Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT Permit Application

NOTE: This Permit Application (and associated Instructions) are to propose activities to be conducted in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The Co-Trustees are required to determine that issuing the requested permit is compatible with the findings of Presidential Proclamation 8031. Within this Application, provide all information that you believe will assist the Co-Trustees in determining how your proposed activities are compatible with the conservation and management of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (Monument).

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

• Any or all of the information within this application may be posted to the Monument website informing the public on projects proposed to occur in the Monument.

• In addition to the permit application, the Applicant must either download the Monument Compliance Information Sheet from the Monument website OR request a hard copy from the Monument Permit Coordinator (contact information below). The Monument Compliance Information Sheet must be submitted to the Monument Permit Coordinator after initial application consultation.

• Issuance of a Monument permit is dependent upon the completion and review of the application and Compliance Information Sheet.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED
Send Permit Applications to:
NOAA/Inouye Regional Center
NOS/ONMS/PMNM/Attn: Permit Coordinator
1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176
Honolulu, HI 96818
nwhiprmit@noaa.gov
PHONE: (808) 725-5800 FAX: (808) 455-3093

SUBMITTAL VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL IS PREFERRED BUT NOT REQUIRED. FOR ADDITIONAL SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS, SEE THE LAST PAGE.
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Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
Permit Application Cover Sheet

This Permit Application Cover Sheet is intended to provide summary information and status to the public on permit applications for activities proposed to be conducted in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. While a permit application has been received, it has not been fully reviewed nor approved by the Monument Management Board to date. The Monument permit process also ensures that all environmental reviews are conducted prior to the issuance of a Monument permit.

Summary Information
Applicant Name: Eric A. VanderWerf
Affiliation: Pacific Rim Conservation

Permit Category: Conservation and Management
Proposed Activity Dates: 10 January to 28 February 2021
Proposed Method of Entry (Vessel/Plane): Plane
Proposed Locations: Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge

Estimated number of individuals (including Applicant) to be covered under this permit: 6
Estimated number of days in the Monument: 6

Description of proposed activities: (complete these sentences):

a.) The proposed activity would…
Establish a new nesting colony of Black-footed Albatrosses on Guadalupe Island, Mexico by translocating birds from Midway Atoll.

b.) To accomplish this activity we would …. Remove up to 42 Black-footed Albatross eggs and 25 Black-footed Albatross chicks from Midway and transport them by plane to Tijuana, Mexico and then to Guadalupe Island. The eggs would be placed in Laysan Albatross foster nests and raised by foster parents. The chicks would be raised by hand until fledging. We would take eggs and chicks from nests located on the perimeter of the atoll where they are threatened by high waves and coastal erosion to minimize the impact to the source population, thereby also saving those eggs and chicks from drowning.

c.) This activity would help the Monument by …
aiding in the long-term conservation and resiliency of the Black-footed Albatross through establishment of an additional nesting colony on a high island that is not vulnerable to climate change.

Other information or background:
We have translocated 89 Black-footed Albatross chicks from the Monument from 2017-2020, and those birds were taken to James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge, Oahu in order to start a
new nesting colony there, where it will be safe from climate change. That project has been successful thus far, with 94% survival to fledging of the translocated chicks, and the return of the first translocated bird as an adult in 2020. The previous translocations have been covered under the Monument managers permit because they were regarded as management actions directly relevant to one of the species protected by the Monument. We are proposing to continue that project, but to begin moving Black-footed Albatrosses to Guadalupe Island, Mexico. Because this would no longer be a direct transfer of birds from one refuge to another, and would involve moving birds to another country, it was recommended that we apply for a permit specifically for this action. We are proposing to continue moving the same number of chicks per year as in previous years (25), for three more years. In 2021, 12 of them would go to James Campbell NWR, which would achieve our goal of releasing 100 birds on the refuge, which we believe will be a sufficient number to establish a new colony. The other 13 chicks in 2021 would be moved to Guadalupe Island, and 25 chicks would be moved to Guadalupe in 2022 and 2023. In addition, we would like to collect up to 42 Black-footed Albatross eggs from Midway each year and move them to Guadalupe. All eggs and chicks removed from Midway would be taken from beaches where many nests are destroyed by waves and coastal erosion and have a low chance of surviving anyway. The impact on the source colony thus would be very low, perhaps even zero, and the eggs and chicks collected would be saved from possible drowning.

