



DRAFT – Subject to Council approval or revisions at Council Meeting #75
Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine
Sanctuary Advisory Council

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

74th Meeting
Wednesday, August 16, 2017
10 am – 3:30 pm
Maui Office and Visitor Center, Kihei

NON-GOVERNMENT (Voting)

Thorne Abbott
Business Commerce

Glenn Hong
Commercial Shipping

Barbara (Maka'ala) Kaaumoana
Conservation

Judith Lemus
Education

Myrick (Rick) Gaffney
Fishing

Steve Turner
Hawai'i Island

Maxx Phillips
Oahu Island

Nina Monasevitch
Kaua'i Island

Solomon Pili Kaho'ohalahala
Lana'i Island

Robin Newbold
Maui Island

Vacant
Moloka'i Island

Vacant
Native Hawaiian

Jim Coon
Ocean Recreation

Mark Deakos
Research

Vacant
Tourism

Tara Leota
Whale Watching

GOVERNMENT (Non-Voting)

Leo Asuncion
DBEDT – Office of Planning

Veronica Rocha
DBEDT Renewable Energy

Bruce Anderson
Division of Aquatic Resources

Alec Wong
DOH

Sandra Rossetter
DOT – Harbors

Keola Lindsey
OHA (Voting)

Allen Tom
Hawaiian Islands
Humpback Whale NMS

Athline Clark
Papahānaumokuākea MNM

Jeffrey Pollack
NOAA OLE

Jeff Walters
NOAA Fisheries PIRO

Eric Kingma
WESPAC (Voting)

Tunis McElwain
US Army Corps of Engineers

Eric Roberts
US Coast Guard

Janice Fukawa
US Navy

Purpose

The Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) will receive updates on sanctuary activities and become familiar with the new headquarters on Maui. The SAC subcommittees will discuss the incorporation of Native Hawaiian culture into the sanctuary's focus on humpback whales.

Introductions and Council Business

- Chair Sol Kaho'ohalahala called the meeting to order
- Sol introduces new council members
 - Maxx Phillips, Oahu Island; Alec Wong, DOH
 - Magen Schifiliti, Tourism alternate and Jens Currie Research alternate this is the first meeting
- Secretary Judy Lemus takes attendance.

Primary SAC council members present: Thorne Abbott, Leo Asuncion, Athline Clark, Jens Currie (for Mark Deakos), Janice Fukawa, Rick Gaffney, Asuka Ishizaki (for Eric Kingma), Maka'ala Kaaumoana, Sol Kaho'ohalahala, Judy Lemus, Tara Leota, Tunis McElwain, Nina Monasevitch, Anabelle Padilla, Maxx Phillips, Jeff Pollack, Eric Roberts, Magen Schifiliti, Russell Sparks (for Bruce Anderson), Allen Tom, Steve Turner, Jeff Walters, Alec Wong

Alternate SAC council members present: Kevin Kelly (via phone),

Primary members excused: Bruce Anderson, Jim Coon, Mark Deakos, Glenn Hong, Eric Kingma, Keola Lindsey, Robin Newbold, Veronica Roche, Sandra Rossetter

Staff: Ka'au Abraham, Nancy Daschbach, Nicole Evans (PMNM), Mike Fox, Jessica Kondel, Ed Lyman, Patty Miller, Bo Petty, Shannon Lyday Ruseborn, Jean Souza, Paul Wong

- Approval of Meeting 72 minutes
 - Maka'ala Kaaumoana motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Rick Gaffney. All members said aye. Minutes adopted.
- Upcoming SAC Recruitments (*Shannon Ruseborn*)
 - Shannon discussed open seats coming up, reminded members that when their seat comes up they must re-apply if they wish to continue. Member Recruitment starts in October.

