



OFFICE OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Coordinating and participating in regional ocean conservation, science, and education initiatives

Supporting Maritime Heritage

Participating in and implementing regional ocean governance initiatives

Improving the efficiency of regional administration

Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

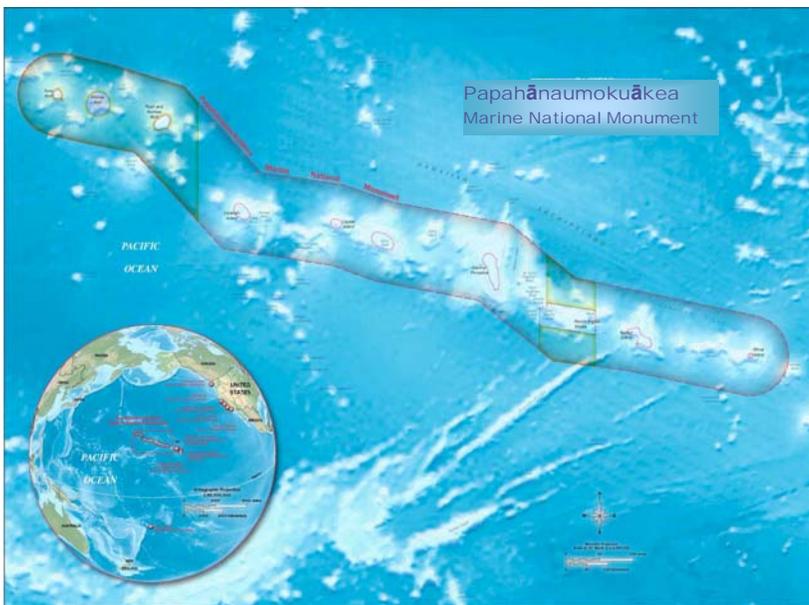
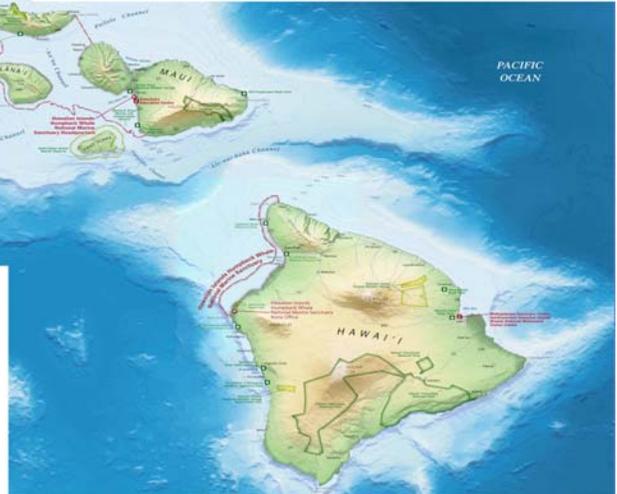
Rose Atoll Proposed National Marine Sanctuary



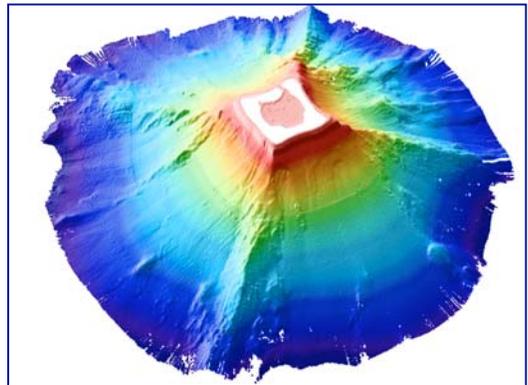
NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES
PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION



Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale
National Marine Sanctuary



Papahānaumokuākea
Marine National Monument



Rose Atoll
Proposed National Marine Sanctuary

Pacific Islands Regional Staff

- Allen Tom
Regional Director
- LT Kelley Sage
Acting Deputy Director
- Hans Van Tilburg
Maritime Heritage Coordinator
- Jonathan Martinez
Graduate Sciences Intern
- Micki Ream
Graduate Sciences Intern
- Nancy Daschbach
Administrative Assistant



