

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 May 22, 2020

9:00am – 2:00pm

Via GoToWebinar

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES:

RAC Voting Members Present: William Aila (State of Hawai'i, Chair); Halealoha Ayau (Native Hawaiian), Judith Cucco (Citizen-At-Large), Phil Fernandez (Commercial Fishing), Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing, Secretary); Gail Grabowsky (Education), Cindy Hunter (Research), Solomon Kaho'ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder), Jean Kenyon (Research), Richard Lee (Ocean-Related Tourism), Audrey Newman (Conservation), Linda Paul (Conservation, Vice Chair); Don Schug (Research)

RAC Voting Members Absent: Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian), Jessica Wooley (Conservation).

RAC Non-Voting Members Present: Thorne Abbott (Conservation Alternate), Gail Clarke (Education Alternate), Nakoia Goo (Native Hawaiian Alternate), Bonnie Kahapea-Tanner (Native Hawaiian Alternate), Shad Kane (Native Hawaiian Elder Alternate), Robert Leinau (Conservation Alternate), Kanoa Morishige (Research Alternate), Athline Clark (NOAA/Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument [ONMS-PMNM]); Brad Wong (Office of Hawaiian Affairs), Brandon Jim On (NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Law Enforcement [NMFS-OLE]); Cindy Among-Serrao (for Allen Tom, NOAA/ONMS, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary [HIHWNMS]); Hoku Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima (NOAA/NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional Office [PIRO]); Jared Underwood (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Refuges [USFWS-NWR]); Janice Fukawa (Department of Defense, U.S. Navy [DOD-USN]); Joshua DeMello (for Kitty Simmonds, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council [WPFMC]); Maile Norman (U.S. Coast Guard [USCG]).

RAC Non-Voting Members Absent: Allen Tom (NOAA/ONMS-HIHWNMS), Kitty Simmonds (WPFMC).

ONMS Leadership and Staff: Kristina Kekuewa (ONMS Regional Director-Pacific Island Region), Eric Roberts (ONMS-PMNM Deputy Superintendent). Staff: Alan Lum, Alyssa Miller, Andy Collins, Jason Leonard, Jenny Crawford, Jon Martinez, Justin Umholtz, Kalani Quiocho, Keo Lopes, Naomi McIntosh, Randy Kosaki, Shannon Amiot.

Other Agency Staff: Kristina Kekuewa (ONMS Regional Director-Pacific Island Region), Eric Roberts (ONMS-PMNM Deputy Superintendent). Staff: Alan Lum, Alyssa Miller, Andy Collins, Jason Leonard, Jenny Crawford, Jon Martinez, Justin Umholtz, Kalani Quiocho, Keo Lopes, Naomi McIntosh, Randy Kosaki, Shannon Amiot.

Members of the Public: Alealani Dudoit, Asher Loring, Ashley Mocerro Powell, Barb Mayer, Carl Meyer, Carmen Antaky, Chris Rodgers, Doug Fetterly, Haunani Kane, Ilana Nimz, Jeannine Rossa, Joanne Kimata, Martyna Goralska, Nicole Galase, Stephanie Leonard.

I. CALL TO ORDER (Aila Jr.)

Chair Aila Jr. called the meeting to order. Protocol, roll call and introductions followed. A short orientation of the Go To Webinar platform and interface done by PMNM staff.

II. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (Aila Jr.)

The Council unanimously approved, with no amendments, the meeting minutes from the January 9, 2020.

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

1. RAC/SAC Action: Letter to ONMS Director John Armor regarding EOs 13792 and 13795. This item is on hold, no new action.
2. New member 2020 recruitment (second and orientation). Superintendent Clark introduced Halealoha Ayau, Native Hawaiian representative (Primary), he was also a member of the original Advisory Council. Other new members to the Council include Audrey Newman, Conservation representative (Primary); Thorne Abbott, Conservation representative (Alternate); and Kanoe Morishige, Research representative (Alternate). Ms. Clark thanked everyone for their patience during the lengthy agency review process and reminded everyone that a second round of recruitment was conducted in February and awaiting final clearance which should be announced any day. Ms. Clark also informed the council that another round of recruitment will be conducted this fall.
3. State of Hawaii Action: Keep RAC informed of *30x30 Initiative*. Update deferred to DLNR agency update.
4. ONMS Action: Keep RAC informed of NFWF funding and activities. Update deferred, there will be two presentations on this later this morning.
5. NMFS Action: Keep RAC informed of any changes to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. No updates.

