



Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary Summary Scoping Document

Report to the Sanctuary Advisory Council

June 5, 2009

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Document

This document was created to assist staff of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) and Fagatele National Marine Sanctuary (FBNMS), the FBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC), and the public in understanding and interpreting the comments received during the scoping phase of the FBNMS Management Plan Review and possible Site Expansion/Additional Site Designation process (MPR). Participants provided comments at three public scoping meetings, as well as written comments submitted via letter, fax, and email.

This document summarizes the scoping comments received during the public scoping period (February 9 to March 27, 2009). It organizes the comments into twelve broad categories or “issue areas” including some overarching comments, with background information provided for each issue area.

1.2 Summary of Scoping Process

Raising Public Awareness and Participation

Management plan review can be a lengthy and complex public process. In order to raise awareness, reduce confusion, and increase public participation throughout the MPR process, Sanctuary staff from FBNMS and headquarters developed a Communications Plan. The plan calls for conducting outreach to various user groups and members of the media, and detailed methods for informing the public about the MPR process.

One of the first outreach strategies was to create a project website and specific outreach materials. In December 2008, FBNMS staff developed informational fact sheets, in both English and Samoan, to inform people about the sanctuary, the MPR process, and how they could get involved. In December the program also added an MPR page to the website (http://fagatelebay.noaa.gov/html/management_plan.html). The website contains information about the MPR and other general information about FBNMS, including maps, existing regulations and management plans. All outreach materials and products from the public scoping meetings have also been posted on the website.

A State of the Sanctuary report for FBNMS was developed in 2003 and updated in 2008. In addition, the sanctuary produced a Condition Report in 2007. These documents were made available on the website and provide information about significant accomplishments to date, a summary of sanctuary resources, pressures on those resources, and the current and emerging resource management issues for FBNMS. Copies of these reports were also made available for review at each of the public scoping meetings. The intent of these reports was to help raise public awareness about the Sanctuary before the public scoping meetings were held.

Prior to the public scoping meetings, FBNMS staff explained the MPR process to Territorial and Federal agencies, the Coral Reef Advisory Group, the Sanctuary Advisory Council, the Office of Samoan Affairs, and local media. Media were encouraged to help raise awareness about the MPR and bolster public participation at the scoping meetings. To date, the following media “hits” have been tracked: 15+ feature print articles, 30 KSBS radio spots, 6 television talk shows and 4 KNWJ radio station talk shows. Staff also distributed newspaper and radio public service

announcements, calendar event listings, and placed advertisements announcing the local scoping meetings. Finally, a notice was placed in the *Federal Register* (74 FR 5641) formally announcing the scoping process.

Scoping Meetings

During the week of February 9, 2009, the ONMS held three public scoping meetings on the island of Tutuila covering central areas (at the Convention Center in Utulei), eastern villages (at Fagaitua High School), and western villages (at the American Samoa Community College). These forums allowed the public to comment on the Sanctuary's management strategies and to actively participate by providing input on specific issues they see as management priorities for the next 5 to 10 years. The scoping meetings and written comments are tools that are used to "scope out" or receive input from resource users, interest groups, government agencies, and other members of the public on resource management issues. After the meetings, Sanctuary staff compiled all of the comments raised at the meetings and posted them on the FBNMS website.

The format for each public scoping meeting was similar, though tailored to meet the needs for each venue. The Sanctuary Superintendent opened each scoping meeting and provided a summary of the MPR process, detailed the meeting format, and answered questions. Following the introduction, the participants broke into smaller discussion groups. Each group had an FBNMS staff leader to help guide the discussion and ensure everyone had the opportunity to provide comments. Each group also had a note taker to accurately record each of the comments in a word document that was presented on a large monitor so the group could see that their comments were accurately captured. At the end of the meeting, the whole group reconvened and highlighted the issues raised in the individual breakout groups which were summarized so everyone could hear a sampling of the issues raised in other groups. In Fagaitua Village, a translation of presentation materials was provided when asked of team members, and the remainder of the scoping meeting was held in Samoan.

Written Comments

In addition to public scoping meetings, the program accepted written comments from early February to late March, 2009. Comments were sent to the ONMS in the form of E-mails, letters, and faxes.

2.0 FBNMS Scoping Issue Areas

2.1 Summary of Comments

To facilitate analysis of the public comments, FBNMS staff exercised professional judgment to synthesize all comments provided during the scoping. A summary of issues raised at the scoping meetings and in the written comments can be found in Appendix 1 and on the website. The "raw" or unprocessed comments can also be viewed on the FBNMS website's Management Plan Review page. Appendix 1 organizes all scoping comments received, either at the meetings or in writing, into twelve primary issue areas including some overarching comments, and represents all non-duplicate comments received during the scoping process in order to provide a general scope of issues raised.

The 12 issue areas were not arbitrarily chosen by FBNMS staff, but rather fell naturally out of the summary process. However, these areas mesh nicely with those Preliminary Priority Topics that were highlighted in the FR notice as some of the “most important issues NOAA should consider in preparation of a new FBNMS management plan.” Each comment was placed into one of the issue areas. However, there were two comments that were considered to be ‘Overarching Comments’ as they addressed the management and all programs of FBNMS as a whole.

