

# 2026 Mariana Islands Conservation Conference

(last updated 18 Mar 2026)

## Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-Authors	Title	Session
7:00	<b>Welcome</b> - Dr. Ann Marie Gawel - MICC Organizing Committee & TTT Board				
7:15	<b>Opening Remarks</b> - Senator Sabina Perez Conference Logistics & Schedule				
7:30	<b>Plenary</b> - Angelo Villagomez, Center for American Progress				
7:45					
8:00					
8:15	Break				
8:30	<b>Panel discussion - Deep Sea Mining Request for Information Response</b>				
8:45	<u>Panelists:</u> Blue Nature Alliance - Lauren Swaddell; Friends of the Marianas Trench - Neildino Taisacan; Northern Marianas College - Kelsey McClellan; Tāno Tāsi yan Todu - Steven Johnson; Micronesia Climate Change Alliance - Amanda Dedicatoria; Prutehi Guahan - Monaeka Flores; Our Commonwealth 670 - Mallory Muna; CNMI DFW - TBD; University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability - Emily Wood; Center for American Progress - Angelo Villagomez				
9:00	Break				
9:15					
9:30					
9:45	<b>Panel Discussion: Summarizing Existing Knowledge and Data Gaps: Considerations for the BOEM Outer Continental Shelf Request for Information</b>				
10:00	Panelists: Carey Demapan, Henry Fandel, Eve Hallock, Cara Lin, Halle Martineau, Dean Palacios, Kalani Reyes, Brent Tibbatts, Nathan Van Ee				
10:15					
10:30					
10:45					
11:00	Megan Cook	Ocean Exploration Trust	-	Deep-sea exploration around the Mariana Islands: 2025 discoveries with a preview of the 2026 E/V Nautilus expedition	
11:15	Sandra Meerwein	Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, Johannes Gutenberg University (Mainz)		Socio-Cultural Understandings of Human-Ocean Relations and their Impact on Marine Conservation Management	

**Wednesday, March 11, 2026**

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-authors	Title	Session	
7:00	Welcome, announcements					
7:15	Diane Vice	Guam Agriculture, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources	Suzanne Medina, Lauren Thompson, Christopher Jones, Carlos Quintanilla - Guam Agriculture DAWR	Ko'ko' for Cocos Project: An adventure in wildlife recovery in the face of invasive species	Mostly Birds	
7:30	Lauren Thompson	Guam Agriculture, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources	Jack Christie (Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife Fisheries, and Parks), and Diane Vice, Suzanne Medina, Chris Jones, Carlos Quintanilla, and Megan Volstead (DAWR).	Post-release population dynamics of the Ko'ko' (Hypotaenidia owstoni) on Islan Dãno, Guam		
7:45	Caitlin Andrews	The Nature Conservancy & Zoological Society of London	Kayla Baker (TNC/ZSL), Jonathan Shepherd (TNC/ZSL), Maude Vernet (University of Bern), Alex Wegmann (TNC), John Ewen (ZSL)	Reversing Extinction: First Breeding Attempts of the Extinct in the Wild Guam Sihek at Palmyra Atoll		
8:00	John Bender	Pacific Bird Conservation & Ecology of Bird Loss Project	Annika Andersson - CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife, Luta; Jerry Barcinas - Northern Mariana College, Luta; Edilynn Benjamin - Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs, Dana Calvo - Luta Soil and Water Conservation District; Trey Dunn - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BTS Program; Henry Fandel - CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife; Phil Hannon - San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance; Diana Hocog - Northern Mariana Islands, Luta; Lisa Kelley - Saint Louis Zoo; Jonovan Lizama - Luta Municipal Council, Richard S. Manglona - Luta Artist; Charles Mendiola - CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife, Luta; Phil Miller - IUCN SSC CPSG; Robert Myers - Luta Mayor Office, Melia Nafus - U.S. Geological Survey; B.J. Nicholas - Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs; Teresa Rose Osborne - CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife, Luta; CJ Paulino - Tano, Tasi, yan Todu; Mark Rabauliman - Northern Islands Mayor Office; Cecilio Raiukiulipiy - Mariana Water Works; Alexi Rebueng - Friends of the Mariana Trench; Auston Reyes - Luta Mayor Office; Haldre Rogers - Virginia Tech; Roy Joe San Nicolas - Northern Mariana College, Luta;	Implementing a Collaborative Single-Species Planning Framework for Nosa' Luta (Zosterops rotensis, Rota white-eye)		
8:15	break					
8:30	Rebecca Krasa	CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife	Bradley Eichelberger (CNMI DFW), Henry Fandel (CNMI DFW), Jill Liske-Clark (NAVFAC MAR)	Pulattat (Mariana Common Moorhen, Gallinula chloropus guami) monitoring on Tinian		
8:45	Zia Crytser	Virginia Tech	Haldre Rogers & Rachel Reid, Virginia Tech	The Survivor's Niche: Isotopic Evidence of Trophic Shifts in Guam's Last Native Avian Omnivore		
9:00	Eben Paxton	USGS Pacific Island Ecosystems	Marcos Gorresen <sup>1</sup> , Paul Cryan <sup>2</sup> , Leanne Obra <sup>3</sup> , Megan Parker <sup>3</sup> 1 Hawai'i Cooperative Studies Unit, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Hawai'i National Park, HI 96718, U.S.A. 2 U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center, Fort Collins, CO 80526, U.S.A. 3 U.S. Navy, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Marianas	GuakCams: 24/7/365 monitoring of Yayaguak (Mariana swiftlet) roosting colonies on Guam for BTS incursion		
9:15	Jose Simpson	University of Guam	Dr. Rachel Jolley, University of Guam; Nicolas Ubaldo, University of Guam; Kâna Sgambelluri, University of Guam	Restoring Guam's Savannas to Native Forests: Preliminary Trials with 7 Native Species		

