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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Turtle and Shark

Other names/site number: Laumei ma Malie; Laumei

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: N/A Near SW edge of Vaitogi

City or town: Vaitogi State: AS County: Western (050)

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<u>David J. Herdreich, Historic Preservation Officer</u> <u>9/19/14</u>	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>American Samoa Historic Preservation Office</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

11/19/2014
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: N/A _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Turtle and Shark is a small ocean cove—measuring roughly 72 meters (m) east to west by 78.5 m north to south—located near the southwest edge of Vaitogi (meaning “thrown water”), a village of approximately 1,200 people on Tutuila Island in American Samoa. The cove is U-shaped, and opens to the south into the Pacific Ocean. Turtle and Shark is set between the rugged, basalt-covered Vaitogi beach to the northeast, and a basalt sea cliff that extends more than one kilometer (km) to the southwest and rises up to 15 m above sea level. The portion of the cliff forming the north and west edges of Turtle and Shark can rise as high as 6 m above sea level depending on the tide, while the basalt peninsula forming the east edge of the cove usually remains around 2 to 3 m above the water. Turtle and Shark is significantly weathered by continuous high-energy wave action inside the cove, which frequently blasts water and sea spray high into the air, and often gives the site a violent and dramatic appearance. The water within Turtle and Shark is between 3 m and 5 m deep, and while often turbulent, it is turquoise and clear. The property has integrity of setting; no prehistoric, historic, or modern structures are present or have been recorded inside or along the edges of Turtle and Shark, and the cove has never been physically modified.

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Narrative Description

Turtle and Shark is on the southwest edge of the Tafuna Plain, a roughly 5,100-acre deposit of olivine basalt lava that forms the southwest portion of Tutuila Island (Stearns 1944). The cove and the sea cliff were formed by wave-induced erosion of the lava during a mid-Holocene highstand, when the sea level was approximately 5-8.5 feet higher than the present day (Rieth and Cochrane 2012). Historically, this craggy coastline was called the “Iron-Bound Coast” (Coffee 1925, Mead 1977 [1925], Russell 1922), and renowned for its “wild romantic precipitous” atmosphere (Kramer 1999). The unaltered physical landscape around Turtle and Shark today still retains this historic integrity of feeling.

Photographs of Turtle and Shark and the Vaitogi coastline taken during the 1910s and 1920s (Photos #13, 14, 15, 16, and 18) show that the cove and the surrounding landscape have changed very little during the previous century, and retain much of their historic integrity of feeling. The village of Vaitogi, adjacent to the coast since at least the early 1900s (Bartley 2014, Coffee 1925, Freeman 1999, Hall 2014, Marshall 1930, Mead 1977, Russell 1922, Van Der Ryn 2007), has expanded over a wide inland area during subsequent decades, and many of the *fales* (traditional Samoan houses with domed roofs and no walls) that once lined the coast (Bartley 2014, Mead 1977 [1925], Photo #17) have been largely replaced by Western-style concrete houses. However, coconut trees still line the edge of the village beach as they did more than 100 years ago (Photo #16 and 17), and the inland areas northeast and east of Turtle and Shark are as lush with vegetation as they have been historically, when residents cultivated large coconut and breadfruit plantations (Hall 2014, Photo #18). Flora near Turtle and Shark ranges from the *to'i to'i* (*Scaevola taccada*) that grows naturally within the beach sand, to trees such as coconut, *fasa* (*Pandanus tectorius*), and *toa* (*Casuarina equisetifolia*), which are deliberately planted by the villagers and contain materials used in Samoan indigenous medicine (Bartley 2014, Castro and Tsuda 2001). Access to lands southwest of Turtle and Shark was only possible on foot or horseback until around 1970, when a partially-paved automobile road was built over the old coastal trail; this road and an adjacent above-ground electrical line run roughly 40 m northwest of the cove (Photos #4, 5, 7, and 11).

The shoreline immediately surrounding Turtle and Shark retains much of its historic integrity of setting and feeling as well, with the exception of two nearby structures: a World War II concrete pillbox, 3 m in diameter and rising 1.15 m above the ground surface, is located about 25 m to the north of Turtle and Shark (Photo # 9); and a steel lifesaving stand, 1.5 m high and 0.8 m wide, is located 24 m northwest of the cove (Photo # 10). These structures do not affect seaward views of Turtle and Shark (Photos #1, 2, 3 and 6), and minimally impact views of the nearby shoreline (Photos #4, 5, 7, 8, and 11). Vaitogi residents do not feel that these structures impinge upon Turtle and Shark at all (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014). The pillbox and the lifesaving stand are not included in the recommended property boundary for Turtle and Shark.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE, PACIFIC ISLANDER
LITERATURE

