

***NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL***

October 31, 9:00am – 4:15pm

*NOAA Inouye Regional Center – Ko‘olau Haka Conference Room
1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176
Honolulu Hawai‘i*

Meeting Minutes
October 31, 2014

ATTENDEES

Voting Members: Tim Johns (State of Hawai‘i, Chair); Linda Paul (Conservation, Vice-Chair); Kem Lowry (Citizen-At-Large, Secretary); Rick Lee (Ocean-Related Tourism); Gail Grabowsky (Education); Cindy Hunter (Research); Bill Gilmartin (Research); Tammy Harp (Native Hawaiian); Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing); Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian); and Laura Thompson (Conservation). [On Phone]: Jessica Wooley (Conservation).

Non-Voting Members: Dennis Rowley (Department of Defense) Janice Fukawa (Department of Defense); David Swatland (Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (NWHI CRER)); Malia Chow (Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary); and Brandon JimOn (NOAA / Office of Law Enforcement). [On Phone]: Samantha Brooke (NOAA / National Marine Fisheries Service); David Laist (Marine Mammal Commission); and Joshua DeMello (Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPFMC)).

Absent: Barry Stieglitz (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Refuge System); Bobby Gomes (Commercial Fishing); Don Shug (Research); Michael Lesser (National Science Foundation); Louis “Buzzy” Agard (Native Hawaiian); and Eric Roberts (U.S. Coast Guard).

[All Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) Staff]: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS): Hoku Johnson, Pua Borges-Smith, Andy Collins, Tia Brown, Alyssa Miller, (afternoon only) Kelly Gleason, Scott Godwin, David Graham, and Daniel Wagner; ONMS Ocean Initiatives: ‘Aulani Wilhelm, Naia Lewis; Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR): Maria Carnevale and Anne Rosinski (on phone in pm); Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA): Keola Lindsey; and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Ecological Services (USFWS): Dan Polhemus.

[Members of the Public and Non-Agency Presenters]: Barbara Mayer (on phone); Courtney Couch (Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology); Allison Reiser (University of Hawai‘i Department of Geography); and Will Cecil (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa).

PURPOSES OF THE MEETING:

- 1) Receive updates on ONMS initiatives and related efforts
- 2) Receive updates related to the 2014 field season
- 3) Potential Action Item: Resolution Supporting Increased Distance Learning Opportunities and Infrastructure at Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

I. CALL TO ORDER (JOHNS)

Council Vice-Chair Linda Paul called the meeting to order. Introductions followed.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Johns)

Chair Tim Johns reviewed the day’s agenda. Minutes from July 24, 2014 were reviewed. Ms. Judith Cucco commented that the last bullet regarding the presentation by Sylvia Earle was old and should be

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deleted as the last RAC meeting was in July but Dr. Earle’s presentation was in March. The minutes will be amended to delete the last bullet discussing the presentation by Dr. Earl. Ms. Laura Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Gail Grabowsky seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS AND STATUS (Johnson)

1. Comments on expansion of Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monuments

RAC members submitted comments during the summer public comment period and pointed to the comments in the RAC member packet. Ms. Hoku Johnson commented that Ms. Samantha Brooke, Marine Monuments Manager with the NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service would provide an update on the Pacific Remote Monuments Expansion later in the day.

2. Joint MPA FAC & SAC Call to Action:

The Joint MPA FAC / SAC Call to Action was approved by all the ONMS-wide advisory councils. Gilmartin asked what the call to action was being used for. Johnson stated that it would be shared with the ONMS Business Advisory Council. Johnson will check on what other purposes the Call To Action will be used for.

IV. MEMBER SELECTION PROCESS UPDATE (Johnson)

Ms. Johnson provided an update on RAC member selection for the two Native Hawaiian alternate seats. Two people applied and Ms. Johnson recommended to re-advertise both positions through the Federal Register process to obtain a more robust group of applicants. Ms. Pelika Andrade added that once the seats were re-advertised, she would mention them at the next Native Hawaiian cultural working group meeting. RAC members collectively agreed to re-advertise both seats. The next opportunity to advertise both seats is February 2015 and Ms. Johnson would provide a status update to the RAC at the next meeting.

