



# 2024

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# Annual REPORT

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✉ [dpl@dpl.gov.mp](mailto:dpl@dpl.gov.mp)

🌐 <https://publiclands.cnmi.gov/>

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For easy access to our website, kindly utilize the QR code provided.

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## Mission

The Mission of the Department of Public Lands (DPL), as trustees for public lands in the Commonwealth, is to develop and incorporate our strategic land use plan that promotes cultural and economic growth for the benefit of our present and future generations. The plan provides for the efficient and effective services in the management, use, disposition and development of public lands for the economic and social betterment of the Commonwealth.





**Honorable Governor  
Arnold I. Palacios**



**Honorable Lt. Governor  
David M. Apatang**

## *Stewarding our Lands, Securing our Future*

Our connection to the land is more than just a matter of geography – it is the foundation of our heritage, our identity, and our way of life. As stewards of these lands, we bear the solemn responsibility of preserving and managing them, ensuring they remain a source of prosperity for generations to come. Under the leadership of Secretary Teresita A. Santos, the Department of Public Lands (DPL) continues to fulfill its fiduciary duty with excellence, safeguarding our public lands and advancing the interests of the people of Northern Marianas Descent (NMD).

Over the past year, DPL has achieved remarkable milestones, securing two long-term lease agreements that will drive economic growth and community development. Grace Christian Academy (GCA) and Suwaso Corporation, doing business as Coral Ocean Resort (COR), have both entered into 40-year lease agreements with renewal options under Public Law 20-84. Furthermore, the department successfully executed the Assignment of Commercial Lease between Saipan Portopia Hotel Corporation, doing business as Hyatt Regency Saipan, and MB Capital Corporation on September 4, 2024.

DPL's financial stewardship remains strong, with a total revenue of \$6,644,574 in FY 2024, generated primarily through leases, permits, and BGRT fees. For the sixth consecutive year, DPL has received an unqualified opinion in its financial audit, demonstrating its unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility. The department continues to address and clear all audit findings by the Office of the Public Auditor (OPA), reinforcing public trust in its operations.

We commend the dedicated team at DPL for their steadfast commitment to the responsible management of our public lands. While challenges lie ahead, we remain resolute in our mission to protect the interests of our NMDs and uphold the integrity of the lands that define our Commonwealth. Together, we will build a future that honors our past while embracing new opportunities for progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold I. Palacios".

**Arnold I. Palacios**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David M. Apatang".

**David M. Apatang**





# Office of the Governor Department of Public Lands



**Secretary, DPL**

It is with great pride and gratitude that I present this year's Annual Report for the Department of Public Lands (DPL). As we continue to uphold our mandate to manage and administer the public lands of the Commonwealth, we remain steadfast in our commitment to serving the people of the Northern Mariana Islands with transparency, equity, and a forward-looking vision for sustainable development.

Guided by our mission, DPL has worked tirelessly to ensure that the administration, use, leasing, development, and disposition of public lands benefit the people of the Commonwealth. We recognize the critical role public lands play in empowering our communities, fostering economic growth, and preserving our cultural and natural heritage. Our work reflects the principles enshrined in our vision—a Commonwealth in which public lands are managed for the highest and best use, serving the needs of current and future generations.

This year, our efforts have been defined by collaboration, innovation, and resilience. We have strengthened partnerships with local stakeholders, worked hand-in-hand with federal agencies, and continued to pursue projects that align with the best interests of our people and the natural environment. Every decision we make and every initiative we undertake is rooted in the belief that public lands are the lifeblood of our islands—a shared resource that must be stewarded with care and responsibility.

As we reflect on the past year's achievements, we also look ahead with optimism and determination. The path forward requires us to remain adaptable, to embrace opportunities for growth, and to prioritize the sustainability of our resources. By doing so, we ensure that the legacy of public lands is one of prosperity and opportunity for generations to come.

On behalf of the Department of Public Lands, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Governor and the Lt. Governor, the Legislature, our community partners, and the people of the CNMI. Your trust and collaboration empower us to fulfill our mission and bring our vision to life. Together, we are shaping a future that honors the past, enriches the present, and safeguards the future of the Northern Mariana Islands.

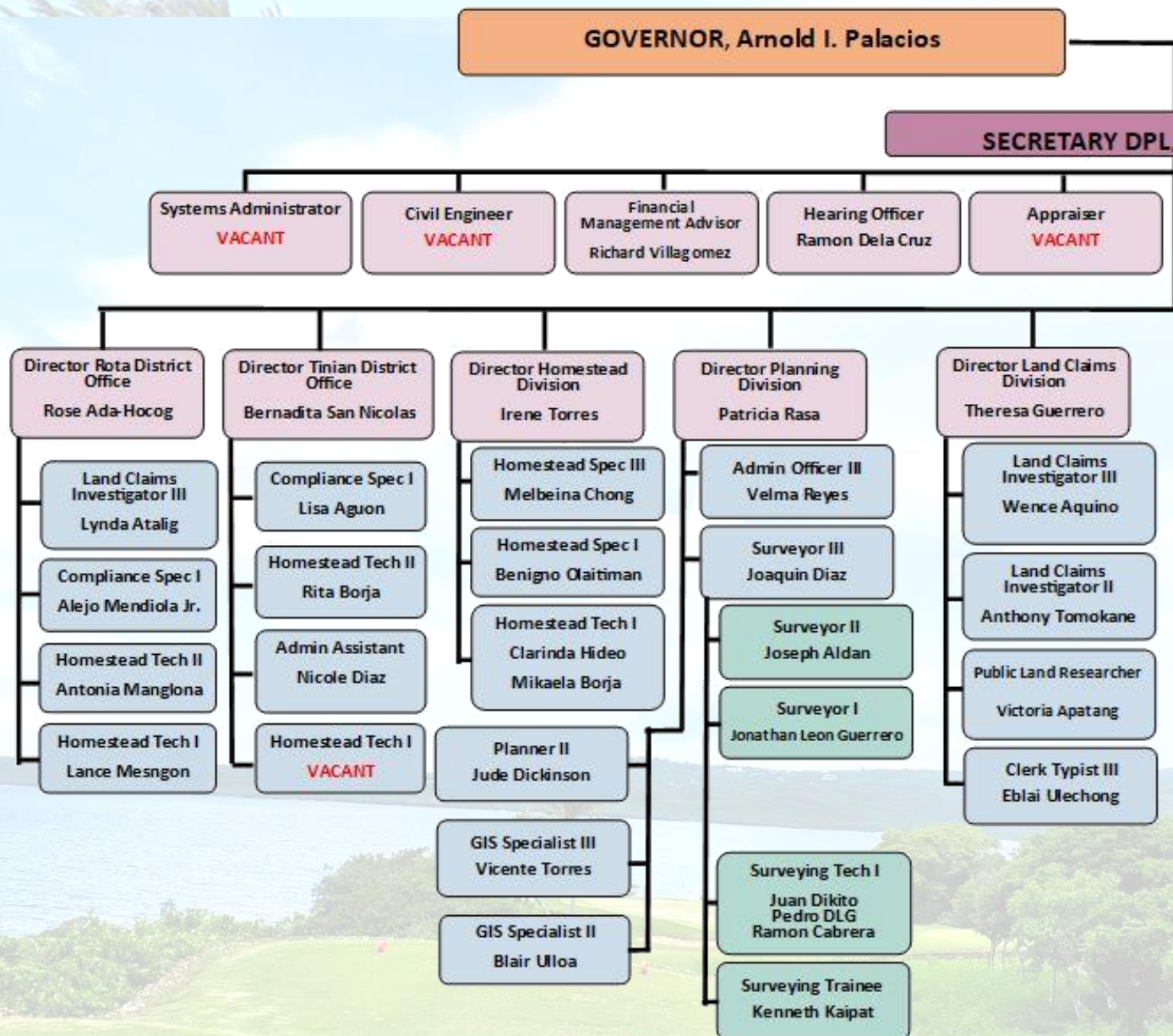
Si Yu'us Ma'åse' and thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully,