This project will be done in collaboration with the Mexican government (the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas; CONANP) and with a partner non-profit organization based in Mexico (Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas; GECI). CONANP and GECI have already provided permission and letters of support for the project.
Section A - Applicant Information

1. Applicant

Name (last, first, middle initial): VanderWerf, Eric, A.

Title: Director of Science, Pacific Rim Conservation

1a. Intended field Principal Investigator (See instructions for more information):
Dr. Eric A. VanderWerf, Pacific Rim Conservation

2. Mailing address (street/P.O. box, city, state, country, zip):

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

For students, major professor’s name, telephone and email address: NA

3. Affiliation (institution/agency/organization directly related to the proposed project):
Pacific Rim Conservation

4. Additional persons to be covered by permit. List all personnel roles and names (if known at time of application) here (e.g. John Doe, Research Diver; Jane Doe, Field Technician):
Dr. Lindsay C. Young, avian biologist, Pacific Rim Conservation
Mr. C. Robert Kohley, avian biologist, Pacific Rim Conservation
Dr. Adrien Pesque, veterinarian, Pacific Rim Conservation
Ms. Leilani Fowlke, avian biologist, Pacific Rim Conservation
Ms. Erika Dittmar, avian biologist, Pacific Rim Conservation

Section B: Project Information

5a. Project location(s):

- [ ] Nihoa Island, Ocean Based
- [ ] Necker Island (Mokumanamana), Ocean Based
- [ ] French Frigate Shoals, Ocean Based
- [ ] Gardner Pinnacles, Ocean Based
- [ ] Maro Reef, Ocean Based
- [ ] Laysan Island, Ocean Based

- [ ] Nihoa Island, Land-based
- [ ] Necker Island (Mokumanamana), Land-based
- [ ] French Frigate Shoals, Land-based
- [ ] Gardner Pinnacles, Land-based
- [ ] Maro Reef, Land-based
- [ ] Laysan Island, Land-based

- [ ] Shallow water
- [ ] Deep water

- [ ] Shallow water
- [ ] Deep water

- [ ] Shallow water
- [ ] Deep water

- [ ] Shallow water
- [ ] Deep water

- [ ] Shallow water
- [ ] Deep water
Lisianski Island, Neva Shoal  □ Land-based  □ Shallow water  □ Deep water
Pearl and Hermes Atoll  □ Land-based  □ Shallow water  □ Deep water
☒ Midway Atoll  □ Land-based  □ Shallow water  □ Deep water
☒ Kure Atoll  □ Land-based  □ Shallow water  □ Deep water
□ Other

NOTE: Shallow water is defined by water less than 100 meters in depth.

□ Remaining ashore on any island or atoll (with the exception of Sand Island at Midway Atoll and field camp staff on other islands/atolls) between sunset and sunrise.

NOTE: There is a fee schedule for people visiting Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge via vessel and aircraft.

Location Description:
Black-footed albatross eggs and chicks would be collected from Midway Atoll, specifically from North Beach on Sand Island and, weather permitting, the eastern end of Eastern Island. Eastern Island would be visited only during the day.

5b. Check all applicable regulated activities proposed to be conducted in the Monument:
☒ Removing, moving, taking, harvesting, possessing, injuring, disturbing, or damaging any living or nonliving Monument resource
□ Drilling into, dredging, or otherwise altering the submerged lands other than by anchoring a vessel; or constructing, placing, or abandoning any structure, material, or other matter on the submerged lands
□ Anchoring a vessel
□ Deserting a vessel aground, at anchor, or adrift
□ Discharging or depositing any material or matter into the Monument
□ Touching coral, living or dead
□ Possessing fishing gear except when stowed and not available for immediate use during passage without interruption through the Monument
□ Attracting any living Monument resource
□ Sustenance fishing (Federal waters only, outside of Special Preservation Areas, Ecological Reserves and Special Management Areas)
□ Subsistence fishing (State waters only)
□ Swimming, snorkeling, or closed or open circuit SCUBA diving within any Special Preservation Area or Midway Atoll Special Management Area
6. Purpose/Need/Scope State purpose of proposed activities:
Over 95% of the global population of Black-footed Albatross nests on low-lying atolls in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, where they are threatened by sea level rise and other aspects of global climate change. Each year thousands of albatross nests are destroyed by storm surge and high waves, particularly on Midway and Tern Island. One of the highest priority conservation actions for this species is to create additional nesting colonies on high islands that are safe from climate change. From 2017-2020, Pacific Rim Conservation has used translocation (moving birds a new location) to begin establishing a new colony of Black-footed Albatrosses at James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge on Oahu. That project has been successful so far, with 94% survival of translocated chicks and the first bird returning as an adult to JCNWR in 2020. Expanding the translocation to establish more colonies other high islands would further safeguard the future of the species.

