



**LOLO M. MOLIGA**  
GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT**  
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**LEMANU P. MAUGA**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 28, 2017

Serial #: 381

Samuel D. Rauch, III  
Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Attention: Hannah Hafey

Dear Mr. Rauch:

It is with great pleasure that I submit qualified nominees for the vacant at-large seats for the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. These individuals are listed by seat and order of priority. Their general background and experience are as follows:

Vacant At-Large Seat

1. Fuega Lua Moliga: Mr. Moliga is a life-long fisherman and the owner of 3 alia fishing boats. He is the Treasurer of the Fale-Leluanu'u Fisherman Co-op. His boats troll and bottomfish. As a local fisherman Mr. Moliga would like to preserve traditional fishing practices for future generations. He currently serves as the Director of the Department of Administrative Services for the American Samoa Government.
2. Keniseli Lafaele: As the Director of Commerce for the American Samoa Government, Mr. Lafaele is deeply involved with the economic development and use of fisheries in our Territory. His department is responsible for programs that increase local fishery participation. He has also served as a representative for the American Samoa Government at international treaty negotiations including the South Pacific Tuna Treaty and the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Commission. Currently, he also serves as a member of the American Samoa Fishery Task Force.
3. Eo Elvin Mokoma: Mr. Mokoma is a life-long fisherman and has been an alia commercial fisherman for the past 20 years. He operates the only active alia long-liner in American Samoa. Mr. Mokoma is a member of the American Samoa Alia Fishing Association and he

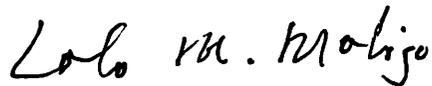
owns and operates two alia boats. Mr. Mokoma is familiar with federal/state fisheries meetings and has attended numerous meetings in the past.

The foregoing list of nominees was compiled by my office after consultation with Va'amua Henry Seseapasara, Director of DMWR. Mr. Seseapasara worked with Governor's Deputy Legal Counsel Alema Leota to identify qualified nominees. My Deputy Legal Counsel also spoke with: Mr. Solip Hong, chairman of the American Samoa Fishery Taskforce to determine viable candidates.

Every year, in compiling this list, my office is committed to soliciting applications from those who are qualified and come from diverse backgrounds and experience. My office continues to solicit applications from those who are qualified, both men and women.

I trust that from the foregoing nominees you will find persons qualified to fill the existing and pending vacancies on the WPFMC. Each nominee is committed to the responsible management of our precious resources and has expressed a strong desire to serve on the council. I look forward to the announcement from the Secretary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lolo M. Moliga". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Lolo M. Moliga  
Governor of American Samoa



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

**Ralph DLG. Torres**  
Governor

**Victor B. Hocog**  
Lieutenant Governor

April 25, 2017

Samuel D. Rauch III  
Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
National Marine Fisheries Service/NOAA  
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636  
Silver Spring, MD 20810

Dear Mr. Rauch:

In accordance with the Governors' Guidance for Nominations to Regional Fishery Management Councils, I nominate the following four persons to fulfill the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Obligatory and Western Pacific Region At-Large seats: Mr. John E. Gourley (re-nomination), Mr. Joaquin DLG Torres, Mr. Benigno M. Sablan and Mr. Edwin A. Ebisui Jr. All applicants reside in a territory or state of the Western Pacific Region and are knowledgeable about the conservation and management or commercial or recreational harvest of fishery resources in the Region. Mr. Torres, Mr. Sablan and Mr. Ebisui are members of minority populations.

