

National Marine Sanctuary Designation for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument



Mokumanamana (Necker Island) is known for its numerous religious sites and artifacts. Photo: Ruben Carrillo



Rare species live at Kure Atoll. Photo: NOAA/Richard Pyle-Bishop Museum



Galapagos sharks (manō) school at Maro Reef. Photo: James Watt/NOAA

In December of 2020, Congress directed NOAA to initiate the process to designate Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument as a national marine sanctuary under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

In August of 2016, President Barack Obama issued Presidential Proclamation 9478, expanding Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The proclamation also stated that the Secretary of Commerce should consider initiating the process to designate Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument as a national marine sanctuary.

Stakeholder groups and partners, including the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council and the state of Hawai'i, have also supported sanctuary designation.

This process does not change the monument designation. The national marine sanctuary designation would add an additional layer of protection and permanency to safeguard resources in the marine portions of the monument. The co-management structure that is a hallmark of the monument will continue.

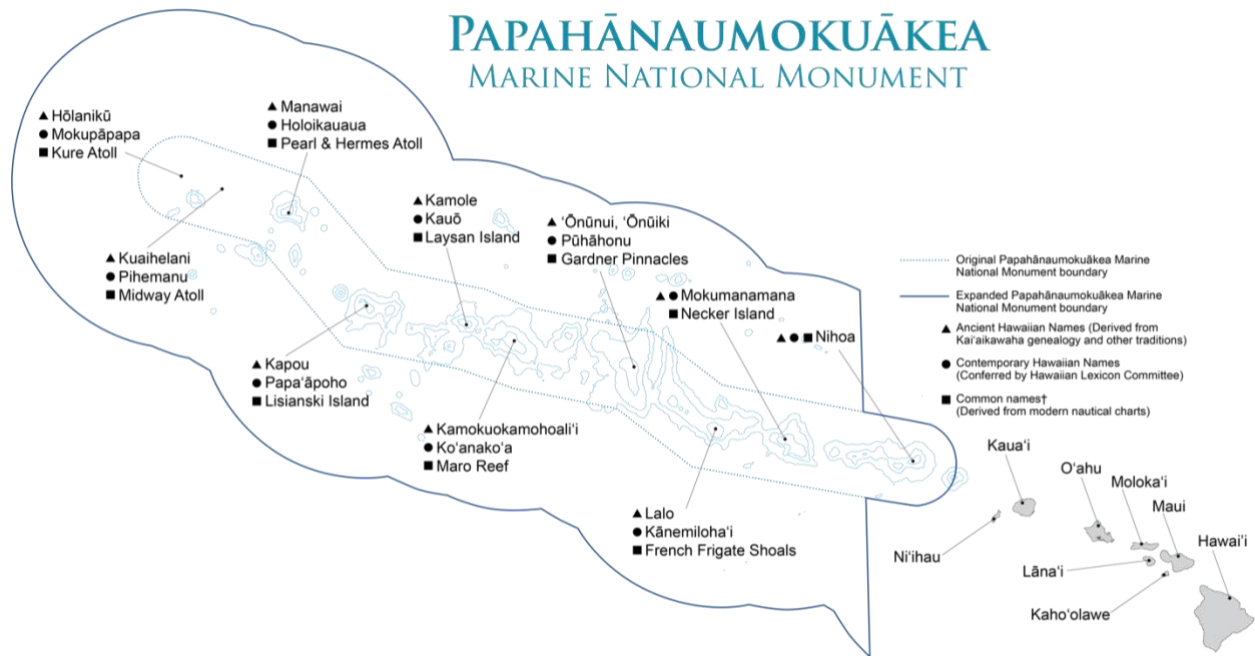
NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has been a key partner and co-managing agency in the management of Papahānaumokuākea since the initial designation of the site as the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve in 2000.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



The National Marine Sanctuary System encompasses 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.

PAPAHĀNAUMOKUĀKEA MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT



Designation as a national marine sanctuary would supplement and complement, as well as enhance, existing authorities and the regulatory framework.

The establishment of a national marine sanctuary would ensure strong and lasting protections for all areas of the marine environment included in the monument, but would not include any terrestrial areas.

The process to designate a national marine sanctuary will be done in concert with the monument's co-managing agencies.

As a part of this collaborative process, we will also be updating the Monument Management Plan, which is 13 years old and does not include critical new information, such as the inclusion of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs as a co-trustee.

The process will be conducted as a public process and include significant opportunities for public comment.

Native Hawaiian culture is a foundational element of the management of Papahānaumokuākea. We will continue to honor and perpetuate spiritual and cultural relationships with this special place.



NOAA maritime archaeologists located the wreck of the *Two Brothers*, lost in 1823.
Photo: NOAA



A juvenile Hawaiian monk seal (ʻĪlio holoikauaua) swims near Trig Island, French Frigate Shoals.
Photo: Mark Sullivan/NOAA



Papahānaumokuākea provides refuge for endangered species such as the Hawaiian green sea turtle (honu).
Photo: John Burns/NOAA