

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Non-Government (Voting)

William Aila Jr. (Chair)
State of Hawai'i
Linda Paul (Vice Chair)
Conservation
Rick Gaffney (Secretary)
Recreational Fishing
Solomon Kaho'ohalahala
Native Hawaiian Elder
Halealoha Ayau
Native Hawaiian
Pelika Andrade
Native Hawaiian
Gail Grabowsky
Education
Phil Fernandez
Commercial Fishing
Cindy Hunter
Research
Don Schug
Research
Jean Kenyon
Research
Richard Lee
Ocean-Related Tourism
Kanoë Morishige
Conservation
Audrey Newman
Conservation
Judith Cucco
Citizen-at-Large

Government (Non-Voting)

Athline Clark
Papahānaumokuākea MNM
Allen Tom
*Hawaiian Islands
Humpback Whales NMS*
Hoku Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima
NOAA Fisheries PIRO
Brandon Jim On
NOAA OLE
Brad Kaalelo Wong
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Maile Norman
U.S. Coast Guard
Janice Fukawa
U.S. Department of Defense
Joshua DeMello
WPRFMC
Dan Polhemus
*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Ecological Services*
Jared Underwood
*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Refuges*
Brian Neilson
State of Hawai'i - DLNR

Meeting August 20, 2020

9:00am – 1:00pm

Via GoToWebinar

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES:

RAC Voting Members Present: William Aila Jr. (State of Hawai'i, Chair); Judith Cucco (Citizen-At-Large), Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing, Secretary); Gail Grabowsky (Education), Cindy Hunter (Research), Solomon Kaho'ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder), Jean Kenyon (Research), Richard Lee (Ocean-Related Tourism), Kanoë Morishige (Conservation), Audrey Newman (Conservation), Linda Paul (Conservation, Vice Chair); and Don Schug (Research).

RAC Voting Members Absent: Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian), Halealoha Ayau (Native Hawaiian), and Phil Fernandez (Commercial Fishing).

RAC Non-Voting Members Present: Thorne Abbott (Conservation Alternate), Nakoa Goo (Native Hawaiian Alternate), Bonnie Kahape'a-Tanner (Native Hawaiian Alternate), Robert Leinau (Conservation Alternate), Athline Clark (NOAA/Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument [ONMS-PMNM]); Brad Wong (Office of Hawaiian Affairs), Brandon Jim On (NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Law Enforcement [NMFS-OLE]); Richard Hall (NOAA/NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional Office [PIRO]); Brian Neilson (State of Hawai'i/Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources [DLNR-DAR]); Cynthia Vanderlip (State of Hawai'i/DLNR, Division of Forestry and Wildlife [DLNR-DOFAW]); Cindy Among- Serrao (for Allen Tom, NOAA/ONMS, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary [HIHWNMS]); Janice Fukawa (Department of Defense, U.S. Navy [DOD-USN]); Joshua DeMello (Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council [WPRFMC]); Maile Norman (U.S. Coast Guard [USCG]); and Dan Polhemus (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services [USFWS-ES]).

RAC Non-Voting Members Absent: Allen Tom (NOAA/ONMS-HIHWNMS), Hoku Ka'aekuahiwi-Pousima (NOAA/NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional Office [PIRO]); and Jared Underwood (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Refuges [USFWS-NWR]).

ONMS Leadership: Kristina Kekuewa (ONMS Regional Director-Pacific Island Region), Eric Roberts (ONMS-PMNM Deputy Superintendent).

ONMS Staff: Alan Lum, Alyssa Miller, Andy Collins, Jason Leonard, Jenny Crawford, Justin Umholtz, Kalani Quiocho, Malia Evans, and Shannon Amiot.

Members of the Public: Paul Friese, Van Hare, Tammy Harp, Pa'ahana Kincaid, Alyssa MacDonald, Mark Manuel, Barb Mayer, and Ashley Mocerro Powell.

I. CALL TO ORDER (Aila Jr.)

Chair Aila Jr. called the meeting to order. Protocol, roll call and introductions followed. Alternates Nakoa Goo and Bonnie Kahape‘a-Tanner acting Primary for absent Primary Members Haleloha Ayau and Pelika Andrade, respectively. A short orientation of the GoToWebinar platform and interface was provided by PMNM staff.

II. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (Aila Jr.)

The Council unanimously approved, with no amendments, the meeting minutes from the May 22, 2020.