Guadalupe Island, located 180 km off the coast of Northern Baja California, supports a thriving nesting colony of Laysan Albatrosses and would provide ideal nesting habitat for Black-footed Albatrosses too. Black-footed Albatrosses foraging extensively in the California Current near Guadalupe Island and commute to this area from Hawaii to forage. Establishing a breeding colony of Black-footed Albatrosses in the eastern Pacific would expand the breeding range of the species, allow for a shorter foraging commute, and increase its resiliency to climate change. Moving eggs and chicks simultaneously will provide the best change of establishing a breeding population on Guadalupe as quickly as possible. By selecting eggs and chicks from nests on the perimeter of Midway Atoll that are vulnerable to inundation, we will increase their chance of survival and minimize any impacts to the source population. The eggs will be placed in foster Laysan Albatross nests on Guadalupe and raised by the foster parents. The chicks will be raised by hand until they are ready to fly. By moving chicks at a young age (3 weeks), they will imprint on Guadalupe and return there as adults.

We proposed to do this project for three years. In the first year of the project (2021), 12 of the chicks would be moved to James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge in order to reach the goal of moving 100 chicks there to provide a sufficient founding population. The other chicks collected in 2021 would be moved to Guadalupe, and in years 2 and 3 of the project all 25 chicks and 42 eggs would be moved to Guadalupe.

*Considering the purpose of the proposed activities, do you intend to film / photograph federally protected species?  Yes ☒ No ☐

If so, please list the species you specifically intend to target.
Black-footed Albatross

For a list of terrestrial species protected under the Endangered Species Act visit: http://www.fws.gov/endangered/
For a list of marine species protected under the Endangered Species Act visit: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/esa/
For information about species protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act visit: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/mmpa/
7. Answer the Findings below by providing information that you believe will assist the Co-Trustees in determining how your proposed activities are compatible with the conservation and management of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the Monument:

The Findings are as follows:

a. How can the activity be conducted with adequate safeguards for the cultural, natural and historic resources and ecological integrity of the Monument?

The activity will be conducted with adequate safeguards for the natural, cultural, and historical resources and ecological integrity of the Monument. All personnel that will be involved in the field activities have worked with seabirds for at least several years, are familiar with island ecosystems, and have previous experience in the Monument. We have sufficient experience to be able to avoid stepping on seabird nests and otherwise disturbing nesting seabirds, monk seals, and other wildlife and natural resources. The Black-footed Albatross eggs and chicks will be moved and cared for using methods that have been used successfully for similar projects over the past six years. The proposed activities would not affect any historical or cultural resources, and personnel will stay away from any such resources.

b. How will the activity be conducted in a manner compatible with the management direction of this proclamation, considering the extent to which the conduct of the activity may diminish or enhance Monument cultural, natural and historic resources, qualities, and ecological integrity, any indirect, secondary, or cumulative effects of the activity, and the duration of such effects?

The proposed activity will have a net positive effect on the natural resources of the Monument. Removal of the proposed number of Black-footed Albatross eggs and chicks would have a negligible effect because the number of Black-footed Albatrosses nesting in the Monument is so large (25,000 pairs), and because the eggs and chicks selected for translocation will be taken from parts of the atoll exposed to high waves, where they likely would drown. In the long-term, the cumulative effects of the action on the natural resources of the monument will be beneficial, because creating an additional, secure breeding colony will enhance the overall conservation status of the species.

c. Is there a practicable alternative to conducting the activity within the Monument? If not, explain why your activities must be conducted in the Monument.

No, there is no practicable alternative to conducting the project within the Monument. All large colonies of the Black-footed Albatross are located within the Monument, so there is no other suitable source. The fact that there is no other location in the world where this species nests in large numbers demonstrates why the project is necessary to secure the future of the species.

d. How does the end value of the activity outweigh its adverse impacts on Monument cultural, natural and historic resources, qualities, and ecological integrity?
The final outcome of the activity greatly outweighs any adverse impacts to the resources in the Monument. Establishing a new nesting colony of Black-footed Albatrosses on a high island that is safe from sea level rise is a high priority management action that is specifically mentioned in several management plans and will substantially improve the long-term, global conservation status of the species. All eggs and chicks will be taken from nests close to the shoreline in areas that have been inundated in recent years, where they would have had a low chance of survival anyway, thus minimizing any impact. There will be no negative impacts to cultural or historical resources.

e. Explain how the duration of the activity is no longer than necessary to achieve its stated purpose.