9:30	Break			
9:45	Ka'ua'oa Fraiola	US Geological Survey	Heather Kerkering - US Geological Survey; Jessica Wong- US Geological Survey; Dean Gesh - US Geological Survey/retired; Dolores deBrum Kattil - Micronesian Conservation Society; Juddson Nelson - Micronesian Conservation Society; Ryan Perroy - University of Hawai'i Hilo; Martin Romain - Micronesian Conservation Society; Dua Rudolph - Micronesian Conservation Society; Mari-Vaughn Johnson - US Geological Survey	Enhancing Stakeholder Capacity for Coastal Inundation Assessment in the Marshall Islands
10:00	Alicia Waters	University of Washington/Mariana Crow Recovery Project	Rumaan Malhotra, University of Washington/Mariana Crow Recovery Project and Sarah K. Faegre, University of Washington/Mariana Crow Recovery Project	To flip or not to flip: a unique foraging behavior of released captive reared Mariana crows
10:15	Julia Mast	University of Washington	Sarah Faegre University of Washington, Rumaan Malhotra University of Washington	Natal Dispersal in Wild and Captive-reared Mariana Crows
10:30	Tully Henke	University of Washington	Sarah Faegre (University of Washington), Rumaan Malhotra (University of Washington)	Video-ography: Nest camera viability and breeding success of the Mariana Crow
10:45	Break			
11:00	Mentoring Session - Coordinated by Rachel Jolley, University of Guam			
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**Thursday, March 12, 2026**