Many comments cover more than one category and could therefore be placed in other issue areas. For instance, the comment that FBNMS “Must improve awareness of regulations (e.g., zoning), enforcement & enforcement efforts” could have been placed in the ‘Enforcement’ issue area, but because the comment is about raising awareness, it was placed in the ‘Outreach’ issue area. It should also be noted that the ONMS received many comments concerning a particular issue that were opposed to each other (i.e., FBNMS should do something; FBNMS should not do something) or there was a range of comments regarding a particular concept. This scenario occurs in almost every issue area. For example, one comment says: “The Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (FBS) should not be expanded to include Rose Atoll or any other areas due to concerns over possible fishing restrictions”; while another comment states “Oppose expansion unless get approval from villages, locals, fishermen, and data”; and yet other comments state “The boundaries of the Sanctuary need to be greatly expanded in order to mitigate against threats (e.g., land-based development)” or “Fully support expansion if properly enforced.”

2.2 Issue Area Summaries

Below you will find brief descriptions of each issue area, as well as a summary of the primary issues and some suggested strategies or tools to address these issues that arose during the public scoping period. To clarify, FBNMS staff sorted all comments as either an “issue” (e.g., lack of enforcement) or as a “tool” that may be used to address the issues (e.g., include villages / utilize aumaga to help solve issues of enforcement). Please note that even though a distinction has been made between issues and tools, both may be incorporated into the new management plan in some capacity.

Overarching Comments

A few comments were submitted that did not fit into a single issue area, but rather were intended to be applied to all aspects of FBNMS. These comments were considered ‘overarching comments’ as they emphasized the need to take into account the Samoan culture in everything FBNMS does, and to maintain Fa’asamoa in every issue area, every program, and the management and administration of FBNMS as a whole.

Administration

Comments regarding staffing, budgets, the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC), the MPR process and the general management of FBNMS were included in the Administration category. Many comments indicated support for the planning process, management plan review process, and the biogeographic assessment. One participant indicated that the MPR process could be a useful tool to support existing management efforts. However some participants believe that the scoping process has been inadequate to date and needs to be reinitiated. In particular, one participant expressed concern that a scoping meeting was not held in the Manu’a islands. The concern was based on the proximity of Manu’a to Rose Atoll. Other participants expressed their concern about the Federal government regulating marine resources. Several participants felt that the

territory was already accounting for marine protection and that the territory was seeking to manage additional marine areas. Another participant suggested that it should be up to the villages to decide how long the rules will apply. The CFMP program at DMWR allows villages to determine the length of marine conservation and the public may want the same from the national marine sanctuary program. Additional concern was expressed regarding the transparency of the management plan review process. In particular participants expressed that they didn't want any surprises and that FBNMS should provide avenues for public input other than the public scoping period. A recommendation was also made that the SAC should have a better cross section of members including people that enjoy water sports and water sports athletes. There were comments submitted on the need for an economic valuation of the sanctuary and socioeconomic baselines. One comment questioned why FBNMS had such a small budget, and numerous others recommended that the FBNMS acquire sufficient resources (administrative, enforcement, program, etc.) so as to encourage effective sanctuary operations and management.

Some technical recommendations were also submitted regarding the need for additional scientific monitoring, socioeconomic monitoring, and economic valuations. Participants suggested that FBNMS include more measurable objectives under all goals and the need to incorporate effectiveness monitoring to assess the impact of specific management activities. Participants also noted the need to have sanctuary personnel dedicated to scientific monitoring and enforcement. A number of comments suggested more direct involvement with villages regarding development of the management plan, among other things.

Ecosystem Characterization, Research, & Monitoring

The diversity of species and habitat in American Samoa, and specifically Fagatele Bay, offers an outstanding opportunity for scientific research on tropical marine ecosystems. All comments and suggested strategies/tools regarding research, monitoring, and characterization are included in this category. Numerous comments indicated support for the goal of characterization and monitoring of FBNMS resources. It was offered that FBNMS should develop better science-based research and monitoring plans, including establishing an understanding of baseline conditions. One comment stated that conducting research within FBNMS, and peer-reviewed publication, should be the top management priority. Support was also offered to bring in off-island expertise and special projects. However, one comment suggested that there is already enough on-going research in American Samoa. Many comments indicated a need to consider the link between the land and the sea and a holistic approach to managing the marine resources by looking at terrestrial impacts throughout the watershed. The proximity of FBNMS to the landfill was specifically mentioned numerous times, and questions arose regarding any possible impacts on water quality and other resources due to this close proximity. All in all, comments generally suggested that FBNMS needs better monitoring of marine resources.

Some participants of the public scoping process suggested that long-term monitoring be improved, possibly with the use of data logger buoys. Others suggested monitoring nutrients, fish, and making all results available to the public, including in the Samoan language.