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Superintendent's Report (Allen Tom)

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- Introduced Jessica Kondel, NOAA Fisheries, as new HIHWNMS Acting Superintendent.
- Malia Chow left to work for NOAA Fisheries in June. We are arranging for an open announcement for Superintendent and there is a process to get that done.
- Headquarters for sanctuary will now be in Kihei, Maui. It is important for SAC members to see what we do here so we will have a tour today.
- **Budget report**
 - Currently there is no head of NOAA
 - Allen emphasized the difference between NOAA Fisheries and NOAA Ocean Service (which is where Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is housed)
 - ONMS budget is \$48 million annually and is fairly stable
 - Cost associated with buildings and boats are decreasing
 - HIHW allocation = \$1,244,000 and is determined based on complexity
 - This budget includes education, research, facilities, admin, systems development
 - Education/Outreach is the biggest section of the budget (31%)
 - This will need to include costs of new kiosk on Kauai
 - FY17 budget includes possible additional funds associated with renting the facilities or money donated to support entanglement work
 - The Hawai'i chapter of National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) was being dissolved but that a gift shop on Maui remains active under NMSF and has helped to bring in donations for program development and the Kihei facilities.
 - NMSF will figure out how individual island chapters can use the money already raised to support the communities directly and not have that funding be spread to areas beyond the community that raised the funds (i.e. money from Kauai chapter does not go to Oahu).
 - Sol asked the council to keep their eyes and ears open for additional funding opportunities to continue raising money for the sanctuary.

National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Report (Kris Sari)

- Kris spent 9 months as president of NMSF after working for Department of Interior
- Worked in Sen. Inouye's office and helped defend two bills expanding Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries
- Sanctuary foundation established in 2000
- Emphasized the importance of maintaining public-private partnerships
- NMSF has been involved in HIHW disentanglement program, west coast ship strikes, volunteer coordination and support, coral reef restoration, removal of invasive species, protection of endangered species
- Key priority is a focus on local communities
- Key question – how do we build support and create a national voice?

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- Perspective – sanctuaries as living classrooms and laboratories that help teach stewardship and natural history to diverse audiences in meaningful ways
- Decision to dissolve HIHW chapter of NMSF was due to governing issues
 - Desire to rebuild with clearer vision for fundraising and a focus on supporting both Papahānaumokuākea (PMNM) and HIHWNMS
- Trying to figure out how to partner with SAC to find funding and resources
- The foundation will coordinate efforts to identify best ways to move forward and contact SAC after several avenues have been identified

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State of Hawai'i Report (Russell Sparks)

- The state is implementing FY17 funding provided by the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NOAA and the state. The following items are being addressed with the funding:
 - Towing of dead humpback whale
 - Research management roundtable
 - Supporting this SAC Meeting
 - Pier improvements at Ma'alaea Harbor for better and safer access to vessel Kohola
 - Reprinting boater safety brochure
 - Co-manager salary and benefits
- Governor Ige's Sustainable Hawaii Initiative was announced almost a year ago at the IUCN World Conservation Conference. There are 5 components including a marine target of 30 x 30: 30% of nearshore marine areas effectively managed by 2030. The question is though, what about the other 70%. The Department of Lands and Natural Resources are working to define what their efforts are and set the bar higher.
 - The five year 30x30 marine roadmap is a Statewide Aquatic Resources Management Plan that includes the following:
 - Coral Bleaching Recovery Plan
 - Developing a tiered statewide management approach including statewide fishery management rules, regional rules such as Maui specific rules, and community-based initiatives working closer together with communities like Haena CBSFA. Going to land board within a month for the Mo'omomi CBSFA.
 - Network of Marine Managed Areas
 - Collaborative Monitoring Plan – between federal partners such as NOAA Coral Reef Ecosystem Program.
 - Strategic Communications and Outreach
 - Improved Enforcement – Community enforcement units such as in Maui
 - Partnerships (e.g. watershed management, protected species management, spatial planning)

Humpback Whale Season Report (Ed Lyman)
2016-2016 Season

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- Understanding the numbers of humpback whales this past couple of seasons has been based on anecdotal information and some localized monitoring by researchers.
- Observations in Hawaii include:
 - Late arrivals of humpback whales
 - Lower reported sightings
 - Fewer calves
 - Early departure from Hawaii was also observed last season.
 - Similar reports from Mexico and Philippines (other breeding grounds)
 - Observations from Alaska researchers report change in sightings, distribution and possibly health
 - SPLISH (mini SPLASH) research in Alaska reports some humpback whales are looking thin
 - It's been 10 years since SPLASH and the abundance estimate that was produced from it
 - There are current efforts by researchers to document humpback whale abundance including doing transect efforts to quantify the population and distribution
 - Citizen science such as Sanctuary Ocean Count can provide some insight into humpback whale numbers and observations
 - Acoustics information using singers show that there may be fewer animals
 - Fewer reports of distressed animals