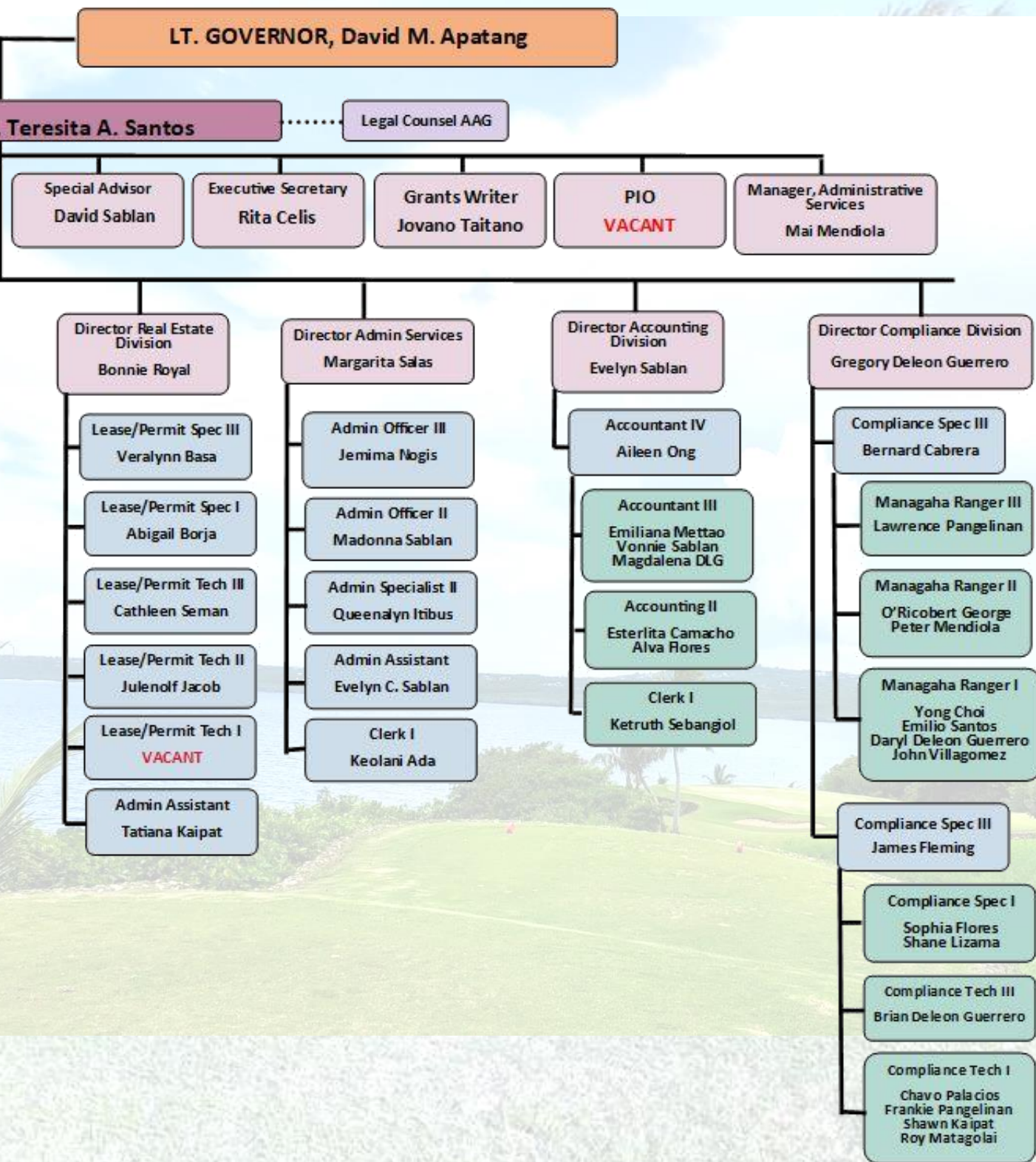
**Teresita A. Santos**



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





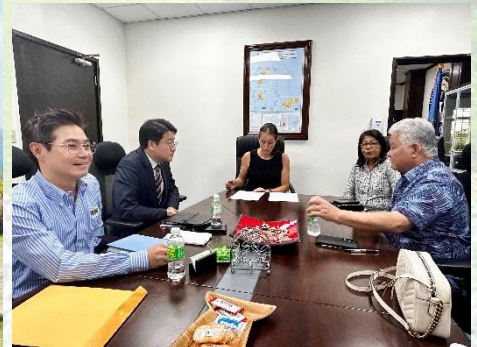




## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Department-wide highlights and accomplishments from 2024 include the following:

- ❖ DPL amended Brilliant Star Montessori School's lease term from 25 years to 40 years pursuant to PL20-84.
- ❖ Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Resort's Lease was executed on December 27, 2024.
- ❖ Evaluation Committee has been established for the Rota Resort RFP and has begun the process of reviewing the submitted proposals.
- ❖ Funded by the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), the DPL surveyors and project coordinators travelled to the neighboring islands of Rota and Tinian for the "Revegetation of Abandoned Quarries with Native Vegetation-Activity 8" project. This is to conduct comprehensive quarry surveys for the successful implementation of DPL's revegetation efforts that is vital to the ongoing environmental restoration initiatives and sustainable development of our natural resources.
- ❖ DPL has initiated the processing of Temporary Occupancy Agreements (TOAs) for the Managaha Temporary Concession; TOA will commence on January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.
- ❖ To date, DPL has 74 active long-term leases. Leased properties include the Crowne Plaza Hotel, former Hyatt Regency Saipan (now known as Marianas Beach Resort), portions of the Pacific Islands Club (PIC), Saipan World Resort Hotel, Kanoa Resort Hotel, Coral Ocean Resort, Saipan Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Kingfisher Golf, Grace Christian Academy (GCA), and Brilliant Star Montessori School.
- ❖ Over 108 active Temporary Occupancy Agreements (TOAs) have been issued for beach concession, roadside vendors, quarry, parking, encroachment, maintenance, telecommunication and subsistence agriculture and grazing.
- ❖ DPL was awarded funding assistance under the Office of the Insular Affairs Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Funding of 2024 program. With this, the Survey Crew under DPL's Planning Division and Support Staff traveled to Tinian and Rota to conduct quarry surveys under the "Revegetation of Abandoned Quarries with Native Vegetation-Activity 8" project. Additionally, this project was to explore the best approaches towards restoring the quarries through revegetation and safety measures.
- ❖ DPL conducted a sale of inventory and assets at the former Marianas Resort & Spa from September 2023 through June 2024.
- ❖ Quitclaim Deeds were awarded to qualified homesteaders: 1) 4 village in Saipan; 2) 3 village and 4 agricultural in Rota; 3) 14 village in Tinian.





## EXECUTIVE STAFF

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The vision, knowledge, and commitment of our Executive Staff are at the forefront of the Department of Public Lands. This group, which is responsible for the accomplishments of our department, is made up of seasoned experts who all play crucial roles in guiding the department toward its strategic objectives. Aligned by a mutual dedication to excellence, they guarantee that rules, guidelines, and policies are strictly adhered to, promoting an atmosphere of responsibility and advancement.

The Executive Staff is the foundation of our operations, handling everything from coordinating department-wide projects to negotiating intricate regulatory environments. Their cooperation with the Secretary and other DPL departments is essential to completing the tasks that are required to maintain the department's success. Under their competent leadership, the Department of Public Lands sets standards for public land management by frequently exceeding expectations.

### **David C. Sablan // Special Advisor to the Secretary**

David assists the DPL Secretary in completing all projects, correspondence, and tasks. He advises the Secretary on all public land matters, including but not limited to, creating draft responses on proposed legislations, perform special assignments or projects, and assist with the processing for all renewals of TOAs, TAs, AGPs, and APs. David is also responsible for representing the Secretary in meetings, and advise on best actions for DPL during public hearings, legislative oversight hearings, etc.