Ecotourism

A number of comments were submitted regarding aspects of tourism, either for American Samoa in general or specifically Fagatele Bay. It is worth repeating that there is overlap among

numerous comments and they could easily fit into one or more category. For example, there were a number of comments on the need for a visitor's center, and that the visitor's center could be used to promote tourism. Since these comments were primarily regarding a visitor's center, they were placed in the Outreach category. All comments primarily related to tourism are included in this category. Comments indicated support for FBNMS to help promote tourism activities in American Samoa, and specifically at Fagatele Bay. It was also indicated that tourism should be promoted in a sustainable manner. There were a number of comments regarding access to Fagatele Bay, specifically that access (foot traffic) should be possible on Sundays and the need to improve the road leading to the bay. A final issue raised was that tourism options in American Samoa should be for everyone – including trips to Rose Atoll.

There was one comment suggesting a strategy regarding tourism. It was suggested that villages could offer tours of Fagatele Bay, and that the concept could be modeled off of Aunu'u.

Education

All comments related to specific educational programs, activities, and needs are included in this category. Educational activities are geared towards students/teachers in both formal and non-formal educational setting. It was noted that as FBNMS conducts programs to educate youth, they should also educate older generations – the leaders, and education programs could be focused on the villages around FBNMS. It was also stated that education is needed across the board on all issues that can affect marine resources (e.g., littering). One commenter supported the education programs offered from June to August, but stated that they are too few and infrequent for 9-12 year olds. A number of comments indicated that education and outreach should be a priority as greater public awareness leads to greater understanding. One comment noted a potential disconnect between environmental education and site knowledge.

This potential disconnect could possibly be rectified by adopting a strategy that was suggested by a number of people. Many comments indicated support for site-based education programs and the benefits of bringing people to Fagatele Bay, stating that education should be done at the site. One commenter noted that due to FBNMS's proximity to the landfill, there exists an opportunity for educational programs related to waste (e.g., recycling, water quality, etc.). One commenter suggested restoring funding for 8th grade "Classroom Ocean" to take kids to MPAs, including Manu'a. Another suggested creating a site-based curriculum utilizing FBNMS to engage students in stewardship and ocean awareness – to be based upon the Navigating Change curriculum developed in Hawaii. There were also a number of comments supporting internships for high school and college students – specifically for education & outreach, and for science and resource management.

Emergency Response

This category includes comments on emergency response to such things as oils spills, vessel groundings, and coral bleaching events among others. It was noted that FBNMS needs to develop an emergency response plan, and utilize teams in D.C. and other sanctuary sites.

It was suggested that in order to develop a response plan and adequately respond to emergency situations, FBNMS should tap into existing funds that have been set up for these purposes.

Enforcement & Regulations

The most common comment in this category was that we need to increase enforcement efforts. There were comments stating that enforcement efforts to protect Fagatele Bay have not changed since sanctuary designation and that if there is no enforcement or protection then the Sanctuary is just a line drawn on a map. It was stated that the Territory currently does not have the resources to maintain constant enforcement activities, and that in general the lack of enforcement is caused by a lack of resources. Many comments indicated that in order to facilitate greater enforcement, monitoring, and surveillance increased resources are needed including a vessel, dedicated enforcement staff, and the use of cameras and other technologies. Other comments emphasized the need to stop illegal fishermen (possibly using GPS) and the need to use enforcement measures for land access. Finally, a number of comments support the use of the villages in enforcement efforts.

During the public scoping period a number of strategies or tools were suggested to address enforcement issues. A commonly suggested strategy is to include the villages and engage locals and/or utilize aumaga to enforce regulations at sites. Other comments suggested setting an enforcement schedule (but not making it public), charging enforcement time to FBNMS, and deputizing people to issue citations to violators. The most commonly suggested strategy to address enforcement issues was basically to increase enforcement and related resources (e.g., manpower, vessel, partnerships, etc.).

Expansion & Possible Additional Site Designations

All comments that were primarily related to boundary expansion of FBNMS and possible designation of additional sanctuary sites, including the marine portions of the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, are included in this category. There were a number of comments that indicated a need to clarify the FBNMS MPR and additional site designation process, and to clarify the method for determining possible sites (i.e., how they would be selected). Also, some suggested that it is difficult for the public to distinguish among the different MPA initiatives and time should be taken by all agencies to explain these different initiatives to the public.

A number of comments were submitted that expressed concern over FBNMS boundary expansion and the possible addition of new sanctuary sites. These ranged from concerns over Territorial waters being a Territorial issue to fears that a Federal system may take over the marine resources and not allow for a community focus. It was also suggested that the Federal government could aid the Territory by providing assistance, not by expanding. One commenter stated that FBNMS should not be expanded to include any new areas, including Rose Atoll, due to concerns over possible fishing restrictions. A few comments indicated the need for an evaluation of current sanctuary programs prior to any expansion, and others suggested that it would be best to improve management of the current site before creating additional sites. One comment stated opposition to expansion unless there was approval from locals, villages, fishermen, and it was supported by data.