III. BRIEF REVIEW & SUMMARY: PREVIOUS ISSUES, ACTION ITEMS AND STATUS

1. RAC/SAC Action: Letter to ONMS Director John Armor regarding EOs 13792 and 13795. Item is on hold, no new action.
2. Second round of recruitment complete. NOAA Superintendent Clark introduced Kanoe Morishige as the Conservation representative (Primary) and Heather Howard as the Education representative (Alternate). Rick Gaffney was also selected for a new term as the Recreational Fishing representative (Primary). Ms. Clark informed the Council that another round of recruitment will be conducted this fall. The Council will be recruiting for 2 Primary seats - Research (Cindy Hunter) and Education (Gail Grabowsky); and 7 alternate seats - (3) Research, (1) Conservation, (1) Commercial Fishing, (1) Ocean-related tourism, and (1) Native Hawaiian (Bonnie Kahape‘a-Tanner). Ms. Clark asked the RAC to assist in getting the word out on recruitment.
3. State of Hawai‘i Action: Keep RAC informed of *30x30 Initiative*. Update deferred to DLNR agency update.
4. ONMS Action: Keep RAC informed of NFWF funding and activities. Update deferred to ONMS agency update; Ms. Clark informed the RAC that there will be presentations by NFWF grantee at future meetings.
5. NMFS Action: Keep RAC informed of any changes to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). No updates.

IV. MONUMENT CO-TRUSTEE/MANAGEMENT AGENCY UPDATES

1. NOAA-ONMS (Clark): See PowerPoint presentation and written report archived at PMNM website.
Outreach Highlights: PMNM Birthday Party held virtually. Staff have been providing technical and other support for ONMS Webinar Series and Waikiki Aquarium Ocean Spotlight Series. We also held many of our own events/presentations; deep reefs, Hollywood sharks vs real sharks, studying whales and dolphins in the Hawaiian Archipelago. Links to all presentations are posted on the ONMS website. Staff at the Mokuapāpapa Discovery Center (MDC) in Hilo, Hawaii are in the process making aquarium and education elements more accessible via virtual tours.
Field and Research Highlights: Received a \$1 million grant to map seamounts in PMNM. Ocean Exploration Trust, founded by Dr. Robert Ballard, will have two cruises, each with a telepresence component. Researchers have discovered several new algal species. PMNM staff and partners worked with UH and South Carolina University to name the invasive algae,

Chondria tumulosa, overgrowing at Pearl & Hermes Atoll. We are continuing efforts to conduct further research on the newly discovered species. We will have a forum at the Hawaii Conservation Conference on status and trends of PMNM resources. A RAC member asked about the attendance on the webinars; Ms. Clark responded by saying that it depends on the topic, however averaging at over 300 attendees. We may see a decrease due to school starting their online distance learning. We will continue to produce these as resources for educators.

2. NOAA-NMFS (Richard Hall, Fisheries Policy Analyst): No updates on MSFCMA at this time. NMFS will soon be posting the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument (MTMNM) Draft Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. The management plan will provide for the public (including the RAC) to give public comment. The draft plan will be out this fall. NMFS will inform the RAC of the release of the NOA. NOAA cruises continue to be on hold as NMFS works through protocols and practices that will allow the cruises to take place. Having the cruises on hold has negatively impacted field work and data collections; in particular, the monk seal field camps and turtle counts. The Monument Program will soon be releasing the Monument Program Priorities Plan which is currently in layout phase. The plan will provide details of activities of the NMFS Monument Program for the four marine national monuments in the Pacific. NMFS will share the plan with the RAC when it becomes available. The RAC will also be informed when NMFS opens its' public comment period for scoping. Recently, there was an article in the local news on returning monk seals to Midway. The focus was four female monk seals that were brought back from the Monument for rehabilitation in 2019. The article can be found at: <https://www.westhawaii.com/2020/08/11/hawaii-news/theres-no-place-like-home-four-hawaiian-monk-seals-returned-to-northwestern-hawaiian-islands/>
3. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services – Refuges (Underwood): No report.
4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services – Ecological Services (Polhemus): Hawai‘i Climate Indicators Summary, see PowerPoint presentation.
Key takeaways: 1) this is the second hottest year ever on record for the Hawaiian archipelago, 2) ninety percent probability of thermal stress to PMNM’s coral reefs this year. Waters are warmer than normal but not extreme, may create coral heat stress, but there's a low-likelihood of bleaching this year, 3) local tropical cyclone events have already occurred in Hawai‘i this year, and 4) sea level continues to rise 3-5 mm per year.
Representative Hunter stated that coral bleaching has been recorded on O‘ahu this year and wanted to hear how the corals and waters are on Hawai‘i Island. Representative Gaffney answered this question, stating that Kona waters are staying cool and the corals are looking healthy despite presence of Crown of Thorns starfish. Mr. Gaffney asked if the bleaching on O‘ahu was localized to a few nearshore waters. Ms. Hunter replied that bleaching was reported on horizontal surfaces on the North Shore and Kailua. Mr. Polhemus added that the air is clearer and may have allowed for increased insolation.