Period of Significance

CIRCA 1919 TO PRESENT

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

SAMOAN

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Turtle and Shark (*Laumei ma Malie* in Samoan) meets National Register criterion “A,” because it is a place associated with beliefs, customs, and practices that are significant to the cultural traditions and ethnic history of the American Samoan community. For more than 95 years, Turtle and Shark has been widely regarded in American Samoa as the scene of the climactic event of the Turtle and Shark legend (*O Le Tala I Le Laumei Ma Le Malie*), one of the most famous stories in Samoan oral literature. Villagers from nearby Vaitogi continue to reenact an important aspect of the legend at Turtle and Shark by performing a ritual song intended to summon the legendary animals to the ocean surface, and visitors are frequently amazed to see one or both of these creatures emerge from the sea in apparent response to this call. The striking natural beauty of Turtle and Shark evokes feelings of drama and supernatural power commensurate with the spirit of the legend, and the site’s nearly pristine state of physical preservation during almost a century of continuous use underscores Turtle and Shark’s living connection to a historic Samoan storytelling tradition. Turtle and Shark is both the physical embodiment of “an important referent in Samoa legends and traditions” (Clark 1980), and a place where the people of both Vaitogi and American Samoa continue to assert and revitalize their historic and cultural identity.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Turtle and Shark Legend

Many versions of the Turtle and Shark legend have been recorded over the years (Coffee 1925, Fitiseanu and Kelley 1960, Flood et al. 1999, Henry 1955, Henry and Pula 1980, Holland 1986, Lutu-Drabble 2000, Maddox 1959, Marshall 1930, Martin 1961, Mead 1977 [1925], Price 1956, Russell 1922, Schultz 1994, Su’apa’ia 1962, Turner 1884, Van Der Ryn 2007, Wright n.d., Wright 1981). One of the earliest published versions of the story was documented by the missionary George Turner in 1884, although he did not name the village or island where the story is set, and described the supernatural animals as two turtles, rather than a turtle and a shark:

A story is told of a woman and her child, who in a time of great scarcity were neglected by the family. One day they cooked some wild yams, but never offered her a share. She was vexed, asked the child to follow her, and when they reached a precipice on the rocky coast, seized the child and jumped over. It is said they

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were changed into turtles, and afterwards came in that form at the call of the people of the village. (Turner 1884).

Turner's story is also the source of two notable proverbs frequently employed in Samoan oratory (Schultz 1994):

Ua o le talitaliga o le soi.

(It is like waiting for the wild yam.)

Upu fa'aulaula or fa'anoanoa.

(To wait in vain.)

Variations of this basic story were probably associated with several Samoan villages during the 19th and early 20th centuries, as storytellers would often invoke familiar geographical locations to add a sense of realism to their performances, or alter a spoken narrative to suit their unique styles or audiences (Fauolo 2014, Moyle 1981, Schultz 1994). Major changes to a folkloric story over time are considered typical within the Samoan oral tradition, and since the 19th century, chroniclers of Samoan folklore have noted that disparities often appear among versions of a story told across many districts and villages, particularly when no standard reference text is available (Fauolo 2014, Lafai-Sauoaiga 1981).

The author Frank Coffee, who visited the Samoan archipelago in 1919, provides perhaps the earliest written evidence of the strong association that had developed between the Turtle and Shark legend and the village of Vaitogi by the early 20th century, although this connection almost certainly predates his visit by several years (Coffee 1925). Coffee described a version of the legend—involving “a Samoan prince and princess” sacrificing themselves at the behest of a Samoan god to save their people from famine and death—that is very different from Turner's version. However, the ceremony he witnessed, which he noted “is known as the ‘Calling of the Shark and Turtle,’” is similar to rituals observed by others at Turtle and Shark in subsequent years; these will be discussed later in the narrative.

The New York Times reporter John Russell described in 1922 hearing a version of the Turtle and Shark legend in Vaitogi—concerning “an aged, blind dame” and her “little granddaughter” (Russell 1922)—that is very similar to Turner's story. The author John Marshall, who visited Vaitogi in the 1920s, recorded a grandson rather than a granddaughter, but otherwise repeated an almost identical tale (Marshall 1930). The anthropologist Margaret Mead, who conducted her first substantial fieldwork in Vaitogi in 1925, called it “the famous village of the Turtle and the Shark,” and also recalled a story involving “an old woman and a child, neglected by their relatives during a time of famine” (Mead 1977 [1925]).