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Summary of Whale Response Efforts

- Since 2002 there have been over 316 reports of entangled whales. Of those reports 169 have been confirmed. (53.5% of the reports of entangled whales actually being confirmed)
- This past humpback whale season, 2016-2017, there were 3 confirmed cases of entangled humpback whales on Hawaii Island, Kauai, and Maui.
- The response to the entangled humpback whale on March 11, 2017 was a very unique entanglement and involved 850 feet of 5/8" coaxial cable. It was multi-day, multi-agency effort. About 800 feet of the cable was removed which possibly was gear from a FAD.
- From 2002-2017, over 160 responses have been mounted in response to reports of entangled whales, with 23 animals being freed (22 humpback whales and 1 sei whale).
- The success rate has been about 40%
- More than 10,000 feet of line has been removed from these entangled whales.
- Since 1980 there have been 101 confirmed reports of ship strikes. Of those, 68% were self-reported and 64% of the ship strikes involved sub-adult whales. During the 2017 humpback whale season there were only 3 confirmed reports of ship strikes in Hawaii.

Enforcement Update (Jeffrey Pollack, NOAA OLE and Eric Roberts, USCG)
NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, Jeff Pollack

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- The NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) had focused efforts during the humpback whale season that is a protected species mission and includes dolphins, monk seals and sea turtles.
- Work jointly with U.S. Coast Guard and State of Hawaii DLNR Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE).
- The OLE Safe Boat is used for patrols in the Maui area.
- OLE has had an increase in uniformed staff, in order to patrol larger areas.
- 228 hours of sea patrol by OLE
- During the humpback whale season there were 23 complaints from January to April.
- On Hawaii Island, OLE partnered with DOCARE to patrol on their boat.
- Land patrols amounted to 425 hours, with 262 of those on Maui.
- Outreach is the focus of efforts in making contacts and approaches on the water to boaters is about making sure they are educated about proper wildlife watching.

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U.S. Coast Guard, Eric Roberts

- During January to March, USCG has a focused effort to protect humpback whales called Kohola Guardian.
- This past humpback whale season it included 66 surface patrols, 52 air patrols, and 150 boater interactions with the objective of educating the boaters.
- Took out the NOAA General Counsel Chief of Enforcement to ensure that cases are presented as they need them.
- Marine protected species hours are the same as those used for fisheries enforcements
- \$1.8 million in direct costs per year including the aircraft and boat patrols as deterrence factor.

Tara Leota: What is the effort on Kauai since there are issues with drone and stand up paddlers?

Eric Roberts: We are well aware of the issues and have been targeting kayak groups.

Overview of Purpose of Subcommittee Meetings

- Sol discussed his statements made at the last SAC meeting regarding how we may alter our perspective of the information we convey about the whales in the sanctuary
- Now that we are once again a single-species sanctuary, how else can we connect people with the whales
- Historically have focused on behavioral aspects of the whales and the scientific research being done on them
- What if we try to use the whales to represent important cultural values as well?
- For example – the spout of a whale (and its strength) could be linked to the Hawaiian value of “ha” to help establish a stronger connection between the whales and a sense of place (Hawaiian culture)
- Encouraged the subcommittees to identify other opportunities for connecting whales and elements of Hawaiian culture

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- Enforcement = Malama
 - The care of things around us helps us elevate their place and understanding to others
- Entanglement = Kokua
 - Help and support to situations.
- Revenue generation – so often we use the imagery of a whale to generate support (e.g. whale tail jewelry).
 - But what if instead we use the whales to represent Waiwai (water,) the most valuable and previous part of these islands?
 - Can we use waiwai to help reinforce the importance of water quality and the healthy waters of the sanctuary?
- Can we link the whale song with the Kumulipu (creation chant) because the whales are so much older than us?
- Important to remember that we are not just a sanctuary but that we also value the whales as a part of a larger place.

