

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Non-Government (Voting)

William Aila Jr. (Chair)
State of Hawai'i

Linda Paul (Vice Chair)
Conservation

Rick Gaffney (Secretary)
Recreational Fishing

Solomon Kahoohalahala
Native Hawaiian Elder

Pelika Andrade
Native Hawaiian

Gail Grabowsky
Education

Jean Kenyon
Research

Phil Fernandez
Commercial Fishing (acting Primary)

Gail Grabowsky
Education

Vacant
Native Hawaiian

Cindy Hunter
Research

Richard Lee
Ocean-Related Tourism

Don Schug
Research

Judith Cucco
Citizen-at-Large

Jessica Wooley
Conservation

Government (Non-Voting)

Athline Clark
Papahānaumokuākea MNM

Allen Tom
HIHW National Marine Sanctuary

Hoku Kaaekuahiwi-Pousima
NOAA Fisheries PIRO

Brad Kaaleleo Wong
Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Maile Norman
U.S. Coast Guard

Janice Fukawa
U.S. Department of Defense

Kitty Simonds
WESPAC

Jared Underwood
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Vacant
National Science Foundation

Vacant
Marine Mammal Commission

Meeting January 9, 2020

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Honolulu Service Center Pier 38

1139 N. Nimitz Hwy, Suite 220

Honolulu, HI 96817

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES:

RAC Voting Members Present: William Ailā (State of Hawai'i, Chair); Linda Paul (Conservation, Vice Chair); Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing, Secretary); Phil Fernandez (Commercial Fishing, acting primary); Gail Grabowsky (Education); Cindy Hunter (Research); Solomon Kaho'ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder), Jean Kenyon (Research); Richard Lee (Ocean-Related Tourism); Bob Leinau (Conservation, acting primary for Wilcox); Jessica Wooley (Conservation).

RAC Voting Members Absent: Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian); Judith Cucco (Citizen-at-Large), Don Schug (Research).

RAC Non-Voting Members Present: Athline Clark (Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument [ONMS-PMNM]); Maria Carnevale (State of Hawai'i-DLNR-DAR); Janice Fukawa (Department of Defense, U.S. Navy [DOD-USN]); Nakoa Goo (Native Hawaiian Alternate); Hoku Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima (National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS], Pacific Islands Region Office [PIRO]); Maile Norman (U.S. Coast Guard [USCG]); Dan Polhemus (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [FWS] Ecological Services); Allen Tom (ONMS/Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary [HIHWNMS]); and Jared Underwood (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Refuges [USFWS- NWR]).

RAC Non-Voting Members Absent: Jennifer Barrett (Citizen-at-Large alternate); Gail Clarke (Education alternate); Rick Hoo (Recreational Fishing alternate); Bonnie Kahape'a-Tanner (Native Hawaiian alternate); Shad Kane (Native Hawaiian Elder alternate); Kanekoa Shultz (Research alternate); Kitty Simonds (Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council [WESPAC]); Brad Ka'alelo Wong (Office of Hawaiian Affairs); Bill Worcester (Research alternate); and Matt Zimmerman (Ocean-Related Tourism alternate).

ONMS Leadership and Staff: John Armor (ONMS Director); Kristina Kekuewa (ONMS Acting Regional Director – Pacific Islands Region), Eric Roberts (ONMS-PMNM Deputy Superintendent); Alan Lum; Alyssa Miller; Andy

Collins; Jennifer Crawford; Justin Rivera; Kalani Quioco; Naomi McIntosh; Randy Kosaki, Sarah Marquis; and Shannon Amiot.

Other Agency Staff: Brandon Jim On, NOAA Fisheries, Office of Law Enforcement [NOAA-NMFS-OLE]; Cynthia Vanderlip (DLNR-DOFAW); Michelle Barbieri (NOAA-NMFS, Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center [PIFSC]); and Summer Martin (NOAA-NMFS-PIFSC).

Members of the Public: Haunani Kane, Kevin O'Brien, and Tammy Harp.

I. CALL TO ORDER (Paul)

Vice-Chair Linda Paul called the meeting to order. Roll call and introductions followed.

II. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (Paul)

October meeting minutes discussion and approval deferred to afternoon.