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Ausage, Teleiai Christian, and Tafito Aitaoto

2009 *Ua Tala le Ta'ui: Untying the bundles of fine mats*, vol. 1. Samoan Studies Institute, American Samoa Community College, Malaeimi, American Samoa.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: IARII, 2081 Young St., Honolulu, HI, 96826-2231

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.3

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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: -14.357222 | Longitude: -170.735555 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Starting at -14.356666/-170.735277, the boundary of Turtle and Shark extends 185.7° by 15.6 m, then 126.9° by 18.2 m, then 164.7° by 5.9 m, then 177.6° by 48.2 m, then 267.4° by 11.1 m, then 274.5° by 37.4 m, then 280.1° by 14.0 m, then 284.8° by 13.5 m, then 2.7° by 16.2 m, then 11.8° by 19.4 m, then 346° by 24.3 m, then 40.4° by 14.2 m, then 59° by 11.9 m, then 120.3° by 9.1, then 89° by 32.7 m to -14.356666/-170.735277. The boundary is also shown as a red polygon on the three maps accompanying this form.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property boundary encompasses the cove known as Turtle and Shark, and includes the outcrop where Fonuea's song is traditionally performed (Bartley 2014, Photos #14 and 15), the basalt peninsula and sea cliff forming the edges of the cove, and a projected line across the mouth of the cove to the south that represents its "entrance," or the outermost point at which the turtle and the shark appear (Bartley 2014). The boundary further includes a portion of the shoreline north and northwest of the cove that serves as the main pedestrian approach from the nearby road. This segment of unaffected natural landscape contributes to Turtle and Shark's integrity of setting and feeling, and the local caretaker of Turtle and Shark, Mrs. Senofeva Bartley, has previously refused offers of modern improvements (such as stairs) here, preferring that this area remain as it has always been (Bartley 2014). The boundary stops short of the nearby World War II pillbox and the modern lifesaving station, two structures that do not contribute to Turtle and Shark's historical integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert A. Pacheco, Myra J. Tomonari-Tuggle, and Timothy M. Rieth
organization: International Archaeological Research Institute, Inc. (IARII)
street & number: 2081 Young Street
city or town: Honolulu state: HI zip code: 96826-2231
e-mail: BusinessOffice@iarii.org
telephone: (808) 946-2548 ext. 103
date: September 19, 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:	Turtle and Shark
City or Vicinity:	Vaitogi
County:	Western District
State:	AS
Name of Photographer:*	Robert A. Pacheco
Date of Photographs:*	September 15, 2014, and September 17, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:*	2081 Young St., Honolulu, HI, 96826-2231
Number of Photographs:	18

*unless otherwise noted

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0001)

Turtle and Shark. The outcrop where Fonuea's song is performed is visible at the right of the photo. Camera facing southeast.

Photo #2 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0002)

Turtle and Shark. This photo was taken from the outcrop where Fonuea's song is performed. Camera facing east.

Photo #3 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0003)

Turtle and Shark. This photo was taken from the outcrop where Fonuea's song is performed. A portion of Vaitogi is visible at the top left of the photo. Camera facing northeast.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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In 1955, a significantly different version of the Turtle and Shark legend was published in a collection of Samoan tales gathered and translated by Brother Herman, a Marist brother who had lived and worked among the Samoans for over 40 years (Herman 1955, Martin 1961). Brother Herman’s version, which is reproduced below (Herman 1955, brackets added), may have been compiled from several unique variants of the story acquired from multiple sources (Moyle 1981):

During the cruel reign of Malietoa Faiga [a legendary cannibal chief] there lived a young couple on the south side of Savai‘i [the westernmost island in the Samoan archipelago]. The woman’s name was Fonuea, but the man’s name is unknown.

The young husband learned that he had been designated for the cannibalistic repast of the king. Although the couple loved each other very much, they decided that the husband should present himself before the king, in order to avert reprisals against their village.

So, they set out from Savai‘i in their canoe. However, they did not reach Upolu [another major Samoan island] where the king had his residence. The wind carried their canoe to Tutuila. There they lived for many months with Chief Letuli of Iliili [an inland village northwest of Vaitogi]. The chief and his family treated them hospitably and they often asked themselves how they could make return for his kindness.

The time came when Malietoa gave up his cannibalistic propensities. The Letuli family then offered to take the young couple back to their home in Savai‘i. The husband said, “I am very grateful to your Excellency and the members of your family for the way you have treated me and my wife. However, we are not going to return to our village, but we desire to do something that will be to your advantage. Please, look favorably on what we are going to do to spread your fame throughout the world.”

They forthwith went to Vaitogi and jumped off the cliff into the sea below. Fonuea was changed into a turtle and her husband turned into a shark. The shark spoke up to the villagers and said, “If you wish us to appear on the surface of the sea, let the children stand on the cliff and sing.”

To this very day the children often assemble on the rocks and sing and shark and turtle appear on the surface, just as they promised.

