

**NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS  
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**November 2, 2011, 9am- 5pm**  
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Advisory Council Members: Linda Paul (Conservation); Louis “Buzzy” Agard (Native Hawaiian Elder); Cindy Hunter (Research); Laura Thompson (Conservation); Don Schug (Research); Sarah Pautzke (WESPAC for Kitty Simonds); Malia Chow (Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHWNMS)); Maria Carnevale (State of Hawai’i); Julia Parish (State of Hawai’i); ‘Aulani Wilhelm (Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (NWHI CRER)); Kem Lowry (Citizen-At-Large); Rick Gaffney (Recreational Fishing); Brian Bowen (Research for Bill Gilmartin); Eric Roberts (US Coast Guard); Janice Fukawa (U.S. Navy for Becky Hommon); Allen Tom (ONMS PIR); teleconference: Tammy Harp (Native Hawaiian); teleconference: Jessica Wooley (Conservation); teleconference: Shannon Dionne (NMFS for Mike Tosatto);

*Absent:* Tim Johns (State of Hawai’i); Gail Grabowsky (Education); Tom Edgerton (US, Fish and Wildlife); Bobby Gomes (Commercial Fishing); Kitty Simonds (Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC)); Philip Taylor (National Science Foundation); Mike Tosatto (National Marine Fisheries (NMFS)); Matthew Zimmerman (Ocean-Related Tourism); Bill Gilmartin (Research); Take Tomson (NOAA – OLE); Danielle Carter (State of Hawai’i)

[NWHI CRER Staff]: David Swatland, Andy Collins, Wesley Byers

[US, Fish and Wildlife Service]: Dan Polhemus, Leanne Veldhuis, Ann Bell

[Members of the Public]: Barb Mayer (Public); Judith Tarpley (Public); Walter Ritte (Public); Heidi Guth (OHA); teleconference: Marti Townsend (KAHEA); Jeff Walters (NMFS); Jean Higgins (NMFS)

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING:

- 1) Receive updates on Monument activities and reports on related efforts
- 2) Working Group updates
- 3) Decision on RAC position on Large-Scale MPAs
- 4) Potential Action: Resolution on Education

I. CALL TO ORDER (Paul)

Council Vice-Chair Linda Paul called the meeting to order  
Opening Protocol – [NWHI CRER Staff]: Nai’a Lewis  
Ms. Paul reviewed the agenda for the meeting.  
Introductions

II. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS AND STATUS (PAUL)

### III. TOPIC A: MONUMENT CO-TRUSTEE/MGT. AGENCY UPDATES (CARNEVALE, PARISH, BORN, WILHELM, ROBERTS)

**Carnevale:** State DAR/DoFAW Update, July – September 2011. Personnel Update: Monument Co Manager: Dani Carter on maternity leave, Sanctuary Co Manager for HIHWNMS: Elia Herman, Sanctuary Operations Coordinator for HIHWNMS: Sarah Corbis, Monument Research Coordinator: position to become vacant Jan 2012. Position was posted and applications to refill this position are being processed now and DAR Administrator: pending. Permits/Research Coordinator: 12 permits to Land Board since July 1. Research Coordinator: planned and participated in both the RAMP and Tech cruise for 2011. Manuscript development/submission. Currently being trained in spatial ecology using multibeam bathymetry and survey data from NWHI. **Parish:** Management Objectives: Seabird Habitat Restoration: since June 2011 outplanted over 275 pots of native plant species = 82 personnel hours; Eradication of Golden crownbeard (*Verbesina encelioides*): controlled over 40 acres for the past three months; Coastal and Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management and Enforcement, Seabird and Shorebird Monitoring and Research. Albatross Banding: Mōlī or Laysan = 34, Ka'upu or Black-footed = 751, Booby Banding: 'Ā, Brown Booby = 18, 'Ā, Masked Booby = 10. Christmas Shearwater: Recaptures = 16. Newly banded = 19. Total personnel hours: 122. Bolus Collection: BFAL: 160, LAAL: 200 Personnel hours = 65. Hawaiian Monk Seal Monitoring (NOAA NMFS), Monk Seal Surveys and Tagging: tagged 18 pups that were born this year; Necropsy; Male aggression: all of our pups were attacked by adult or sub-adult male seals; Disentanglements: 4 seals were entangled in ghost nets or fishing line; Spinner Dolphin Monitoring: Did not conduct surveys this summer, but two surveys were conducted by the winter camp; Marine Debris Removal: removed over 3000 lbs from green island and over 600 lbs from our emergent reef, collected over 2000 lbs of marine debris this summer; USCG Soil Remediation Testing: Post-tsunami testing in surrounding sediments showed no signs of PCB's. Kure Atoll Conservancy. [kureatollconservancy.org](http://kureatollconservancy.org) **Paul**(question): Is the Green Island debris new debris? **Parish:** Yes, pretty much shoreline debris that washed up over the winter. **Paul**(question): Is this a normal amount? **Parish:** Yes, according to Cynthia it is normal. **Agard**(question): Any recommendation on what to do about the aggressive monk seals? **Parish:** NMFS is working on issue and they are researching other options for the upcoming field season. **Agard**(question): Is the PCB presence any danger to any wildlife there? **Parish:** As of right now they have not found any PCBs in the aquatic species in the area. **Harp**(question): Has any of the tsunami debris from Japan reached the shore? **Parish:** It is expected to reach Kure in December.