### **Consideration for CNMI Obligatory and Western Pacific Region At-Large Seats**

**Mr. John E. Gourley** (re-nomination) is the sole proprietor of Micronesian Environmental Services (MES), which provides a range of environmental and regulatory consulting services to the Micronesian region, with specialization in permits, certification and compliance with the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and similar matters. Under Mr. Gourley's leadership, MES developed a bio-sampling program for surveying reef and bottom fish in Saipan. Mr. Gourley has assessed federally endangered species in both the Northern and Southern Islands of CNMI and has conducted numerous environmental assessments throughout the archipelago. Previous to the MES, Mr. Gourley was the sole proprietor of the Micronesian Clam Company. He has served the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council as a Council member and vice chair (2014-2017) and as a member of its various Advisory Panels (since 1995) and Pelagic Plan Team (early 1990s). He served for three terms as director of the Guam Department of Commerce's Industry Advisory Council for the Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture (1996-2003), developed international standards for the marine

ornamental industry with the Marine Aquarium Council, and assisted with the development of the CNMI aquaculture industry as a member of the Governor's 1999 Economic Revitalization Committee's committee on Agriculture and Fisheries Development.

**Mr. Joaquim DLG. Torres** was born and raised on the island of Saipan. He learned and practiced the traditional method of fishing including but not limited to throw net fishing and spear fishing. In 1992, He moved to Boise, Idaho and continued fishing and learned hunting. While in Boise, he learned conservation management of fishing and hunting. He learned fly fishing on remote areas where catch and release only were allowed. He also fished for salmon and steel head while in Boise. He moved to Lansing, Michigan in 1998 to enroll in Law School. While in Lansing, he continued fishing and hunting and learned more about conservation of fishing and their habitats. He graduated from law School in 2002 and moved immediately back to Saipan. Since he moved back to Saipan, he continued the throw net fishing on the shore and on the reef. He currently owns a boat and now does bottom fishing and trolling on a regular basis. Since returning back to Saipan, he has practiced conservation management of fishing and tries to teach the younger generation the importance of conservation management. Mr. Torres would like to learn more about fishing conservation to ensure that the quality of fish and fishing last a long time for the future generation and to benefit from the conservation done today.

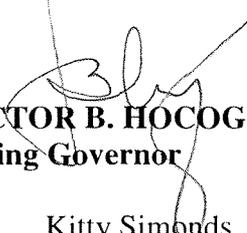
**Mr. Benigno M. Sablan** served three consecutive terms in the CNMI House of Representatives (1984-1990) and in the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources as Secretary (1994-1997) and as a Fishery Specialist (1981-1984). Prior experiences included Fishery Specialist and Master Diver in the U.S. Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife (1970-1979) and as a teacher in the CNMI Department of Education and a junior clerk for the CNMI Department of Public Health. Mr. Sablan is well versed in federal fisheries management having served on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council as an observer prior to the Northern Mariana Islands becoming a Commonwealth ( 1982) and as a Council member ( 1994- 1996, obligatory seat) and 2002-20 II and held the position of vice chair in 2002-2005 and 2008-20 II.

**Mr. Edwin A. Ebisui Jr.** is a lawyer who has been active in fisheries-related matters for decades. Mr. Ebisui is well versed in the role of the Council and the Region's fisheries, having previously served several terms as a member on the Council (1987-1996, 2001-2007, and 2012-20 17) and as its chair (1994-1996 and 2014-20 17) and vice chair (1990-1991, 2002, and 2013-2014). Additionally, Mr. Ebisui Jr. served as the chair of the Council's Advisory Panel from 2007 to 2010. He is a part-time commercial fisher who also fishes recreationally. In addition, he has served as president of the Pacific Ocean Research Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to research and knowledge of Pacific game fish. His prior actions on the Council demonstrate his commitment to fisheries conservation and management not only in his home state of Hawai'i but in the Territories and Commonwealth of the Western Pacific Region as well.

Over the past couple of months, Governor Ralph Torres and I have consulted with Saipan Fishermen Association (SF A), Marianas Apnea Spearfishing Club (MASC) and the late Richard Seman, Secretary of the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, as well as others in the fishing community, and we are comfortable with our nominations. My staff and I look forward to our continued partnership with the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and assure you of our strong support of the goals and objectives of the organization.

While all three nominees are well qualified for this vacancy, I respectfully request the appointment of Mr. Joaquin DLG. Torres to the Obligatory seat. I am confident that Mr. Torres more than meets the qualifications listed in the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Sincerely,



**VICTOR B. HOCO**  
**Acting Governor**

cc. Kitty Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Eliceo D. Cabrera, Acting Secretary, Department of Lands and Natural Resources