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Brother Herman's version has been widely disseminated throughout Samoa and the world, and many published versions of the Turtle and Shark legend either reprint Herman's version precisely or alter only minor details (Fitisemanu & Kelley 1960, Flood et al. 1999, Henry & Pula 1980, Martin 1961, Wright n.d., Wright 1981).

Several contemporary Vaitogi villagers dismiss Brother Herman's version as false, resenting the insertion of characters from Savai'i and Upolu (other major islands in the Samoan archipelago) into what they believe is a fundamentally local Tutuila legend (Bartley 2014, Nua 2014). Mrs. Senovefa Gaea Bartley, a 72-year old resident of Vaitogi who is today the primary caretaker and village representative of Turtle and Shark (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014, Nua 2014), relates the "true" legend, which is paraphrased below:

During the 1800s, there was a period of famine in Samoa, and many people were starving. In the village of Iliili, there lived a woman named Fonuea, who was a member of the chiefly Letuli family. She was old and blind, and had no family to support her except for a very young granddaughter, whose name has been lost. Because Fonuea and her granddaughter could not gather food for themselves, Fonuea asked the other Iliili villagers to provide them with something to eat. The villagers prepared a meal, wrapping it in banana leaves and placing it in an *'umu* (earthen oven) to roast. When the cooking was done, Fonuea asked her granddaughter to see what the villagers had given them. The granddaughter removed the bundle from the *'umu* and unwrapped it carefully, but was horrified to find that it contained only rat meat. Fonuea was deeply offended that her neighbors would give her rats to eat; "They think they can fool me because I am old and blind," she cried, "but I still know the smell of rat meat!" To display her anger at this act of disrespect, Fonuea asked her granddaughter to lead her to the sea cliffs at the edge of nearby Vaitogi, and they both leaped into the sea. When they entered the water, Fonuea was transformed into a turtle, and her granddaughter into a shark. From then on, whenever a villager from Vaitogi stands at the cove known as Turtle and Shark and sings a special song to Fonuea, a turtle and a shark will appear in the waters below.

Other Vaitogi residents tell fundamentally the same story (Hall 2014, Van Der Ryn 2007), although some details may differ among storytellers. For example, Roy Hall, Jr., a Vaitogi resident since 1969, says that the old woman and child were fed a poisonous root rather than rat meat, and that after sympathizing with the desperation that would motivate such a harsh action, the two jumped as an act of self-sacrifice meant to reduce the burden on their village (Hall 2014).

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Fonuea's Song

Although the details of the legend can vary widely among different authors and storytellers, nearly all versions state that the people of Vaitogi are able to summon the turtle and the shark at will from the village cliffs. Since the 1920s, a ritual song has been performed by the Vaitogi villagers to call the creatures to the ocean surface (Coffee 1925, Russell 1922, Marshall 1930, Mead 1977 [1925], Martin 1961, Su'apa'ia 1962). Historical photographs (Photos #13, 14, and 15) and local consultants (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014, Nua 2014) identify Turtle and Shark as the physical location where this song has traditionally been performed, verifying that the property possesses historical integrity of location and association.

Frank Coffee (1925) recorded in broken Samoan a portion of the song he heard the villagers sing in 1919:

*Fonea! Fonea! Lau mai si manu mea!
Ose i iluga nei Osa Letuli iluga nei!*

The New York Times reporter John Russell recalled witnessing the ceremony in 1922:

[The chief] directed me then to walk through the street of the village [of Vaitogi] to a certain point above the sea. I did so. As I passed along by the huts the little children began to flock out and follow me. Perhaps there were two dozen of them, from 5 to 12 years old. They seemed to know exactly what I had come for. They asked no reward. [...] [The children] led me, laughing and beckoning, to a particular point where the ceremony was to take place. There, standing over the water, the children began to sing, with their hands outstretched in invocation. (Russell 1922, brackets added)

Russell also translated some of the song lyrics to English:

Faguea—forgive us!
We wait for the dear ones,
Lost to us—so deep—so deep!
Up here are sun and rain;
Sun and rain would see thee again—Thou turtle.
We wait and mourn and love thee. (Russell 1922)

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The name “Fonea” in Coffee’s version, and the name “Faguea” in Russell’s version, both closely resemble “Fonuea,” the name of the woman/turtle in most versions of the legend. Fonuea is mentioned in nearly all subsequently-recorded versions of the song (Fitisemanu and Kelley 1960, Henry and Pula 1980, Herman 1955, Su’apa’ia 1962, Wright n.d., Wright 1981).

In 1925, Margaret Mead observed that the Vaitogi children “stand out on a rocky bit of the coastline and sing to the turtle and the shark” (Mead 1977 [1925]). Mead, Russell (1922), and Coffee (1925) also noted that the occupants of the nearby United States Naval Station at Pago Pago frequently visited Vaitogi to observe the ritual.