5. State of Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources - Division of Aquatic Resources (Neilson): We are establishing a philanthropic fund for the *30x30 Initiative* in partnership with Hawai‘i Community Foundation. This is a public/private partnership with clear objectives and goals and a multi-stakeholder advisory committee. Currently working on five Community Based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFA). Public meetings are being held for the Miloli‘i CBSFA; also working on Kīpahulu CBSFA, Maunalua Bay special management area and the expansion of Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation District (MLDC). Tracking legislation: for federal, the Coral Reef Conservation Act and Reef Resilience and Restoration Act; for State, the Statewide Rules Packages: reef resilience, support for coral nursery, also proposing a number of DAR bills in the 2021 session.
As a Councilmember of WPRFMC, DLNR Chair Suzanne Case sent a letter on May 8th to the President regarding Executive Order 13921 Promoting American Seafood and Economic Growth. Representative Kaho‘ohalahala asked what was the intent of the State's letter? Mr. Neilson answered that it was to clarify the State's position on fishing in the monuments and further clarified that the WPRFMC letter did not go through an approval process with the fishery council and the State's position diverged from what is stated in WPRFMC's letter.
6. State of Hawai‘i DLNR - Division of Forestry & Wildlife (Vanderlip): There are four crew members currently working at Kure Atoll. Primary conservation objectives: monitoring and eradication of *Verbesina encelioides* and ants, monitoring monk seals, and the removal of marine debris. The marine debris cruise has been postponed until April 2021, when it will be carried out in partnership with the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project, NOAA ONMS/NMFS, Kure Atoll Conservancy, and USFWS. Most of the funding came from the *M/V Casitas* settlement fund. Representative Grabowsky commented that the press coverage on the marine debris efforts has been good and asked if anyone has written a book about the effort at Kure Atoll for restoration ecologists, which would be good for several audiences.
7. Office of Hawaiian Affairs (Wong): The Cultural Working Group (CWG) met on July 24th. Current Chair, Kekuewa Kikiloi, is stepping down and the CWG will be looking to find a new Chair.
The nomenclature group worked on the naming of four bird species: 1) Tristram's Storm Petrel, 2) Blue Noddy, 3) Christmas Shearwater, and 4) Bonin Petrel. These four bird species were given new Hawaiian names which will be announced to the public soon. In-progress: permit application to harvest Ka‘upu (black-footed albatros) from Midway Atoll for cultural purposes, Mai Ka Pō Mai - the Native Hawaiian Plan is undergoing layout and will be available for agencies to review in the near future. A new OHA strategic plan is also in progress. OHA completed a contract with Noho Papa Hawai‘i to gather information from agencies and partners on ways to get more Native Hawaiians and local people into PMNM; as well as ways to motivate younger people to be involved in the management. OHA is also working with Hawaii Community Foundation on grants for food production to ease crisis precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. U.S. Coast Guard (Norman): See full USCG written report posted at the PMNM website. USCG participated in two joint ops in Hawaii: 1) NOAA-OLE Operation Nemo on Hawai'i Island in June where a USCG C-130 aircraft transported crews and equipment, and a USCG cutter operated off-shore. This was a multi-agency effort with DLNR, Hawaii County Police, and National Park Service as an educational effort. There were both marine and land-based components; 2) USCG completed a successful mission to transport four rehabilitated female Hawaiian monk seals from Kona, Hawai'i to Midway Atoll.

V. OFFICER ELECTIONS

The chair and secretary positions were up for election with only one candidate for each position. These candidates were the current chair and secretary. Both were confirmed, with no objections, for a new term. Re-elected officers were Chair William Aila Jr. and Secretary Rick Gaffney.

