

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve

RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

RAC Virtual Meeting via Google Meet

‘Okakopa (October) 16, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

RAC Voting Members Present: Linda Paul (Conservation Primary and Chair), Sam ‘Olu Gon III (Conservation Primary), Solomon Kaho‘ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder Primary), Don Schug (Research Primary and Secretary), Mark Hixon (Research Primary), Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing Primary and Vice Chair), Bonnie Kahapea-Tanner (Education Primary), Judith Cucco (Citizen-At-Large Primary), Pelika Andrade (Native Hawaiian Primary)

RAC Voting Members Absent: Kalama‘ehu Holden Takahashi (Native Hawaiian Primary), Audrey Newman (Conservation Primary), Rick Lee (Ocean Related Tourism Primary), Haunani Kane (Research Primary)

RAC Non-Voting Members Present: Kammie Tavares (Citizen At Large Alternate), Doug Fetterly (Conservation Alternate), Neal Langerman (Research Alternate), Nakoa Goo (Native Hawaiian Alternate), Thorne Abbott (Conservation Alternate), William Walsh (Research Alternate), Joshua DeMello (WPRFMC), Brandon Jim On (NOAA-OLE), Maile Norman (U.S. Coast Guard), Dan Polhemus (USFWS-ES), Peter Thomas (Marine Mammal Commission)

RAC Non-Voting Members Absent: Heather Howard (Education and Outreach Alternate), Don Paul Badgley (Ocean-Related Tourism Alternate), Robert Leinau (Research Alternate), Rick Hoo (Recreational Fishing Alternate), Emily Hauck (U.S. Department of Defense), Kim Hum (HIHWNMS), Amanda Boyd (USFWS), Kaipō Perez (NOAA-PIRO), Brian Neilson (DLNR-DAR), Jared Underwood (USFWS), Cynthia Vanderlip (DLNR-DOFAW), Kealoha Pisciotta (Office of Hawaiian Affairs),

ONMS Staff and Others: Eric Roberts (PMNM), Sara Wood (PMNM), Kanoē Morishige (PMNM), Alyssa Miller (PMNM), Brian Hauk (PMNM), Jason Leonard (PMNM), Kevin Kelly (PMNM), Andy Collins (PMNM), Kalani Quiocho (ONMS-PIR) Randy Kosaki (PMNM), Moani Pai (PMNM), Chelsie Counsell (PMNM), Catherine Takata (ONMS-PIR), Pua Borges (NMFS), Public: Daniel Wagner (OET), Megan Cook (OET)

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome (Paul)

The meeting opened with a welcome by Chair Paul and opening protocol conducted by Kanoē Morishige.

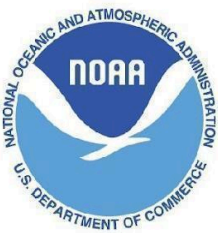
Roll call, Introductions, Review and Approval of Agenda (Paul)

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 August 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes (Paul)

Review and approval of the meeting minutes were conducted by Chair Paul. The minutes were approved with one minor revision.

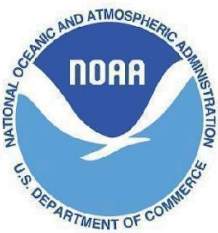


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Monument Co-Trustee/Management Agency Updates/Highlights

- NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
 - Education & Outreach
 - From August to October, Mokupāpapa Discovery Center engaged 5421 people. They hosted a public League of Women Voters event featuring Hawai‘i County Member Jennifer Kagiwada. Educators engaged with students from Haili Christian and Malamalama Waldorf. MDC hosted 32 indigenous peoples from four different tribal communities of Taiwan. The Taiwan exchange hosted visitors at Hilo One through the Nā Wa‘a Mauō Marine Stewardship Program. A three-day Papahānaumokuākea Cultural Working Group meeting attended by participants from across the islands.
 - PMNM staff participated in an outreach event at Pearlridge Mall on September 16th as part of the Keiki Ho‘olaule‘a Day. Present were eleven hula halau and five musical artists which brought in hundreds of local community members.
 - Educators at Mokupāpapa Discovery Center were awarded the National Park Service Excellence in Education for their work with Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park and the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center and an education partnership called Earth, Sea, Sky. The partnership included development of a shared field trip program, and over 1,700 students from across Hawai‘i visiting all three sites.
 - Research
 - PMNM staff joined efforts with National Marine Sanctuary American Samoa and completed closed circuit rebreather (CCR) dives on mesophotic coral reef ecosystems. The team dove and collected data at Tutuila, Swains and Ta‘u. These were the first technical dives conducted at Swains and Ta‘u to collect valuable data through stereo video, structure from motion, and collect invert and algae samples.
 - Agency Coordination
 - The PMNM Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group meeting was hosted at Mokupāpapa Discovery Center in September. Over 50 participants were in attendance with a special discussion on internal and external governance. ‘Aulani Wilhelm and Heidi Guth, former ONMS and Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Monument Management Board (MMB) representatives, shared information about the 20-year journey of Papahānaumokuākea from the creation of the CWG and the key kūpuna and community leaders who fought to elevate the CWG voice to the MMB through OHA as a PMNM co-trustee.
- NOAA Fisheries PIRO (Hall)
 - Working with ONMS on draft fishing regulations
- USFWS Refuges
 - No update
- USFWS Ecological Services (Polhemus)
 - Climate Update- Highlights
 - September was an anomalous month of heat, more similar to July for most of the globe. However, Hawai‘i was spared most of this heat due to moderate sea temperatures.
 - There is a 99% chance that 2023 will be the hottest year ever recorded globally. Ocean heat content is at record levels as well; the current ocean temperature is more than two standard deviations from the mean of 1981-2011.
 - While much of the tropics are seeing prolonged warming periods, Hawai‘i is surrounded by moderate ocean temperatures. Therefore, while Atlantic coral reefs such as those in the Florida Keys are at risk of bleaching, Hawai‘i reefs are not expected to bleach this year.



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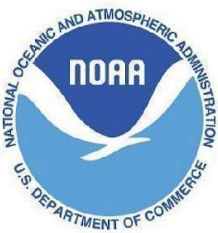
- El Nino conditions are now present, with a 95% probability that they will persist until February 2024.
- State of Hawai‘i DLNR-DAR
 - No update
- State of Hawai‘i DLNR-DOFAW
 - No update
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs
 - No update

Supporting Agency Updates/Highlights

- Enforcement
 - NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (Jim On)
 - No update
 - US Coast Guard (Norman)
 - US & Papua New Guinea recently signed bilateral agreement.
 - Enforcement - conducted High Seas boardings (outside of PMNM).
 - Established IUUF Center of Expertise to address illegal fishing.
 - Supported humpback whale disentanglement efforts.
- Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
 - No update

Presentations

- 2023 Research Field Season Briefing (Hauk)
 - A year of rebuilding capacity, refilling vacant positions, and building back diving, small boat and rebreather capacity. Continue to work on backlog of specimens and data.
 - Multiple delays this field season, reduced cruises and days at-sea
 - A planned 25-day cruise aboard NOAA Ship Oscar Elton Sette was canceled after numerous shipyard delays.
 - Hawaii Research Group (HRG) chartered M/V Kahana II in July 2023. Despite reduced days at-sea, the project was successful and they completed multiple research projects in cooperation with Hawai‘i DLNR-DAR. The focus of the cruise was on invasive species mapping and monitoring (*Chondria tumulosa*), in addition to deployment of SanctSound acoustic recording devices, post-Hurricane Walaka recovery surveys at Lalo, and bleaching and buoy grounding and eDNA surveys at Kapou. New record of *Chondria* at Kuaihelani (Midway Atoll), and low levels were seen at Hōlanikū (Kure Atoll) this year.
 - Following the first leg aboard NOAA Ship Rainier, a fire rendered the ship unusable. The ship is currently being towed to Honolulu for repairs.
 - New NOAA Ship R/V Oceanographer is expected to come online in 2025. This is a newly built, multi-faceted platform, however it is not a full replacement for Hi‘ialakai.
- SAC Summit Report Out (Paul, Wood, Kaho‘ohalahala)
 - 2 Day SAC chair’s summit in Oswego, NY. Linda Paul (Chair), Sol Kaho‘ohalahala (Native Hawaiian Elder) and Sara Wood (council coordinator) attended. Briefings from John Armor, NMSF Leadership Joel Johnson, and others. Discussed the new O‘ahu interpretive center with NMSF and John Armor. Other key topics were budget, offshore wind, deep sea mining, international implications and impacts of external extractive activities, and administrative / logistical aspects of how RAC/SAC meetings are conducted.