Numerous comments indicated support for boundary expansion and/or additional sanctuary designations in American Samoa. Some comments indicated full support for expansion and additional sanctuary sites if they are properly enforced, or as no-take areas. Others support expansion efforts in order to regenerate fisheries or as seeding areas for fish stocks. It was stated

that the boundaries of the Sanctuary need to be greatly expanded in order to mitigate threats (e.g., land-based development), and that the revised sanctuary would be most successful and biologically beneficial as one site among a network of MPAs. Finally it was suggested that site expansion and additional site designations would likely require close collaborations and with the concurrence of villages, the ASG, community groups, and non-government entities, an expansion of the sanctuary presence in American Samoa would be beneficial to the long-term protection of marine resources in the Territory.

A variety of strategies regarding expansion and additional site designation were put forth during the public scoping period. These suggestions ranged from general suggestions, to the naming of specific sites to be considered for inclusion into the national marine sanctuary system. It was recommended the sanctuary be re-designated as a network of sites beyond the current geographic scope of Fagatele Bay. Numerous comments supported expansion of FBNMS to include Larsen's Bay. Others indicated that a co-management approach for Rose Atoll has merit while some offered outright support for the inclusion of the marine portions of Rose Atoll Marine National Monument. Other specific areas that were recommended for sanctuary designation include the Pala Lagoon (due to mangrove diversity), Leone, and the big corals of Ta'u in Manu'a. It was also recommended that the boundaries of FBNMS be expanded to include the adjacent coastline and bay(s), as well as deepwater areas outside of the Bay running parallel along the adjacent coastlines.

Fishing

A number of comments indicated concern over possible fishing restrictions. One commenter noted that there were no representatives of the fishing industry to state their opinions at that particular public meeting, and that all fishermen shouldn't be lumped together. It was stated that much effort is put into preserving and conserving but not into developing fisheries – we should not just protect coral reefs, we should also protect the fisheries. Comments also noted that fisheries cannot be closed just for the sake of doing it – it is a balancing act and everyone should be represented. A couple of fishing-related comments were geared towards Rose Atoll. Specifically, extending the no-fishing zone out to 50 nmi provides only slight protection for pelagic fish, but reef fishing around Rose Atoll could significantly reduce biomass and biodiversity of fish and invertebrates there, and should thus remain a no-take area out to 3 nmi.

There were a number of comments related to the traditional nature of fishing in American Samoa. It was recommended that we not limit the fishing areas of indigenous people fishing from shore or using small boats. One comment suggested that the Sanctuary not adversely affect local fishermen. It was emphasized that managers not lose sight of the cultural and traditional components of fishery management. Others indicated that because fisheries are traditionally important, further protections and conservation is supported. Along those lines some commented that overfishing is a concern and support fishermen being encouraged to utilize traditional fishing techniques, not modern technologies. It was also noted that in establishing CFMPs fishing is considered as once a site is closed fish abundance increases and spill over to other areas, thus increasing fisheries abundance elsewhere.

Two specific strategies were proposed to deal with fishing issues. One supported managers taking a straight-forward position that the coral reef ecosystem around Rose Atoll be a no-take

area – no exceptions. The other recommended the use of seasonal closures, as they are more in tune with village needs for subsistence.

Outreach

Public outreach and informal education include such things as exhibits, displays, public talks, trails, slide shows, etc.; and are generally geared towards the general public. A number of comments indicated the need for a visitor's center to increase the scope of outreach efforts and to help develop ocean awareness in young people. A number of comments indicated that FBNMS should do a better job of outreach and clarifying sanctuary programs, mission, goals, and objectives. Specifically, there is a need to better clarify the co-management relationship between ASG and the federal government. Also, outreach regarding enforcement and regulations is needed as few villagers understand what the regulations are, including the zoning of Fagatele Bay. It was also stated that greater awareness of regulations would facilitate enforcement efforts. Numerous comments emphasized the need to target outreach efforts towards villages, and include all generations. It was stated that there is a need to promote sanctuary programs and benefits to villagers as well as the general public. There was an overarching comment regarding all outreach; include Samoan legends in all outreach efforts – including outreach to tourists.

Suggested strategies and tools to address outreach issues include: continuing support and promote wide distribution for the Art and Tide calendar; FBNMS should participate in science fairs/symposia and other events; have meetings with, and get the opinions of, high school students; develop a cultural & visitor's center for locals and tourists; have an information booth at the turn-off to the Futiga dump; and utilize local media to inform the public and gain support.

Partnerships

As one commenter put it “partnerships are essential.” This category includes comments regarding ways to leverage resources to best achieve management objectives. All comments submitted regarding partnerships were in full support of FBNMS partnering on activities and management. Comments indicated the need for FBNMS to work collaboratively with DMWR and their existing MPA efforts – both the 20% no-take and the CFMP programs; and to promote integration of all of the MPA sites on island. It was also stated that collaborative partnerships are what DMWR is looking for. It was noted that FBNMS must collaborate with the Territory on enforcement, and enforcement partnerships need to be improved in general. Other comments supported partnering with a Federal agency for greater resources and to increase protections, thus benefiting the people; while another indicated that partnering with FBNMS would provide an opportunity to be included in the National Framework of MPAs. Finally, there were a number of comments on the need to partner with the villages - specifically, villages should play a larger role and FBNMS needs to partner with OSA. One comment stated that this is a sensitive issue. A commenter suggested that village partnerships would receive more support if the villagers perceived the value of sanctuary efforts. Also, communities should be encouraged to participate, but not for money, rather because active participation allows for a sense of ownership in the management process.