V. MONUMENT CO-TRUSTEE / MANAGEMENT AGENCY UPDATES (Member Agencies)

State of Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR): Ms. Maria Carnevale provided an update on the Kure Atoll field camp. Her update included information on the Big Headed Ant eradication project, *verbesina encelioides* removal and monk seal population monitoring.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS): Dr. Dan Polhemus updated the RAC on the Nihoa Millerbird / Nihoa monitoring trip that took place in September. Dr. Polhemus discussed the continuing challenges with the seawall at Midway and FWS’s efforts to reinforce the seawall. Ms. Linda Paul asked about the levels of use of the airfield on Midway. Dr. Polhemus stated that it would be best to request that information from FWS-Refuges. RAC members discussed their concerns about FWS having to maintain the airfield at Midway Atoll. Mr. Rick Gaffney recommended that the RAC formalize their concerns about the airfield as there are two aircraft companies that benefit from the continued maintenance of the airfield. Ms. Andrade asked Dr. Polhemus about any FWS efforts to reduce the cost of living at Midway and/or ways to make Midway Atoll more sustainable. Dr. Polhemus commented that those types of questions should be directed to FWS-Refuges. The conversation regarding the airstrip continues on page five of the meeting minutes.

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Office of Hawaiian Affairs Report (Lindsey): Mr. Keola Lindsey introduced himself to the RAC and provided an overview of the Papahānaumokuākea program at OHA. Mr. Gilmartin asked about OHA’s education programs related to PMNM. Mr. Lindsey reported on OHA’s continued efforts to conduct outreach and education specifically on PMNM. Ms. Barbara Mayer commented that OHA has been great at conducting outreach at various schools on O‘ahu.

NOAA Report (Swatland): Mr. David Swatland reported on ONMS activities from July 28 – October 30th. He discussed the Unmanned Aircraft Systems project that occurred during summer 2014 and efforts to train ONMS staff to fly the Puma aircraft. Mr. Swatland also talked about the recent hurricanes that affected the NWHI including hurricanes Iselle and Julio. Mr. Swatland mentioned that no ONMS facilities in the main Hawaiian Islands sustained major damage as a result of the storms. Mokuāpapa Discovery Center did sustain minor water damage from a rain storm in Hilo. Mr. Swatland reported that the marine debris cruise returned earlier in the week with two Japan tsunami boats and a giant 11-ton “super net” that was originally sited in 2013, but personnel were unable to remove it because of its extremely large size. Ms. Paul asked about the budget and National Marine Sanctuaries Act Reauthorization. Dr. Chow reported that the FY2015 budget levels have already been set and budgets are allocated on an office-by-office basis. Mr. Rowley offered assistance on the base access issue and asked that he, Ms. Fukawa and Mr. Swatland meet at a later time to discuss specifics.

Ocean Initiatives Report (Wilhelm): Ms. ‘Aulani Wilhelm provided an update on the ongoing efforts by the new ONMS Ocean Initiatives program to continue international marine conservation efforts. Ms. Wilhelm discussed the Big Ocean business meeting as a piggyback to the 2014 World Parks Congress and efforts to finalize the Guidelines for Marine Managers.

U.S. Coast Guard: It is noted that the U.S. Coast Guard submitted a written report. Mr. Brandon JimOn referred to the written report submitted by the Coast Guard. Mr. JimOn also mentioned that the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement will likely hire three additional agents for the Pacific Region. Ms. Harp commented that it would be nice for the Coast Guard to assist with the Hawai‘i Air National Guard Youth Challenge Academy.

VI. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION:

Pacific Monuments Expansion (Brooke): Ms. Samantha Brooke provided an update on the recent Presidential proclamations expanding the Pacific Remote Island Marine National Monuments (PRIMNM). Mr. Johns asked what happened related to fishing activities within the PRIMNM. Brooke responded that the Monument fishing regulations would be expanded to the new boundaries of the PRIMNM. Mr. Johns asked if PMNM would be affected by this new designation. Ms. Brooke replied that NMFS is currently awaiting their 2015 budget and it didn’t appear that the budgets would be affected.

Presentation on Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan Review (Chow): Dr. Chow provided an update on the HIHWNMS process and stated that HIHWNMS is looking to move from a single-species sanctuary to an ecosystem-based sanctuary. Dr. Chow also stated that the management plan review public comment period would be 90 days. Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Johns and Ms. Paul commented that there was a desire to have a RAC meeting during the 90-day public comment period and possibly have a RAC member at the next HIHWNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and vice-versa.

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Update on 2013 Evaluation Process and 5-Year Evaluation / Monument Management Plan (MMP) Review Subcommittee (Miller / Johnson): Dr. Alyssa Miller provided an update on the end-of-year 2013 annual evaluation process and the draft report completed by TetraTech Inc., ONMS' contractor. Mr. Johns asked the RAC why it might be appropriate to support ONMS decision to allocate funds to programmatic activities and not MMP review. Dr. Lowry stated that it might be useful to use the Tetra Tech draft to have a period of reflection related to adaptive management and what's gone on related to adaptive management. Ms. Johnson said ONMS would put a presentation together related to adaptive management from what was included in the original management plan and how activities are changing.