### **Mai M. Chong // Manager, Admin. Services**

Mai collects, monitors, and maintains a wide variety of database information. She also serves as a liaison between assigned department and other departments and organizations. She works with DPL division directors to ensure all pending tasks are completed, and tracks all incoming and outgoing documents for the department. Mai has been handling the Cabinet Monthly Reports, the Citizen Centric Report (CCR), and the Annual Report.

### **Richard S. Villagomez // Financial Management Advisor**

Richard advises the department on strategic business planning and financial analysis which includes providing analytical reports, comparative scenarios, and recommendations as a tool for DPL to make well informed decisions. He assists with managing DPL's financial affairs by designing, developing, implementing, and maintaining procedures for fiscal operations and the enhancement of financial management systems. His work also involves collaboration with the various divisions within DPL and the AAG assigned to DPL towards finding solutions to address issues and improve operational efficiency for the department general. In FY2024, Richard continued managing the negotiation of several major leases including the renewal of Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Resort, and finalizing the lease to Marianas Eland Corporation for the former Marianas Resort properties in Marpi, Saipan. Negotiations for other major leases are ongoing as of this report. Richard also provided key support in the consistent application of regulation for a new category of leases known as matured leases, and analysis for the negotiation of leases under this category on terms acceptable to DPL.



**Ramon S. Dela Cruz // Hearing Officer**

Ray conducts all administrative status and scheduling conferences and evidentiary hearings on land claims that are timely appealed in writing by any claimant who disputes a written determination by DPL. He hears matters appealed including village and agricultural homestead revocations or denials, agricultural homestead waiver, land compensation and land exchange, and public land lease termination. He issues final written findings of fact and conclusions of law, and final decisions and orders.

**Rita M. Celis // Executive Secretary**

As the Executive Secretary, Rita reviews all incoming correspondence, memoranda, and other materials and distributes to the appropriate divisions. She entertains clients via phone calls and communicates with divisions about assigned tasks to ensure that assignments are being handled; she follows up on pending matters, when necessary. Additionally, she is assigned to assist our Special Advisor, Financial Management Advisor, and Hearing Officer. She is also handling the Public Lands Advisory Board (PLAB).

**Jovano Q. Taitano // Grant Writer**

Jovano is responsible for researching grants, grant writing and grant reporting for DPL. He works closely with the Secretary to ensure that any and all grants that DPL avails of is closely monitored, including maintaining current records in database and in paper files, and grant tracking and reporting.





# ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

**PEGGY SALAS**  
**Administrative Division Director**

The Administrative Services Division is the backbone of the Department of Public Lands (DPL), ensuring that the Department operates efficiently by providing robust administrative support and fostering a competent and committed workforce. The Division is dedicated to maintaining an optimal work environment that supports high productivity, continuous employment and access to training and benefits for all staff. By prioritizing the development and well-being of employees, the Administrative Division ensures that DPL's overarching mission, goals, and objectives are effectively implemented.

In addition to these core functions, the Administrative Services Division is responsible for contract processing, as well as managing asset and inventory control. The Division plays a key role in organizing and coordinating staff development initiatives, including Employee Recognition Awards and Professional Development Day.

The Administrative Services Division has filled 74 of its 81 full time positions. The biggest challenge has been recruiting a full-time Civil Engineer. DPL hopes to fill all 7 of its remaining vacancies during this new fiscal year so that DPL may enhance its workforce and operational capacity.





## COMPLIANCE DIVISION

DPL's Compliance Division is the official custodian of all public land records for long-term leases and temporary occupancy agreements (TOA). Its primary duties and responsibilities include stringently enforcing all provisions of public land leases, TOA's, and promulgated rules and regulations. This process is achieved through regular on-site inspections and audit reviews of all record files to ensure the following:

**GREGORY DELEON GUERRERO**  
Compliance Division Director

- I. premises are used pursuant to the stated purpose clause of their respective agreements;
- II. timely remittance of lease rentals and TOA fees; and
- III. submission of all requisite documents.



Types of Temporary Occupancy Agreements	Expiration Dates
Agricultural and Grazing Permit	January 31 <sup>st</sup>
Parking Permit	February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Signboard and Maintenance	March 31 <sup>st</sup>
Encroachment, Container Storage and Staging	April 30 <sup>th</sup>
Roadside Vendor, Telecommunication Tower, Rock Quarry, Others	May 31 <sup>st</sup>
Beachfront Concession (moratorium)	December 31 <sup>st</sup>

Currently, DPL has 74 long-term leases and 108 TOA's. Regular and scrupulous on-site inspections are conducted to ensure lessee/permittee are in compliance with their

agreements. Additionally, audits are reviewed to ensure that all accounts are up-to-date and there is timely submission of financial records.

The Compliance staff also periodically patrol around the island to conduct inspections for encroachments and unauthorized activities and address them to comply with DPL's policies.

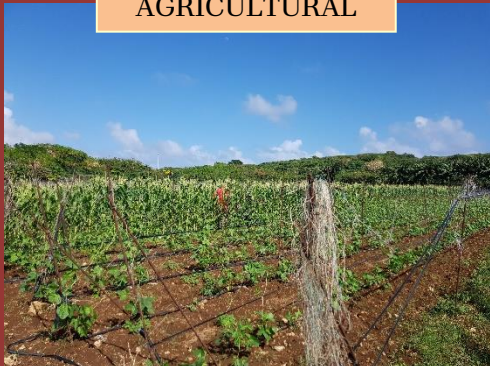
For more information, please contact Compliance Director Gregory Deleon Guerrero at (670)234-3751/54 or [greg@dpl.gov.mp](mailto:greg@dpl.gov.mp).





The following are various types of activities operated on public lands which includes but are not limited to: beach concession, staging construction equipment, rock quarry, selling fish/coconuts/trinkets as a roadside vendor, parking lot, using fallow land for agriculture or grazing, and telecommunication towers.

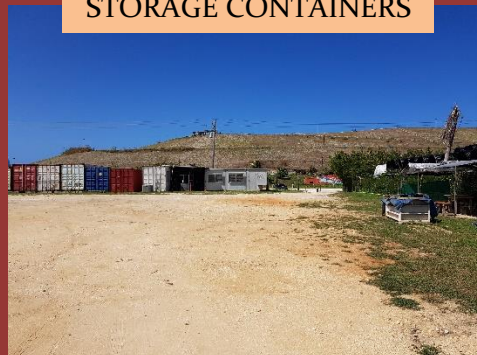
AGRICULTURAL



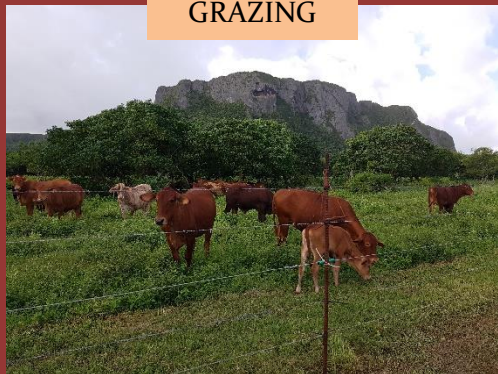
BEACH CONCESSIONS



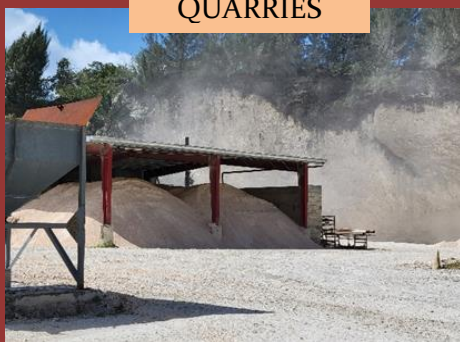
STORAGE CONTAINERS



GRAZING



QUARRIES



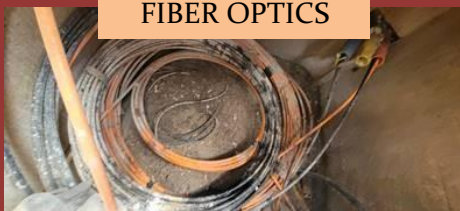
PARKING



MAINTENANCE



FIBER OPTICS



ROADSIDE VENDORS



STAGING



ENCROACHMENTS



TELECOMMUNICATION





# MANAGAHA PIER REVITALIZATION PROJECT

The Managaha Pier Revitalization Project continues to make significant progress. We are pleased to announce that the safety rails have been successfully installed along the pier, significantly enhancing safety for all visitors. In addition, the solar bollard lights have also been installed, providing improved visibility and safety during evening hours.

