UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
1305 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

January 4, 2023

Dear ~~Chair~~ William Ailā:

Thank you for your letter. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (RAC) has been a crucial source of advice and guidance throughout the sanctuary designation process. NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is grateful for your thoughtful recommendations regarding non-commercial fishing regulations in support of the national marine sanctuary designation process for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM).

The RAC's non-commercial fishing recommendations, in addition to the full suite of regulations, will be considered by NOAA in the coming months to ensure consistency with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and the Presidential Proclamations that created the marine national monument. ONMS appreciates the attention to detail in your recommendations to align regulations across the two distinct monument areas to the extent possible, and to ensure that the sanctuary regulations provide protections to the management expansion area (MEA) that are equal or greater than current regulations for the original monument boundary. These recommendations are crucial for NOAA to fully consider resource protection and conservation needs for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

I continue to be both impressed by and thankful for the significant contributions of time and energy exhibited by our volunteer advisory council members, and I encourage you to continue your support to help manage our special places alongside ONMS.

Sincerely,

John Armor
Director