



He lā'au ku ho'okāhi, he lehua no Ka'ala

A lone tree, a lehua of Ka'ala

An expression of admiration for an outstanding person, unequalled in beauty, wisdom or skill.

This 'ōlelo no'ēau, or traditional Hawaiian proverb, poetically describes Kahi Fujii, Papahānaumokuākea Graphics and Web Designer for over 11 years. As an innovative artist, he used his considerable skills to highlight the natural and cultural significance, history, and science of Papahānaumokuākea to a global audience, inspiring action through the visual arts. Kahi's legacy includes Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument's (PMNM) distinctive signature branding that weaves Native Hawaiian cultural elements and perspectives to epitomize the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument's theme "Where Nature and Culture are One." He has produced a range of stunning and dynamic content from story maps and wall murals, to aloha shirts, books, technical reports, scientific publications, stationery and educational activities, and more.

As a natural convener, Kahi cultivated a host of new partnerships and actively participated in NOAA outreach, and numerous diversity and inclusion initiatives that fostered respect and equity for all. Kahi deeply understands the value of aloha 'āina and stewardship of our finite resources, and continually sought to develop new work methods that reused materials, reduced waste, and stretched limited resources. Kahi embodies aloha, sharing compassion, grace, kindness, and love with whomever he meets; truly a lehua of Ka'ala. We wish Kahi all the best in his new international role with the U.S. Peace Corps as a Multimedia Specialist.

A hui hou, friend and colleague. Until we meet again.

Welcome to the Team

Sascha Fujiwara

This month we welcome Sascha Fujiwara, our new Graphics and Web Designer. Sascha brings extensive experience in digital and graphic design, having worked at the Hawai'i State Department of Health and the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship. She holds a Bachelor of Creative Media from the University of Hawai'i and an Associate of Science in interface design from Kapi'olani Community College.



Superintendent's Corner

I have a confession to make, despite a life spent in and around the ocean, swimming, surfing, freediving, fishing, and sailing, I have never experienced the waters of Papahānaumokuākea. Yet, like many of you, I feel a deep connection through the images I have seen, the stories I have heard, and the people I have connected with. As we celebrate World Ocean Day, I can't help but think of all of the influencers that led the efforts to protect this place that we hold so sacred. World Ocean Day was designated by the United Nations on June 8, 2008, approximately eight years after the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and two years after Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument were designated. I can only imagine that those two actions, and the individuals that lead those efforts, ultimately influenced the UN's decision to establish this international day for ocean recognition. As we wrap up this important month dedicated to ocean awareness and conservation, I want to thank all of you for your support of Papahānaumokuākea, support that has lasted for over two decades. I look forward to the next decade of protection and the continuation of this important legacy. Mahalo and imua Papahānaumokuākea.

Eric Roberts

National Marine Sanctuary Designation for Papahānaumokuākea Update

The process to consider designating marine portions of Papahānaumokuākea as a national marine sanctuary under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act is moving forward.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, along with co-management partners, is now working on a series of documents to include a draft sanctuary management plan, draft environmental impact statement, and proposed sanctuary regulations. NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is also working closely with the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council, the Papahānaumokuākea Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group, and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. These draft documents will be available to the public later this year.

For more information about the process, visit the [Monument website](#).

The Designation Timeline





Credit: Andy Collins

A student learns how to research sea turtles during the World Ocean Day event.

Mokupāpapa

Where Nature, Culture, and Education Are One

It has been a very busy spring and early summer for Mokupāpapa, with major events such as World Ocean Day, World Bee Day, the Merrie Monarch Hula Festival, increasing school field trips, high visitation, and many VIP visits. We hosted a booth at the Merrie Monarch craft fair for the first time, reaching residents, visitors, and cultural practitioners, and providing information on the sanctuary designation for Papahānaumokuākea. We also partnered with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on cultural workshops, panel discussions, and held a hula workshop at Mokupāpapa during the festival.

Education staff have also continued the successful Third Thursday webinar series, with hundreds of attendees from around the world learning about topics related to Papahānaumokuākea, and we even had an American Sign Language interpreter on the recent webinar about monk seals to make it more accessible. We recently hosted meetings of the NOAA Regional Coordinators, a Pacific Remote Islands Sanctuary Designation Scoping Meeting, and the National Nature Assessment.

We are currently working on a major new exhibit about sea turtles, with content spread throughout the facility that includes a large wall mural by Patrick Ching, and life size cutouts of our five species of sea turtles to measure yourself against. This should open in late July, so keep an eye out for an invitation.

Papahānaumokuākea and Rapa Nui MPA Announce Sister-Site Relationship

In February, leadership from the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and the Rapa Nui Marine Protected Areas announced a renewed initiative to develop a sister marine protected area agreement. This agreement will create a cooperative framework for the protection and management of natural and cultural resources between two places that, in spite of the geographic distance, are linked by a common culture and represent two unique marine environments in the Pacific Ocean. This agreement also supports the continuation of the broader U.S./Chile bilateral agreement that was recently extended for an additional five years. As part of this relationship, the Mai Ka Pō Mai Native Hawaiian guidance document was translated into Spanish.



