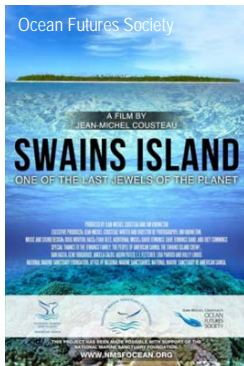


## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### SWAINS ISLAND FILM WINS AT BLUE OCEAN FILM FESTIVAL

“Swains Island: One of the Last Jewels of the Planet” won first place in the Cultural Connections: People and the Sea category at the Blue Ocean Film Festival. The film brought international attention to the sanctuary's Swains Island area, one of the most remote places in the world. The PBS documentary stars Jean-Michel Cousteau and showcases the unique ecological and cultural aspects of the island. Attendees at the American Samoa premiere included Cousteau, Sylvia Earle, Jim Knowlton, Polynesian Voyaging Society Master Navigator Nainoa Thompson, ONMS Director Dan Basta and representatives of the Jennings family.



### ERADICATING AND MONITORING CROWN-OF-THORNS STARFISH

In April, the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa (NMSAS) led a crown-of-thorns starfish eradication and monitoring team around the islands of Tutuila and Aunu'u. The mission's goal was to protect coral reefs and livelihoods in and around the sanctuary from this threat. The mission involved team members from the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA Dive Center and community partners, agencies and businesses in American Samoa.



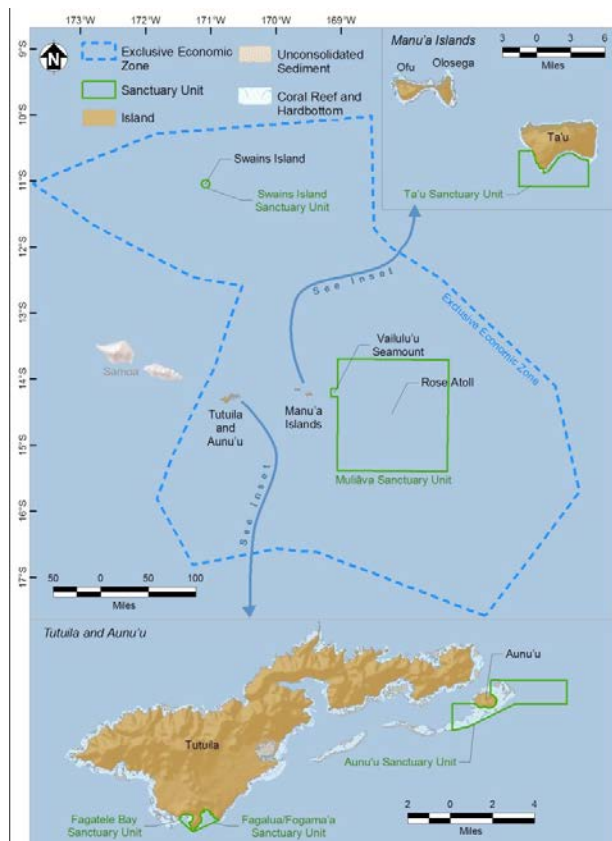
### MĀLAMA HONUUA WORLDWIDE VOYAGE VISITS AMERICAN SAMOA

The sanctuary hosted many community events to raise awareness of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS). Two traditional Hawaiian voyaging canoes are carrying PVS' mission, “Mālama Honua” or “take care of our earth,” around the world. PVS and the sanctuary system forged a partnership to promote ocean and cultural conservation. The partnership has worked to mentor youth through hands-on navigational training, bridge cultural heritage connections throughout the Pacific and provide opportunities in traditional navigation for students and communities.



### BRINGING REMOTE SANCTUARY AREAS TO THE WORLD

The sanctuary was part of a new collaboration between NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Catlin Seaview Survey and Google. Catlin Seaview Survey's goal is to record, research and reveal the world's coral reefs in high-resolution, 360°panoramic vision. The project will help establish a baseline to monitor coral reef change through time. Land and sea-based virtual experiences of remote sanctuary areas will be available to show the world the importance of these special places. The Catlin Team captured images throughout American Samoa including a virtual tour of the Sanctuary Ocean Center.



The National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa is the largest of the 13 sanctuaries in the National Marine Sanctuary System. While originally established in 1986 to protect and preserve the 0.25 square miles of coral reef ecosystem within Fagatele Bay, the sanctuary was expanded by NOAA in 2012 to include Fagatua/Fogama'a (the next bay east of Fagatele) on Tutuila Island, as well as areas at Aunu'u, Ta'u and Swains islands, and a marine protected area at Rose Atoll (which was named Muliāva as known by the Manu'a residents) including nearby Vailulu'u Seamount.

## LOOKING AHEAD

- In collaboration with NOAA's Coral Reef Ecosystem Division, NMSAS will conduct surveys to show changes in fish biomass over time and develop sea level rise models to help communities plan for future climate change impacts.
- A series of Get Into Your Sanctuary (GIYS) programs will highlight adventures that visitors can experience to promote sanctuaries as iconic places. GIYS will provide opportunities for NMSAS to partner with community members, businesses, travelers and tourism promoters.
- The sanctuary will continue to partner with organizations including the American Samoa Visitors Bureau and the Small Business Development Center to provide assistance and guidance to village-based visitor programs. The goal is to enhance community livelihoods in villages near sanctuary units.

*NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is committed to supporting lives and livelihoods across the nation and in sanctuary communities through socioeconomic research and monitoring to understand the economic and social drivers of sanctuary resources and improve management practices.*

## NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a system of 14 marine protected areas encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>