A great number of ideas and strategies were offered regarding possible partnerships for FBNMS including: ASCC; school PTAs (get students to the Bay, etc.); US and AS EPA (water quality, landfill runoff, etc.); boys/girls and other youth groups; church groups; Tourism Bureau

(including cruise ships); DMWR (existing MPA programs); US Coast Guard (enforcement, emergency response, etc.); ASDOE (materials, curriculum development, etc.); Samoan Studies Institute; village councils; NPS (education and interpretive strategies); and investigate future collaborations with The Nature Conservancy.

Resource Management

Comments on watershed issues, traditional ecological knowledge, specific resources, and zoning/no-take issues are included in this category. A number of comments supported FBNMS taking a ‘ridge-to-reef’ approach in developing the next management plan, and that marine resource management has to have some connectivity to land. It was noted that development and land use is often neglected, but can have huge impacts on the marine environment through runoff, sedimentation, etc. One commenter cited a need to deal with runoff from Nuuuli, while another indicated that coconut and bush crabs need to be conserved. Other comments indicated that anchor damage was a big issue, and that it is good to protect Fagatele Bay for food security purposes. One comment requested clarity on how a biogeographic assessment would benefit the Territory. Concerns were expressed that the new Monument designation for Rose Atoll may allow for significantly less protection for atoll’s coral reef resources. Finally, it was suggested that any expansion should be inherently designed to address current international MPA design criteria and standards.

Many comments support getting rid of the current zoning scheme in FBNMS and making the entire bay a no-take area, as this would reduce confusion and aid in enforcement. It was also recommended to establish and maintain mooring buoys to help protect reefs from anchor damage. One commenter suggested that seasonal closures do not allow for sufficient recovery and should therefore not be used. It was again stated that there needs to be a combination of current management and science with traditional practices and knowledge, and include socioeconomic information. Depending upon the site, mangrove restoration may be needed. Finally, it was suggested that any new sanctuary boundaries should have multiple-use zoning and include an enlarged, ‘core reserve’ area of full protection from any extractive use, as well as an enlarged ‘buffer zone’ around this core reserve where there are limited, multiple extractive and non-extractive uses occurring

APPENDIX 1

Full List of Issues Raised at Scoping Meetings and in Writing

Overarching Comments:

Issues:

- We need to take into account culture in everything FBNMS does
- You have to support the culture with the Bay and the public. Maintain Fa'asamoa

ADMINISTRATION:

Issues:

- No issues on the management review, or biogeo assessment. Fully supported.
- the NPS is supportive of the planning process you have begun and look forward to participating in the next steps
- The scoping process to date has been inadequate and needs to be reinitiated; scoping meeting needs to be held on Manua due to its proximity to Rose Atoll
- Is it up to the villages to decide how long the rules will apply?
- Need to provide avenues for public input other than this public comment channel
- FBNMS must keep transparent in terms of process and what's happening. No surprises.
- MPR should be used as an additional tool to support existing efforts
- We fully support management review and the biogeographic assessment
- The territory (CFMP, MPA) is already accounting for marine protection
- The territory would like to manage additional marine areas – however they believe we already have the resources on island to manage these sites
- Need to improve the area - preserve & protect for future generations, programs need to get funding to implement activities
- Need activities to incorporate effectiveness monitoring to assess the impact of specific management activities
- The Territorial lead agency for Rose Atoll is subject to the decision of the governor
- The Sanctuary Advisory Council should have a better cross section of members; people that enjoy water sport recreational sports and water sport athletes
- Need to determine cost/benefit of Sanctuary - need socioeconomic baselines and other (sensitivity) analyses
- Need economic valuation of FBNMS
- Why doesn't Fagatele Bay go to DMWR?
- Are the goals of the CFMP and the ONMS the same...are the means the same to accomplish these goals?
- Need clarification on the FBNMS MPR / Additional site process
- Why do you have such a small budget?
- US Citizens and US Nationals should have more input into budgetary funding
- What dollar amount is paid for the easement right of way and why isn't the lease agreement recorded at the Registrar's Office
- Why can't tour operators like BPMC have some input on the annual budget
- Look at local zoning laws (Title 26); couple zoning with Title 26; make clear our definition of "zoning"
- The site should not employ people

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- please incorporate by reference all pertinent information relevant from the NPSA General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Include more measurable objectives under all goals, to better assess the effectiveness of your activities
- Hold public meetings earlier in the day to accommodate the bus schedule or on Saturday. Also have meetings in villages near (potential) sites and have food.
- Go to villages directly and explain what is in the draft management plan, not just hold the meetings in public areas
- Involve the village of Futiga in developing the management plan. This may help with enforcement.
- Send people out into the villages to gain comments firsthand
- The ONMS should provide access to all individual public comments via the internet
- You need a park ranger for education/outreach, and as an enforcement officer
- The biogeographic study is another example of assistance provided by a Federal agency
- Need to piggy back from other sanctuaries management plans that are successful, then modify to fit Samoa
- Need an outdoor recreational planner or a park ranger
- I would recommend that the management planning review process include future provision of sufficient administrative and enforcement resources (including both staff, infrastructure, and finances) so as to encourage the effective management of the Sanctuary
- FBNMS needs to have dedicated personnel for monitoring/enforcement