Construction of the Ranger's booth is on schedule and is anticipated to commence at the end of February. The renovation of the booth will provide a dedicated space for rangers to assist visitors and manage the island's resources. This project is a collaborative effort, and we extend our sincere gratitude to the following agencies for their invaluable assistance:

- Office of Insular Affairs
- Office of Grants Management under the Office of the Governor
- Department of Public Works
- Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

We remain committed to completing the remaining phases of the project and look forward to the full revitalization of the Managaha Pier for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. Further updates will be provided as we reach new milestones.



Since the award back in 2020, DPL has been working diligently with the appropriate agencies to complete this project.





# FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING DIVISION

**EVELYN SABLAN**  
**Accounting Division Director**

The Finance and Accounting Division of the Department of Public Lands (DPL) plays a crucial role in overseeing and managing the fiscal responsibilities of our department. As guardians of DPL's financial health, this division ensures the integrity and accuracy of our financial records, aligning our financial strategies with the department's overall goals. In Fiscal Year 2024, the division faced unique challenges and opportunities, largely shaped by the ongoing global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, the division demonstrated resilience and adaptability, effectively managing our resources and identifying new revenue streams.

In a year marked by gradual economic recovery and operational adjustments, the division's strategic financial management was pivotal in navigating the uncertainties. The highlights of our financial performance for Fiscal Year 2024, detailed below, reflect our commitment to fiscal responsibility, transparency, and strategic growth. These figures represent not just numbers, but our dedication to the efficient management of public lands and the generation of revenue to support the public trust.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Revenue-

DPL Collected \$4,795,920.00 in Fiscal Year 2024:

- \$2,215,334.00 in Long-term Leases
- \$1,079,354.40 in Estimated Revenue BGRs/\$12,639.65 in Estimated Revenue Temporary Permit BGRs/\$66,337.98 in Temporary Permit BGRs
- \$628,564.40 in Royalties
- \$720,609.02 in Temporary Permits
- \$7,414.00 in Commercial Permits
- \$5,666.30 in AGPs
- \$60,000.00 in Submerged Land



## Challenges-

- To date, the biggest factor that continues to affect not only our department but the CNMI as a whole and across the globe, is the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the absence of tourists visiting the CNMI. In addition, the reduction of tourists affects the business gross receipts revenue (BGR).
- Although tourism is slowly inclining, the challenge still remains in the collection of leases, TOAs, BGR, Royalties, and AGPs with the continuous decline of revenue.
- DPL terminated the Managaha Master Concession Operator's Agreement late October 2024. Absent a concessionaire, DPL stepped up for the daily upkeep and maintenance (lifeguard services, security services, etc.), another added expense until a new concessionaire takes over.



## Expenses-

- DPL decreased its budget by -8.27% from FY2023 to FY2024 due to decline in projected revenues.
- Total revenues actually increased 20.81% due to diligent collection efforts from one of DPL's larger lessees.
- Total expenses decreased -11.78% through cost cutting measures to remain within budget.
- As a result, net revenues realized in 2024 were much higher than 2023, a +239.15% increase.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Goal-

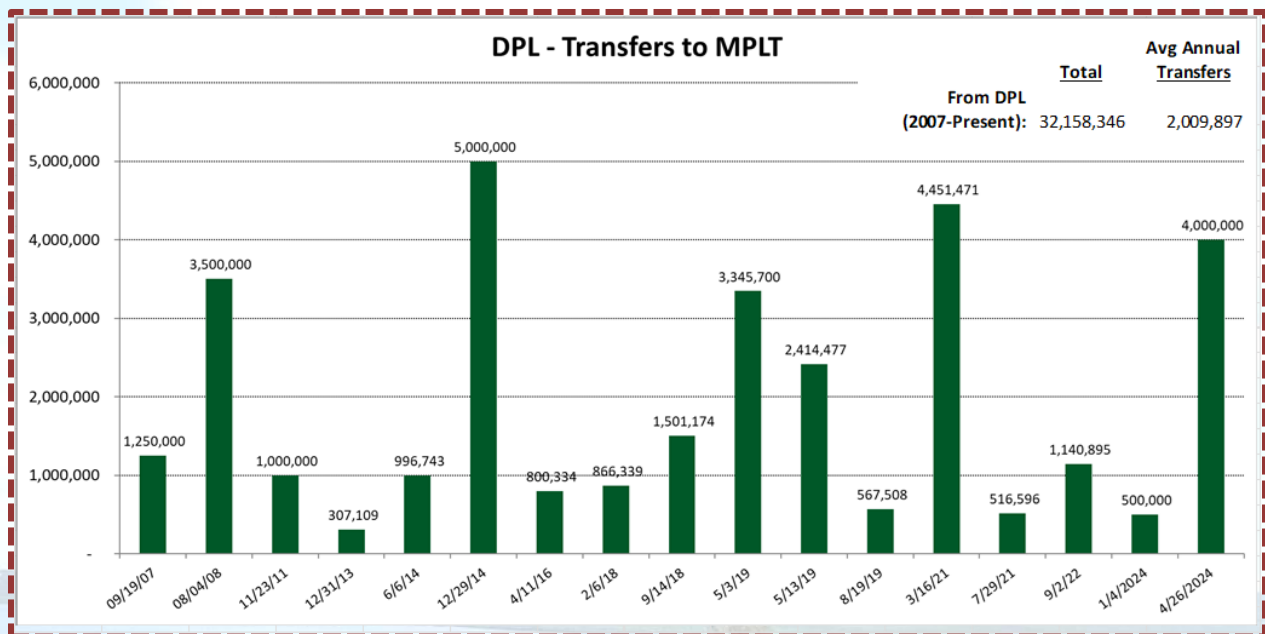
The primary objective of the Finance and Accounting Division is to secure unqualified audit report for FY2022. This goal is in line with our overall commitment to surpass our income collection projections and assist the Northern Marianas Descent (NMDs). This Division is simultaneously concentrating on upholding financial prudence and encouraging all departments to closely analyze and optimize their costs. In order to prevent budget deficits, this cost control technique is essential. The reactivation of Directive No. 005, which is expected to greatly improve the division's efficiency in the renewal and evaluation of leases, Temporary Occupancy Agreements (TOAs), and Agricultural Grazing Permits (AGPs), is a noteworthy initiative for this fiscal year. Additionally, this instruction will help expedite the collection of past-due accounts, which is essential to meeting our anticipated revenue goals. All of these initiatives are focused on increasing the net operating revenue sent to the Marianas Public Land Trust (MPLT), which will enable us to carry with our mandate and effectively and efficiently serve the interests of the NMDs.





## REMITTANCE TO MPLT

With the exception of the sum required to cover "reasonable expenses essential for the performance of its tasks," as specified in Article XI of the CNMI Constitution, the Marianas Public Land Trust (MPLT) is entitled to receive all remaining funds from the Department of Public Lands (DPL) at the conclusion of each fiscal year. Civil Action Case 84-119, Marianas Public Land Trust vs. Marianas Public Land Corporation (the latter being the antecedent to MPLA and DPL), defines these reasonable expenses as land surveys, homestead development, and administrative and administration costs. It's crucial to remember that capital upgrades and expenditures do not qualify as reasonable expenses. Examples of these include building roads, water lines, sewers, and other infrastructure on public land that has been designated under the homestead program. DPL is therefore prohibited from allocating its funds to these infrastructure projects.