VI. ACTIONS/DECISION-MAKING

1. RAC voting on the Resolution regarding the Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth Executive Order 13921

The chair started the discussion by explaining the review process of the draft resolution.

WPRFMC indicated that they are not in support of the resolution.

Two minor text changes to the 'Be It Resolved' sections were made at the suggestions of Representatives Hunter and Kenyon, with no objections by the RAC.

Member requested that the Hawaiian place names be placed first followed by the English names; stating as we move towards Hawaiian inclusion and identification it is important to be consistent. The RAC put this recommendation to a vote in which a majority was in favor of placing the Hawaiian place names first, followed by the English name.

The council put to vote the resolution as amended. The resolution as amended was approved.

2. RAC voting on submitting FAQs with the Resolution

Members from the drafting committee shared that the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were sourced from current literature, with the intention to inform the RAC on the science in order to substantiate points made in the resolution. The document is a draft that may contain errors and the RAC may wish to finalize it as an information document.

NMFS representative stated that ONMS is not the best venue to bring up fisheries related issues and there is a better way; adding the resolution should not include any fishery language.

NOAA superintendent shared concerns that it has not been discussed or otherwise undergone a similar process to the resolution and was not voted on as a document to be produced by the RAC. This is a RAC document and not an ONMS document and the RAC must vote on whether to attach it to the resolution or not. Also, the process for any RAC resolution is that the site superintendent adds a cover letter to the RAC correspondence and sends it up to ONMS HQ who will ultimately make the decision on what should be done with it. The superintendents cover letter also indicates whether the site leadership agrees or disagrees with the documents being presented.

The RAC put to vote on submitting the FAQs with the resolution. There was no opposition, and the RAC approved to attach FAQs to resolution pending final review and revisions by the working group as delegated by leadership for finalizing.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Raymond Berrios: Registered but not present at time of public comment period.

Tammy Harp: Commented on the use of Hawaiian names and that in the past it has been the English name first with the Hawaiian name in the parenthesis. Asked about the impacts of Hurricane Douglas on the Monument. NOAA superintendent responded that a before and after comparison was done via satellite photos and there was no noticeable change in any of the land areas; sharing the storm dissipated prior to arriving at French Frigate Shoals.

She commented the desire to morph the CRESR RAC into the PMNM, especially since we are living in a time of disturbances and change. It would be a new experience and perspective.

Ms. Harp commented on not being in support of a NMS designation and commercial uses of PMNM; and foresees us evolving into a subsistence society, knowing what it is to give and take in aloha. She requested to work with PMNM staff, Andy Collins and Kalani Quiocho, to share about Tūtū Abbott for the 20th Anniversary of the CRESR. NOAA superintendent responded and agreed to her request. Finally, Ms. Harp asked a question to representatives Kaho‘ohalahala and Paul - What is your mana‘o about what I said about the order of the names?

Representative Paul: Acknowledge Ms. Harp's sentiments about creating a NMS in the NWHI. One of the advantages of the NMSA is that it adds another layer of legal protection, which makes undoing protections harder. The Antiquities Act, under which PMNM was created differs from the NMSA, under which the NWHI CRESR was established. The NMS designation takes an act of Congress to undo, so one administration on a whim can't undo its protection. This is why we advocate for a NMS designation. The Executive Order creating the NWHI CRESR also explicitly calls for creating a NWHI NMS. Mr. Aila asked that Representative Paul and Ms. Harp have an offline conversation about this topic. To Ms. Harp's initial question, Representative Paul responded that her preference is to leave it as is for now because Hawaiian names are being slowly added and it's an evolving process and we aren't ready for the complete switch.

Representative Kaho‘ohalahala: As a participant, I want to emphasize whatever direction the RAC moves and that we need to be ever-mindful of our place and what is important to us. If we are a Hawaiian place, then we need to speak in the manner that is appropriate to it, and we should always include the language and things that are dear to us in order to communicate who we are and what we stand for. Mahalo, Tammy, for your past leadership.

VIII. DECISION-MAKING, WRAP-UP AND CLOSING REMARKS (AILA JR.)

NOAA superintendent thanked everyone and also made mention for the foreseeable future, these meetings will continue to be virtual.

Next Meeting Date: October 22, 2020 - Virtual

Possible topics for agenda include: 1) Update on the State of the Monument Report, 2) NFWF Grantee Presentations, and 3) Update on background and status on National Marine Sanctuary designation.

PAU