	**Manuel/Hideyo**
10:45-11:00	**BREAK**	
11:00 – 12:15	**Project Planning** Presentation (15 minutes) Group exercise (60 minutes) *Focus*:	**Manuel/Hideyo**

	Developing a realistic, robust, and complete project proposal. What are the traits of a successful project? Plan for the scope of a project through a work breakdown structure Plan the schedule Plan the costs Plan the resources Plan for risk Produce a project plan	
12.15-1:15	**LUNCH**	
1:15-1:45	**Project Planning continued** Report back from exercise before lunch and group discussion (30 minutes)	
1:45-3:00	**Implementing Project** Presentation (15 minutes) Group exercise (30 minutes) Report back and discussion (30 minutes) *Focus:* Understanding the areas that project managers should monitor/track throughout the life of a project Determine and interpret project baseline Assess project performance Complete and present performance report Respond to requested changes in project Respond to risk as they occur Identify factors crucial to managing project teams effectively	**Berna/Hideyo**
3:00-3:15	**Break**	
3:15-3:30	**Wrap Up** Comments on the day's activities – big issues, findings, etc. and Plus/Delta	**Berna**

Friday November 4th 2016 – Driving accountability and Closing the Project		
		Presenter/Facilitator
8:30	Welcome to the day	**Manuel**
8:45-10:00	**Creating and Managing Effective Teams** Presentation (15 minutes) Exercise activity (30 minutes) Discussion (30 minutes) **HET - Drive accountability** Put in place system to ensure team members do what is tasked to do **HET - Engaging constructively** Taking care of the team	**Berna**
10:00-10:15	**Break**	
10:15-11:45	**Project Closing**	**Manuel**

	Presentation (15 minutes) group exercise (45 minute) report back and discussion (30 minute) *Focus:* Identify key tasks required for proper scope verification and stakeholder closure Identify key task for proper administrative and contract closure Complete and interpret set of lessons learned for the project Communicate lessons learned and project successes with project stakeholder and others	
11:45-12:45	**Lunch**	
12:45-1:15	**Tools to support effective Project Management** Overview on the Maradi tool	**Berna**
1:15-1:30	**Wrap Up** Comments on the day's activities – big issues, findings, etc. Workshop evaluation & closing	**Manuel**

Photo 4- reviewing group one's SMART objectives

Participants list

	Participant's name	Agency	Nov. 2, 2016	Nov. 3, 2016	Nov. 4, 2016
1	Kelley Tagarino	ASCC + HI Sea Grant	x		
2	Solialofi Tuaumu-Afoa	DOC	x	x	x
3	Victoria Fano	EPA	x	x	x
4	Tricia Sataua	EPA	x	x	
5	Siumukuka Faaiuaso	AS-EPA	x	x	x
6	Ian Gurr	ASCC - ACNR	x		
7	Alice Lawrence	DMWR - CRAG	x		
8	Sabrina Woofter	CRAG	x	x	x
9	Maria Vaofanua	DMWR - IED	x	x	x
10	Kim McGuire	DMWR - CRAG	x	x	x
11	Motusaga Vaeoso	DMWR - CRAG	x	x	x
12	Tee-Jay Letalie	DMWR - Fishery	x	x	x
13	Sean Felise	DMWR - Fishery	x	x	x
14	Mary Cheiung-Fuk	DMWR - Fishery	x	x	x
15	Jeremy Raynal	CRAG	x	x	
16	Tepora Toliniu Lavata'i	DMWR	x		x
17	DJ Sene	ASCC - ACNR	x	x	x
18	Junior Sauni	ASCMP -DOC	x	x	x
19	Hideyo Hattori	NOAA	x	x	x
20	Kristine Bucchianeri	CRAG	x	x	x
21	Christina Mataafa	DMWR	x	x	
22	Yvonne Mika	DMWR		x	