Under the guidelines of Article XI of the CNMI Constitution, a long-standing arrangement exists between MPLT and DPL. In this arrangement, MPLT is responsible for collecting and managing funds generated from public lands, representing the interests of those descended from the Northern Marianas.

Since September 2007 through April 2024, DPL remitted a total of \$32,158,346, or \$2,009,897 average per year. Total remitted to MPLT since the Marianas Public Lands Corporation (1983) is \$59,100,948.

Currently, the financial audit for DPL's Fiscal Year 2022 is underway; remittance for these corresponding years will be determined upon the finalization of the audit findings.



# HOMESTEAD DIVISION

The DPL Homestead Division oversees the homestead programs. In accordance with the Article XI of the CNMI Constitution, the program is to provide eligible individuals with one village homestead and one agricultural homestead lot.

**IRENE TORRES**  
Homestead Division Director

Homestead Division continues to identify suitable homestead lots to accommodate eligible applicants who can avail of the program. The division also assesses and determines the qualifications for Agricultural Waiver applications. The division has established procedures relating to its duties- review homestead and agricultural waiver applications and permits, progress inspection reports, notices on inspection results and non-compliance, and issuance of quitclaim deeds. It is also accountable for the process of appeal rights as per the Rules and Regulations under the Village Homestead Act of 1979, as amended.



In 2006, the division reported an increase of the submission of village homestead applications, ordering the placement of a moratorium for Saipan. Since then, the division has not been accepting new applications for village and agricultural homesteads. There are 2141 applications (active) that are pending for lottery. With the newly developed village homestead subdivision in As Gonno, known as the Plumeria Estate, which holds about 300 lots, it is awaiting the set-up for infrastructure to complete the project.

The homestead program for the Northern Islands is still being assessed. DPL and the Office of the Northern Island Mayor are working closely together in securing funding to finalize the agricultural lots in Regusa, Pagan. There are 88 agricultural lots that will become available to eligible applicants once the parcels are completed.

The Homestead staff efficiently manages the applications and the lottery process, which includes updating contact information on applications, researching recorded land documents for any land interests, and finalizing the list for eligible applicants ready for lottery. DPL continue its to identify more suitable homestead lots to accommodate pending applications.

Lottery orientations, conducted by the DPL Secretary and the Homestead Director, are held before the drawing of lots. During the orientation, applicants are briefed with the location of the lot, the permit processes, the program rules and regulations, and the requirements for obtaining a quitclaim deed. The orientation also covers the revocation process and the appeal procedures. After the orientation and the drawing of the lots, participants are given the permits and are shown the physical boundary markers of the lot.

Scheduled on-site inspections are conducted for all homestead lots during their permit terms. Homesteaders with a non-compliant result are sent notices to comply with the regulations of



the permit, and may be given deadline extensions to meet the requirements; otherwise, may result in a revocation, which then can be appealed to the DPL Hearing Office. A Certificate of Compliance and a Quitclaim Deed are issued once all permit requirements are met. These deeds are nontransferable and cannot be conveyed for 10 years from the date of issue. In 2024, DPL issued 6 Quitclaim Deeds and 3 Grants of Public Domain to the NMHC.



Homestead Staff, Mikaela Borja, conducting inspection at permittee's residence in Dandan.

Permittees who pulled lots for As Gonno back in 2022 were transferred to Kagman because of lack of infrastructure and funding.





# LAND CLAIMS DIVISION

**THERESA GUERRERO**  
**Land Claims Division Director**

The Division of Land Claims comprise of two key components: Land claims/Investigation Section and Land Compensation/Land Exchange Section. Land claims/Investigation Section is responsible for conducting reviews, investigations, and research of disputed claims or contentious land matters, affirms validity of claims on a sound and authoritative basis with a firm aims to resolve, settle or find a solution. Land Compensation/Land Exchange Section is to provide for a comprehensive method of processing claims and disbursing monetary compensation upon availability of funds when appropriated by the legislature or land exchange to landowners whose lands had been taken by the Commonwealth for a public purpose.

**Land Compensation (Saipan and Rota)/ Land Exchange** - Due to lack of monetary funding, the Division prioritizes resolving compensation claims involving right-of-way's, wetlands, ponding, parks & recreations, and historical sites by offering land exchange on an equitable or fair market value (FMV) ratio as an alternative to monetary compensation to all claimant(s), streamline process by working collaboratively with the Department of Public Works to address relevant procedural requirements of private property acquisitions for a public purpose and legal barriers that delay claims with the Office of Attorney General.

**Land Claims, Research & Investigation-** The Land Claims Division remains responsible for conducting comprehensive reviews, investigations, and validations of contested property claims. This includes claims related to public land with historical significance and those resulting from government land acquisitions.

The Division ensures the legitimacy and legal title to land ownership and investigates all claims for land exchange and compensation, ensuring lawful and fair resolutions.





# PLANNING DIVISION

The Planning Division is responsible for homestead development, land use planning, surveying of public lands and maintenance of land information functions. Land use reviews are performed for government, commercial, or personal land use requests. General mapping and land research review, certification of cadastral survey plats and identification of public lands appropriate for homestead development are among the many duties of the Division.

**PATRICIA RASA**  
Planning Division Director

## Survey Projects-

**Rota Agricultural Homesteads** - DPL completed numerous retracement surveys for agricultural homesteads, ensuring accurate boundary delineation. Conducted and completed an As-Built survey for the Rota Resort providing accurate documentation of

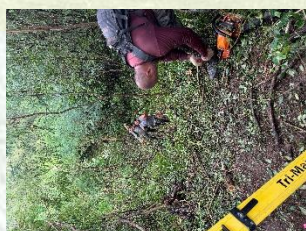


**Tinian** – Several retracement surveys were conducted and completed for encroachments on various public lands, addressing land use conflicts and ensuring proper land management. Retracement surveys were also completed for Agricultural Grazing.



Responded to numerous urgent survey requests on Saipan, some were significant due to land instability resulting from recent monsoon season, ensuring public safety.

- DPL continues to work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, contracted by the Department of Defense, in prioritizing our submissions of priorities on Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) in the assessment and clean-ups of unexploded ordinances and possible contaminants on public lands.



**Tinian Abandoned Quarry**



**Rota Abandoned Quarry**

**Grant Support & Collaboration-** Surveying of abandoned quarries on public lands on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan have been completed for the installation of fencing. This project is to mitigate safety concerns, significantly within the residential areas.





Managaha Pier - The renovation and upgrade of the Managaha Pier is on schedule and expected to be completed by end of March. Pictures on left: The newly installed railings and bollard lights

- Preparation of the Northern Island Land Surveying project, is scheduled to commence between March and May, weather permitting.
- The Managaha Erosion Impact Study which has been newly awarded, will allow us to gather valuable data to better protect the Managaha shoreline

- A total of 15 Grants of Public Domain Designations for public purposes were successfully processed and completed including the Childcare Center under DCCA Rota, the Tinian Landfill, and the BECQ's Laboratory and office space. Furthermore, we finalized 1 Reconveyance, ensuring accurate return of public land.



**GIS Mapping-** The Geographical Information System (GIS) section of the Planning Division continues to update information on a daily basis to ensure full accountability that all public land inventory, land exchanges, Right-of-Ways and easements are completely updated for Rota, Saipan and Tinian.

The Land Use Review (LUR) section of the Planning Division identifies if the land in questions is a public or private land and if it is suitable for use. This process may also include as-built surveys to determine encroachments and delineate boundary lines.



Meet the Planning Division crew who plays an essential role in shaping the future of our lands. These talented individuals are the backbone of sustainable development, ensuring responsible land use and protecting our precious natural resources for generations to come. Front Row: Joe, Pedro, Pat, Velma, Ben  
Back Row: JD, Kenneth, Jack, Jude, Blair, Jonathan, Ray



# REAL ESTATE DIVISION

**BONNIE ROYAL**  
Real Estate Division Director

The Real Estate Division (RED) is the primary division responsible for generating income to sustain the operations of DPL. They process requests for long term leases and temporary permits for the use of public lands. DPL continues to attract new investment, while the processing of renewals remains consistent. The RED is dedicated to its marketing campaign and works diligently with current lessees and permittees to facilitate their renewal process.

