



## CNMI CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT 2024

Department of Lands & Natural Resources



DLNR was established by CNMI Public Law 1-08, as amended.

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources contains four (4) divisions and two (2) programs, each led by a respective director or program manager who reports to the Secretary of the DLNR. These divisions are the Division of Agriculture, Division of Land Registration and Survey, Division of Parks and Recreation, and the Division of Wildlife. The programs are the Invasive Species Program and the Coral Restoration Program. The Endangered Species Program was transferred under the Division of Fish and Wildlife as of August 2024.

**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE:** Promotes agricultural programs, animal industry, and health; and prevent the introduction and spread of plant and animal diseases, including invasive species.

**DIVISION OF LAND REGISTRATION AND SURVEY:** To conduct surveys of public lands; To preserve and protect land documents and maps.

**DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION:** In charge of landscaping and beautification projects for all Commonwealth parks. This Division was temporarily transferred to the Department of Public Lands to prevent furlough of staff.

**DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE:** To protect the natural resources of the islands, the marine environment, the endangered species, and prevent the spread of invasive species.

**INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM:** to serve as a frontline which provides the necessary support to properly manage prevention and eradication efforts. Managing the protection of our borders from the threat of invading invasive species in collaboration of multiple agencies.

**CORAL RESTORATION PROGRAM:** To sustain and advance coral reef restoration efforts for the benefit of our lands, ocean, and Marianas communities.

PROGRAM FUNDING: (Local: CNMI Public Law 23-09; Federal: Based on Governor’s Submittal of Fiscal Year 2024)

1. Office of the Secretary of DLNR: \$326,330.00 (Local)
  - (a) Personnel: \$323,012.00
  - (b) Operations: \$3,318.00
  - (c) Utilities: \$0
2. Division of Agriculture: \$494,450.00 (Local)
  - (a) Personnel: \$489,416.00
  - (b) Operations: \$5,034.00
  - (c) Utilities: \$0
3. Division of Land Registration and Survey: \$266,917.00 (Local)
  - (d) Personnel: \$264,200.00
  - (e) Operations: \$2,717.00
  - (f) Utilities: \$0
4. Division of Parks and Recreation: \$542,404.00 (Local)
  - (g) Personnel: \$536,897.00
  - (h) Operations: \$5,507.00
  - (i) Utilities: \$0
5. Division of Fish and Wildlife: \$409,008.00 (Local)
  - (j) Personnel: \$182,867.00
  - (k) Operations: \$2,268.00
  - (l) Utilities: \$0
6. Invasive Species Program: Total: \$554,103.00 (Federal)
8. Coral Restoration Program: \$234,498.00 (Federal)

*\* The Department of Lands and Natural (DLNR) has been awarded more than 110 federal grants, totaling in more than \$14.87 million in federal funds. Such funds are utilized to cover 81 NOPs and numerous projects.*

STAFFING:	TOTAL:
Office of the Secretary of DLNR	6 (Local)
Division of Agriculture	18 (Local)
Division of Lands Registration and Survey	11 (Local)
Division of Parks and Recreation	40 (Local)

Division of Fish and Wildlife	14 (Local)
Invasive Species Program	5 (Federal)
Coral Reef Conservation	1 (Federal)

**EXTERNAL PROJECTS:**

**SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES FUND:** Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) for the Northern Mariana Islands. Magnuson-Stevens Act Section 204(e) authorizes the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce, and in consultation with the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), to negotiate and enter into a Pacific Insular Area fishery agreement (PIAFA). Before entering into a PIAFA, the applicable Governor, with concurrence of the Council, must develop and submit to the Secretary of Commerce a 3-year MCP providing details on uses for any funds collected by the Secretary of Commerce under the PIAFA. NMFS is the designee of the Secretary of Commerce for MCP review and approval.

**CORAL RESTORATION PROGRAM:** May 2024: The Restoration Coordinator presented the first *CNMI Coral Restoration: Overview and Introduction* half-day Training to the DFW Enforcement Section in May 2024 in order to familiarize the DFW’s Conservation Officers with enforcing the Coral Reef Protection Act law.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Resolution of audit findings at Outer Cove Marina due to lack of funding.
- Lack of local funding to cover operations and utilities.
- Lack of local funding for programs, in the process of identifying local funds to assist.
- Lack of equipment needed to efficiently and effectively carry out operations.
- Staffing shortages
- Trying to cover personnel salaries with federal funds
- Paul Russ Restoration - Devising plans to address the damage caused by the Paul Russ Shipwreck.