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-authors	Title	Session
7:00	Welcome, announcements				
7:15	Olympia Terral	Friends of Islan Dãno'	Martin Kastner	We can keep Dãno' safe from BTS	Brown Tresnakes
7:30					
7:45	Amy A. Yackel Adams and Amanda M. Kissel	U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center	Allison G. Kelley <sup>2</sup> , Ella L. Norris <sup>3</sup> , MJ Mazurek <sup>4</sup> , Tim B. Clark <sup>3</sup> , Jr Sasao Alexander <sup>3</sup> , Rachel Kvasnak <sup>3</sup> , Brittany Usoff <sup>3</sup> , Mike Richardson <sup>4</sup> , Troy W. Levison <sup>4</sup> 1U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center, 2U.S. Geological Survey, Pacific Island Ecosystems Research Center, 3National Park Service, War in the Pacific National Historical Park, 4U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Office	Using Citizen Science and Partnerships for Invasive Brown Treesnake Removal to Facilitate Native Species Recovery at Asan Beach Unit, War in the Pacific National Historic Park	
8:00	Break				
8:15	Haldre Rogers	Virginia Tech	João Vitor Messeder, Christina Navarro, Eunice Molina, JD Herndon	The effect of bird loss on plant-pollinator interactions	Terrestrial Invertebrates
8:30	CJ Paulino	Tãno, Tãsi, yan Todu	Ryutaro Goto (Kyoto University, Japan), Tomoko Okamoto (Gifu University, Japan)	Pollinators in paradise: Investigating the intricate pollination system of <i>Phyllanthus mariannensis</i> (Phyllanthaceae)	
8:45	Break				
9:00	G. Curt Fiedler	University of Guam, CNAS Biology	R.Daniel Johnson, UOG CNAS Extension Alexander M. Kerr, UOG Marine Lab	A New Araneid Recorded from Guam: <i>Neoscona cf punctigera</i> .	Terrestrial Invertebrates
9:15	Alexander M. Kerr	University of Guam	Heather Ketebungang (Palau Conservation Society), Kaeli S. Swift (School of Environmental & Forest Sciences, University of Washington), G. Curt Fiedler (Division of Natural Sciences, College of Natural and Applied Sciences, University of Guam), Kenneth P. Puliafico (Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, Colorado State University), Alan E. Davis (Marianas High School), Haldre S. Rogers (Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Virginia Tech), Raphaël Sané (Groupe d'Etude et de Conservation de la Nature)	New and noteworthy spiders of Micronesia	
9:30	Alfred Daniel Johnson	University of Guam		Parasitoid Diversity and Host Associations in Guam Agroecosystems	
9:45	Heather Kerkering	USGS Pacific Islands Climate Adaptation Science Center	Mari-Vaughn Johnson, USGS PICASC Kauaooa Fraiola, USGS PICASC	Conservation by Climate Adaptation Science	Conservation Programs
10:00	Job/Career Fair - Coordinated by Rachel Jolley, University of Guam				
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## Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-Authors	Title	Session
7:00	Welcome, announcements				
7:15	Serena Barasi	University of California, Santa Cruz	Ingrid M. Parker <sup>1</sup> , Rachel Jolley <sup>2</sup> , Christine Fejeran <sup>3</sup> 1 University of California, Santa Cruz 2 University of Guam 3 Department of Agriculture Forestry and Soil Resources Division	Investigating savanna and forest state shifts in Guam	Plants
7:30	Kyla Mei A. Tuazon	Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE)	Susan Cordell <sup>2</sup> , Rebecca Ostertag <sup>3</sup> , Christine Fejeran <sup>4</sup> , Rachel Jolley <sup>5</sup> 2 USDA Forest Service; 3 University of Hawaii at Hilo; 4 Department of Agriculture Forestry and Soil Resources Division; 5 University of Guam	The growth observations of afforested areas in Guam's southern degraded landscapes	
7:45	João Vitor S. Messeder	Virginia Tech	Haldre Rogers - Virginia Tech	Assessing the consequences of frugivore loss on forest diversity and regeneration trajectories across the Mariana Islands	
8:00	Fletcher Moore	University of Washington	Kaeli Swift; University of Washington, Beth Gardner; University of Washington, Jonathan D. Bakker; University of Washington, Ellie Roark; University of Washington, and Jill Liske-Clark; NAVFAC Marianas	Plant Communities and Forest Structure on Tinian Island	
8:15	Break				
8:30	Ian Entilla and Tihu Lujan	Tano Tasi yan Todu	CJ Paulino, Jem Miller, Ann Marie Gawel, Haldre Rogers	Update on Taguan Forest Restoration	
8:45	Nathan Sablan	University of Guam/ ARC Environmental Services Inc.	Chaz Comia, Martin Kastner, Tom Mathies, Xiao Wei	Natural History, Decline, and Conservation Significance of <i>Rhaphidophora guamensis</i> , a Critically Rare Endemic Aroid of Guam	
9:00	Break				
9:15	<b>Symposium: Under-represented plant species not protected by ESA</b> CJ Paulino, Mario Martinez, Nate Sablan, James Bamba				
9:30					
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10:00					
10:15	Break				
10:30	Claudia Nuñez-Penichet	Fish and Wildlife Conservation Department, Virginia Tech	Maya Murasaki, Haldre S. Rogers (Fish and Wildlife Conservation Department, Virginia Tech)	Preliminary species distribution models and critical occurrence data gaps for threatened and endangered species in the Mariana Islands	General Biodiversity
10:45	Dusty Jordan	Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands	Bea Daria - CEMML, Leanne Obra - NAVFAC Marianas, Steve Mosher - NAVFAC Marianas	Yáyaguak Recovery: Using the History of Collaborative Brown Treesnake (BTS) Research for Current Adaptive Management	
11:00	Kaeli Swift	University of Washington	Celine Boillat@, Jill Liske-Clark%, Beth Gardner@ @=University of Washington %=NAVFAC Marianas	Invasive predator occupancy and abundance on Tinian Island	

