

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) #25

## *Revising the Protocol*

Version 1.02 (August 9, 2022)

### Change History

New Version #	Revision Date	Author	Changes Made	Reason for Change	Previous Version #
1.01	7/23/2021	Kim Weisenborn	Updated all sections.	To make consistent with SOPs in other protocols.	1.0
1.02	8/9/2022	Kim Weisenborn	Added links to PACN Monitoring Archive Library in SharePoint. Updated footnotes.	PACN Digital Library (previously located on the I:\ drive) is now the PACN Monitoring Archive Library in SharePoint.	1.01

Only changes in this specific SOP will be logged here. Version numbers increase incrementally by hundredths (e.g., version 1.01, version 1.02) for minor changes. Major revisions should be designated with the next whole number (e.g., version 2.0, 3.0, 4.0). Record the previous version number, date of revision, author of the revision, changes made, and reason for the change along with the new version number.

### Purpose

This SOP explains how to make and document changes to the Pacific Island Network (PACN) Focal Terrestrial Plant Communities (FTPC) Monitoring Protocol Narrative and associated SOPs. Anyone editing the Protocol narrative or any one of the SOPs needs to follow this outlined procedure in order to eliminate confusion in how data is collected, managed, analyzed, or reported. All observers should be familiar with this SOP in order to identify and use the most current methodologies.

A master equipment list for the entire FTPC Vital Signs Monitoring Protocol can be found in [SOP #1 Before the Field Season](#). The master equipment list should be updated simultaneously if this or any SOP requiring an equipment list is revised.

### Rationale

The PACN FTPC Monitoring Protocol Narrative and associated SOPs represents an effort to document and employ scientifically rigorous methodologies for collecting, managing, analyzing, and reporting FTPC monitoring data and information. However, all protocols regardless of initial rigor require editing as new and different information becomes available. Required edits should be made in a timely manner and appropriate reviews undertaken. Careful documentation of changes to the protocol, and a library of previous protocol versions are essential for maintaining consistency in data

collection and for appropriate treatment of the data during data summary and analysis. The Microsoft Access® database for each monitoring component contains a field that identifies which version of the protocol was in use when the data were collected.

In this context of revising the protocol, the rationale for dividing this document into a Protocol Narrative with supporting SOPs is based on the following:

- The Protocol Narrative is a general overview of the protocol that gives the history and justification for monitoring and an overview of the sampling methods but does not provide all of the methodological details. The Protocol Narrative will only be revised if major changes are made to the protocol.
- The SOPs, in contrast, are very specific step-by-step instructions for performing a given task. They are expected to be revised more frequently than the Protocol Narrative.
- When an SOP is revised, in most cases, it is not necessary to revise the Protocol Narrative to reflect the specific changes made to the SOP.
- All versions of the Protocol Narrative and SOPs will be archived in the [PACN Monitoring Archive Library](#)<sup>1</sup> (see [SOP #14 Workspace Setup and Project Records Management](#)) and uploaded to the Integrated Resource Management Applications Portal's (IRMA) Data Store<sup>2</sup>.

## Revision Procedure

All edits require review for clarity and technical soundness. Small changes or additions to existing methods should be reviewed in-house by PACN staff (e.g., version changes by hundredths). However, if there is a complete or major change in methods, then an outside review may be required (e.g., version changes by whole numbers). If there is a major change in methodology, either to the entire protocol or individual SOPs or narrative components, the Pacific West Region Inventory and Monitoring Program Manager should be consulted to determine the appropriate level of peer review required. Typically, regional and national staff of the NPS, and outside experts in government, private sector, and academia with familiarity in FTPC Monitoring in the Pacific Islands will be utilized as reviewers.

## Metadata

Any changes to associated database design and organization are documented in the Metadata of the project database(s) (see [SOP #19 Metadata Development](#) for more information).

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<sup>1</sup> PACN Monitoring Archive Library, [https://doimsp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-PWR-PACNIM/monitoring\\_archive/](https://doimsp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-PWR-PACNIM/monitoring_archive/) (accessed 9 August 2022).

<sup>2</sup> IRMA Data Store, <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/> (accessed 9 August 2022).

**Notification**

The PACN Data Manager should be informed of changes to the Protocol Narrative or SOPs so the new version number can be incorporated in the metadata of the project database. The database may have to be edited by the PACN Data Manager to accompany changes in the Protocol Narrative or SOPs.

The appropriate PACN staff should be notified of the changes and appropriate level review process initiated as determined in collaboration between the network staff and protocol principal investigator.

Once review comments are received, incorporated, and approved, the revised Protocol Narrative or SOP versions will be uploaded to the NPS Data Store. The PACN Data Manager will archive the older and updated versions of the Protocol Narrative in the PACN Monitoring Archive Library. The PACN Data Manager will forward the Data Store link to all individuals with a previous version of the Protocol Narrative or SOPs.