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- E/V Nautilus Briefing - Ala 'Aumoana Kai Uli Expedition Summary (Wagner, Cook)
 - 27 days exploration of the most remote regions of Papahānaumokuākea.
 - Conducted Seafloor Mapping, ROV Visual surveys, and Telepresence to engage the public.
 - Staff included specialists from PMNM, Japan, and elsewhere.
 - Objectives to explore unsurveyed areas of PMNM (NW quadrant), collect information that serves the science and management community, incorporating Hawaiian values, worldview and language, and publicly-accessible data
 - The team completed a total of 12 deep sea dives; 8 were focused on seamounts, which are hotspots of biodiversity and highly productive ecosystems.
 - Many new discoveries and 'firsts', including an extensive forest of pink deepwater corals on King George Seamount, and highly diverse systems at several sites that promise to yield new species (samples and data are currently being processed).
 - Samples collected from roughly 40 seamounts have yet to be aged to determine their geological relation to the Hawaiian hotspot; evidence thus far indicates these seamounts did not form in Hawai'i.
 - Surveyed deep (5000m) water areas of historically significant wrecks from the Battle Of Midway. Conducted ROV survey dives on USS Yorktown, Japanese aircraft carriers Akagi, and Kaga.
 - Protocols and practices were conducted by those onboard to honor those lost in the Akagi and Kaga.
 - Many expedition videos were produced, please see the expedition webpages for more information:
<https://nautiluslive.org/expeditions/2023>
<https://nautiluslive.org/cruise/na154>

- Subcommittee and Working Group Updates
 - Kahuapa'a Working Group (Gaffney)
 - Kickoff meeting to reunite and develop a workplan, which includes:
 - Develop a Papahānaumokuākea genealogy timeline of Hawaiian knowledge and RAC history
 - Advise RAC on the sanctuary designation process.
 - Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis.
 - Still recruiting members.
 - Research Subcommittee (Schug)
 - Initial virtual meeting to reconstitute the Subcommittee
 - Schedule meeting in January
 - Ensure Sanctuary EIS is reviewed by Subject Matter Experts during review period.
 - Update the Subcommittee work plan.
 - Permit Application Review Subcommittee (Wood)
 - New Subcommittee, to participate in the permit review process
 - Draft 'charter' sent to RAC for review
 - Permit recommendations formulated by this group would be reviewed/approved by the RAC and then forwarded to ONMS as recommendations.
 - Meetings on an as-needed basis, likely three times per year, consistent with the permit application cycle.
 - If interested in joining, contact Sara Wood.



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- Education Subcommittee (new) (Roberts, Schug)
 - Develop coordinated outreach for sanctuary designation.
 - Design an outreach volunteer program for O‘ahu.
 - If interested in joining, contact Sara Wood.
- Planning, Evaluation and Sanctuary Designation Subcommittee (PESS)
 - Focused on outreach for sanctuary designation.
 - Developing Op Eds.
 - Developing talking points for outreach during sanctuary designation (see Discussion section, below).

Discussion

- PESS - Review Draft Talking Points Prepared for Sanctuary Designation - Upcoming Draft Document Review Phase
 - Decision to defer voting on talking points until WPRFMC/NMFS process advances and PESS further refines the talking points**
- NMFS will send a notification when the draft fishing rules are released for public comment.

Public Comment

No comments were received

Discussion - Sanctuary Designation Workshop

- RAC input on formats, venues, process for workshop
- 2 days: Briefings day one, Breakout sessions day two
- Content to be presented by ONMS
 - Summaries of draft Sanctuary Management Plan, DEIS and Regulations
 - Compilations of various known objections of various groups.

Decision Making, Council Business and Closing Remarks

- RAC Calendar is live. The calendar can be used to post meetings and events that may be of interest to other RAC members. Please contact Sara Wood for more information.
- Recruitment. The deadline to apply for the RAC is October 20th at 5pm.
- Executive Committee Election to be held at January meeting- accepting nominations now to the end of January, please email nominations to Sara Wood.
- Poll was conducted to select 2024 meeting dates; the decision will be announced via email.