John Marshall (1930) recalled that the villagers began the song “softly and slowly, gradually raising their voices and quickening the tempo until they are singing shrilly, then with frenzy.” Marie Tisdale Martin, a frequent visitor to Turtle and Shark in the late 1950s, remembered her first visit to the site:

Here [in Vaitogi] a stranger can want only one thing, to see the shark and the turtle. [...] With one accord [the children] led us beyond the village to a high, black rock overlooking the ocean. [...] We stood on the promontory of a small bay walled with black rock. [...] As we marveled at our surroundings, the children sang lustily. (Martin 1961, brackets added)

Brother Herman’s 1955 version of the legend contains the earliest published version of the complete song. Elements from the versions of the song recorded in the 1920s are also repeated in this version, such as the name Fonuea (resembling Fonea and Faguea in the earlier versions), the name Letuli, and references to the sun and the rain.

Laumei faiaga ma sulu ma si au tama.
(Careless turtle, cleave the waves with your boy.)
O i ai le moega afa.
(Rise from your resting place in the deep.)
Fa’i mai, fa’i mai o se lauti e laulelei
(Gather the velvety leaves of the ti)
E lavalava le laumei. Apa e, laumei;
(To clothe the paddling turtle.)
Apaapa le laumei; apa e, laumei.
(Paddle, turtle, paddle, Turtle paddle nigh.)

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Fonuea, Fonuea, laulau mai se manamea.

(Fonuea, Fonuea, show to us your darling husband.)

Po 'e sa'i a i luga nei? O Sa Letuli o i luga nei

(“Who is calling?” ‘It is Letuli’s clan;))

A uaina, a laina, a solo e mata 'ina,

(Mind neither rain nor sun, but let us see you;)

Laulautu la le i 'a. Siususu.

(Come up together. Siususu.)

Galu sasā, tama 'ita 'i, maliu a 'e;

(Lady, come up despite the ominous waves.)

Susu a 'e; le uale; tigitigi mai oe.

(Come up; here is your goal.)

Fa 'amata 'u mai Samoa; le pu ia manu e.

(Frighten the Samoans. Let the conch call her.)

Teuteu le ana le laumei, e le pu ia manu e.

(Bed the turtle softly; let the conch call her.) (Herman 1955)

Alternative versions of the song have subsequently been published, many retaining the same lyrics and poetic elements contained in Brother Herman’s version (Fitisemanu and Kelley 1960, Henry and Pula 1980, Su’apa’ia 1962, Wright n.d., Wright 1981). One such song, a choral arrangement titled “Fonuea / Laumei / Alulue / Aluluo,” has been popular in both American Samoa and the independent nation of Samoa since the 1970s (Fauolo 2014). An important line is frequently added to the later versions of the song—*Lālēlei, lālēlei, lālēlei* (Oh, how pretty, pretty, pretty)—which is a phrase the Vaitogi villagers cry out when the turtle and shark appear (Bartley 2014).

The song that the Vaitogi villagers perform at Turtle and Shark today (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014, Ueligitone 2014) differs only slightly from the historic versions noted above:

Laumei faiaga ma sua si au tama.

Oi ai le moega āfa.

Fa 'i mai, fa 'i mai se lautī e lalelei—

O lava-lava olē laumei, 'apa e laumei

'Apa 'apa le laumei, 'apa e laumei.

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*Fonuea, Fonuea,
Laulau mai se manamea.
Po'o sã ī o i luga nei? Sa Letulī o lo'o i luga nei.
A uaina, a lāina, A solo ē māta 'ina
Lou galu tu'u la le i'a,
Lalelei, lalelei, lalelei. (Ueligitone 2014)*

There is not a widely-accepted name for the song performed at Turtle and Shark. Historical oral accounts refer to it as “the native song” (Coffee 1925), “a song of uncounted antiquity” (Russell 1922), “songs of reverence, and of love” (Marshall 1930), and “an ancient Polynesian chant” (Martin 1961). Published versions have been titled: “The Children’s Song” (Henry and Pula 1980, Herman 1955, Lafai-Suaioiga 1991), so named because the Vaitogi children were the primary performers of the song during the early 20th century (Russell 1922, Mead 1977 [1925], Martin 1961); “Laumei Faiaga” (Su’apa’ia 1962); or simply given no title at all. Local informants call it “the song” (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014), the “shark and turtle chant” (Ueligitone 2014), or “Fonuea’s song” (Bartley 2014, Ueligitone 2014). Because variations of the name Fonuea have been included in all historical accounts of the song since the 1920s, it is subsequently referred to as “Fonuea’s song” in this form.