IV. MONUMENT CO-TRUSTEE/MANAGEMENT AGENCY UPDATES

1. NOAA-ONMS (Clark): See powerpoint presentation and written report.
2. NOAA-NMFS (Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima): NOAA Fisheries updates - All research cruises and field activities are currently on hold due to pandemic. Monk seal cruise remains a high priority and NMFS is working to hopefully make it happen this season. Other monuments' work – NMFS held a Pacific Remote islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) community advisory group webinar this week. The new group provided valuable feedback on multiple topics pertaining to management planning. NMFS also recently held a PRIMNM Conservation Targets virtual workshop with subject-matter experts, to gather input for management planning. Feedback is being analyzed. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMI) Marianas Trench Management plan release was originally scheduled for June, but is now on hold.
 - a. Comment by Representative DeMello: CNMI Government opens up full-time next week (with furloughs).

3. NOAA-NMFS (Richard Hall, Fisheries Policy Analyst): Summary and update of two recent fishery papers by Lynham et al. [Lynham] and Chan. In general, both papers employed different datasets and questions, and emerged with opposite conclusions. Lynham looked at limited landings data from NOAA observer datasets. Chan used logbook data and dealer data for revenue per day and dependent variables and just the impact on one group of fishers who were fishing in the expansion area. This analysis found a significant impact on that group of fishers based on total profits for the year.
 - a. Question by Representative Schug: Do articles agree that the deep-water fleet as a whole were not negatively affected? Hall responded – Chan didn't consider the entire fleet, she only looked at a small subset that were fishing in PMNM, Lynham looked at the entire fleet so the articles are not comparable in that way.
 - b. Comment by Representative Newman: Chan's study seemed more sensitive to changes, but still showed a very modest decline – less than predicted when expansion was approved – is that correct? Hall responded – Yes.
 - c. Comment by Representative Newman: Would like to note that Chan's \$3.5M decline figure is over a timeframe of 16 months. When calibrated as an annual number it would be an estimated \$2.6M decline.
 - d. Comment by Representative DeMello: Problems with the first [Lynham] paper: why use 'All Sets' [Tuna and Swordfish] as a control group, since it doesn't target big-eye; it also uses number of fish rather than pounds for discerning yield; and using big-eye and yellow-fin prices equally is not correct as big-eye prices are much higher. Chan's paper looks at effects before and after. There are no plans for the SSC to review them as they are peer-reviewed, published papers.
4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services – Refuges (Underwood): In March, FWS had to make the decision to postpone the Midway Seabird Protection project to eradicate house mice. The project is postponed until 2021. FWS also had to severely restrict access to Midway to just a very few people to maintain a coronavirus-free location. Only mission critical personnel are allowed, and there is a 14-day quarantine for those traveling there..
5. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services – Ecological Services (Polheum): Hawaii Climate Indicators Summary, see powerpoint presentation.
 - a. Comment by Andy Collins (PMNM Staff): Great webinar on “The BLOB” Understanding the Marine Heatwaves in the Pacific Northwest, April 24, 2020.
<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/webinar-series-archives.ht>
6. Office of Hawaiian Affairs (Wong): – Mai Ka Pō Mai guidance plan is in the final draft stage and heading into layout. There will be a draft for the Monument Management Board (MMB) review in the next few months. OHA has also partnered with Haunani Kane, Kanoë Morishige, and Pelika Andrade for a trip to Lala (French Frigate Shoals) on Makani Olu to conduct East Island climate change research and intertidal monitoring. Originally scheduled for July, the trip is likely to be delayed.
7. U.S. Coast Guard (Norman): – See written report.

8. State of Hawai‘i – Department of Land and Natural Resources (Carnevale): The *30x30 Initiative* web page has information including a handout, a memorandum of agreement and other resources. DAR has shifted to telework except for a limited number of staff. DLNR is experiencing technology challenges and other adjustments to telework. Ocean Acidification Plan is in process and the planning team will work with the MMB and MB climate change working group in the future. A series of informational webinars was recently held. Policies and procedures for Land Board authorizations for PMNM activities are currently being worked out. Legislature is back in session. Marine debris removal support request via DOFAW’s budget was removed; hopefully this isn’t the end of the story.
 - a. Comment by Dan Polhemus (USFWS): May be able to use Casitas NERDA account to support the marine debris cruise if not funded by legislature.

