

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
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September 10, 2015

Aloha Greg,

As you leave Midway after more than nine years, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council wishes to formally recognize you for your superior service of duty while assigned as the Biological Science Technician at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, the window to Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

During your tenure on Midway, you were responsible for the iterative planning and implementation of a nationally and internationally recognized invasive species control program aimed at creating new, and improving existing, nesting habitat for the world's largest albatross nesting colony. For much of this time, you were the sole Refuge staff person responsible for implementing invasive plant management actions on three islands as part of a program funded by three grants totaling over \$15 million. You supervised the daily work effort of a five person contract crew working on multiple islands simultaneously. Under your guidance, crews adaptively shifted invasive plant treatment priorities based on target species life history and environmental conditions, resulting in effective control of more than 20 invasive non-native plant species over the entire 1,472 terrestrial acres of the Refuge.

In addition to coordinating the monitoring and treatment of invasive plants, you were responsible for the propagation and out-planting of native plant species once invasive non-native species were removed. You and your crews planted more than 100,000 individual plants of eight native species on the three islands, significantly improving the nesting habitat for millions of albatross. Realizing that the job wasn't over until the paperwork was done, you always provided detailed grant reports, a detailed annual summary that went well above and beyond the reporting requirements, and mapped the treatment and monitoring effort in real time providing a clear picture of the program's success.

Your persistent and creative efforts and dedication to duty have resulted in positive habitat transformation on the three islands of Midway Atoll. The invasive plant *Verbesina encelioides* dominated the Refuge landscape following the 2011 Japan tsunami; thanks to the efforts of you and your crews, the plant's coverage has been reduced to less than 3% average over the entire Refuge. You have always been willing to share your knowledge and passion with those fortunate enough to visit Midway, and you have inspired numerous future leaders with your commitment to resource conservation and performance excellence.

Your tremendous efforts and the success of your work have brought significant credit to Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Midway Atoll is a better place because of your actions there; few of us are lucky enough to have had such a positive impact on such a special place. Congratulations on a job well done!

Sincerely,



Timothy E. Johns
Chair
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands
Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council