ECOSYSTEM CHARACTERIZATION, RESEARCH, & MONITORING:

Issues:

- The Council supports the goal of characterization and monitoring of FBS resources including the establishment of an understanding of baseline conditions.
- Support bringing in off-island special projects
- Need expansion of the science goal, and objectives
- I think there's enough research now
- FBNMS needs to develop better research and monitoring plans, including science-based characterization and monitoring
- Conducting (and peer-reviewed publication) of scientific research within the existing FBNMS should be the top management priority
- Connections of animals (land and ocean in our culture are connected and sometimes describes trends) are important and needs to be considered
- There is concern with FBNMS's proximity to the landfill, and if there is impacts on water quality or other resources
- Embayments are important because they are secured and sheltered
- Current data limited to Birkland's long-term monitoring study
- Need better monitoring of resources

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Monitor nutrients in the water, and impacts on fish
- Detailed results from all research and monitoring programs should be peer reviewed and made available to the public (including in the Samoan language)
- Improve long-term monitoring; include data logger buoys

ECOTUORISM:

Issues:

- Promote tourism at Fagatele Bay in a sustainable manner
- FBNMS should help to promote tourism activities; tourism should be increased
- Tourism options should be for everyone - including Rose Atoll
- Need to fix the road to FB so more people can visit
- Access to FB (via foot traffic) should be possible on Sundays

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- The village could offer tours of Fagatele Bay; Could potentially be modeled off of Aunu'u
- You guys should get into tourism with the cruise ships

EDUCATION:

Issues:

- As you are educating the younger generation you should also be educating the leaders who have the control
- You should educate all the villages around FBNMS
- Education and outreach should be a primary factor because greater public awareness means greater understanding
- Need education across the board on all the issues (e.g., littering)
- Potential disconnect between environmental education and site knowledge
- The education programs offered from June to August are great. However too few and infrequent for 9 to 12 year old kids.

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Increase awareness and promote sanctuary programs and benefits by bringing people to FBNMS (including students) - Education should be done at the site
- Restore funding for 8th grade "Classroom/ocean" to take kids to MPAs (including Manu'a)
- Since Fagatele Bay lies adjacent to the landfill, is there potential for an educational program related to waste? Recycling? Water quality?
- Create a site based curriculum which utilizes Fagatele Bay to engage students in stewardship and ocean awareness. This could be modeled on the "Navigating Change" curriculum that was developed in Hawaii
- You should have internships for college and high school, for we can get experiences, and we can talk to people about the Sanctuary. One for education/outreach experience. One for working with FB to help them preserve it – science and management.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

Issues:

- Need to develop emergency response plan, utilize team in DC and other sanctuary sites

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Tap into existing fund to develop emergency response plans for human made scenarios

ENFORCEMENT & REGULATIONS:

Issues:

- Important to use enforcement measures for land access and to follow up on claims of ownership
- Need to develop methods to stop illegal fishermen - possibly GPS
- If there is no protection and no enforcement, then the “Sanctuary” is just a line drawn on a map that does not correspond to any reality
- In the past 25 years enforcement effort to protect the marine life in Fagatele Bay has not changed
- Lack of enforcement caused by lack of manpower; resources (boat); safety
- There is a need for a dedicated person to help with enforcement
- Problems getting funding for enforcement (salaries/vessel/etc); DMWR cannot do enforcement alone
- We need to increase enforcement efforts
- Resources are needed for greater enforcement including a boat, increased monitoring and surveillance, more staff, and use of cameras and other technologies
- The territory does not currently have the resources to maintain constant enforcement activities
- Village involvement in enforcement efforts is very important and needed

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- DMWR uses a sign-in sheet, surface patrol both during the day and at night, NOAA surveillance camera
- Develop enforcement schedule, but don't make schedule public
- Time (for enforcement) should be charged to Fagatele Bay account; Camera in the bay
- Include villages/ utilize aumaga to help solve issue of enforcement
- Get an easement right of way to the Ridge overlooking the Bay and like ASEPA deputize people to issue citations to violators (most always at night) and pay for it
- Engage local villagers to enforce regulations at their own site

EXPANSION & ADDITIONAL SITES:

Issues:

- Oppose expansion unless get approval from villages, locals, fishermen, and data
- Sanctuary should change the wording that it is using for the ‘site expansion process’ so that people are clear that they are proposing making additional sites.
- Support expansion if the fisheries are regenerated and land areas are protected
- The boundaries of the Sanctuary need to be greatly expanded in order to mitigate against threats (e.g., land-based development)

