



# FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project Newsletter

## *R2R Project Co-hosts 2<sup>nd</sup> Cross-Site Learning Exchange in Kosrae*



On May 21-22, 2020, the FSM R2R Project partnered with Kosrae environmental agencies, departments, NGOs and the Kosrae Protected Area Network (PAN) to host the state's second Cross-Site Learning Exchange at the Governor's Conference Room. The learning exchange aimed to seek institutional support and capacity development to help advance the Protected Area (PA) movement in Kosrae by providing updates to proposed and registered PAs in Kosrae, challenges and lessons learned from the planning to implementation of PA management plans.

Opening of the learning exchange was officiated by the Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (KIRMA), followed by a short remark from the Honorable Carson K. Sigrah, Governor of Kosrae State. In his remark, Governor Sigrah emphasized

the importance of collaboration by stating "we must work together to identify solutions that are key to preserving our resources for the present and future generations". Furthermore, he urged the participants to work together to reach the goals and objectives of all Protected Areas in Kosrae by utilizing the information provided from the cross-site learning exchange to support Kosrae's protected areas.

Other key topics discussed during the learning exchange include the Mahkontowe Conservation Area, the Kosrae State Protected Area System of 2010, Urban and Community Forestry Support for PAs, the National PAN Framework, Kosrae State PAN, FSM Ridge to Reef Project, the Community Based-Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Process and the recently completed Spatial Planning for PAs through TNC.

### ***Employment Opportunity!***

***Position: R2R Technical Officer***

***Location: KIRMA***

***Benefits: \$18,000 per annum***

The primary responsibility of the **R2R State Technical Officer** is to technically assist the R2R Technical Coordinator in successfully implementing the FSM R2R Project. The R2R State Technical Officer will play a key role in liaising with and providing technical assistance to key implementing partners and stakeholders to ensure sound technical cooperation and coordination of project activities in Kosrae.

**Qualifications:** BA in environmental management, conservation or other closely related fields; 2-3 years of work experience in PA management; good leadership, communication and facilitation skills; ability to work in multi-disciplinary environments; fully computer literate with MS Programs; and demonstrated initiative in carrying out his/her duties and ability to work independently on tight deadlines.

**To Apply:** Contact the Director of KIRMA, Mr. Blair Charley, via email at [charleyblair@gmail.com](mailto:charleyblair@gmail.com) or by phone at (691) 370-3646 or Ms. Yatilman at [rosalinda.yatilman@decem.gov.fm](mailto:rosalinda.yatilman@decem.gov.fm) / (691)320-8814.

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## ***R2R Project joins the world to observe World Environment Day in Kosrae and Chuuk.***

The Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (KIRMA), in collaboration with the Tafunsak Municipal Government, conducted a 5-day clean-up in Tafunsak from June 1-5, 2020 in observation of this year's World Environment Day (WED). The WED events rotate annually around different communities in Kosrae to promote a safe and clean environment. Last year Kosrae observed WED in the municipality of Utwe.

This year's World Environment Day theme was "Time for Nature". The 5-day event involved over 100 participants from the municipality of Tafunsak, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, Department of Resources and Economic Affairs, FSM R2R Project, PREL, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Kosrae Women Association, Kosrae Association of Tourism

Operators, Nautilus Resort and PA Managers across Kosrae.

The clean-up targeted residential homes and the Tafunsak Marine Protected Area. Trash and solid waste materials were collected on land and under water and transported to the central dump site in Tofol. Over 25.5 tons of waste and solid materials were removed and disposed.

In Chuuk, the R2R Project, in partnership with the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), Chuuk State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Chuuk Conservation Society (CCS) and other key partners, convened for a trash-a-thon at the Chuuk Fresh Tuna Inc. (CFTI) dock in honor of World Environment Day. CFTI was once a clean and safe dock. Over the years, however, waste slowly accumulated in and around the dock, raising environmental and health concerns. The outcome of the event includes collection and disposal of approximately 60 (39 gallon) trash bags filled with different types of solid waste materials.



## ***R2R Project launches ground work for the demarcation of the Kitti Watershed Forest Reserve***

On June 8-12, 2020, the Pohnpei State Department of Land's Division of Survey and Mapping, through the Pohnpei State Department of Land, coordinated a one-week field work aimed at identifying the starting points of the Kitti Watershed Forest Reserve boundary line. The starting points are crucial land survey coordinates required to establish ground points for the survey and mapping of the Kitti Watershed Reserve. Joining the team were representatives from Kitti Municipal Government and local community members.

The FSM R2R Project, in its efforts to enhance management effectiveness of protected areas across the FSM, partnered with the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) to demarcate the Kitti Watershed Forest Reserve and rehabilitate critically degraded areas within the watershed. This effort is an outcome of a series of stakeholder consultations, led by the R2R project in 2017, for the demarcation of the watershed. The consultations resulted with a MOU, signed by the Traditional Leader's Council of Kitti, the Pohnpei State Government agencies, the

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Kitti Municipal Government and CSP, to guide and support execution of the demarcation work.

The Pohnpei Watershed Forest Reserve and Mangrove Protection Act of 1987 is a public law, established by the Pohnpei State Government, designating a portion of Pohnpei's intact forests and mangroves under management and preservation. Since 1987, demarcation of the Watershed Forest Reserve has completed in Madolenihmw, Sokehs, and U. Kitti and Nett still remain to be demarcated.