III. BRIEF REVIEW & SUMMARY: PREVIOUS ISSUES, ACTION ITEMS AND STATUS

1. RAC Action: Letter to ONMS Director John Armor regarding Monument Access. The RAC letter was sent and a response letter was received. The two letters are available on the PMNM/RAC website.
2. New Member 2019-2020 Recruitment (Clark): Ms. Clark provided an update on 2020 member recruitment. ONMS anticipates getting the final selection decisions from HQ for the fall 2019 round of recruitment. Additionally, per the new rolling-recruitment system, we will have another round of recruitment in spring 2020. Those current councilmembers whose seats are up for rotation are encouraged to reapply for their seats. There will be elections for Secretary and Chair in April 2020.
3. State of Hawai'i Action: Keep RAC informed on 30x30 Initiative (Carnevale): Ms. Carnevale reported that DAR will be holding a series of open houses on all islands to inform communities and stakeholders about the 30x30 Initiative and to gather input. To learn more, email: marine30x30@hawaii.gov or call (808) 587-0100.
4. ONMS Action: Keep RAC informed of NFWF funding and activities (Clark): Ms. Clark shared the recent NOAA press release on 2020 budget and highlighted federal opportunities including OMAO funding research for vessel time and continued match for the NFWF. Similar to last year, PMNM's budget include a required match to the NFWF funds and some of this will be allocated to the marine debris efforts. In regards to last year's grant, ONMS worked with NFWF to get funding for research on the invasive algae issue, including genetic studies.
5. NMFS Action: Keep RAC informed of any changes to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. (No update).

IV. MONUMENT CO-TRUSTEE/MANAGEMENT AGENCY UPDATE/HIGHLIGHTS

1. NOAA-ONMS report (Clark) – See printed report and PowerPoint.
2. NOAA-NMFS report (Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima) – No report.

3. State of Hawai‘i DLNR-DAR report (Carnevale) – Ms. Carnevale provided highlights referencing a prior report to WESPAC. The O‘ahu Commercial Aquarium Fishing Draft EIS public review period closed on January 7th. The legislature passed HB 808, which expands existing prohibitions on capturing or killing manta rays in State waters. Ms. Kenyon requested more information on the Caribbean corkscrew anemone.
4. ONMS Update on Law Enforcement Working Group (Roberts) – The working group has been re-constituted for 2020. The first meet was held on January 7^h to reform the working group and review current law enforcement efforts in PMNM. The working group will likely meet semi-annually and the next meeting is slated for July 2020.
5. USCG Enforcement (Norman) – See printed report. Ms. Norman shared a video highlighting a USCG partnership trip to Midway Atoll in 2019. Partners included USFWS, NOAA, USCG, and the State of Hawai‘i.
6. USFWS (Polhemus) – Dr. Polhemus noted that the USFWS has hired long-time natural resource professional Ric Lopez as the new Refuge and Monuments Supervisor for the Pacific Islands Refuges and Monuments Office. Dr. Polhemus also presented a Monument Climate Update (see PowerPoint). PMNM Refuges Superintendent Jared Underwood will provide a presentation on the Midway Seabird Protection Project later during the next section.

V. PRESENTATIONS

The following presentations were provided to the RAC. PowerPoint slide shows for these presentations are available on the PMNM/RAC website.

1. ONMS Presentation by Director (Armor) – Mr. Armor updated the Council on progress and new National Marine Sanctuaries (NMS) locations. The 15th NMS for Mallows Bay is now official. There is a new large-scale coral restoration project in progress for the Florida Keys NMS and the budget for this project is \$100M over 10 years. Also, there are proposed expansion initiatives in progress at Flower Garden Banks NMS and Monitor NMS. The new NMS Council Coordinator is Katie Denman. Mr. Armor summarized the recent appeals court decision regarding the challenge to Northeast Canyons & Seamounts MNM. The Circuit Court upheld the designation and their decision included, among other findings, that the NMSA and Antiquities Act are not redundant, but complimentary. Mr. Armor shared a presidential memorandum on ocean exploration which was released in November 2019 and has tasked NOAA with mapping exploration areas as much as possible. Memo also focuses on streamlining permitting of marine exploration. Mr. Gaffney asked if there is a replacement vessel for the Hi‘ialakai and Dr. Kosaki responded that there is currently on ship time allocated by OMAO. Mr. Gaffney followed up by asking if there is anything the Council can continue to remind NOAA leadership of what is needed regarding research in PMNM as well as the implications if it does not happen. Mr. Gaffney commented that it was great that monies were allocated to OMAO, but moving beyond a year-to-year needs-assessment for PMNM. Mr. Kaho‘ohalahala commented that we are an ocean community in a massive