- With the concurrence of the local community and the American Samoa Government (ASG), an expansion of the existing Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) would be beneficial to the long-term protection of the Bay's resources
- Supports the site expansion/additional sites for fish stock, seeding...We need more areas like Fagatele for AS
- The revised Sanctuary would be most successfully adapted and biologically beneficial long-term as one site among a network of MPAs around Tutuila
- Site expansion and additional site designation would likely require community groups and non-government entities to advocate for the creation of such a network of new areas
- The federal government can assist the territory by providing services instead of expanding sites
- The territory would prefer to receive the funds directly to contract someone themselves to do the work
- Territorial waters should be a territorial issue and not a Federal reserve because there becomes a question of ownership
- There are concerns regarding a Federal system not allowing community focus, and taking over marine resources
- My grandfather is a fisherman and he believes that poor water quality affects fishery abundance. Therefore setting up an MPA will not serve a purpose
- Need to clarify FBNMS mpr/site designation process with emphasis on areas of public participation
- It is very difficult for the public to understand the differences between different types of MPA initiatives and time should be taken by different agencies to work together to explain these differences to the public
- What qualifies a site/how do you select other sites?
- Site expansion is of greater concern than the management review. How will that work, and what sites would you use?
- What is the distance of expansion out to sea? Will Fagatele be expanded out 50 miles?
- How will traditional bottom fishers be affected by the expansion?
- Clarify the method for determining preliminary sanctuary site. Utilize biogeographic assessment
- The Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (FBS) should not be expanded to include Rose Atoll or any other areas due to concerns over possible fishing restrictions
- It would be best to improve the management of one single site and concentrate efforts on having one successful Sanctuary before jumping ahead to create additional sites that there may be no local need for.
- There should be an evaluation prior to expanding. Why expand when not sure how you're doing now?
- Fully support expansion if properly enforced
- The NPS supports any sanctuary expansion as no-take areas

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Expansion should include the boundaries of the Sanctuary to be expanded to include adjacent coastline and bay(s) to the Fagatele, as well as deepwater areas outside of the Bay, running parallel along the adjacent coastline and bay(s)

- I encourage and support the expansion into Larsen's and other bays
- The coral in Leone has been destroyed by people walking on the reef; consider Leone as an additional sanctuary site
- Consider Pala Lagoon, and its diversity of mangroves, as a sanctuary site
- Support expansion of the boundaries of the Sanctuary to include the new Rose Atoll Marine National Monument
- The proposal to expand the Fagatele Bay NMS to include co-management of Rose Atoll NWR offshore areas by NOAA in partnership with the FWS may have merit, and further consultation between agencies should take place as part of the EIS preparation process
- You should protect Ta'u, the big coral in Manu'a as part of the Sanctuary
- Recommend that the Sanctuary be re-designated as a network of sites (if possible) beyond the current geographic scope of Fagatele Bay

FISHING:

Issues:

- The Rose Atoll Monument, by extending the no-fishing zone out to 50 miles off shore, provides slight additional protection for the pelagic fish (it is only about 1% of our EEZ)
- Any coral reef fishing at Rose Atoll can significantly reduce the biomass and diversity of fish and invertebrates there, diminishing the very purpose for designating the site as a refuge/monument, and should thus remain a no-take area out to 3 nmi
- Don't lump all fishermen together as one. Each case/individual is different
- How are fishing activities illegal and damaging?
- We put so much effort in conserving and preserving, but not into promoting and developing our fisheries
- Fisheries traditionally are important, protection and conservation is supported - agrees conservation efforts are needed
- Our fishery is in its infancy, compared to rest of the world. We are small, but maybe it's due to other people coming in
- In establishing CFMPs we also consider fishing. Once a site is closed down, the number of fish increase and spill over into other areas increasing fisheries abundance elsewhere
- Spear fishing is illegal in the territory
- Fishermen are not here, there are no representatives from those industries here to state their opinions
- Can't just protect coral reefs, need to protect the fisheries
- We can't just close down a fishery for the sake of doing it. It's a balancing act. We must ensure everyone is represented
- Must not affect small fishermen/alias who depend on resources
- I recommend you take into account the indigenous people, who come from shore, and use small boats. We shouldn't limit their fishing areas
- Overfishing is a concern. There is no more fish. What about traditional fishing practices? What happened to that?
- Managers must not lose sight of the cultural and traditional components of fishery management
- I know that fishermen are using modern technologies. Can fishermen be encouraged to use traditional fishing techniques?

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- I would hope that managers take a clear and straightforward position that the coral reef ecosystem around Rose Atoll shall remain a no-take marine protected area, no exceptions
- Utilize seasonal closures, as they are more in tune with village needs for subsistence fishing

OUTREACH:

Issues:

