

**FISHERIES DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM (FDRP)
ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY 2007**

P.I. Name: Frank Parrish

P.I. Address: Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
2570 Dole Street
Honolulu Hawaii, 96822

FDRP Project Title and Project No.:
Age and growth validation of gold coral (*Gerardia* sp.) Project number 657781

Funding Agency: NOAA

1. Purpose of the Project (one paragraph)

The goal of this project is to validate the growth estimate that is currently used in the Precious Coral Fishery Management Plan for gold coral. Growth is estimated at ~6 cm year based on a size structure and basal stem ring count data. Recent radiometric work has estimated the life span of gold coral to be considerably longer than previously thought with estimates exceeding millennia. Two research avenues were identified that might address the uncertainty in these estimates. One was to obtain more samples of gold coral and have more refined radiometric estimates made and the other was to re-measure some gold coral colonies that were marked years earlier and look for any linear growth that approximates 6 cm/yr. Funds for this FDRP project are to pay for the submersible time needed to revisit and remeasure the colonies, change out archival instruments (thermographs, sediment traps, etc), cover the travel costs for collaborating radiometric scientists from Standford University, and pay for some of the radiometric analyses.

2. Progress during FY 2007 (One-two paragraphs, including a comparison of the actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period, and the reasons for slippage if established objectives were not met):

The submersible dives (HURL Pisces submersibles) needed for this work have been scheduled for November 2007. The needed number of ship days falls short of travel time it takes to reach all the dive sites and a request is pending with FDRP for additional days to cover the scheduled dives. Some of the sites are located in the NWHI Monument and a permit request has been submitted for access and permission to work in the region.

3. Plans for project completion:

Dives are expected to be completed in November 2007, with analysis in spring 2008 and the project completed by the FDRP deadline of summer 2008.

4. List of papers published in refereed journals during FY 2007. NA

5. Other papers, technical reports, meeting presentations, etc. NA