Fagatele Bay
National Marine Sanctuary

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Pacific Islands Region

2009 Accomplishments

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The Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIR) coordinates and supports our four Pacific Islands sites, Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary in American Samoa, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary in the main Hawaiian islands, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, Rose Atoll Proposed National Marine Sanctuary, and the regional Maritime Heritage Program. The regional office develops and maintains partnerships with agencies and organizations that enhance the program's mission.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>



Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Pacific Islands Region 2009 Accomplishments

The Pacific Island Regional Office (PIR) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) oversees management of two sanctuaries and one marine national monument, all in the central and south Pacific ocean. These sites include both the largest and smallest in the ONMS system, as well as one established to protect a single species. Together they protect over 140,000 square miles of tropical coastal and ocean waters.

This report provides a brief overview of the activities conducted by the PIR in 2009. Many of these accomplishments involved collaboration with one or more of the sites and ONMS headquarters. Others involved partners both inside and outside of the federal government.



Aerial view of Rose Atoll, in American Samoa.
On January 6, 2009, Rose was named a Marine National Monument. By order of Presidential Proclamation 8337, NOAA has been directed to determine whether to include the waters of Rose Atoll in the national marine sanctuary system. Photo from www.oceandots.com/pacific/samoa/rose.php

Coordinating and participating in regional ocean conservation, science, and education initiatives

The PIR staff engaged State, Federal, nongovernmental and academic partners in a variety of efforts that promoted understanding of marine protected areas and the ONMS, and supported education and science initiatives throughout the region.

Supporting local students in the marine environmental sciences

The PIR has developed a multi-pronged approach to promoting and nurturing the region's students. By working with the University of Hawai'i, Maui Community College and other local academic institutions, support for internships for our local island students is growing.

PIR and University of Hawai'i internship developed

The PIR and the University of Hawai'i's Institute of Marine Biology are collaborating on a new fellowship program. The program offers support for masters level marine science students for two semesters. Students work in a PIR office, and also complete a 2-month

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internship in a NOAA office in Washington, DC. Three interns have been selected for 2009, and are working with the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHW), the Pacific Services Center and the National Marine Fisheries Service. A fourth student from Maui Community College will begin a marine science internship in 2010. See our homepage for more information:

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

Graduate Science Program interns begin their careers with PIR

The PIR selected two graduate students from the NOAA Office of Education's Graduate Sciences Program. Ms. Micki Ream, and Mr. Jonathan Martinez will work for OE until they graduate, then join the PIR team. Micki is detailed to the Waikiki Aquarium where she puts to use the public relations and outreach skills learned at her master's degree program at Stanford University. Jonathan works at the University of Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB) as the science liaison between the PIR and HIMB. He is a doctoral candidate at the university. Both work part time while they finish their degrees.

Developing undergraduate internships

The PIR is working with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo to place a student at the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo. The regional office is also helping to prepare intern opportunities for Kaua'i, Maui and other locations on the Big Island, in collaboration with the NOAA Office of Education. Next summer, the PIR has arranged for a Hollings Scholarship Intern to be placed at the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center on the Big Island. 'Imiloa is one of the PIR's partners through a Memorandum of Agreement. In addition, the PIR is working with the Maui Fishpond Association, the HIHW Kaua'i office, and the Hawai'i Undersea Research Lab to develop NOAA Office of Education undergraduate internship projects at those locations.

Mokupāpapa Discovery Center opens wetlab



Yumi Yasutake (in the background) chats with Senator Akaka's Big Island liaison, while Tanya DeCembra (front) explains how the wetlab's newest microscope works.