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Working Lunch/Subcommittee Meetings

- SAC members and staff break into standing subcommittees (Education, Research, Conservation, Native Hawaiian)

Subcommittees Report Out

Education – Judy Lemus

- The subcommittee is interested in incorporating culture as part of the education and science curriculum
- They see a need to describe the full cultural context of the humpback whales and Hawaii
- SAC as a whole could do better educating themselves on the cultural elements of the sanctuary's mission.
- The education subcommittee is interested in helping this effort.
- Examples of incorporating culture into sanctuary education:
 - Use Visitor Center in Kihei as a test site
 - Have SAC members with different areas of expertise go talk to schools and introduce new aspects of what the sanctuary is/does
 - Translate signage into two languages
 - Help key words like 'Kohola' become more widely recognized

Research – Ed Lyman

- We discussed the importance of refining our research objective as a sanctuary
- Determined that we don't need specific numbers (i.e. how many whales) but more importantly we need to examine the overall trends (population going up vs down)
- Incorporating health assessments and risk/threat assessments are important.
- Still using data from SPLASH, which is over 10 years old
- Should we try to generate new Hawaii-specific data so we can establish a baseline to follow future population trends after the delisting?

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- Difficult to conduct detailed surveys at each island, expensive and also infrastructure doesn't exist – e.g. Kauai doesn't have ship that could support transect surveys
- Marc has been conducting acoustic monitoring in Maui-Nui since 2013
- Can establish relative trend in singer abundances but cannot extrapolate to whale numbers
- An important next step is to precisely define what the data priority is for the sanctuary given the need but also how to deal with the logistical constraints (funding and infrastructure)
- Unclear what is driving recent decline in humpback numbers in Hawaii
 - ENSO?
- Humpbacks are generalist foragers so may be more resilient to climate change than some other whale species
- More research needed to understand Pacific-wide patterns influencing humpback numbers and timing in Hawaii
- There is a general increasing trend in enforcement \$ spent in the sanctuary which can be thought to indicate increased care in the sanctuary's overall mission
- Opportunities to start using citizen science and new imaging technology to build database of fluke ID photos to start a basic population assessment.
- More work needs to be done to think about how we can link water quality assessments to “whale habitat”

Native Hawaiian Subcommittee - Ka'au Abraham

- There is a need to develop new material to help incorporate the new cultural lens into sanctuary outreach and education
- It will be important to conduct a training for volunteers and staff so that everyone is saying the same thing
- Audio-visual elements will be valuable
- A 1-pager to detail the connection between whale actions and cultural values should be made
- It will be important for this subcommittee to reach out to cultural leaders in the community for their guidance and buy in before starting this process
- Should increase participation of Native Hawaiians as Sanctuary docents
- SAC should find ways to raise money to support trainings and development of new materials
- Should work to identify people who will be able to help write grants
- Thorne voted to lead a working group to investigate new avenues of fund raising

Conservation Subcommittee – Shannon Ruseborn

- Working draft of the definition of whale habitat developed by Maka'ala to be reviewed by subcommittee
- The Aloha Aina document that was developed to support the management plan should continue to be used
- Ecosystem Services should be used to convey benefits of the sanctuary since NOAA is within the Department of Commerce.

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- Subcommittee would like to establish a climate change working group
- Maxx Phillips volunteered to be chair of the working group
- Working group will look at following:
 - Humpback whale abundance relative to climate change
 - Green operations (carbon footprint of Kihei campus and staff).
 - Information on food sources on feeding grounds/food chain impacts
- Leo Asuncion – State’s Island Climate Adaptation Policy (ICAP) commission is developing recommendations for climate adaptation and mitigation.
 - The ICAP report on sea level rise and how to adapt is due in December.
 - The 100% completed report is due to legislature 20 days before the next session.
 - The state should report out at next SAC meeting on this report.
 - By 2023, reports on other climate impacts including greenhouse gas emissions are due.
- Working group should link with ICAP commission/reports.

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Papahānaumokuākea MNM Update (Athline Clark, PMNM)

- First Executive Order:
 - Review of any site designation in last 21 years for areas larger than 100,000 acres.
 - Lead agency – Department of Interior (DOI)
 - 7 criteria
 - 5 marine areas
 - Final recommendations due out soon.
- Second Executive Order:
 - Lead agency: Department of Commerce, NOAA
 - Review of monuments and sanctuaries that have been designated or expanded since April 28, 2007.
 - The review for PMNM is only on the area that was expanded.
 - 3 criteria
 - Final recommendations due out in October.
- No decisions have been made.
- DOI, NOAA, BOEM (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management), and DOD (Department of Defense) are sharing information and coordinating efforts.

Public Comment Period

- There were no public comments at this meeting

Next Steps

- The next meeting is a joint RAC/SAC Meeting on December 6 with John Armor.

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