- The ONMS should do a better job of outreach and providing a “transparent, cooperative and coordinated” approach
- Increase scope of outreach; concentrate on youth and those that actually play in the water
- Need clarification on the FBNMS co-management relationship between AS and the Federal government
- Support efforts to develop ocean awareness in younger people
- FB trail needs better signage and trail improvements
- It is important to get the information out to the people so that they know what the restrictions and regulations are
- Fagatele Bay needs more signs all around the island - particularly in/around the sanctuary in English and Samoan
- The FB trail is overgrown
- The track should be built properly out of wood or some other suitable material to stop erosion and make it more accessible to people
- Tracks to Sliding Rock and Larsen’s should be cleared more regularly and clearly marked
- Signs should be cleaned regularly and include a ‘YOU ARE HERE’ or some indication of where that sign is in relation to the trail
- There is a need for a visitors center
- Few villagers in the area understand what the regulations are
- It is very important that you communicate with the villages about FBNMS programs and regulations
- You need ways to reach the elders, and they will educate youth/others
- What exactly are you managing? Need to clarify sanctuary programs, mission, goals, objectives
- Greater awareness would facilitate enforcement efforts
- Must improve awareness of regulations (e.g., zoning), enforcement & enforcement efforts (i.e. how does it work, response time, existing efforts, DMWR vs. Federal regulations and penalty schedules, etc.)
- How many MPAs will there be around the island?
- Need to promote sanctuary programs & benefits to villages and general public
- Include Samoan legends in the outreach, and for tourists

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Continue support of the Art & Tide calendar and promote wide distribution
- Participate in science fair/Science Symposium and other events
- Increase ongoing outreach efforts with the surrounding communities
- Have meetings with the local high school students to get their opinions

- Develop a cultural center for tourists to visit, and include FBNMS
- Have an information booth near the turn off to the Futiga Dump road from 1300 week days, Saturdays and by appointment on Sundays for tourists
- Use local media; get articles on FBNMS in local papers
- You should advertize to gain support from the public

PARTNERSHIPS:

Issues:

- FBNMS needs to work in partnership/collaboratively with DMWR and their existing MPA efforts (20% No-Take and CFMP)
- Support the partnership with federal agency for greater resources, increase protection to make connections....the people benefit
- Need to address runoff from Nuuli
- Support ongoing community fisheries program
- Promote integration of all of the MPA sites on island
- There is an opportunity to be included in the National Framework of MPAs
- Collaborative partnerships are what we're looking for
- FBNMS must collaborate on management
- FBNMS must collaborate with the Territory of American Samoa (e.g., on enforcement, etc.)
- FBNMS must work with the Territory (OSA) to go to the villages
- There is currently a partnership between NOAA and DMWR for enforcement
- Need to improve enforcement partnerships
- At Fagatele Bay the Village should be playing a larger role
- The village partnership will receive more support if villagers perceive the value
- Encourage communities to participate, but not for \$\$ - because they get a sense of ownership
- Partnerships are essential
- I understand you plan to build partnerships with the villages for additional sites. I know for a fact this is a sensitive issue
- Please explain "Partnerships"

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Good opportunity to partner with ASCC
- Opportunity to form partnerships with school PTAs (e.g., to fundraise to take students to the bay)
- Potential for a partnership with the US-EPA (on water quality, landfill runoff, etc.)
- Provide more local groups (e.g., boys/girls groups, church groups, OSA, EPA, Tourism Bureau) the opportunity to partner
- Partner with DMWR, Coast Guard, etc... to assist with enforcement issues
- Revamp and strengthen partnership w/ DOE for materials, curriculum
- You should partner with specific classes that have a connection to Fagatele Bay - to come and work in the Bay
- You should partner with the Samoan Studies institute so that everything can be done in Samoan

- You should partner with village councils and youth groups
- Investigate future collaborations with TNC
- The Sanctuary should work closely with existing territorial programs if they do indeed intend to make additional sites in territorial waters
- The NPA encourages NOAA to work closely with the NPS as NOAA develops education and interpretive strategies
- Partner with the Coast Guard on emergency response

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Issues:

- Incorporation of a more "ridge to reef" approach in developing the next management plan, including specific regulations and management actions to protect and restore the watershed
- Anchor damage is a big issue
- Good to protect Fagatele Bay for food security
- Land development and land use is often neglected, but it's a huge issue on sea issues, sedimentation, run off, etc....
- Coconut & Bush Crabs need to be conserved
- Land based activities need to be controlled to deter impacts on the ocean, there needs to be connectivity to land
- Concern that the new Monument designation for Rose Atoll may now provide significantly less protection for atoll's coral reef resources than it did when Rose Atoll was a National Wildlife Refuge
- Expansion in area of waters protected should be inherently designed to address current international MPA design criteria and standards (sufficient biological protections for the residing reef species assemblage and community structure, migratory/pelagic marine mammals and fish, protect migration and home range behaviors of resident organisms, and sustain fish and invertebrate population dynamics - including enhanced recruitment, and spawning/larval source opportunities).
- A connection needs to be made with science and traditional knowledge
- Look into changing the zoning regime of FBNMS
- How does the bio-geographic assessment benefit American Samoa?
- FB should have no zoning and should be made entirely a no-take Sanctuary

Suggested Strategies and Tools:

- Establish and maintain mooring buoys to protect the reefs from anchor damage
- Depending upon the site, there may be a need for mangrove replanting to occur
- Don't use seasonal closures as they do not allow for sufficient recovery
- New sanctuary boundaries should have multiple-use zoning and include an enlarged, 'core reserve' area of full protection from any extractive use, as well as an enlarged 'buffer zone' around this core reserve where there are limited, multiple extractive and non-extractive uses occurring
- Need to put science together with a layer of traditional practices/socio on top of the biology