Mokupāpapa Discovery Center celebrated the opening of a new wetlab, developed through the efforts of the Center's staff. The lab expands the Center's ability to offer meaningful scientific education programs to Big Island students. The new wet lab can accommodate as many as 15 students and three teachers at one time. Equipment includes stereo-microscopes that can project onto two 32 inch flat screen monitors, six specimen tanks, counter work space, display and storage cabinets, and sinks for cleaning and aquarium maintenance. The PIR helped to

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coordinate the official opening, which was attended by staff from Senators Inouye's and Akaka's offices. <http://papahanaumokuakea.gov/education/center.html>

Discover Earth, Sea and Sky curriculum project

The PIR, the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center and the Hawai'i Volcano National Park on the Big Island of Hawai'i collaborate through a Memorandum of Agreement. They are developing a new curriculum that will debut in the island's elementary schools called "Discover Earth, Sea and Sky: Through Hawaiian Eyes". The curriculum will target fourth grade students who will utilize resources at all three partners' locations, including the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center. For more information about the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center, go to: www.imiloahawaii.org



Old Lahaina Courthouse, Maui

PIR developing new visitor center in Lahaina

The PIR embarked on an exciting project to assist with the development of a new visitors center in Lahaina, Maui. The center is planned to occupy space in the Old Lahaina Courthouse a popular tourist destination prominently located in downtown Lahaina. Partners in the ambitious project include the Lahaina Restoration Foundation, NOAA Fisheries and the Lahaina Town Action Committee. Plans for

the two-story courthouse feature themes on Hawaiian cultural, historical and natural history, with sanctuary information well integrated within the exhibits.

NOAA partners with Lahaina Restoration Foundation

The PIR was awarded a Preserve America Initiative Grant to conduct a historical preservation project focusing on Lahaina's colorful history. The \$12,000 grant, part of a NOAA initiative to promote historic preservation projects, will be used to record oral histories, and produce several outreach products from those histories. The PIR will work with the Lahaina Restoration Foundation to complete the project. For more information about NOAA's Preserve America Initiative, go to: <http://preserveamerica.noaa.gov/>.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

PIR's Volunteer of the year completing groundbreaking work

The PIR's Volunteer of the Year, Renee Lackey is finishing up a labor of love: reassembling the skeleton of a Hawaiian monk seal. Renee single-handedly rearticulated the marine mammal utilizing skills that she developed in similar projects with two dolphin skeletons. Because there were no local experts who could assist her and answer any questions, she connected with scientists at the Smithsonian and other institutions for guidance. The completed skeleton will be displayed first at the Waikiki Aquarium before being moved permanently to Mokupāpapa Discovery Center.



Renee Lackey and the monk sea skeleton.

Hihimanu blessing held on Oahu

Senator Daniel K. Akaka, ONMS Director Dan Basta and other distinguished guests joined Allen Tom and the Hawai'i sites leadership in the blessing of the R/V *Hihimanu*, an 11m boat shared by Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHW). Kimokeo Kapāhulehua and William Aila conducted the traditional Hawaiian blessing. A crowd of over 50 guests including state Senator David Ige, Representatives Roland Sagum and Chris Lee, Chrystn Alston Eads for Honolulu's



Senator Akaka addresses the crowd. Photo by Delores Clark

Mayor Mufi Hanneman, and a representative for State Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland attended the event held at Rainbow Bay Marina in Pearl Harbor.

Disaster assistance to American Samoa

In late September, the Territory of American Samoa suffered an 8.0 earthquake. A resulting tsunami devastated much of the coastline of the main island of Tutuila, as well as on neighboring islands of Western Samoa. Focus has been on relief for the families who lost loved ones and property. Fortunately, no one among the sanctuary family was seriously affected. An initial reconnaissance of Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (FBNMS) showed little damage to the shoreline, but a later survey suggests that there



Post tsunami scene in Pago Pago Harbor. Photo by Jooke Robbins.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

may have been significant damage to the reef, especially between 10 ft. and 40 ft. depths. Both the national and regional offices will work to validate the assessment, and assist in any restoration efforts that may be needed. PIR Director Allen Tom, along with ONMS Director Dan Basta and FBNMS Superintendent Gene Brighthouse, met with Governor Togiola Tulafono to discuss NOAA's intentions to assist the Territory in the wake of this disaster.

In addition, a recovery team (that includes PIR staff) will be investigating other types of aid to the territory, including long-term planning and mitigation products. FBNMS is collaborating with the National Weather Service (NWS) and the NOAA Ocean Media Center to produce educational videos to inform citizens near oceans coasts everywhere of the dangers of tsunamis and the importance of awareness. The videos will illustrate some basic tsunami principles and impacts through stories told from the standpoint of individuals who have experienced the destructive waves.