This project will involve two trips to Midway, one in January to collect Black-footed Albatross eggs and one in February to collect Black-footed Albatross chicks. Each trip would be 3 days in duration; this is the standard duration of return flights to Midway and is the minimum amount of time required to locate and collect eggs and chicks and prepare them for transport.

f. Provide information demonstrating that you are qualified to conduct and complete the activity and mitigate any potential impacts resulting from its conduct.

All personnel included in this application have extensive experience with seabirds in Hawaii, and with albatross translocation in particular. All of them have worked on previous translocation projects with the same or similar species for 1-5 years, and all of them have previous experience on Midway. In particular, Dr. Eric VanderWerf, Dr. Lindsay Young, and/or Robby Kohley will be present on each trip to ensure everything is done appropriately.

g. Provide information demonstrating that you have adequate financial resources available to conduct and complete the activity and mitigate any potential impacts resulting from its conduct.

Funding already has been secured from several sources that is sufficient to cover all aspects of the proposed project, including travel from Midway to Mexico. All equipment and supplies needed to feed and care for albatross has already been obtained for use in previous years.

h. Explain how your methods and procedures are appropriate to achieve the proposed activity's goals in relation to their impacts to Monument cultural, natural and historic resources, qualities, and ecological integrity.

The methods used to transport and care for albatross eggs and chicks have been used successfully by Pacific Rim Conservation to translocate the eggs and chicks of Laysan and Black-footed Albatross eggs and chicks for the past 15 years (eggs) and 7 years (chicks). More details are provided in the attached project report from 2019.

i. Has your vessel been outfitted with a mobile transceiver unit approved by OLE and complies with the requirements of Presidential Proclamation 8031?

NA. Travel will be by airplane.
j. Demonstrate that there are no other factors that would make the issuance of a permit for the activity inappropriate. There are no other factors that would make the issuance of a permit for this activity inappropriate.

8. Procedures/Methods:

PRC staff would travel to Midway by plane. Black-footed Albatross eggs and chicks would be collected by PRC staff in consultation with USFWS biologists, and will be taken from parts of the atoll that are most subject to high waves, which will reduce the impact to the source colony by taking individuals that had a lower chance of surviving anyway. In previous years, Black-footed Albatrosses chicks have been collected from the eastern end of Eastern Island and from North Beach on Sand Island. Eggs will be placed in portable incubators that have a heater and foam padding to protect the eggs and keep them warm. For chicks, if workload allows, USFWS biologists may locate and mark about 30 nests with chicks of the desired age (3 weeks). Those chicks will be assessed by PRC biologists, and 25 healthy chicks will be selected for translocation. No Black-footed Albatross chicks will be taken from the long-term albatross monitoring plots, and any chicks that have or could have been exposed to avian pox virus also will be avoided. Chicks will be left in the nest as long as possible before departure to allow the parents to continue feeding them. Just prior to the flight to Oahu, each chick will be placed in an individual pet carrier with towels for padding and to absorb fluids. The portable incubators and pet carries will be transported by golf cart and loaded on the plane and then flown to Honolulu.

After the plane is refueled in Honolulu, the Black-footed Albatross eggs and chicks will be flown to Tijuana, Mexico, where they will undergo customs and immigration inspections required under Mexican law. After passing immigration, the eggs and chicks will be flown in a smaller airplane to Guadalupe Island. The eggs will be placed in foster nests of Laysan Albatrosses in which the natural egg is determined to be infertile by candling. The chicks will be raised by hand on a diet of pureed squid, fish, fish oil, pedialyte, and vitamins. They will receive 15-20% of their body weight in food each day for the first two months, then the frequency of feeding and the proportional meal size will be gradually reduced in order to reach typical fledging weight at the appropriate time. All feeding equipment will be sterilized daily by thorough washing with soap and water and soaking overnight in a chlorhexidine solution. Each chick will be weighed daily and its wing chord length will be measured every three days to monitor their growth. This diet and feeding protocol were developed for Laysan Albatross at James Campbell NWR, and have been used successfully with Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses during six years of previous translocations. The chicks will fledge themselves when they are ready.