The Turtle and Shark Appear

The lasting fame of Turtle and Shark is due in large part to the frequent appearances of turtles and sharks within the cove, seemingly in response to Fonuea’s song.

John Russell in 1922 recalls that as the Vaitogi children sang the song:

[...] one of [the children] plucked me by the sleeve, the song ceased and, with waving hands and excited shouts, they attracted my attention to the water below, and there, as I watched, a monstrous old sea turtle swam to the surface, thrust up a scaly and moss-stained head and regarded us for a moment. At the same time, some yards away, there drifted past the shadowy form of a six-foot shark. (Russell 1922, brackets added)

Russell adds this coda to this story:

[...] the fairy tale came true. It always does come true. It never fails. Natives regard its coming true as a matter of course, and subsequently when I met the American naval officers at Pago-Pago Naval Station they one and all testified that they had seen exactly the same thing. (Russell 1922, brackets added)

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Margaret Mead said of the Turtle and Shark ritual, “sure enough, always one and sometimes both appear. I saw both the same day” (Mead 1977 [1925]).

Although tradition permits observers to wave at the turtle and the shark when they appear, several authors emphasize that pointing at them is considered extremely rude (Ausage and Aitaoto 2009, Coffee 1925, Martin 1961, Su’apa’ia 1962) and Vaitogi villagers warn against this gesture to the present day (Bartley 2014).

Marie Tisdale Martin, visiting the site in the late 1950s, vividly describes the moment the creatures appeared:

Excited, [the children] ceased supplicating, started welcoming the shark.

There it was, an ugly brownish-yellow beast swimming near the entrance to the bay. It was as long as a man, its fins outspread, its torpedo-shaped body unmistakable. As it remained near the surface for a few seconds, the children gestured eagerly with their hands, being careful not to point, because pointing is considered disrespectful. Their voices became higher and higher, their chant a frenzied screaming.

Then, as the shark swam out to sea, silence fell.

Almost immediately the original chant was taken up, for the turtle had yet to be summoned. Again the same queer, piercing chant rose above the roaring of the breakers.

We had not long to wait. Soon we heard the frenzied song of welcome, saw hands outstretched. And there, well inside the bay, a great red turtle surfaced. It jumped into the air so that its clumsy body seemed clear of the water. As it rose and sank and rose again, the excited chant continued. Slowly the turtle, too, swam out to sea. The show was over. (Martin 1961, brackets added)

Martin and her husband attempted during a later visit to see if the turtle and the shark would appear without Fonuea’s song:

The children were bribed not to sing and we watched the bay in silence for about fifteen minutes. There was nothing. Then the children, who wouldn’t be restrained any longer, began their chant. In less than three minutes the shark swam by, looking ugly and sinister on the crest of a swell.

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As [my husband] says, the experiment was not conclusive. But we returned to Vaitogi several times and never saw a sign of a shark or a turtle until the children called them.
 (Martin 1961, brackets added)

The regular appearances of these sea creatures within Turtle and Shark reaffirm for observers the viability of the traditional legend, and motivate the passing of the oral tradition to subsequent generations. The Samoan author Kipeni Su‘apa‘ia summarizes the abiding sense of wonder these appearances arouse in both local and foreign onlookers:

It may sound too good to be true but the scene at the Vaitogi cliff is one of the great wonders of the world. Scientists have yet to find why the turtle and shark never appear to the surface unless Letuli’s chant is sung. It is as much a mystery to the foreigners as it is to the Samoans who have tried for several generations to attract the turtle and shark to the surface by other means but always failed. Best of brass bands played and large choirs sang the best of anthems, hymns and island songs over the cliff but they were all disappointed. Seeing the turtle and shark tops the tourists attraction in American Samoa today. It signifies Fonuea’s sincere love and appreciation. (Su‘apa‘ia 1962)

Turtle and Shark Today

Both the Turtle and Shark site and legend are well known throughout the Samoan archipelago. The story is taught in Samoan history, language, and literature classes in American Samoa schools, and is highlighted in government-sponsored tourist campaigns for the territory (Fauolo 2014, Hall 2014). Fonuea’s song is widely familiar as well, and people from across Tutuila often visit Turtle and Shark to attempt to summon the creatures with their own renditions, although Vaitogi locals still believe that only people from the village can call them (Bartley 2014, Nua 2014). For its part, Vaitogi embraces its role as the home of Turtle and Shark (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014, Nua 2014), maintaining a welcome sign and two “tourist” *fales* near the cove to accommodate visitors. Tour buses from cruise ships are also permitted to visit Turtle and Shark several times a month (Bartley 2014, Nua 2014).

