

NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

Small Boat Mission Plan

Mission Number: SB-13-24

Operator-in-Charge: Captain Russ Cox

Small Boat ID/Type: *Bonavista II*, 37ft sport fishing troller

Chief Scientist/PIFSC Mission Plan Lead: Dr. Kyle Van Houtan, NOAA PIFSC

Mission Title: Monitoring and tagging of marine turtles at Rose Atoll, NWR

Mission Area: Rose Atoll NWR

Mission Dates: December 1-7, 2013

Mission Objectives

NOAA PIFSC, as part of its routine marine turtle research and monitoring program, conducts field research trips across the Pacific Islands. In 2012 the PIFSC's Marine Turtle Assessment Program (MTAP) initiated a collaborative turtle project at the Rose Atoll NWR with USFWS. In year 2 of this long-term monitoring project Dr. Kyle Van Houtan and Dr. T. Todd Jones will conduct turtle surveys and in-water capture of green and hawksbill turtles of the NWR with FWS refuge personnel. Turtles will be measured, biopsied, marked (flipper/PIT tagged) and satellite tagged when size-appropriate.

Mission Operations

The aforementioned activities are permitted under National Marine Fisheries Service ESA10a1A Take permit #17022 and NMFS IACUC SWPI2011-04. Transport to Rose Atoll from Pago Pago, AS and lagoon surveys for this mission will be conducted on the charter vessel *Bonavista II*, a 37ft sport fishing troller (see attachments 1). Boat assisted in-water capture activities will focus on reef pinnacles of the greater Rose Atoll lagoon. The boat assisted survey and capture will include the chartered boat captain and first mate maintaining the boat and monitoring a 2 person in-water team (Drs. Van Houtan and Jones), another FWS member may also stay on the boat to help with decking any captured turtles. Snorkel only surveys and capture will be shore based and concentrate on the nearshore areas of Rose and Sand Island of the Atoll. When conducting shore based operations 2 snorkelers will survey for turtles with a minimum of 1 shore based observer. While at Rose Atoll all in-water operations will be conducted during day light hours. Night operations will include nesting turtle (land based) observations and tagging only. Any captured turtles (in-water and nesting) will be photographed, measured, and biopsied — satellite tags deployment will be species/size class dependent.

Schedule

29 November	Fly to Pago Pago
30 November	Boat/field preparation
1 December	4am depart/transit to Rose Atoll
1-7 December	Conduct in-water and land based surveys/capture of turtles
7 December	6am depart/transit to Pago Pago
8 December	Debrief, breakdown gear from boat, pack equipment
8-9 December	Meet with USFWS and DMWR staff
9-10 December	Depart Pago Pago/ arrive next day at HNL

Field Party

NAME	ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Kyle S. Van Houtan	Chief Scientist	NOAA PIFSC
T. Todd Jones	Sea Turtle Scientist	NOAA PIFSC

Other participants: There will be a total of 7 personnel on the mission, the 2 NOAA employees listed above and — Russ Cox (Charter Captain), the first mate, Jean Kenyon (USFWS Refuge Manager), Mark MacDonald (DMWR Biologist), and Carlo Caruso and Ricky Misa’alefua (NPS).

Equipment

Scientific equipment will include tagging gear (biotelemetry tags, flipper tags, PIT tags, etc.) and snorkel gear (mask, fins, snorkel, underwater cameras, etc.). Safety equipment will include GPS and VHF radio, life jackets, ePIRB (Beacon IDs: 2DCE6 36A4A FFBFF, 2DCE6 36A54 FFBFF), and first aid kit.

Communication Plan

The primary means of communications available through the PIFSC Inmarsat satellite phone 88 164 144 5858. Backup communication can be made through the *Bona Vista II* Iridium satellite phone that belongs to Captain Russ Cox, 87 077 646 2266. Jean Kenyon will also bring her USFWS Inmarsat satellite phone 87 077 649 0447.

The primary emergency point of contact for this mission is Frank Pendleton who can be reached at 684-633-7082, extension 15 (office) and 684-258-7107 (mobile). Next point of contact is Mr. Andy Wearing, Pago Marine Charters, mobile telephone 684-733-3890, office telephone 684-699-9234. Andy will be communicating with us on Rose at two daily check-ins, 8 am and 4 pm local time, via sat phone. Kyle Van Houtan and T. Todd Jones’ emergency contact information are on file with NOAA PIFSC Protected Species Division. In the event of an emergency or need to contact the PIFSC team during this mission, the above satellite phone number is the preferred means of communication or Mr. Wearing can relay messages.

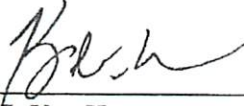
For routine communications, text messages to the satellite phone are preferred. Internet service is available by means of satellite phone and not routinely provided, but will be possible if needed. U.S. cell phone services do not work in American Samoa, but when on Tutuila, the crew will have regular email contact. Drs. Van Houtan and Jones will contact PIFSC VOC, Ryan Nichols, via the *Bonavista II* satellite phone in cases of emergency during this mission.

Upon completion of this mission, Dr. Van Houtan will notify Ryan Nichols by phone and/or email. This contact will be relayed to the PSD Chief Dr. Frank Parrish.

Mission Specific Risk Assessment

Risk management entails a process of identification, ranking, abatement, communication, and supervision of risks and associated controls. Mission personnel will use the Risk Assessment and Situational Awareness Model (Green, Amber, and Red) daily to evaluate risk exposure and make appropriate decisions to maintain a safe work environment. Through this process, the Field Party will evaluate factors such as the mission's resources (vessel equipment, supervision, communication, and support), the mission complexity, environmental characteristics and hazards, team selection (experience, training, and familiarity), fitness (mental and physical) and weather and sea state. All personnel involved in the mission have the right and responsibility to refuse or cancel participation in field activities outlined herein should they feel unsafe at any time.

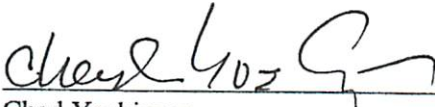
Approvals



Kyle S. Van Houtan
Chief Scientist
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

18 Nov 2013

Date



Chad Yoshinaga
PIFSC Line Office Small Boat Safety Officer
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

18 NOV 2013

Date



Samuel G. Pooley
Science Director
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

11/19/2013

Date