**Born:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/National Wildlife Refuge System: July 2011 through September 2011. Agency Accomplishments and Recent Activities: Historic Resources at Midway: Six archaeologists are sampling for historic artifacts around the cable buildings and marine barracks in preparation for removal and/or lead-based paint remediation activities. Refuge Operations: Infrastructure: A \$2.5 million contract was awarded to Chugach Construction to renovate all nine half duplexes and the Empire Café for staff and contractor housing on Midway. Lead-based paint will be removed or encapsulated, and the structures will be completely gutted and renovated with new plumbing, electrical, split unit air conditioning, cabinets, counters, windows, flooring, appliances, paint, doors, fire suppression sprinklers, and all furnishings. The Northwest Demolition Company crew of eighteen, hired to do the lead based

paint remediation at Midway, began laying shade cloth around the Cold Storage, Transportation, and Torpedo Buildings. This will prevent nesting by petrels, ducks, and albatross as the work occurs. The crew also started to remove paint from the eaves of the Cold Storage Building. Short Tailed Albatross: On Laysan Island, seven short tailed albatross decoys were placed in the NE Desert in hopes of attracting the birds. Nihoa Millerbird: On September 10th, the Nihoa Millerbird (NIMI) crew arrived at Laysan aboard the M/V Searcher with 24 captured birds. The birds were transported from ship to island smoothly and released without any problems. Two NIMI team members remained on Laysan to monitor the birds' survival, movements, and, reproduction for six months. All 24 Millerbirds are doing well, and several pairs are exhibiting breeding behavior, including nest construction. For more information go to [fws.gov/pacificislands/nihoamillerbird.html](http://fws.gov/pacificislands/nihoamillerbird.html) T&E Rescues: In early September on Tern Island, FWS staff and volunteers successfully and safely released one juvenile endangered Hawaiian green sea turtle, one endangered Hawaiian monk seal, and three frigate birds that were trapped behind the NE seawall. They continued to collect and release hatchling green sea turtles daily along the south side of the island. The trapped monk seal was discovered during an evening check of this area that staff conducts during full moons. The capture and release went surprisingly smoothly as time spent observing and working with the NMFS seal crew during summer really paid off, both for the seal and for the FWS crew. Migratory Birds: In early October, Laysan Island volunteers resighted a banded male bristle-thighed curlew. The bird was banded on 6/20/11 on the Yukon Delta NWR. Non-native cattle egrets continue to expand their range on Midway. The population is now estimated at 34. Personnel updates: Ann Bell has returned to us as the Visitor Services Manager working both at Midway Atoll NWR and here in Honolulu. Leanne Veldhuis has joined us as a Presidential Management Fellow on a rotation with the Fish and Wildlife Monument staff until February. Leanne is working on a project to look at cost-sharing between the partner agencies, in particular NMFS and FWS to help determine how we can better share the financial burden of management costs. She's been going through what numbers we have on the FWS side and is looking forward to working with folks from NOAA to better understand their costs. **Paul**(question): What are your long term plans for the sea wall at Tern Island? **Born**: Try to sustain it and reduce impact on wildlife.