Senator Daniel K. Inouye and Senator Daniel K. Akaka share a laugh at the Sanctuary learning center opening in Kihei.

Hawai'i's Senators Inouye and Akaka participate in Kihei Learning Center dedication

Senator Daniel K. Inouye and Senator Daniel K. Akaka joined NOAA's new Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco and PIR Director Allen Tom to speak at the dedication of the Kihei Learning Center on Maui in April. The new 4,600 ft² single-story learning center is located next to the sanctuary office building. The Sanctuary Learning Center provides offices for staff, and classroom space for school groups and public programs. The \$6.5 million building broke ground in 2004, and construction was completed earlier this year.

Waikiki Aquarium prepares Northwestern Hawaiian Islands exhibit

In collaboration with the PIR, the Waikiki Aquarium will be opening a new exhibit featuring the natural history of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. In addition to the exhibit, a new touch tank and Hawaiian monk seal skeleton (assembled by PIR volunteer Renee Lackey) will enhance the visitor experience at the Waikiki Aquarium. For more information about the Waikiki Aquarium, visit: <http://www.waquarium.org/>

Community support: Science Fair and History Awareness Day

PIR staff participated as judges in the Hawai'i State Science Fair and in History Awareness Day. These opportunities to support our local communities help to promote NOAA and the sanctuary program.

Supporting Maritime Heritage

PIR Maritime Heritage Coordinator Hans Van Tilburg is one of only two maritime specialists in our region. As such, he is the region's representative to Hawai'i and the Pacific's maritime organizations. Van Tilburg collaborates with other NOAA programs and offices, transferring his knowledge of identifying potential underwater shipwreck sites to divers, mappers, and others traveling and working in remote Pacific island areas. He also works closely with federal partner agencies, non-profits, and the academic community in the field of heritage preservation. <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific/mhp.html>

Maritime Heritage Symposium hosted by PIR

This year, PIR co-sponsored the 20th annual Symposium on Maritime Heritage and History of Hawai'i and the Pacific, which was held at our Hawai'i Kai conference room. Over 75 maritime preservation professionals and the public gathered for two days of presentations and panel discussions, followed by receptions and special evening events. Participants included speakers from Australia, California, Oregon, and all across the local islands. The 21st annual maritime symposium is in the planning stages.

PIR "Returns to Shipwreck Beach" on Lāna'i

NOAA's Preserve America Initiative awarded Regional Maritime Heritage Coordinator Hans Van Tilburg a grant to train University of Hawai'i Marine Option Program students in marine archaeology survey techniques. The students trained with Van Tilburg on O'ahu, then traveled to Lāna'i to survey an historic inter-island steamship wreck. Lāna'i elementary and high school students joined the group in the efforts. After the survey was completed, the group presented their findings to the residents of Lāna'i. A website and public information brochure are being developed that will showcase for the first



Shoreline survey being conducted at Shipwreck Beach.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

time, the maritime heritage of Hawai‘i’s historic steamship fleet during the plantation era.
<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/maritime/expeditions/lanai/welcome.html>



Chinese junk visits Hawai‘i

The PIR was a local co-host to the *Princess Taiping*, an authentic replica Chinese junk (see photo) that sailed from Taiwan to the US mainland, Hawai‘i and back to Taiwan (where ironically she was accidentally struck by a passing freighter and sunk). While on O‘ahu from late December through early February, the PIR, led by Hans Van Tilburg, sponsored meet and greets for the ship’s crew, and co-hosted an evening talk at the Maritime Museum.

Participating in and implementing regional ocean governance initiatives

Coordination with regional organizations

The PIR office has initiated a number of agreements with organizations throughout the region. Official Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) are the vehicles that begin the process of cooperation and collaboration. The PIR has MOAs with the following organizations:

University of Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology

The PIR and the Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology renewed an MOA that has been the funding vehicle for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. This critical MOA supports research in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘i

The PIR and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘i manage much of the administrative funds for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

The Kohala Center

The PIR works with The Kohala Center to support education and outreach programs on the Big Island such as the protection of Kahalu‘u Bay.

‘Imiloa Astronomy Center and Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park

The PIR partners with the Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park (HAVO) and the University of Hawai‘i’s ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center to develop educational programs for the Big Island.

Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park

The PIR and HAVO have their own agreement to develop outreach products and

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

to provide cross-training for National Park and ONMS staff.

Maui Ocean Center

The PIR collaborates with the Maui Ocean Center to provide and promote education projects centered in this premier Hawaiian aquarium.

Maui Community College

This new partnership seeks to develop innovative programs, including student internships, fellowship programs, sharing staff, volunteers, guest lectures, and facilities.

Tri-Isle Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

Tri-Isle provides services and administrative support needed to assist the PIR in conducting outreach, research, monitoring and education projects.

Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘i, and American Samoa

PIR Director Allen Tom worked with the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘i to develop the agreement for administration and project management for Fagatele Bay NMS.

Several other MOAs are in process and will include these new partners:

Waikiki Aquarium

University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant Program

University of Hawai‘i at Hilo

University of Hawai‘i Marine Option Program

State of Tasmania, Australia, Department of Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts

These MOAs broaden the scope of the regional program’s maritime, education, research and outreach efforts by synergizing the combined strengths of the partners and the region.

Regional Coordination within NOAA

NOAA has a strong presence in Hawai‘i, and directors from each of the agencies meet regularly to discuss common issues and to foster a “One NOAA” approach in the islands. Regional Director Allen Tom has been a member of the Pacific Regional Executive Board (PREB) since its inception. His participation in PREB has elevated the standing of ONMS within the region among our sister NOAA agencies. PREB initiated a separate education and outreach arm: the Pacific Regional Outreach Group or PROG. LT Kelley Sage represents the PIR on the PROG.

Fagatele Bay Management Plan Review

Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (FBNMS) initiated their management plan review (MPR) process in 2008, and the PIR staff have been providing support as the MPR gathers momentum. The PIR funded key MPR activities, participated in MPR meetings, and coordinated with ONMS headquarters and other agencies. So far in the process, FBNMS is

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evaluating additional sites that will expand the sanctuary on Tutuila and perhaps other islands. The new sites being considered include adjacent Fagalua Bay (Larsen's Cove), sites on Ta'u Island in Manu'a, and Swains Island. The newly designated Rose Atoll Marine National Monument is also being considered as an additional sanctuary site. For more information about FBNMS's management plan review process, go to: http://fagatelebay.noaa.gov/html/management_plan.html

Kaua'i County designated a Preserve America Community

In the final days of 2008, the county of Kaua'i became the second county in Hawai'i to achieve Preserve America Community status. Their efforts to attain the Preserve America designation were aided by the PIR, as the PIR had similarly done for the county of Maui (and with the City and County of Honolulu, and American Samoa, both still in the application process). Kaua'i held its designation ceremony in September.

Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, ONMS Director Dan Basta and Gary Heu,

Administrative Assistant from the Kaua'i Mayor's office, spoke at the event. Basta also presented a ceremonial check for \$4,000 signifying funding from the PIR to the county for a historic preservation project. Learn more about Preserve America at:

<http://www.preserveamerica.gov/index.html>



Dan Basta and Congresswoman Mazie Hirono present the Preserve America Community declaration to the county's Administrative Assistant Gary Heu. Photo by Cheryl Oliver.

Hawai'i Conservation Alliance annual conference

The PIR and Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument have been members of the Hawai'i Conservation Alliance for several years. This group brings together the diverse environmental government and non-government organizations of Hawai'i. Each year, they host a large conference that draws not only Hawai'i's environmentalists, but also those from the mainland and other countries. This year, PIR staff participated in the conference and volunteered to assist in various capacities from note taking to ushering. PIR and site staff were active in the conference proceedings, and in post-conference activities such as an invitation-only climate change workshop. <http://hawaiiconservation.org/>



<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

Improving the efficiency of regional administration

Regionalization is often viewed as a way to improve administrative efficiency for far-flung sites. Indeed, in many ways we achieve that through the delegation of formerly headquarters-only duties such as approvals for travel or time and attendance, and for coordination and approval of the sites' annual operating plans and long-term planning. In addition, the regional office coordinates and runs many value-added programs, leaving the sites free to focus on their *kuleana* (responsibilities).