Education subcommittee resolution supporting distance learning within PMNM (Grabowsky): Dr. Grabowsky referred to the draft education resolution developed by the RAC education working group. RAC members discussed prioritization of recommendations within the resolution and the cost of certain recommended activities within the resolution.

VII. LUNCH

Presentation on Ikhana Unmanned Aerial System Project (Swatland / Graham): Mr. David Graham introduced and narrated a six-minute video compilation of some of the Ikhana Unmanned Aerial Systems footage recorded in July of Nihoa and Mokumanamana.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

IX. 2014 Field Season Presentations / New Business

RAMP Cruise Overview (Godwin): Mr. Scott Godwin provided an overview of the 2014 Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program (RAMP) cruise. He highlighted the ongoing efforts to continue to monitor shallow water coral reef ecosystems in the NWHI. Mr. Godwin also discussed the ONMS partnership with University of Hawai‘i at Hilo and the Quantitative Underwater Ecological Survey Techniques (QUEST) program.

Coral Bleaching (Couch): Dr. Courtney Couch presented recent information on the coral bleaching events occurring within the NWHI. She talked about the surveys conducted during both the RAMP cruise in August and the Mesophotic cruise in September. Dr. Couch discussed the extensive bleaching recorded at Lisianski and talked about the bleaching data provided by NOAA's Coral Reef Watch.

Maritime Heritage (Gleason): Dr. Kelly Gleason presented on the Maritime Heritage piggyback cruise conducted in conjunction with the August RAMP cruise. Dr. Gleason discussed her recent find of a P-40K Warhawk at Midway Atoll and the yet to be identified shipwreck timbers at Lisianski Island.

FALKOR Benthic Mapping (Wagner): Dr. Daniel Wagner presented on the May 2014 benthic mapping cruise aboard the Schmidt Institute research vessel FALKOR. Dr. Wagner presented slides showing the additional amount of seafloor mapped by FALKOR on both the May and June cruises. Dr. Wagner talked about the partnership between the University of Hawai‘i, ONMS and the Schmidt Ocean Institute and discussed some upcoming cruises on the NOAA Ship OKEANOS EXPLORER in 2015.

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X. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Sanctuary Nomination Process (All)

Section two goals discussion: Ms. Linda Paul presented an overview of the Sanctuary Nomination Process. RAC members discussed the benefits of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) including (1) Ability to establish a Sanctuary Advisory Council; (2) Establishment of a civil and criminal penalty schedule for violations within the sanctuary; (3) Ability to access the Natural Damage Resource Assessment Fund; (4) Ability to form cooperative agreements through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation; (5) Possible expansion of certain biologically significant areas beyond the current PMNM boundary.

RAC members discussed the submission related to whether or not a sanctuary nomination proposal would open the protections established through Proclamation 8031. RAC members collectively agreed to draft a sanctuary application for discussion at a future RAC meeting; Ms. Paul will lead the drafting process. Reserve Advisory Council members also discussed forming a Sanctuary Nomination Process Subcommittee to participate in further drafting of the nomination.

XI. DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS RELATED TO THE DAY’S AGENDA:

Meeting action items:

- (1) Midway airstrip letter asking about a permanent source of funding for runway maintenance.
 - a. Bill, Rick, and Linda will talk with Dan Polhemus and work on the letter for funding for the runway.
- (2) Education resolution: RAC members reviewed draft four of the education resolution.
 - a. Mr. Johns thanked the Education Subcommittee for its efforts on the resolution. Mr. Gilmartin offered that the person for hire (recommendation number one) does not need to be permanently located at Midway. Mr. Andy Collins commented that in order for the person-for-hire to conduct telepresence and skype-type outreach activities, they need to be physically located within PMNM. Mr. Gilmartin made the motion to adopt the resolution as amended. Mr. Gaffney seconded the resolution. The resolution was approved unanimously.
- (3) Superintendent: The RAC (led by Mr. Tim Johns) will draft a letter supporting David Swatland to serve as the permanent PMNM / ONMS Superintendent stating that he is fully qualified to lead PMNM. Mr. Johns made the motion to draft the letter, Dr. Grabowsky seconded the letter and the letter was approved unanimously.

2015 meeting schedule: Ms. Johnson will propose some RAC meeting dates via email.

Items for next meeting:

- FWS to brief RAC on Midway sustainability efforts and airstrip
- HIHWNMS comments on management plan (RAC members need to review)
- OHA as 4th Co-Trustee letter
- Potential letter regarding Monument Management Plan review

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Johns adjourned the meeting for the day.