**Wilhelm**, NOAA: NOAA ONMS Update: Agency Coordination: inspired by renewed FWS interest in presenting 'One Monument' appearance; PMNM/ONMS staff conducted page-by-page review to ensure updated content; we encourage input and contributions from RAC members. Constituency Building and Outreach: 4000 gallon tank exhibit opened Aug 18<sup>th</sup>; preceded by August 16<sup>th</sup> full page spread in Honolulu Star Advertiser featuring the NWHI and PMNM; exhibit features rare fish and corals from the NWHI; focused on five themes: diversity, abundance, remoteness, uniqueness, and threatened; WAQ ad for NWHI exhibit on back of hybrid Pepsi delivery truck. Outreach: Kuhio Park Terrace - summer teen program; Biggest Little Airshow Ford Island - Ford Island event had added benefit of bringing three NOAA entities to their future homes at NOAA's Pacific Regional Center (PRC) on Ford Island; Mokupāpapa: hosted Oregon junior H.S. students for 4th consecutive year to learn about coral reef ecosystems and invasive species; Third Thursday presentations: Randi Brennon (HI Academy of Arts & Sciences). Dr. Adam McClung (USGS) - Laysan Finch and Laysan Duck recovery operations. Mokupāpapa is always looking for potential Third Thursday presenters. If anyone on the RAC is interested in presenting or knows someone who might be interested, please contact Andy; going away party for Kala, Mokupāpapa Discovery Center's Bluespine

Unicornfish. Education: Navigating Change, native nursery is 10'x20' shaded structure w/auto drip system, houses up to 100 cuttings and seedlings for use in ongoing Ka`ena Point restoration efforts; structure was built for less than \$1000; established native plant nursery near Camp Erdman (w/help from DLNR); Chaminade PMNM lesson plan developed by PMNM staff, Dr. Gail Grabowsky and recent Chaminade graduate; first visit to Lana`i in recent memory, again trying to reach audiences we don't normally get to interact with; Discover Center hosts 18<sup>th</sup> Teacher's Roundtable to share partnerships and opportunities; new fish arrive at MDC; visitor count on track for another busy year. Research and Field Operations: 2011 Reef Assessment and Monitoring Cruise (RAMP): NOAA research vessel Hi`ialakai conducted month long mission; visiting all of the major islands and atolls except Kure; under direction of PMNM Resource Protection Specialist and cruise Chief Scientist Scott Godwin. Recently completed Vessel Data Collection System (VDCS) was field tested and was a huge success; system will allow significantly increased capability to rapidly enter, analyze and share research data; additional activities included: Rapid Ecological Assessments (REA) of reef fish, corals, invertebrates and algae; coral bleaching surveys; Ecological Acoustic Recorder (EAR) recovery; marine organism bioerosion surveys; and Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth (CTD) arrays focused on carbonate chemistry. 2011 Mesophotic Coral Ecosystem Cruise: NOAA R/V Hi`ialakai conducted three week long mission; diver oxygen toxicity event early in the cruise resulted in an unscheduled return to Honolulu and the loss of ship days; Chief Scientist Dr. Randy Kosaki can present at the next meeting. 2011 Intertidal Monitoring Expedition: PMNM/ONMS sponsored two week cruise to Nihoa, Mokumanamana, French Frigate Shoals, and Gardner Pinnacles; Chief Scientist Hoku Johnson can present at the next meeting along with hopefully some of the participants; cruise focused on integration of western research activities with Native Hawaiian cultural knowledge and approaches – a central aim of the Monument Management Plan. Whaling Ship Two Brothers Bridges the Continent PMNM's Dr. Kelly Gleason traveled to Nantucket Island, MA, homeport of the whaling ship Two Brothers; sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association; Dr. Gleason spent five days conducting education, outreach, and research, including a presentation to more than 100 guests. Terrestrial News: New species of Shearwater described for Midway Atoll; first time in nearly 40 years for U.S.; named after E.H. Bryan, Curator of Collections at Bishop Museum for almost 50 years. Native Hawaiian: 2011 Summer Camp Activities: Mokupāpapa Discovery Center staff led cultural and sustainable living activities at the second annual Lawai`a 'Ohana camp on the Big Island; PMNM staff presented to 450 Kamehameha School Ho'olauna summer program students as part of six day Na Kama Kai workshops. Strategic Initiatives: Hawaii Green Growth Initiative: a five person panel provided Green Growth briefing to State Dept. official Ambassador Kurt Tong; presented overview of: why ocean conservation and management is important to developing a sustainable society and the Monument's Big Ocean initiative. Staff Changes: Departed: No one! Arrived: Keoni Kuoha (Native Hawaiian Coordinator), Jasmine Cousins (Marine Operations Coordinator – NOAA Corps Officer), Kahi Fujii (Graphics & Web Designer), Kalewa Correa (Mokupāpapa Discovery Center Manager), Alyssa Miller (Evaluation Specialist), Jason Leonard (Field Operations Coordinator - starts Nov 6).