- archipelago and these are compelling reasons for supporting ship time for research and management. Mr. Kaho‘ohalahala also noted a need for resource leveraging efforts like the FKNMS. Mr. Armor was in agreement on these comments.
2. 2019 Hawaiian Monk Seal (HMS) Field Season Report (Michelle Barbieri, NOAA-NMFS Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program) – See PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Barbieri shared there was a continued slight positive population trend; HMS population estimate for 2018 was 1,429 seals. 2019 population data analysis is in progress and population estimate is expected to be released soon. Multiple HMSRP interventions are helping improve survival, these include vaccinations (estimated vaccinated seals 60-90% at most sites), rehabilitation (Ke Kai Ola took in 4 malnourished, underweight seals in 2019, awaiting release in April 2020), shark mitigation at FFS (removed one targeted shark) and translocation (14 pups translocated away from aggressive shark predation areas). Risks to seals from degrading Tern Island infrastructure are increasing. Seawall is degrading, creating entrapment hazards. Risks from sea level rise are on the increase – habitat is shrinking. 2020 outlook: field camps will be deployed from April to September and scientists will conduct interventions, conduct monitoring, release 2 rehabilitated seals, and conduct foraging studies.
 3. 2019 Sea Turtle Field Season Report (Summer Martin, NOAA-NMFS-PIFSC Marine Turtle Biology and Assessment Program) – See PowerPoint presentation. Field research included habitat mapping at FFS. Risks to turtles are increasing from degrading Tern Island vegetation and infrastructure. East Island nests frequently being washed out – East Island loss of 30+ year index site for monitoring trend. However, on the positive side, turtles may be moving away from areas that are degrading.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Kevin O’Brien – Updated the Council on his new non-profit, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project. Mr. O’Brien created the organization to support marine debris efforts due to waning budgets and other support for marine debris removal. The organization’s mission includes expanding the funding base for marine debris removal in PMNM, building partnerships and collaborations, and outreach to schools, communities and public to build interest and support. For more information, contact Kevin O’Brien (808) 348-0096. Website www.pmdphawaii.org. Social media @pmdphawaii.

VII. PRESENTATIONS (continued)

4. Update on Midway Seabird Protection Project (Underwood) – See PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Underwood provided an overview of the seabird protection project that begins next month. FWS hosting of researchers and other visitors at Midway will be limited until the project is completed in 2021.
Update on Friends of Hawaiian Islands NWR and Friends of Midway Atoll NWR – Mr. Underwood provided an update. These are non-profit entities that support the missions of the Refuges. Memberships and donations support projects. The groups can advocate for the NWR and conduct outreach. Mr. Kaho‘ohalahala asked how

these NWR Friends groups are coordinated and how can the Council effectively connect with them. Ms. Clark responded that the Council has an opportunity to bring all these groups together, connect, coordinate, and potentially leverage resources. Ms. Clark said the Council could consider researching out to do a roundtable meeting to potentially create cross-fertilization between groups. Mr. Underwood was in agreement on these comments.

5. R/V *Falkor* September Cruise to Papahānaumokuākea (Collins) – See PowerPoint presentation. Schmidt Ocean Institute, an ocean exploration group, has conducted two mapping expeditions to PMNM. This second expedition’s mission was to map mid-Pacific mountains, Necker Ridge, and PMNM with the goal to understand whether Necker Ridge is a bridge or barrier to species movement and recruitment. Research primarily utilized video surveys and researchers from University of Florida and Texas A & M participated. One preliminary finding is that movement of organisms along Necker Ridge is limited, therefore the ability of this area to replenish PMNM may also be limited.
6. Deep Reef Expedition 2019 and MMB Algae Working Group Update (Kosaki) – See PowerPoint presentation.
7. Milestone Events Update (Marquis, McIntosh) – See PowerPoint presentation. The Monument Communications Team (MCT) is planning for multiple celebrations and conducting outreach/networking at international events throughout 2020. A MCT communications calendar has been developed and a series of web stories focused on the “Nature and Culture are One” message has been scoped. Updates to the PMNM website are in the works and a series of councilmember profiles are being developed for the website. Some key events in 2020 are:
 - a. February: PMNM Celebration at Waikīkī Aquarium with Patrick Ching
 - b. March: Bishop Museum Science Discovery Day
 - c. April: Increased presence at the Merrie Monarch Festival, and a premiere of “Voices of Papahānaumokuākea” video series at Bishop Museum
 - d. May: “Voices of Papahānaumokuākea” premiere at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.
 - e. June: Capitol Hill Ocean Week, Festival of Pacific Arts, World Oceans Day
 - f. July: Volcanoes National Park Festivals, National Marine Educators Association (Preceded by International Marine Education Network meeting) on O‘ahu
 - g. Fall/Winter: Joint agency rollout of the PMNM Native Hawaiian Plan and the State of the Monument Report documents

VIII. CLOSING REMARKS

1. Opening of the Kaua‘i Ocean Discovery on Saturday, January 11th
2. October 10, 2019 meeting minutes were approved.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATES

1. April 24, 2020 at USCG Base in Sand Island – possible agenda items: review work plans, 2020 recruitment
2. August 20, 2020; venue TBD

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