RED collaborates with other divisions, mainly, the Compliance Division, to enforce the terms and conditions of the leases and permits; the Finance and Accounting Division, for the collection of rent and other fees applicable; and the Planning Division, to identify properties available and suitable for leasing and permitting.

As of December 31, 2024, DPL has **74** active leases on Saipan. Base rent and a percentage of Business Gross Receipts from leases make up approximately 80% of the revenues collected by the Department (see below). 16% of revenue collected are from Temporary Occupancy Agreements (TOA) which consists of **150+** active permits.



## REAL ESTATE DIVISION TEAM

L-R: Tatiana Kaipat (Admin Asst); Ian Jacob (Lease/Permit Tech); Vera Basa (Lease/Permit Specialist); Bonnie Royal (Director); Abby Borja (Lease/Permit Specialist); Cathleen Seman (Lease/Permit Tech)

## LEASES



## TOAs





## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Grace Christian Academy (GCA)**, a Christian school established on Saipan in 1986, renewed their lease with DPL for another 40 years back in April, 2024. GCA will be investing over \$4 million on the properties with renovations, upgrades and expansion of its facilities to improve their programs and services. They will be contributing \$500 annually for educational scholarship for eligible NMD students.
- Saipan Portopia Corporation dba Hyatt Regency Saipan lease was assigned to **MB Capital** back in June, 2024. MB Capital assumed the lease and is operating the hotel as **Marianas Beach Resort**. They are currently working to finalize a management contract to operate as the Sheraton Hotel.
- DPL executed a new lease with **Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Point Resort** in December, 2024. The new lease has a term of 40 years with a 15-year extension upon approval by three-fourths of the Legislature in a joint session. The new lease will bring in over \$25 million in new improvements to include additional rooms, a garden, a new golf starter building, a beach club, new restaurants and villas.



In addition, Suwaso Corporation will be contributing over \$1 million for public benefit.



For more information about leasing and authorization for temporary use of public land, please contact Real Estate Division at (670) 234-3751-53. Information is also available on our website (<http://www.dpl.gov.mp>). Copies of DPL's Rules and Regulations, Basic Lease Requirement Checklist, RFP Announcement, etc. is available.



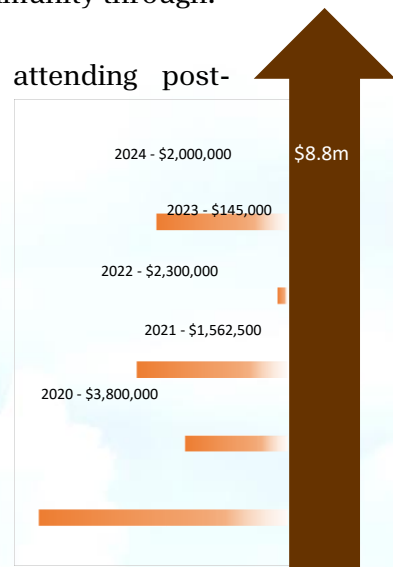
**Moratoriums** – A moratorium for Beach Concession TOA is still in effect. DPL is not accepting new applications for beach concession operation.

**Request for Proposal (RFPs)** – RED is working on an RFP for a new Master Concessionaire for Managaha Island, which will be issued late February, 2025.

**Public Benefit Contributions (PBC)** – In 2024, DPL secured an additional \$2M in public benefit contributions with the renewal of Coral Ocean Resort and Grace Christian Academy.

To date, over \$8.8M will directly benefit NMDs and the CNMI community through:

1. Educational scholarship for NMD eligible students attending post-secondary schools and trade schools;
2. Promotion of Chamorro and Carolinian traditions, culture, language and arts;
3. Homestead Infrastructure;
4. A new fire station;
5. Sports complex and playground equipment;
6. Garapan Revitalization projects;
7. Public facility improvements and more.



In the office....



Out on the field....



## ROTA DISTRICT OFFICE

The Department of Public Lands Rota District Office (RDO) is situated in the De'Ana Building in Songsong Village, Rota, and is staffed by five personnel: the Resident Director, a Land Claims Investigator, two Homestead Technicians, and a Compliance Specialist. The RDO manages various responsibilities for the island of Rota, including the CNMI Village and Agricultural Homestead Program, temporary land use permits, long-term leases, land claims, public purpose land acquisition, conservation of natural resources, and other duties

**ROSE T. ADA-HOCO**  
Rota Office Resident Director

**Village Homestead Program-** Rota currently has 259 active and 363 inactive homestead applicants. Inactive applicants are those who have not responded to DPL's requests to update and complete their files within the designated timeframe. There are 322 active Village Homestead Permits on Rota. Inspections are carried out every three to four months to monitor homesteaders' progress and compliance with the Village Homestead Rules and Regulations. In 2024, the RDO issued 6 village homestead permits, conducted 6 lot showings and 20 village homestead inspections. A significant number of village homestead permittees have been non-compliant for several years and risk having their lots revoked. In 2024, the Rota District Office issued 15 revocation letters to non-compliant village homesteaders. Revoked lots will then become available for future lotteries.



**Agricultural Homestead Program-** The Rota Agricultural Homestead Program has 439 pending applicants, some of whom are considered inactive due to a lack of response. In 2024, 9 Agricultural homestead permits and 2 quitclaim deeds were issued. A lottery was held on September 27, 2023, drawing 11 agricultural lots. Of these, 5 agricultural lots were surveyed and retraced in January 2025 and are scheduled for Lot Showing. The remaining will be surveyed and retraced once funds are available.

Permits for these lots will be issued upon the completion of boundary marker retracement and subsequent lot showings. A thorough review of all agricultural documents is ongoing to ascertain the availability of lots for future lotteries. There are currently 103 permitted Agricultural Homestead lots. Inspections were performed on 40 of these lots. Inspections of the remaining are pending due to the lack of accessible road to the areas. The permit will determine compliance with the Agricultural Homestead program's rules and regulations. Compliant homesteaders will be eligible for quitclaim deeds after a three-year permit period. Non-compliant homesteaders may face revocation of their lots, making them available for future



lotteries. The Rota District Office has 97 applications for Outside Designated Areas. To date, 88 of these have received approval from the former Board. In 2024, 2 ODA applicants were issued permits. The remaining 86 are pending due to incomplete document submissions.

**Leases and Temporary Permits** - Rota currently has five long-term leases: Docomo Pacific Inc., IT&E (three sites), and Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc.'s Rota Bulk Plant. There are eight active Temporary Permits: four for agricultural and two for grazing and one for quarry operations and one for a staging area. Site inspections and file audits are conducted on both short-term and long-term leases to ensure compliance. Lessees or permittees not in compliance will receive a Notice of Violation and time to rectify issues before a follow-up inspection. These inspections and audits help DPL determine whether a lease or permit should be renewed or terminated. The Rota District Office has approximately seventy (70) locations that are being utilized by the municipality and other government agencies through Designation Agreements or Authorizations. The RDO has begun inspecting and monitoring all areas designated to the municipality and other government agencies and will be enforcing the terms of the agreements.

**Unauthorized use of Public Lands** - Rota has over 50 encroachment cases, most of which are in residential areas and have gone unresolved for “over two decades”. These cases have been investigated by both Saipan and Rota Compliance personnel and are awaiting further action by the Saipan Office. Once Saipan has been able to finish their review of those reports we will be better able to determine the next steps to take with regards to these unauthorized uses of public lands. The Rota District Office continues to monitor these known cases and investigate other reports of encroachment and unauthorized use of public lands.

