NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NOAA In Commonwealth of the 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 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

National Marine Fisheries Service Field Office	Garapan
Coral Reef Conservation Program	Entire Jurisdiction
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) / Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Projects	Entire Jurisdiction

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. In the Pacific Islands Region, this includes the waters surrounding American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as well as the Pacific Remote Islands Area. 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. Four major laws drive NOAA Fisheries work in the region:Using the tools provided by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.
The **Pacific Islands Regional Office** uses ecosystem-based strategies to manage the marine resources in the region. Key responsibilities include:

- Maintaining healthy fish stocks for commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing in coordination with the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
- Protecting and recovering populations of protected species
- Preserving and restoring marine habitat
- Coordinating with international organizations to implement and monitor fishery agreements and treaties

The Pacific Islands Regional Office also supports co-management of four marine national monuments; administers grants and other funding opportunities; and 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.

The Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center conducts scientific research, monitoring, and analysis in support of the effective management of living marine resources in the region and surrounding high seas. Its mission is to provide essential scientific information and foster partnerships that enable the sustainability of living marine resources within Pacific Island communities.

- The Ecosystem Sciences Division conducts research, monitoring, and analysis of environmental and living resource systems in the waters of the Pacific Ocean. Humans are a key part of these ecosystems, and this research also includes the social, cultural, and economic aspects of fishery and resource management decisions.
- The Fisheries Research and Monitoring Division coordinates fisheries monitoring, fisheries data management, fisheries interactions, fish life history studies, and stock assessment. They work closely with local, state, federal, and international governmental and non-governmental partners.
- The Protected Species Division provides the scientific foundation for the conservation of whales, dolphins, Hawaiian monk seals, and sea turtles in the Pacific Islands through the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, and international agreements. Their work includes assessing populations, identifying and mitigating threats, and understanding habitats and trends.

The Regional Office and Science Center are based out of the NOAA Inouye Regional Center (IRC), located on Ford Island, Honolulu, Hawai‘i. At the IRC, the Science Center operates a seawater facility—which is capable of housing sea turtles, Hawaiian monk seals, and fishes—and multiple laboratories to complement its field research activities. The NOAA Ship *Oscar Elton Sette* serves as the Science Center’s primary at-sea research platform. It is managed and operated by NOAA’s Office of Marine and Aviation Operations and the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps. Staff provide logistical and coordination support for all science center research in the jurisdiction. In addition to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, both the Regional Office and Science Center have field offices located in and serving American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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 and FY23 to build the commonwealth's capacity to protect its coastal communities and resources.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - OR&R Response and Restoration Coordinators
NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) is a center of expertise in preparing for, evaluating, and responding to threats to coastal environments, including oil and chemical spills, releases from hazardous waste sites, disasters, and marine debris. To fulfill its mission of protecting and restoring NOAA trust resources, OR&R provides scientific and technical support to prepare for and respond to environmental threats that coastal communities face; determines damage to natural resources from those releases; protects and restores marine and coastal ecosystems; and works with coastal communities to address critical local and regional coastal challenges.

- The **Regional Preparedness Coordinator (RPC)** is strategically placed within the region to ensure that NOS and our partners are able to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards, including coastal disasters. The RPC serves as a liaison between NOS and its federal, state, and local disaster preparedness and emergency response partners. A key role of the RPC is to better understand the needs and opportunities within the region and to ensure partners have the tools and resources necessary to inform decision-making. The RPC has expertise across the spectrum of emergency management and provides preparedness, response, and recovery services including planning, training, exercises, response coordination, continuous improvement, and long-term recovery. The RPC based in San Diego, California serves the West Coast and Pacific Islands region including California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands.

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 Pacific Coastal Research and Planning, using funding provided under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to remove abandoned and derelict vessels in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and large marine debris in the Freely Associated State of Palau. The project will seek to build and establish marine debris removal partnerships in the territories and Freely Associated States. The NOAA Marine Debris Program and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation are working with the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance, using funding from the 2019 Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal Fund to assess, remove, and dispose of marine debris from Typhoon Yutu.The MDP recently expanded its partnership and involvement in this territory through the collaborative development of a Marine Debris Emergency Response Guide. This Guide is the first published for the Pacific Region and aims to improve preparedness for responding to marine debris after typhoons and other disasters in the Commonwealth, such as Typhoon Mawar, which impacted the Commonwealth in late May 2023.

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 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, fishing impacts, 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) – Susan L. Williams National Coral Reef Management Fellowship
The Susan L. Williams 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 update the CNMI Coral Reef Initiative's strategic communications plan to produce a standard framework for the program's various communication needs and outreach programs. This in turn, will better support local communication and outreach efforts to increase community awareness of climate change impacts on the local coral reefs and associated ecosystems, foster behavior change, and improve stewardship of the CNMI's coral reefs.

