

## **NOAA GCRC Program Grant Progress Report 6 – FINAL**

### ***Bringing traditional knowledge to the table: building community involvement in fisheries management in the Mariana Islands.***

**A. Grant Number:** NA07NMF4630113

**B. Grant Amount:** \$17,000  
**Match Amount:** \$23,000

**C. Project Title:** Bringing traditional knowledge to the table: building community involvement in fisheries management in the Mariana Islands

**D. Grantee:** Pacific Marine Resources Institute, Inc.

**E. Award Period:** 1 September 2007 to 31 October 2009

**F. Period Covered by this Report:** 1 September 2009 to 31 October 2009

**G. Summary of Progress and Expenditures to date:**

#### **1. Work Accomplishments**

##### **a. Project Summary**

This grant and matching funding from PMRI supported the development of four issues of the Journal of Micronesian Fishing. Interviews with experienced fishermen and contributions by the principle investigators and stakeholders provided content. A website—[micronesianfishing.com](http://micronesianfishing.com)—was developed to increase the impact of the project beyond the geography of the printed magazine.

Sufficient impetus was developed to assure continued development of the Journal and further support of the goals of the grant program beyond the life of the grant. Positive stakeholder feedback has resulted in continued contribution of content and additional funding in the form of advertising and additional grant support continued publication.

##### **b. Project Goals- Assessment, Lessons Learned and Future Directions**

The project was initially intended to only cover the Mariana Islands in scope, however, concurrent publication of another Marianas focused fishing magazine prompted a shift to a regional focus. The project was initially divided into two components- interviews (Goal 1) and publication of the fisheries journal (Goal 2). The following objectives applied to one or both goals.

**Objective 1 (Goal 1): Document the occurrence of shifting fisheries baselines in the Micronesia.**

Every interview conducted with elder fishermen during the course of this project supported a decline in fish abundance since the Second World War. Younger interviewees recognized a lesser level of decline and in some cases disavowed a decline.

*Future Directions*

Interviews from this project will provide broader impact through support of an 'elder fisherman' project currently being conducted by NOAA NMFS in the Marianas. In addition, the positive feed back (e.g. interest) from most fishers has prompted PMRI to continue conducting interviews in the region.

**Objective 2 (Goal 1): Document historical changes in fisheries methods, knowledge and preferences in Micronesia.**

Interviews and historical research has illuminated changes in fisheries methods including the rise and decline of commercial pole-tuna fishing in the Marianas.

*Lessons learned*

In some cases, traditional fishing knowledge is not shared outside strict traditional lineages (Marshall Islands), but in most other regions interviewees are willing to document such knowledge.

*Future Directions*

Identical to those for objective 1.

**Objective 3 (Goal 1 and 2): Disseminate the results of interviews to fishers and resource managers.**

Edited interviews were published in the Journal of Micronesian Fishing and complete interviews made available online at [micronesianfishing.com](http://micronesianfishing.com).

*Future directions*

Identical to those for objective 1.

**Objective 4 (Goal 2): Create and maintain an outreach and education resource for the Micronesian fishing community and coral reef fisheries resource managers.**

This objective focused on the development of the Journal of Micronesian fishing, which has received broad popular support from its readership.

*Lessons Learned*

This was certainly the most challenging part of the overall project. Gaining advertising support in particular proved difficult due to global economics and the regional scope of the journal. The level of effort in terms of meetings and

constant follow up involved in gathering advertising was unexpected and will need dedicated staff time in the future.

#### *Future Directions*

General support for the project, continuing contributions of content from stakeholders and a small grant from the Micronesian Conservation Trust assure the production of at least two more printed issues. PMRI intends to continue to publish the journal and is seeking advertising support for future issues.

## **2. Project Results**

### **Interviews; Shifting Baselines and Traditional Knowledge**

Interviews documenting changes in fisheries resources and changes in fishing methods since WWII were published in the Journal of Micronesia and Fishing.

Audio files of selected interviews featured in the journal are posted at

[http://www.micronesianfishing.com/Talk\\_Story/Talk\\_Story.html](http://www.micronesianfishing.com/Talk_Story/Talk_Story.html).

### **Magazine: Journal of Micronesia and Fishing**

Four issues of the Journal of Micronesia and Fishing were published and distributed regionally. Journal issues available online at

<http://www.micronesianfishing.com/archives.html>.

### **Website: [www.micronesianfishing.com](http://www.micronesianfishing.com)**

A website was developed to support the journal at [www.micronesianfishing.com](http://www.micronesianfishing.com).

Journal issues available online in pdf format at

<http://www.micronesianfishing.com/archives.html>.