**Land Claims-** The Rota District Office continues to work with our Saipan counterparts in the



review of unsettled land claims cases in the effort to get them settled as soon as reasonably possible. A number of these cases are pending either probate settlements, appraisal reports or submissions of other pertinent documents by the claimants. Once these pending items have been resolved, the files will be forwarded for legal review. After the legal review has been completed and approved, those requesting monetary compensation will be forwarded to the Department of Finance for processing of payments, pending funds availability, while the documents for those requesting land exchange will be finalized and routed for signatures. Additionally, the RDO will be working in collaboration with the Division of Planning to identify and designate areas for the pending and future land exchange claims.

**DPL Rota District Office Staff**



# TINIAN DISTRICT OFFICE

**BERNADITA SAN NICOLAS**  
**Tinian Office Resident Director**

The Department of Public Lands (DPL) Tinian District Office (TDO) plays a vital role in managing and overseeing land use and development on the island of Tinian. Our dedicated team, consisting of a Director, Compliance Specialist, Homestead Technician, and Administrative Assistant, is committed to serving the community through efficient management of public lands.

**Key Responsibilities –** The TDO is responsible for the management of various programs and services including:

- **Village and Agricultural Homestead Programs:** Facilitating the allocation and management of homestead properties.
  - 629 village homestead applicants
  - 589 agricultural homestead applicants
  - Quitclaim deeds were awarded:
    - 1) 15 in West San Jose Village
    - 2) 1 in Carolinas Heights
    - 3) 1 in Marpo Expansion.
- **Temporary Land Use Permits:** Processing application for short term-land use.
  - 1) 9 active AGP
  - 2) 4 USDA program
  - 3) TA – JAWRRC
  - Quarries- 1) FPA 2) Hawaiian Rock 3) Marianas Growth 4) USA FANTER 5) Resource Management International Company (RMIC)
- **Long Term Lease:** Managing agreements for extended land use.
  - Docomo
  - IT&E
  - Mobil
- **Public Purpose Land Acquisition:** Overseeing the acquisition of land for community and public purpose
- **Public Land Uses:** Ensuring compliance with regulations related to public land utilization.
- **Daily Operation:** Our daily operations encompass a range of essential tasks, including:
  - Revenue collection - Ensuring timely collections of fees and leases associated with land use and collected \$537,841.43.
- **Timekeeping:** Maintaining accurate records of personnel hours and activities.
- **Report Writing:** Compiling and submitting reports on operations, inspections, and compliance matters.



**Quitclaim Deed issued to West San Jose Permittee**

**Goals:** Recruit Homestead Inspector and upgrade office equipment.

**Challenge:** 1) Conduct village and agricultural lottery 2) Recruitment of Homestead Inspector



Conclusion: The Tinian District Office remains committed to the responsible management of public lands, fostering sustainable development, and supporting the needs of the community. We look forward to another year of growth and services to the people of Tinian.

### Village Homestead Inspections-



Marpo Heights



Carolinas Heights



West San Jose

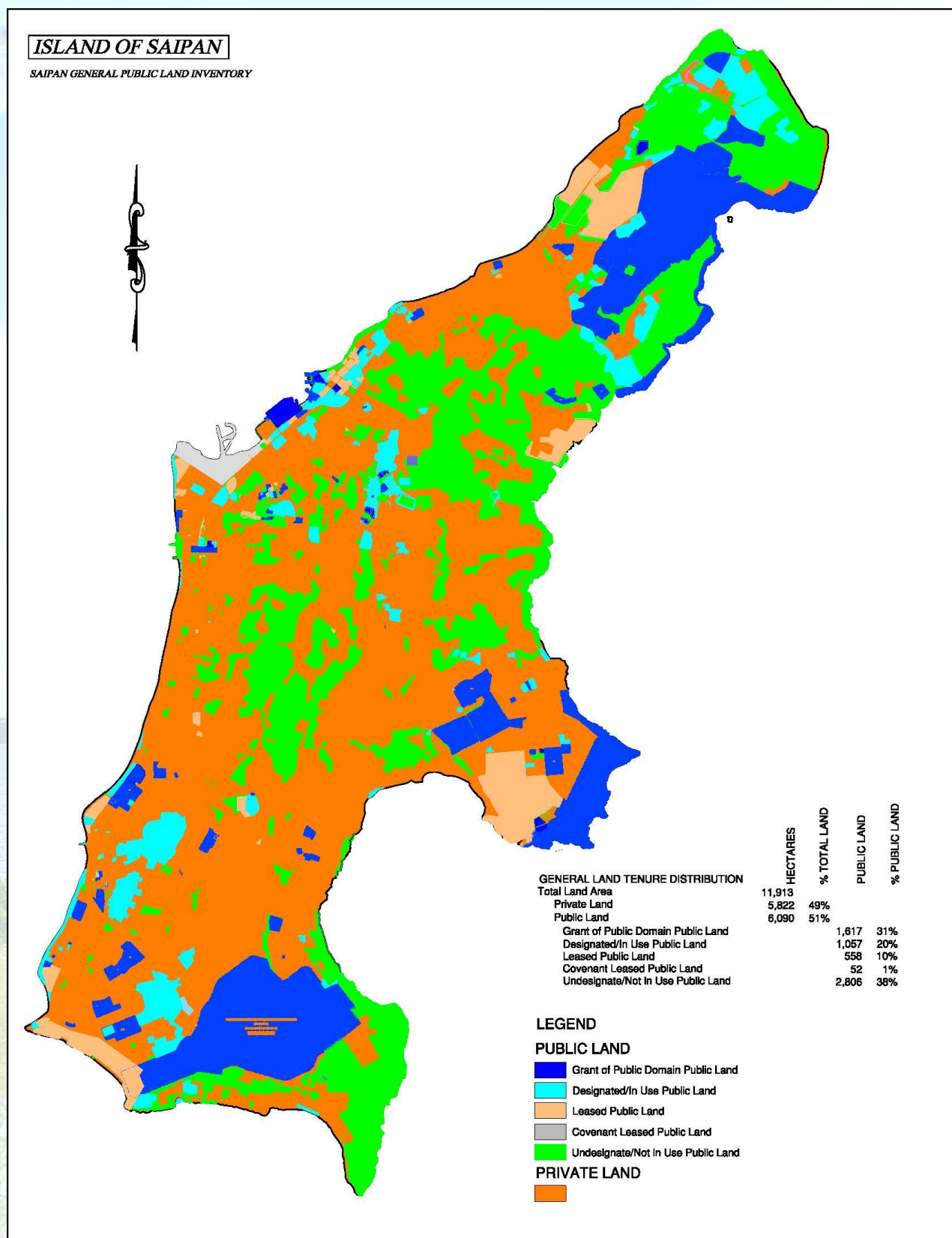
### Agricultural Grazing Permit Inspections-



DPL Tinian District Office team: From (L) to (R) Rita Borja (Homestead Technician II); Resident Director Bernadita San Nicolas; Nicole Diaz (Admin. Assistant); Lisa Aguon (Compliance Specialist I)