National Ocean Service (NOS) – National Coastal Resilience Fund
The National Coastal Resilience Fund restores, increases, and strengthens natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitats for fish and wildlife. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) executes this program in partnership with NOAA to invest in conservation projects that restore or expand natural features, such as coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster and coral reefs, forests, coastal rivers and floodplains, and barrier islands, which minimize the impacts of storms and other naturally occurring events on nearby communities. In the Northern Mariana Islands,two projects were funded 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 Ocean Service (NOS) - Coastal Management Fellowship
This program matches postgraduate students with state and territory coastal zone programs to work on two-year projects proposed by the state or territory. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Division of Coastal Resources Management is hosting a fellow from 2024-2026 who is collaborating closely with key stakeholders to update the 1991

Saipan Comprehensive Wetlands Management Plan and further integrate wetland spatial, ecological, and functional data and analysis for other CNMI islands to transform it into a CNMI-wide comprehensive wetlands management plan.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - National Coral Reef Monitoring Program
NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program established an integrated and focused monitoring effort with partners across the United States—the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program. Coral reef monitoring data can help to inform science-based management decisions about these invaluable natural resources. These findings are shared with local agencies, partners, and communities to inform both federal and local management strategies. The Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center conducts monitoring efforts. Teams survey coral reefs at more than 40 islands and atolls throughout the Pacific ocean on a rotational basis. They monitor reef fish populations, corals, and ocean conditions. To track biological trends and monitor climate-driven impacts, the teams use the same suite of survey methods at each island. Over time, scientists track how reefs have changed—an important part of reef conservation. After collection and a thorough review process, results are shared with local management agencies and the public. This data gives us a snapshot of coral reef health and is presented in status reports, and used to answer questions from local resource managers. These long-term surveys across a wide variety of reefs illuminate the drivers of reef health and help predict future impacts.

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. The Program's focus from 2025-2027 is the U.S. Pacific Islands.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - Restoration Center
The NOAA Restoration Center, within the Office of Habitat Conservation, works with partners across the nation to restore habitat to sustain fisheries, recover protected species, and maintain resilient coastal ecosystems and communities. We have over 30 years conducting habitat restoration through competitive funding opportunities and technical assistance. We also work to reverse habitat damage from disasters like oil spills, ship groundings, and severe storms. See the interactive Restoration Atlas to find habitat restoration projects near you. Site visits to see habitat projects may be available in your state, please inquire if interested.

In addition, the Office of Habitat Conservation is responsible for executing an unprecedented $1.4 billion in funding under Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act for habitat restoration and fish passage. We are working with our partners to do this through our expert technical assistance and four funding competitions: Fish Passage, Tribal Fish Passage, Transformational Habitat Restoration, and Habitat Restoration for Tribes and Underserved Communities. We have funded 214 awards totaling $985M in rounds one and two with more to come in round 3. We are funding work all over the country, explore these projects on our interactive map.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - NOAA Ocean Guardian School Program
A NOAA Ocean Guardian School makes a commitment to the protection and conservation of its local watersheds, the world's ocean, and special ocean areas, like national marine sanctuaries. Funds are provided to schools at $4,000 per year if the school makes this commitment by proposing and then implementing a school- or community-based conservation project. Once the school has completed its project, the school receives official recognition as a NOAA Ocean Guardian School. To date, the Ocean Guardian School Program has reached more than 88,797 students and 3,599 teachers.

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.

National Ocean Service (NOS) - NOAA Ocean Guardian Youth Ambassador Program
Youth aged 13-18 from across the United States and its territories that are committed to ocean conservation and stewardship of our blue planet can apply to become a NOAA Ocean Guardian Youth Ambassador. This year-long program looks for enthusiastic youth with new ideas and a unique perspective who want to learn more about America's underwater

treasures and share their passion with others. Youth learn how to become a leader at their school or in their local community to make a difference in the conservation of the ocean through marine protected areas.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) / Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Projects

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was entrusted with billions of supplemental federal funding dollars with passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law on November 15, 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act on August 16, 2022. This historic infrastructure funding has been invested in communities across the nation to build resilience in the face of climate change. NOAA distributed funding to communities, tribal, state and local governments, higher education programs, businesses, non-profit organizations, and facilities in need. NOAA funded billions of dollars in grants and cooperative agreements across the country to fund projects that enhance climate resilience, restore coastal and marine habitats, improve safety, and create jobs. For an interactive map of NOAA BIL and IRA investments in your state, visit https://www.noaa.gov/bil-ira-awards-explorer.

BIL

Land Use Planning and Acquisition Project, $398,399

This funding will build the capacity of the commonwealth's federally-approved coastal management program within the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality to plan for and implement habitat restoration and conservation projects proposed through funding opportunities connected to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Specifically, the Division of Coastal Resources Management will use these funds to establish two new full-time staff positions to coordinate land acquisition and habitat restoration projects that will support the enhancement of ecosystem services that mitigates coastal hazards to vulnerable island communities due to climate change. These efforts will include outreach and coordination with various stakeholder groups and the public.

IRA

An Abandoned and Derelict Vessel (ADV) and Large Marine Debris Removal Partnership between the US Territories and Freely Associated States of Micronesia, $4,000,000

Pacific Coastal Research & Planning is removing and assessing abandoned and derelict vessels and large marine debris in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Freely Associated States in the Pacific Islands.

Enhancing Coastal Resilience in the Pacific Islands, $5,000,000

PacIOOS will use this funding to support coastal resilience in the U.S. Pacific Islands, including Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through a focus on enhanced engagement and education, capacity sharing and the co-design of data visualization and decision-making tools — using wave, water and other ocean conditions — with Indigenous and other underserved coastal communities throughout the region.

***NOAA In Your State* is managed by NOAA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs and maintained with information provided by NOAA's Line, Corporate, and Staff Offices. Questions about specific programs or offices should be directed to the NOAA Line, Corporate, or Staff Office listed.**

More information for those offices may be found at NOAA.gov.