V. PRESENTATIONS

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

1. **Tracking Movements of Predators Using Passive Acoustic Monitoring** (Dr. Carl Meyer):
Original research project was modified when Hurricane Walaka struck at French Frigate Shoals (Rapture Reef). Research provided an opportunity to study the impact on predators after destruction of the habitat. The study found that a majority of predators survived the storm and habitat impacts. Additionally, predators, especially ulua, are still frequenting the impacted habitat. The area still has ecological importance, perhaps for spawning or other function. Conclusion is that the overall ecosystem is healthy and resilient. Study also includes stable isotope analysis of waters.
 - a. Comment by Representative Leinau: What happens to the smaller reef fish that lose their habitat? Do they just become food? Dr. Meyer responded – that is still unknown.
 - b. Comment by Representative Kenyon: How close to the receiver must the tagged predators be in order to be detected? What is the receiver’s range?
2. **How do our Kūpuna islands respond to sea-level rise and storms?** (Dr. Haunani Kane):
Impacted islands are naturally dynamic, and we are seeing the islands naturally recovering from Hurricane Walaka. Future research includes long-term impact on sediment delivery and availability, as well as processes of island evolution effects on island habitat. A longer version of this presentation is recorded at: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/sea-level-change-and-storms-within-pnmm.html>
Free satellite imagery is available at: <https://www.planet.com>
 - a. Comment from Ashley Mocerro Powell (General Public): How would Dr. Kane recommend an emerging STEM scholar to start in exploring this cultural knowledge to ground our STEM (like you); thinking of how this same framework could be applied to other Coral Triangle and Pacific Islands regions.
 - b. Comment by Representative Ayau: Can you haku a mele (compose a song) with Carl to capture the impact of Hurricane Walaka on Papahānaumokuākea so that the data is also presented and preserved culturally? These two presentations are awesome in the history of these moku (islands) and their resources and it’s a story that deserved to be memorialized in mele. He leo wale no.
 - c. Question by Representative Newman: Anyone tracking changes in vegetation?

3. 2020-2021 Events Update (McIntosh): We are adapting to a new ‘normal’ for PMNM outreach. Most events are cancelled or postponed. PMNM will be rescheduling some events, and we will be celebrating the many anniversaries virtually and indirectly. In June, PMNM will be participating in virtual CHOW and co-hosting a virtual World Ocean Day celebration with partner Ko ‘Olina.
4. Wave Glider 2020 Mission to PMNM (Martinez): Passive acoustic research was done as a component of a larger SanctSound monitoring project. This multi-year project working closely with Jupiter Research Foundation and HIHWNMS records the entire soundscape: wildlife, waves, storms, earthquakes, human-caused sounds (vessel engines, dredging, etc.) The Wave Glider traveled about 2,500 nautical miles from Middle Bank to Lisianski for 67 days. The Wave handled rough winter seas to survey 18 banks, shoals and seamounts resulting in some first records for humpbacks at some of these features. Preliminary data shows a much greater number of Humpback Whales and other cetaceans than previously known.
 - a. Question from the general public: How can we follow the SanctSound Project for the next 5 years? PMNM Staff responded - <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/monitoring/sound/>
 - b. Comment by Representative Kaho‘ohalahala: Who has ownership of these sound recordings and the data that they identify? Response: They are currently being analyzed by the research team at Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.
 - c. Comment by Cynthia Vanderlip (Kure Atoll Conservancy): Is there a possibility that the wave glider could be entangled in derelict fishing gear or other marine pollution?
 - i. Response from Representative Hunter – Yes, it already happened once and had to be rescued
5. Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Expansion Proposal (G.P. Schmahl, Superintendent): Joining us from Galveston, TX, Superintendent Schmahl gave a brief presentation leading up to the council’s discussion to submit a letter in support of the proposed expansion. The expansion initiative originated during the management plan review process and received substantial support. On May 1st, a notice of proposed rule-making was published for the proposed expansion of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. Informational materials are available in the handouts for this meeting and at the FGBNMS website. The site consists of three banks in the Gulf of Mexico, off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana. Three public meetings are scheduled for June to receive feedback on the proposal.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Doug Fetterly, Chair for the National Marine Team for the Sierra Club – Developing a sound national aquaculture policy involves overcoming multiple challenges to sustainable aquaculture. Does the Council have thoughts and expertise in this area and would they be willing to share?
 - a. Comment by Richard Hall: Aquaculture in Hawai‘i is expanding fast. NOAA is making serious commitments to aquaculture for the future. Many issues to think about include location, water quality, ESA issues (entanglement and harassment, etc.)