Credit: NOAA

Members from the Rapa Nui and Hawai'i delegations join for a group photo after the announcement of the renewed relationship. Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) representatives included staff from headquarters, the Pacific Islands Region, and Papahānaumokuākea.

Ala 'Aumoana Kai Uli in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

September 1–28, 2023

E/V *Nautilus* will once again voyage to Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument to explore unseen deep-sea habitats using Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) technology.

Watch **LIVE** online at Nautiluslive.org.

Hökūle'a

The Beginning of a Four Year Journey Around the Pacific

The famed Polynesian voyaging canoe Hōkūle'a began a four year voyage around the Pacific on June 19th, launching from Statter Harbor in Juneau, Alaska. The voyage, titled Moananuiākea, Hawaiian for the Pacific Ocean, is a voyage for the Earth. The purpose is "to ignite a movement of 10 million "planetary navigators" who will pursue critical and inspiring "voyages" to ensure a better future for the earth." Hōkūle'a will visit several sanctuary sites along the voyage, and we are working to amplify the voyage and mission through our network of Ocean Guardian schools, and Indigenous and other community partnerships.

You can follow the voyage at hokulea.com.

Celebrating Anniversaries

This year, we celebrate 17 years since Papahānaumokuākea was designated as a marine national monument. On June 15, 2006, President George Bush created the largest marine conservation area on Earth at the time. A year later, it was given its Hawaiian name, Papahānaumokuākea.

August 26 marks the seventh anniversary of expansion of Papahānaumokuākea by Presidential proclamation, making it, at 582,578 square miles, one of the largest protected areas on the planet.

Thirteen years ago, on July 30, 2010, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was inscribed as a mixed World Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The only mixed World Heritage site within the United States, it is one of the best examples of both the world's cultural as well as natural heritage.



Sara Wood

Meet The Staff



What is your role and how long have you worked at PMNM?

On June 1, 2023, I joined PMNM to serve as the Advisory Council Coordinator and Education Specialist.

What is your background prior to working at PMNM?

I have worked in the field of marine science for over 15 years spanning numerous sectors including education, field research and operations, and management. I received my B.S. in Aquatic Biology from UC Santa Barbara. In 2015 I joined the NOAA Commissioned Corps and served as Navigation Officer aboard NOAA Ship Nancy Foster. I then transferred to Kihei, HI in 2017 to serve as the Marine Operations Coordinator at the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary. In this role, I was involved in whale research and response, logistics coordination, and even served temporarily as the Acting Superintendent. I separated from the NOAA Corps in 2020 to pursue graduate school and recently graduated with my Master's Degree in Marine Science from Hawai'i Pacific University.

What are you working on now?

I have just recently stepped into my role as Advisory Council Coordinator, but I am eager to help head a new recruitment event and help the RAC take part in the upcoming Sanctuary Designation.

What do you enjoy about working at PMNM?

I had the great fortune of sailing through Papahānaumokuākea in 2019 on a cetacean research cruise and am proud to contribute my efforts to the conservation of such a sacred place. I have always had a lot of love for the ONMS 'ohana as they are an incredibly passionate group of people with whom I consider it a privilege to work.

What is your hope for PMNM in the future?

I hope to use my role in the RAC to motivate more community members to engage in the work that Papahānaumokuākea is doing. Papahānaumokuākea is a place for us all to enjoy and benefit from, whether we are able to travel there or not. I'd like to see our RAC members and community stakeholders be more involved in our outreach events, bring new research ideas to the table, and help brainstorm effective conservation policy strategies.



Koholā | *Megaptera novaeangliae*

Humpback Whale

Ka Hō'ike 'Ano: Description

- The humpback whale takes its common name from the distinctive hump on its back. Its long pectoral fins inspired its scientific name, *Megaptera*, which means "big-winged."
- The Hawai'i population, which breeds in the main Hawaiian Islands and feeds in most of the known feeding grounds in the North Pacific, particularly Southeast Alaska and northern British Columbia.

Ka Lauā Kaianoho - Distribution

- Humpback whales live in oceans around the world.
- They travel incredible distances every year and have one of the longest migrations of any mammal on the planet.
- In the North Pacific, some humpback whales migrate from Alaska to Hawai'i—they can complete the 3,000 mile trip in as few as 28 days.

Ka Waiwai Ho'oilina - Cultural Significance

- Manini reproduction is tied to whales. It is said that the hūpē koholā or whale snot provides a safe environment for the eggs to hatch.
- These sacs are found along the shoreline in the early morning, before day break, filled and surrounded by 'ōhua.
- People would gather at this time, scooping up the transparent 'ōhua, and drying them with some salt.

'Ikepili Hoihoi: Interesting Fact

- Some believe the hūpē refers to the whale birthing sac and others believe it may be the skin constantly shed by whales which have a slimy consistency.
- Humpback whales feed on shrimp-like crustaceans (krill) and small fish, straining huge volumes of ocean water through their baleen plates, which act like a sieve.

CONNECT WITH US    papahanaumokuakea.gov

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
NOAA/Daniel K. Inouye Regional Center
1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96818 | Phone: 808-725-5800

Mokupāpapa Discovery Center
76 Kamehameha Avenue
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone: 808-498-4709

Papahānaumokuākea is co-managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State of Hawai'i, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. This newsletter highlights some of the initiatives of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and partners.