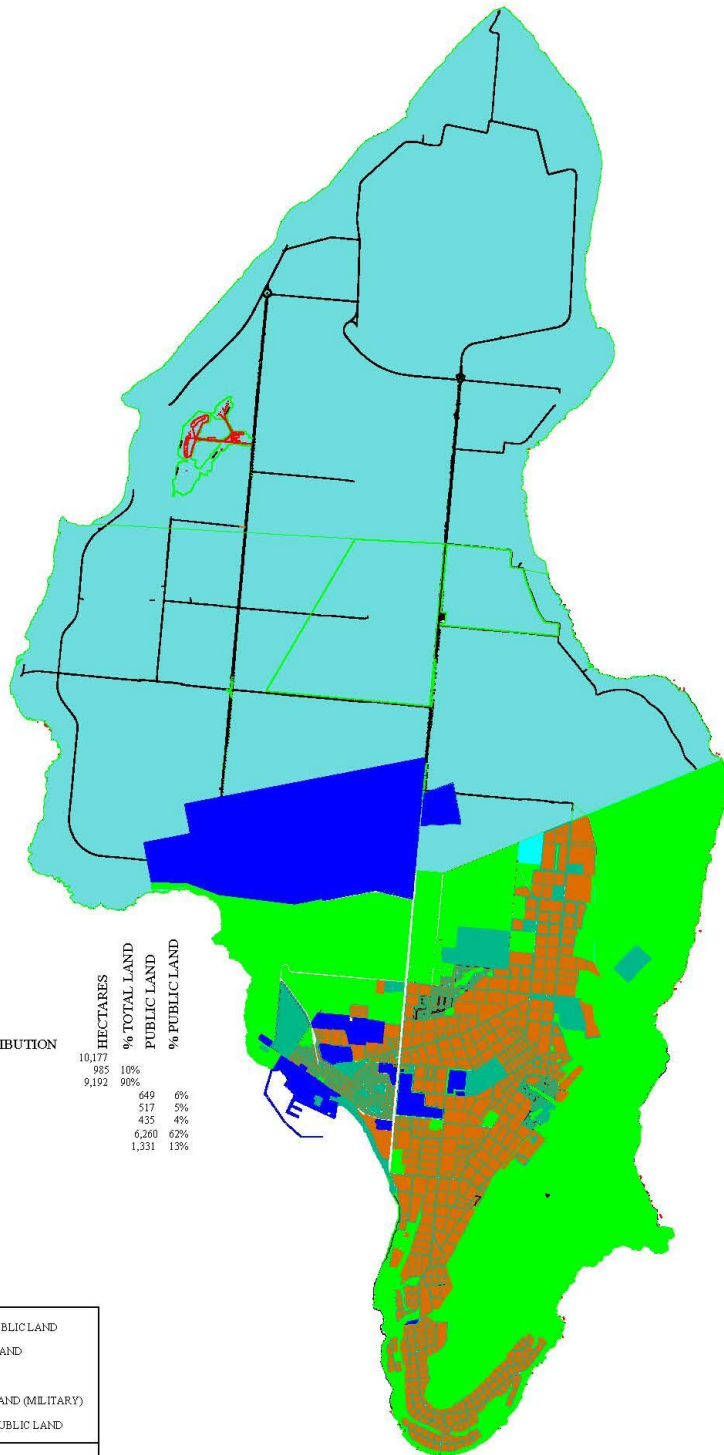
# PUBLIC LAND INVENTORY





# ISLAND OF TINIAN

## TINIAN GENERAL PUBLIC LAND INVENTORY



### GENERAL LAND TENURE DISTRIBUTION

	HECTARES	% TOTAL LAND	% PUBLIC LAND
Total Land Area	10,177		
Private Land	985	10%	
Public Land	9,192	90%	
Grant of Public Domain Public Land	649	6%	
Designated/In Use Public Land	517	5%	
Leased Public Land	435	4%	
Military Leased Public Land	6,260	62%	
Undesignated/Not In Use Public Land	1,331	13%	

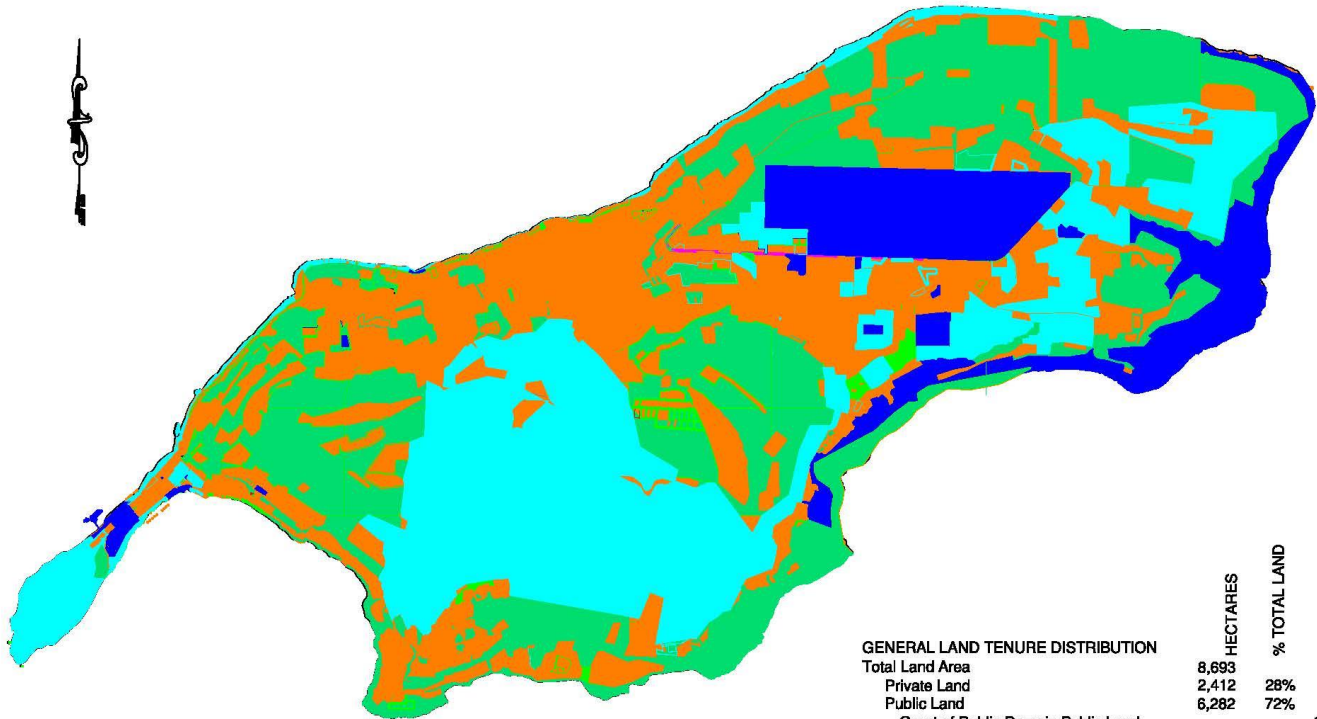
### LEGEND: PUBLIC LAND

<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	GRANT OF PUBLIC DOMAIN PUBLIC LAND
<span style="color: green;">■</span>	DESIGNATED/IN USE PUBLIC LAND
<span style="color: cyan;">■</span>	LEASED PUBLIC LAND
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span>	COVENANT LEASED PUBLIC LAND (MILITARY)
<span style="color: brightgreen;">■</span>	UNDESIGNATED/NOT IN USE PUBLIC LAND
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	PRIVATE LAND



## ISLAND OF ROTA

SAIPAN GENERAL PUBLIC LAND INVENTORY



### GENERAL LAND TENURE DISTRIBUTION

	HECTARES	% TOTAL LAND	PUBLIC LAND	% PUBLIC LAND
Total Land Area	8,693			
Private Land	2,412	28%		
Public Land	6,282	72%		
Grant of Public Domain Public Land			957	10%
Designated/In Use Public Land			2,558	46%
Leased Public Land			149	2%
Undesignated/Not In Use Public Land			2,618	42%

### LEGEND

#### PUBLIC LAND

- Grant of Public Domain Public Land
- Designated/In Use Public Land
- Leased Public Land
- Undesignated/Not In Use Public Land

#### PRIVATE LAND

- Private Land



# 2024 DPL Team







Teamwork divides the task  
and multiplies the success.







**1979**

Creation of  
Marianas Public  
Land Corporation

**1997**

PL 10-57 recreates Division of  
Public Lands under the  
Department of Land and Natural  
Resources under Board of Public  
Lands

**2001**

PL 12-71 created the  
Marianas Public Lands  
Authority (MPLA) as an  
autonomous agency

**PRESENT**

Department of Public Lands under  
PL 15-2 continues to have an active  
role in care taking, management and  
disposition of public lands in the  
CNMI

**1994**

MPLC becomes Division of Public Land  
under Department of Natural Resources  
under EO 94-3

**2000**

PL 12-33 amended PL 10-57 placing  
the Office of Public Lands as a  
Independent Agency under the  
Executive Branch

**2006**

PL 15-2 Created the  
Department of Public Lands  
under the Office of the  
Governor





The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team -Phil Jackson





