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PRESS RELEASE:

Erosion and Sediment Control Training in American Samoa.

The American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (AS-EPA) recently hosted a two day training on Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) in coordination with the Department of Commerce Coastal Management Program and the Horsley-Witten Group. The training was held on June 21st and 22nd at Sadies by the Sea for over 60 contractors, inspectors and regulators involved in preventing erosion and sedimentation from construction sites in American Samoa.

In his opening remarks, AS-EPA Director Fanuatele Dr. To'afa Vaiaga'e stated that soil erosion and sedimentation cause a variety of water quality problems that threaten our coral reefs and marine resources. Uncontrolled runoff can also lead to flooding, property damage and even landslides when disturbed soils are not properly stabilized. The Director pointed out that erosion and sediment wash down have been some of Governor Togiola Tulafono's eminent concerns that are becoming life threatening to the health and safety of our people.

The representatives from Horsley Witten Group, Anne Kitchell and Michelle West, presented information on: (1) why proper ESC is environmentally and economically important; (2) design, installation and maintenance techniques for many different ESC practices; and (3) strategies for minimizing erosion and sedimentation on road projects. In addition to classroom lectures and demonstration videos, the participants conducted field exercises and inspections of ESC practices at the construction site of the AS-EPA office project in Utulei.

Dr. Vaiaga'e extends his sincere appreciation to Governor Togiola T.A. Tulafono for his commitment and prescience in emphasizing the importance of best management practices to control runoff from construction activities. The Director pointed out that this training would help contractors address problems at many construction sites, where water simply runs off into our waterways, carrying soil, pollutants and nutrients as they go.

Participants received a copy of the 2011 American Samoa ESC Field Guide and took an open-book examination at the end of training to receive a certificate of completion.

AS-EPA would like to thank all government agencies and private contractors for their participation in this workshop.

ESC Training Photos:

