

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve

RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

RAC Virtual Meeting via Google Meet

Kekemapa (December) 11, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

RAC Voting Members Present: Linda Paul (Conservation Primary and Chair), Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing Primary and Vice Chair), Sam 'Olu Gon III (Conservation Primary), Kammie Tavares (Citizen At Large Alternate), Neal Langerman (Research Alternate), Nakoa Goo (Native Hawaiian Alternate), William Walsh (Research Alternate), Kammie Dominique Anuhea Tavares (Citizen-At-Large Alternate).

RAC Voting Members Absent: Solomon Kaho'ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder Primary), Don Schug (Research Primary and Secretary), Mark Hixon (Research Primary), Bonnie Kahapea-Tanner (Education Primary), Judith Cucco (Citizen-At-Large Primary), Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian Primary) Kalama'ehu Holden Takahashi (Native Hawaiian Primary), Audrey Newman (Conservation Primary), Rick Lee (Ocean Related Tourism Primary), Haunani Kane (Research Primary), Mark Hixon (Research Primary).

RAC Non-Voting Members Present: Doug Fetterly (Conservation Alternate), Thorne Abbott (Conservation Alternate), Joshua DeMello (WPRFMC), Robert Leinau (Research Alternate), Cynthia Vanderlip (DLNR-DOFAW), Richard Hall (NOAA-PIRO)

RAC Non-Voting Members Absent: Heather Howard (Education and Outreach Alternate), Don Paul Badgley (Ocean-Related Tourism Alternate), Rick Hoo (Recreational Fishing Alternate), Emily Hauck (U.S. Department of Defense), Kim Hum (HIHWNMS), Amanda Boyd (USFWS), Kaipo Perez (NOAA-PIRO), Brian Neilson (DLNR-DAR), Jared Underwood (USFWS), Kealoha Pisciotta (Office of Hawaiian Affairs), Brandon Jim On (NOAA-OLE), Maile Norman (U.S. Coast Guard), Dan Polhemus (USFWS-ES), Peter Thomas (Marine Mammal Commission)

ONMS Staff and Others: Eric Roberts (PMNM), Sara Wood (PMNM), Kanoe Morishige (PMNM), Alyssa Miller (PMNM), Brian Hauk (PMNM), Andy Collins (PMNM), Randy Kosaki (PMNM), Chelsie Counsell (PMNM), Brianna Evencoe (PMNM), Phillip Howard (PMNM), Catherine Takata (ONMS-PIR), Jiny Kim (USFWS), Barb Mayer (public), Lauren Heukelem (public), Michela Kratofil (public), Robin Baird (public)

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome (Paul)

The meeting opened with a welcome by Chair Paul and opening protocol conducted by Malia Evans.

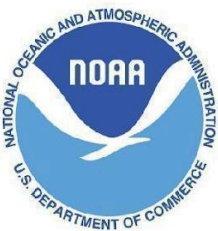
Roll call, Introductions, Review and Approval of Agenda (Paul)

Roll call was taken by Sara Wood.

Review and approval of the agenda was conducted by Chair Paul. The agenda was unanimously adopted.

Review & Approval of October 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes (Paul)

Review and approval of the meeting minutes were conducted by Chair Paul. The minutes were approved with no revision.



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RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Discussion

- Review Draft Talking Points Prepared for Sanctuary Designation
Revisions to Talking Points Approved

Section A:

- Point 1 - [remove 'coral']
- Point 4 - reword to 'from which life springs and to which spirits return after death.'
- Point 7 - The NWHI provide habitat for endangered and threatened flora and fauna including but not limited to: short-tailed albatross, hawaiian monk seals, and sea turtles.
- Point 8 - reword to 'scientific research and education'

Section B:

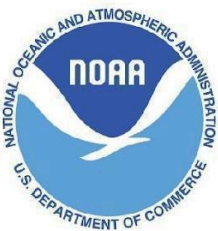
- Point 2 change wording to agree with NMSA (unless discretionary)
- Point 3 change wording to agree with NMSA (unless discretionary)

Section C:

- [Clarification that sanctuary regulations are intended to be consistent with and complementary to existing regulations. Should two rules conflict, the most protective would prevail (Roberts)]
 - Point C: add 'Designation of a sanctuary will:'
 - Point 1: Change to: "Establish an advisory council" ?
 - Point 2: [spell out ONMS? Covered in previous section]
 - Point 3: (mis-labeled as #2) - move this item (funding) up to become item 1
 - Add Point 5: ' Become a valued member of a robust nationally-recognized system of marine protected areas'
- Review Draft Background Document Prepared for Sanctuary Designation (Conservation – alternate: Langerman to provide further editing for PESS)
 - Add background on UNESCO WH designation?
Add more on ESA endangered and threatened species? NMFS - refer to Web "[marine Protected Species of the Hawaiian Islands](#)" for marine species.
Use clear language to express that these species are ESA listed but there may be others that are not yet listed
 - Many previously unknown species are being discovered in PMNM deep sea environments
 - More on funding?
 - Add List of FAQs
 - List the current threats that would be mediated by establishing greater protection
 - Deep sea mining threat

Public Comment

One comment from the public was received prior to the meeting from Anayatzin Sagrario Mendoza Castro: "The Northeast (sic) Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve is a unique and crucial place for marine conservation. Its biological diversity and its role in protecting coral reefs make it an invaluable sanctuary for marine life and ecosystem sustainability."



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RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Decision Making, Council Business and Closing Remarks

- Vote of approval on Talking Points
 - A vote in support of approving the Talking Points with amendments was taken.
 - Result: eight voting members voted in favor, zero voting members opposed. Talking Points were approved as amended.
- Next RAC Meeting: January 29, 2024, Aloha Tower
 - Joint with Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS Advisory Council
 - Hybrid proposed: Aloha Tower, O‘ahu
 - Executive Committee Elections will be held for Vice Chair and Secretary

Superintendent Roberts thanked the RAC for a successful year and welcomed the RAC’s continued participation in 2024. After three years of meeting online, we are thrilled to hold in-person meetings again and are grateful for RAC advice and recommendations. There are currently five subcommittees and working groups and all RAC members are encouraged to participate in at least one; please contact Sara Wood at sara.wood@noaa.gov if you are interested in joining a subcommittee.

Chair/Conservation – Linda Paul adjourned the meeting at 10:11 am.