## ***R2R Project kicks off consultations in Fefan, Chuuk for implementation of the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan***



On Tuesday, June 9, 2020, the R2R project, through the Chuuk Conservation Society (CCS), began consultations in Fefan aimed to establish an MOU for the implementation of the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan. Implementation of the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan is an effort under the R2R Project's 2020 Annual Work Plan. Assisting CCS were R2R staff based in Chuuk and the Chuuk State PAN Coordinator. The consultation process included a review of the draft MOU to allow comments and feedback from community members and resource owners.

The MOU, to be signed between land owners, Chuuk State Government, municipal and traditional leadership, serves the purpose of ensuring that SOU is protected under state laws, while also protecting the landowners' rights to the land. The consultation concluded with an agreement for a follow up visit to review the revised MOU prior to its endorsement.



## ***R2R Project Participates in SGP Planning Grant Consultations with Parem***



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On June 23, 2020, the Brothers and Sisters Association of Parem held a meeting at the Truk Stop Restaurant with municipal and traditional leaders, representatives of community-based organizations and resource owners from Parem to discuss its newly approved planning grant from the FSM Small Grants Program (SGP). The Brothers & Sisters Association of Parem submitted a concept note to the FSM SGP, a few years back, to support the establishment of marine protected areas in Parem. The approval of the planning grant is an indication that the organization can now move forward with the development of the full proposal.

The purpose of the meeting was to revisit Parem's priorities within the concept note and adjust to reflect those that are relevant to their present-day needs. Other topics of discussion include budgeting and planning of next steps. Partners such as the R2R Project and DMR were part of the meeting to discuss support moving forward. The next meeting is scheduled to be at Parem on July 1, 2020.

## *R2R Project Completes Demarcation of Riken and Gachpar MPAs*



On June 22, 2020, the R2R project joined the Yap State Department of Resources and Development (R&D), through the Marine Resources Management Division, and members of the communities of Riken and Gachpar to complete the demarcation of their respective marine protected areas. The demarcation of the Riken and Gachpar MPAs is a project effort that began in September 2019 and was delayed due to severe weather conditions and the ongoing COVID-19.

A total of eighteen (18) buoys were installed within the boundaries of the Gachpar MPA, and an additional two (2) were placed in the outer reef. For Riken, one (1) buoy was deployed in its blue hole per consultations with the community of Riken. The community will be responsible for deploying the rest in the shallow areas of the MPA.

## *The FSM R2R Project Team Welcomes New Additions*



**Mr. Elijah Tarofalmal** joined the R2R project in April 2020 as the Yap State Technical Officer. Prior to joining the project, Mr. Tarofalmal worked at the College of Micronesia's Land Grant Program in Yap as an Aquaculture

Research Aide Supervisor. Mr. Tarofalmal is a former Micronesia Challenge Young Champion who interned with various agencies and communities to oversee environmental projects in the Micronesia region. He advocated for green climate through

public awareness and conducting one-on-one interventions, and has continued to voluntarily provide support to community based environmental projects.

Mr. Tarofalmal earned his Associate of Science degree in Marine Science in 2008 at the College of Micronesia – FSM. After graduating, Mr. Tarofalmal continued on to study Marine Science and received his Bachelor of Science degree in 2012. His primary responsibility is to technically assist the R2R Technical Coordinator in successfully implementing the R2R project. He will play a key role in liaising with and providing technical assistance to key implementing partners and stakeholders. Mr. Tarofalmal can be reached at [r2ryapto@gmail.com](mailto:r2ryapto@gmail.com).

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**Mr. Francis Stephen** joined the R2R Project in May 2020 as the Chuuk State Technical Officer. He is a native of Chuuk who spent most of his childhood in Pohnpei. After graduating from high school, Mr. Stephen relocated to Hawaii where he later enlisted in the US Army, acquiring the experience and insight to the service for the greater good. He enjoys fishing, a passion that motivated him to help preserve our pristine island ecosystems.



Mr. Stephen's main responsibility includes assisting the R2R Technical Coordinator through provision of technical support to key implementing partners and stakeholders in Chuuk. He is also responsible for coordinating, delivering and monitoring the implementation of project technical outputs in Chuuk. Mr. Stephen can be contacted at [francistephen543@gmail.com](mailto:francistephen543@gmail.com).



**Mr. Gorden Koden Lebehn** joined the R2R Project in May 2020 as the Technical Officer for Pohnpei State. Mr. Lebehn recently graduated from the University of Hawaii (Hilo) in May 2019 with a Bachelor's

Degree in Marine Science. Prior to attending UH-Hilo, Mr. Lebehn studied at the College of Micronesia - FSM, where he earned an Associate of Science degree in Marine Science.

His experience includes internships with the Marshall Islands Nearshore Training (MINT), a

program funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and executed by the Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS) and College of Marshall Islands (CMI), and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) where he was trained in the scientific methods of collecting data on water quality, algae cover and reef composition.

Similar to the other State Technical Officers, Mr. Lebehn's role include working with Pohnpei State R2R partners in planning and execution of technical activities, providing technical support and monitoring of project activities and strengthening the presence and support of the R2R project on the ground through active engagement and information sharing with key project stakeholders, government counterparts and communities. Mr. Lebehn can be contacted at [kodenlebehn@gmail.com](mailto:kodenlebehn@gmail.com).

***For more information on the FSM R2R Project, please contact:***

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