The first year of the project (2021) will be a pilot year in Mexico, during which any problems encountered can be addressed and corrected. In the first year only, 12 of the chicks will be removed from the airplane in Honolulu and transported by vehicle to James Campbell NWR. Moving this number to JCNWR will achieve the goal of releasing 100 Black-footed Albatross chicks at the refuge, which is regarded as an adequate number to found a new colony. As in previous years, those chicks will be placed in a mosquito-proof enclosure for a one week quarantine period required under State of Hawaii importation regulations. Chicks will be placed
in separate plastic tubs with padded flooring to prevent them from wandering. After 1 week, the chicks will be moved to an outdoor release area that is surrounded by a predator exclusion fence. For more details about the procedures please see the attached project proposal.

NOTE: If land or marine archeological activities are involved, contact the Monument Permit Coordinator at the address on the general application form before proceeding.

9a. Collection of specimens - collecting activities (would apply to any activity): organisms or objects (List of species, if applicable, attach additional sheets if necessary):

Common name: Black-footed Albatross
Scientific name: *Phoebastria nigripes*

# & size of specimens:
42 eggs and 25 chicks that are 3 weeks old

Collection location:
Midway Atoll

☒ Whole Organism ☐ Partial Organism

9b. What will be done with the specimens after the project has ended?
The eggs will be hatched and raised by Laysan Albatross foster parents on Guadalupe Island in Mexico. The chicks will be fed by hand and cared for until they fledge on Guadalupe Island. The chicks that survive to adulthood will return to Guadalupe Island in 3-5 years after they are mature and will begin nesting there in 7-9 years.

9c. Will the organisms be kept alive after collection? ☒ Yes ☐ No
The eggs and chicks collected in this project will remain alive and will mature wild adult birds that regard Guadalupe Island as their home.

• General site/location for collections:
Guadalupe Island, Mexico.

• Is it an open or closed system? ☐ Open ☒ Closed
NA

• Is there an outfall? ☐ Yes ☐ No
NA
• Will these organisms be housed with other organisms? If so, what are the other organisms? No.

• Will organisms be released?
Yes, they will release themselves (in Mexico) once they can fly

10. If applicable, how will the collected samples or specimens be transported out of the Monument?
The eggs will be transported in portable incubators. The chicks will be transported in pet carriers with padding and towels to absorb fluids. Eggs and chicks will be flown out of the Monument by plane.

11. Describe collaborative activities to share samples, reduce duplicative sampling, or duplicative research:
There are no other similar projects and this action does not duplicate any other management activities. The project will be done in collaboration with the Mexican government and a partner NGO based in Mexico.

12. List all specialized gear and materials to be used in this activity:
Very little gear is needed for this project. Eggs and chicks will be collected by hand. Eggs will be placed in portable incubators, which consist of a cooler modified with a heater and thermostat.

13. List all Hazardous Materials you propose to take to and use within the Monument:
None.

14. Describe any fixed installations and instrumentation proposed to be set in the Monument:
None.

15. Provide a time line for sample analysis, data analysis, write-up and publication of information:
Chicks will fledge in June or July 2021. A final project report will be completed by 30 September 2021.

16. List all Applicant’s publications directly related to the proposed project:


With knowledge of the penalties for false or incomplete statements, as provided by 18 U.S.C. 1001, and for perjury, as provided by 18 U.S.C. 1621, I hereby certify to the best of my abilities under penalty of perjury of that the information I have provided on this application form is true and correct. I agree that the Co-Trustees may post this application in its entirety on the Internet. I understand that the Co-Trustees will consider deleting all information that I have identified as “confidential” prior to posting the application.

___________________________________________________________
Signature Date

SEND ONE SIGNED APPLICATION VIA MAIL TO THE MONUMENT OFFICE BELOW:
NOAA/Inouye Regional Center
NOS/ONMS/PMNM/Attn: Permit Coordinator
1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176
Honolulu, HI 96818
FAX: (808) 455-3093

DID YOU INCLUDE THESE?
- Applicant CV/Resume/Biography
- Intended field Principal Investigator CV/Resume/Biography
- Electronic and Hard Copy of Application with Signature
- Statement of information you wish to be kept confidential
- Material Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Materials