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026**

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-authors	Title	Session	
7:00	Welcome, announcements					
7:15	Ashton Williams	Guam Department of Agriculture - Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources		Muck in the water: evaluating the impacts of the East Hagatna Bay landslide	Fisheries, Coral Reefs, and Marine Ecosystem Health	
7:30	Reilly Kleven	DOAG- GCRI		From Ridge to Reef: Nutrient Pollution and Coral Disease in Piti Bay, Guam		
7:45	Erin Reed	Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research, University of Hawaii; Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service	Brett M. Taylor <sup>1</sup> , Eric Cruz <sup>2</sup> 1- University of Guam Sea Grant and Marine Laboratory, 2 - Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service	Life history characteristics for Bluefin Trevally <i>Caranx melampygus</i> from Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands		
8:00	Break					
8:15	Logen M. Flem	UOG Marine Lab / NASA Guam EPSCoR		Depth effects on trait redundancy in Guam's coral reef fish assemblage		
8:30	Ahmi Cacapit	Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego		Integrating Chamoru values for coral reef monitoring approaches		
8:45	Arnel Gruspe	STEMify CNMI Robotics & Automation		ReefMapping of the Saipan Lagoon Using Sonar to Support Coastal Sustainability and Reef Resilience		
9:00	Break					
9:15	Eric Garcia	University of Hawaii (CIMAR), NOAA (PIFSC)	Jonathan Whitney, Joseph O'Malley, Johanna Wren, Ryan Rykaczewski - Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Using Multi-Marker eDNA Metabarcoding to Characterize Pelagic Ecosystem Species Composition in the Central North Pacific		
9:30	Marie C. Hill	Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research, Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii		Cetacean Research in the Mariana Islands		
9:45	Break					
10:00	Poster Session: Crystal Dombrow, Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research in support of the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, Economic and social dimensions of small boat fishing in the Mariana Islands Willson Gaul, Northern Marianas College, Automated Orthoptera Monitoring: Year Zero Ezra Maze Cervera, University of Guam, Field Testing Metabolic Shifts in Energy Substrate Use During Breath-Hold Spearfishing: Carbohydrate Depletion and Hypoxia Risk Alix Kosmala, CNMI DLNR, Steps toward fadang recovery on Rota Brittany Usoff, War in the Pacific National Historical Park, Leveraging Predator-Prey dynamics to Evaluate Brown Treesnake Suppression and Guide Avian Restoration at War in the Pacific National Historical Park Clementine Schnabel, UOG Center for Island Sustainability & Sea Grant, Micronesia Challenge Guam Repository Kenny Zhang, Marianas High School, Plastic Recycling Keith Mauerman, University of Washington, Drivers and adaptive value of divorce in Mariana crows Alex Loria, University of Guam Marine Lab/Virginia Tech, Using environmental-DNA to detect differences in plant-pollinator interactions across the Mariana Islands					
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## Thursday, March 19, 2026

Time (ChST)	Presenter	Affiliation	Co-authors	Title	Session
7:00	Welcome, announcements				
7:15	Traditional Ecological Knowledge - Aprendis y Fa'fa'nã'gue Moderator: Moñeka De Oro Panelists: Andrew Roberto, Marjorie Daria, Roman Duenas, and Analee Laffet				
7:30					
7:45					
8:00					
8:15	Break				
8:30	Moneka De Oro	Micronesia Climate Change Alliance	Maria Hernandez, Cami Egurrola	Lina'la i Hånom- Water is life- Report back of Water Protection Programs	Conservation Programs
8:45	Jasper Saures	Northern Marianas College	Eden Rodriguez, Northern Marianas College	Cultivating the Future: The Potential for Agritourism in the CNMI	
9:00	Bill Wang	Division of Fish & Wildlife		DFW Technical Guidance Program	
9:15	Charlene Hopkins	USDA Wildlife Services	Martin Kastner (Friends of Islan Dãno'), Diane Vice (Guam Department of Agriculture, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources), Patrick Barnhart (USDA Wildlife Services), Melia G. Nafus (USGS Pacific Island Ecosystems Research Center), MJ Mazurek (US Fish and Wildlife Service), Shane R. Siers (USDA National Wildlife Research Center), Aaron Collins (USDA Wildlife Services), Olympia Terral (Friends of Islan Dãno'), Troy Levinson (US Fish and Wildlife Service), Gregg R. Howald (Advanced Conservation Strategies)	Progressing towards a world-first snake eradication on Islan Dãno' (Cocos Island), Guam	
9:30	Wellness Break - Olympia Terral				
9:45	Yunzi Zhang	Northern Marianas College		Empowering Students through Community-Based Internships: A Roadmap for Workforce Development in Island Environments	Community Engagement and Education
10:00	Eileen Nalley	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa		A New Sustainable Fisheries Graduate Program at the University of Hawai'i	
10:15	Siobhan Clemente	Virginia Tech	Haldre Rogers, David Haak, Susan Whitehead - Virginia Tech; Mari Marutani - University of Guam	Surveying Traits of Donne' Sãli ( <i>Capsicum frutescens</i> ) in the Marianas	Ecology
10:30	Awards & Closing Ceremony				
10:45					
11:00					
11:15					