VII. POTENTIAL ACTIONS

1. RAC comments on the public comment period for Flower Gardens Bank National Marine Sanctuary proposed rule for sanctuary expansion

Members of the Council expressed interest in understanding the relationship between PMNM, the Council and FGBNMS. Chair Aila shared that Advisory Council leadership often supports each other and the Council's relationship is not specific to FGBNMS, but we share issues and goals for nationally significant sites. Representative Kaho'ohalahala also acknowledged the work and legacy left behind by former FGBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council Chair, Clint Moore. Representative Ayau asked who are the indigenous people of the FGBNMS area and that in the Council's comments, it should say that we support coordination with Native Peoples in the expansion effort. Representative Grabowski added that the letter should also stress that we appreciate that this is a compromise in an effort to respond to all stakeholders.

- a. Representative Kaho'ohalahala motioned to draft the letter. Motion seconded by Secretary Gaffney. Motion approved, the Executive Committee will draft the letter.

2. RAC discussion on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth Executive Order

Comment by Superintendent Clark: RAC members circulated a letter from WPFMC in response to this EO and a meeting that was held on this initiative between the White House and fishing industry representatives. RAC leadership expressed an interest in responding to the subsequent letter sent to the White House from the WPFMC. A resolution by the RAC is one way for the Council to go on record with ONMS (PMNM Superintendent and HQ) and is not a direct correspondence with White House, which is outside of this body's jurisdiction. Key component is to understand the purpose in doing this [submitting a resolution] and that the Council has the option of drafting a resolution now or later, as there is a 180-day response period for the EO. The RAC needs to decide if they are commenting on the EO or on the letter from WPFMC.

Comment by Representative DeMello: The White House held meetings with the fishing industry, not WPFMC. The lifting of restrictions in monuments and sanctuaries throughout the U.S. are targeted by the fishery councils mainly because of proximity to ports and access to more high-seas areas to increase competitiveness of fishers internationally. MPAs have no known conservation benefit. Deadline to receive input by fishery councils is November 8, 2020.

Comment by Malia Chow (NOAA/NMFS-PIRO): Clarification that WPFMC letter is not policy recommendations and that the official process for recommendations happens through the NOAA Office of Sustainable Fisheries, using a template. Reiterated that the Council has time to discuss and respond.

Comment by Representative Newman: More time is welcome, but should start the drafting process soon. Look further into Chan's study as well as WPFMC's letter and the issues delineated therein.

Comment by Representative Schug: Starting point could be the 2017 letter that was drafted by RAC leadership in response to the EO 13792 as the letter lays out the case for protections and value of the Monument.

Comment by Superintendent Clark: Clarification on the following – 1) Resolution not be sent until the Council has looked at all information, 2) Basis for drafting the resolution will be the 2017 letter as well as today’s bullet-points and 3) This will be revisited and approved at next Council meeting in August since the Council’s process requires a public meeting.

Response by Chair Aila: Agrees with these suggestions and asks Council for a motion.
Representative Cucco motioned to start drafting a resolution as soon as possible. Motioned seconded by Representative Newman. Motion approved, Rick Gaffney, Don Schug, Linda Paul, and Audrey Newman will work on a preliminary draft.

VIII. DECISION-MAKING, WRAP-UP AND CLOSING REMARKS (AILA JR.)

Superintendent Clark thanked everyone and also made mention that for the foreseeable future, these meetings will continue to be virtual

Next Meeting Date: August 20, 2020 - Virtual

Fall Meeting Date: ONMS will send potential dates for Council’s consideration.

PAU