Artist's rendering of Pacific Regional Center.

Pacific Regional Center

NOAA has been working to consolidate most of the O'ahu offices into one shared facility on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor. The PIR staff, along with PMNM and HIHW staff, are fully engaged in this multi-year planning and design process. To date, the PIR has helped to guide the design and planning process, which finishes this year. The PIR staff represented regional interests and diligently worked to ensure that our shared requirements for space and facilities will be met—from adequate space for expanding

programs, to coordination of the facility's services. Current plans have the Hawai'i Kai office moving to the completed Pacific Regional Center in 2013, occupying much of the first floor in Building 175.

PIR Vessel Support

PIR staff provide the conduit to ship operations so vital to the three regional sites' science and education programs. PIR staff coordinate and facilitate the submission of proposed projects for NOAA ship *Hi'ialakai* to develop the ship's schedule for the coming year. The PIR NOAA Corps Officer (formerly CMDR Dave Rathbun, and now LT Kelley Sage) serves as a liaison to the Fleet Working Group representative, assists the sites with requests for ship time, and cooperates with other NOAA offices on collaborative cruises.



R/V Hi'ialakai

In 2009, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument completed a cruise to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands that yielded astonishing new ecological and cultural

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

discoveries. In addition, scientists tested NOAA’s ability to safely perform mixed-gas diving in the remote setting of the monument.

Next year, the ship will go to American Samoa, where FBNMS plans to conduct education and outreach programs on-board. In addition, the *Hi‘ialakai* may sail to Rose Atoll and Swains Island—both being considered as possible sanctuary expansion sites in FBNMS’ management plan review.

Dive Support for the PIR

The PIR’s Hans Van Tilburg acts as the region’s unit diving supervisor, training, testing and overseeing all ONMS divers in the insular Pacific. He also manages non-NOAA divers who dive from NOAA ships and assists in dive planning for ONMS research cruises, another crucial task to coordinate with the sites.



General administrative support for the region

The PIR provides day-to-day administrative support for the three sites in the region. In addition, the PIR staff help fill in where sites lack adequate staff. For example, our smallest site, FBNMS, does not have dedicated administrative staff. The PIR staff handle FBNMS’ travel, time and attendance, contracting and fiscal accounting, as well as other services that the site may require—and at no additional cost to the site’s small budget. This year the PIR staff arranged with the US Coast Guard to fly—at no cost—an educational exhibit to American Samoa from Oahu.

Looking ahead

FBNMS’s expansion plan

The PIR will continue to assist FBNMS’ management plan review process. The PIR staff will work with the owners of Swain’s Island, a small atoll that is part of American Samoa. The PIR will conduct oral interviews with family members for the possible development of products featuring the island’s maritime heritage. The family members from Swains are interested in FBNMS’ management plan review process and are considering inclusion of Swain’s Island into FBNMS.



<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>

Kaua‘i consolidated center planning

The PIR spearheaded the planning for a new regional environmental center to be located in Lihue, Kaua‘i, with the cooperation of HIHW staff. In addition to providing a large public and office facility, the center would be located near the harbor, which would provide boat access for research and education.

Preserve America Community designation support

The PIR has successfully shepherded several Hawai‘i communities through the Preserve America application process. To date, two counties have achieved Preserve America Community designation (Maui and Kaua‘i). The PIR continues to support the efforts and interest of the County of Hawai‘i, and the City and County of Honolulu in their applications for Preserve America Community status. Recently the Territory of American Samoa submitted their own application as a Preserve America community and designation should occur sometime in 2010, making the entire Territory a Preserve American Community (a first for the Preserve America program). <http://www.preserveamerica.gov/overview.html>

NOAA Preserve America Initiative Grants

The PIR will continue to support historic preservation and community heritage throughout the region by working with community partners to identify projects for NOAA’s Preserve America Initiative funding. In the past two years, the PIR has been awarded grants to work with the Lahaina Restoration Foundation on Maui, The Kohala Center on the Big Island, the Bishop Museum on Oahu, the University of Hawaii’s Marine Option Program and the Lana‘i Culture and Heritage Center. <http://preserveamerica.noaa.gov/>



<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/pacific.html>