Senovefa Bartley’s family has controlled the Vaitogi lands closest to Turtle and Shark for generations, and according to Samoan customary land practices, could legitimately assert ownership over the cove as well (Bartley 2014, Hall 2014). However, realizing the importance of Turtle and Shark to all Samoans, Mrs. Bartley prefers to think of the site as the property of the entire village, and is content with keeping the site clean, sharing the legend with visitors, and performing Fonuea’s song on the outcrop above the cove where it has always been sung (Photos #14 and 15). She considers Turtle and Shark to be a place that people can freely visit, as long as they leave it like it is, and has always been (Bartley 2014).

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Conclusion

Turtle and Shark is a property that is historically and culturally significant to the American Samoan community for the following reasons: 1) it provides a physical referent for one of the most widely-known legends in Samoan literature; 2) it is a location where an indigenous Samoan oral storytelling tradition has been maintained and passed down for almost 100 years; and 3) it is a place where a traditional cultural practice that has historically defined both the local Vaitogi and larger American Samoan communities continues to be performed and renewed. Turtle and Shark maintains its historic integrity of location and association, and much of its integrity of setting and feeling. For these reasons, Turtle and Shark qualifies as a significant property under the National Register criterion "A."

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Photo #4 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0004)

The shore north of Turtle and Shark. This photo was taken from the outcrop where Fonuea’s song is performed. Turtle and Shark is partially visible at the bottom left of the photo. Vaitogi is partially visible at the right center of the photo. Camera facing north.

Photo #5 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0005)

The shore northwest of Turtle and Shark. An automobile track branching south from the nearby road is visible at the left center of the photo. Vaitogi is partially visible at the center of the photo. Camera facing northeast.

Photo #6 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0006)

Turtle and Shark. Camera facing southwest.

Photo #7 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0007)

The shore north and northwest of Turtle and Shark. Turtle and Shark is partially visible at the left of the photo. Camera facing southwest.

Photo #8 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0008)

The shore north of Turtle and Shark. The top of a World War II pillbox surrounded by *to’i to’i* (*Scaevola taccada*) is visible at the center of the photo. The pillbox is just outside of the Turtle and Shark property boundary. Camera facing southwest.

Photo #9 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0009)

A World War II pillbox, 25 meters (82 feet) north of Turtle and Shark. The pillbox is just outside of the Turtle and Shark property boundary. Camera facing northwest.

Photo #10 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0010)

The shore west of Turtle and Shark. Turtle and Shark is visible at the top center of the photo. A steel lifesaving stand, 24 meters (79 feet) northwest of Turtle and Shark, is visible at the right of the photo. The lifesaving stand is just outside of the Turtle and Shark property boundary. Camera facing east.

Photo #11 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0011)

A representative view of the landscape surrounding Turtle and Shark. Turtle and Shark is partially visible at the right center of the photo. Vaitogi is partially visible at the left center of the photo. Camera facing northeast.

Photo #12 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0012)

The basalt sea cliff south of Vaitogi. Turtle and Shark is visible at the top right of the photo. Vaitogi is partially visible at the top center of the photo. Camera facing northeast.

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Photo #13 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0013)

Photo titled "Turtle and Shark in Vaitogi," dated 1920s, photographer unknown (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). A man and a boy wearing *lava-lava* (Polynesian cloth skirts) are visible at the right of the photo. Turtle and Shark is visible at the left of the photo. Camera facing southeast (compare with Photo #1).

Photo #14 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0014)

Photo titled "View of the village of Vaitogi," dated 1920s, photographer unknown (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). At the center of the photo, a group of people is standing on the outcrop where Fonuea's song is performed. Camera facing south.

Photo #15 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0015)

Photo titled "Village of Vaitogi," dated 1920s, photographer unknown (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). At the right of the photo, several people are standing on the outcrop where Fonuea's song is performed. A plume of sea spray is visible at the center of the photo. Camera facing south.

Photo #16 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0016)

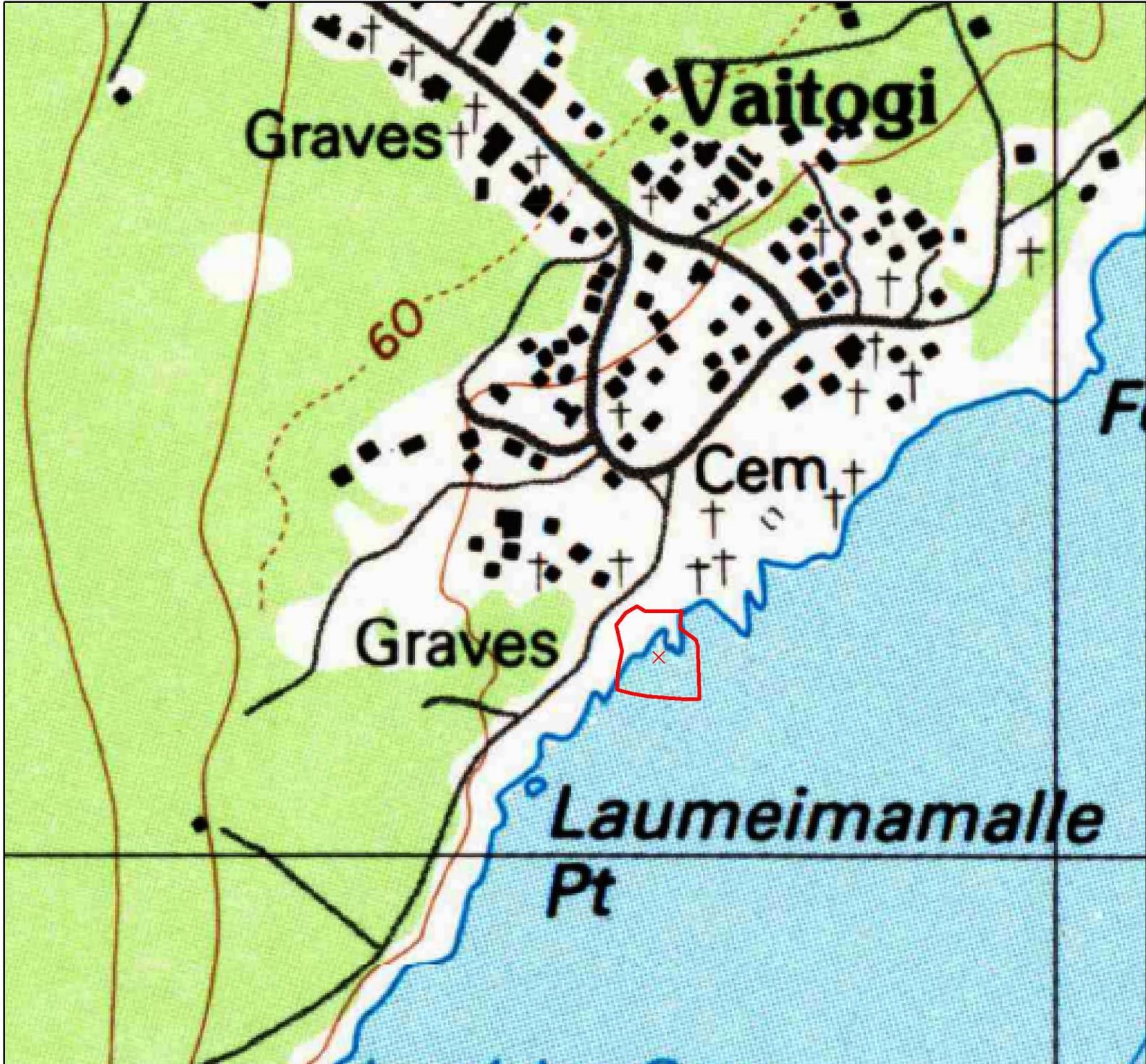
Photo titled "Vaitogi," dated 1910, photographed by J.L. Dwyer, ©K.A. Wheat (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). Turtle and Shark is partially visible at the bottom of the photo. The Vaitogi beach is visible at the center of the photo. Camera facing northeast.

Photo #17 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0017)

Photo titled "Village of Vaitogi, Tutuila, Samoa," dated 1927, photographer unknown, ©Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). Several *fales* (traditional Samoan houses) surrounded by coconut trees are visible at the center of the photo. Camera facing southeast.

Photo #18 of 18 (AS_Western District_Turtle and Shark_0018)

Photo titled "View of Vaitogi from the air," dated January 26, 1970, photographed by Donald Cole (the original photo is located at the Polynesian Photo Archives, Feleti Barstow Public Library, Pago Pago, AS, 96799). Turtle and Shark is visible at the right center of the photo. Vaitogi is visible at the top right of the photo. Camera facing north.



**Turtle and Shark Site, Tutuila Island,
American Samoa
National Register Nomination**

- Proposed Nomination Boundary**
- x **Site Midpoint: -14.357222, -170.735555**



Datum: WGS 1984
Source: U.S. Geological Survey, 1:24,000 Tutuila Island Topographic Map (1989)

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, I-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



**Turtle and Shark Site, Tutuila Island,
American Samoa
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 **Proposed Nomination Boundary**

0 50 100 150 200 Meters



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and

Datum: WGS 1984
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



**Turtle and Shark Site, Tutuila Island,
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- **Photograph Locations**
- ▭ **Proposed Nomination Boundary**



Datum: WGS 1984
Source: Google Earth



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe,
GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and



































VILLAGE OF VAITOGI, TUTUILA, SAMOA.