**Eric Roberts**, US Coast Guard: The following is a summary of U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Marine Protected Species (MPS) activities in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) from July 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. In August, Air Station Barbers Point flew a dedicated law enforcement patrol of the PMNM via a C-130 aircraft. No violations were

noted during this patrol. As part of our standard operating procedures, District Fourteen's Maritime Domain Awareness section monitored PMNM vessel traffic daily via NOAA VMS. In addition to the operational activities listed above, District Fourteen enforcement staff participated in several MPS-related meetings. Most notable were the Pacific Remote Islands and Marianas Trench MNM Visioning Session and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. My staff also attended the annual USCG fisheries enforcement conference in Washington, DC. **Agard**(question): Do you have better technology available to patrol PMNM? **Roberts**: We are still using the same planes, but we do have some video capabilities that we didn't have in the past. **Paul**(question): How about satellite monitoring? **Roberts**: Yes, we use that to the greatest extent that we can.

#### IV. TOPIC B: NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE (GUTH)

**Guth**, OHA: Quick history/genealogy of the Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group (NHWG): Originated from the RAC back in 2000 with seven RAC members. When the Reserve started working on its Reserve Operation's Plan, the subcommittee expanded to a working group and brought in more native Hawaiians. The State in 2005, created the Northwestern Hawaiian Marine Reserve and wanted to have their own CWG to review access permits. A year later the Monument was created. The CWG continued to meet along with the Education WG. OHA was brought in to the Monument Management Board (MMB) the State and the RAC's CWG agreed to meld. OHA began to administer the NHCWG. We will be meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Pelika reported to you at the previous meeting. We are working now on the creation of the Cultural Research Plan (CRP), which comes out of the Monument Management Plan (MMP). We will be going out to the communities at the beginning of next year to gather information and ideas from the community and hopefully be published by January 2013. **Paul**(question): How will your CRP fit into the MMP? **Guth**: This plan is not actually named in the MMP, but you will find it in the Native Hawaiian Culture and History Action Plan Strategy One. **Roberts**: Wanted to thank Heidi and OHA for providing us with a Cultural Briefing Package to brief our staff that will be heading up to PMNM.

#### V. TOPIC C: DEIS FOR ROSE ATOLL MNM/NEW SITES AMERICAN SAMOA (TOM)

**Tom**: Fagatele Bay (American Samoa) National Marine Sanctuary Management plan review Biogeographic Assessment of the Samoan Archipelago: Chapter Topics: introduction; ocean climate; currents and larval connectivity; reef fish and coral communities; existing marine protected areas of American Samoa. A Biogeographic Assessment of the Samoan Archipelago. How is this information used? Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Please provide comments by January 6<sup>th</sup> at: fagatelebay.noaa.gov "Reef flats" represent ~10% of reefs in American Samoa. Biogeography is shaped by ocean currents. Objectives: describe main currents and understand larval transport among islands. Defined two generalized current seasons and three current features: South Equatorial Current; South Equatorial Counter Current; Tonga Trench Eddy. Tools to Map Currents and Interisland Connectivity: Global Drifter Program: satellite tracked surface drogues; six hour speed/heading data; and Hybrid Coordinate Ocean Model. Contrasting results: N. Savai'i and Rose Atoll. Objective: identify biogeographic hotspots, trends, and breakpoints in reef fish and coral communities through data synthesis. Focal variables: coral cover, coral richness coral community, fish abundance, fish richness, fish community. Defined hotspots: ten bioregions were hotspots for 3-variables; five "coolspots"; Savai'i is hot; N. Upolu is cold; Swains is hot but Rose is not; Eastern and SW Tutuila are hot; only 6 variables. 23 total:

11 CFMP, 3 NPS, 3 SMA and 6 others. Which bioregions and ecological hotspots are represented in the MPA network? 6 out of the 20 bioregions lacked any MPA, many had at least 2; 25 out of the 36 hotspots are partly protected by MPAs; 3 “high value” bioregions don’t presently have an MPA; Other key features not included (Vailulu’u, big coral, mesophotic reefs). Fagatele Bay: Key biogeographical attributes: high coral cover and richness; moderate/high fish abundance; collapsed crater. Proposed boundary and regulations: existing Sanctuary boundary; complete no-take within Fagatele Bay (change from current limited take zones). Larsen Bay: Key biogeographical attributes: moderate-to-high coral/fish abundance and richness; replicates Fagatele Bay NMS. Proposed boundary and regulations: hook and line fishing only (single hook). Aunu’u and research: Key biogeographical attributes: very high coral cover and richness; unique coral community; high fish abundance and richness and high habitat diversity. Ta’u: Key biogeographical attributes; high coral cover and richness; giant coral colonies; Manu’a coral community and high fish richness. Proposed boundary and regulations: no overlap with NPS boundary – abuts NPAS boundary, providing buffer zone for important natural and cultural resources (Taisamasama). Swain’s: Key biogeographical attributes: high coral cover and fish abundance; unique coral/fish community; separated from Samoan chain and possible source of larval recruitment. Proposed boundary and regulations: commercial fishing prohibited and only sustenance fishing allowed. Muliāva (Rose Atoll): Key biogeographical attributes: high fish abundance and richness; unique fish community; active undersea volcano; (Vailulu’u Seamount); proposed boundary and regulations: no overlay of FWS Refuge boundaries. No fishing regulations proposed at this time (awaiting NMFS action) American Samoa NMS visitor center. Pacific Region: Lahaina orientation center. We have gone through a public process to identify a location for a potential visitor center on Kauai. **Paul**(question): Are you planning a discovery center for Oahu anytime soon? **Tom**: We have a regional facilities plan for possibly the North Shore. **Pautzke**(question): How do the villagers feel about the no take zone north of Aunu’u? **Tom**: We are getting a broad spectrum of responses from the villagers of Aunu’u.

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

**Mayer**: Watcher at the Window, an idea for PMNM outreach: I agree with "A RAC Resolution in Support of An Elevated Focus on Education at Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument." In the Resolution I appreciate the listing of educational efforts made thus far on behalf of the NWHI. I would like to address my "Watcher at the Window" (W@W) idea, which builds upon the image of Midway Atoll NWR as the "window to the Monument." The RAC's Resolution recognizes existing educational effort in the NWHI in bringing small numbers of competitively selected educators and leaders to Midway (or on a shipboard class-at-sea educational expedition to the southeastern end of the NWHI.) My “Watcher at the Window” idea is to seat an educator/interpreter at the Midway "window" to use perfectly adequate, existing technology and social media for outreach on an almost daily basis. In these budgetary constrained times, perhaps the most cost-effective method of financing a W@W program would be to utilize on-atoll volunteers; each could be a Watcher-writer during a small time slot within their 40-hour workweek. In conclusion, as we complete 11 years of NWHI protection, I support an elevated focus on education at PMNM by bringing the place to a larger audience of people through “Watcher at the Window” interpretive outreach.

**Townsend**(question): Could we get a copy of the presentation by the state? **Carnevale**: Yes, we can send it around.

## VII. TOPIC D: PRESENTATION ON MARINE DEBRIS, IMPACTS AND CURRENT ISSUES (COLLINS)

**Collins:** NOAA Education Coordinator for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and World Heritage site. As you know, marine debris is one of three primary (and devastating) threats to Papahānaumokuākea, and many other marine and coastal areas around the world. I'll attempt to describe the scope of the issue, some of the work being done to understand and address it, introduce some resources for educating about marine debris, and finally suggest some actions we can each take to reduce our own contribution to the problem. If I leave with you just one thought today it is this question: "Why are we using some of the most durable materials on Earth – various forms of plastic - for single use purposes?" Like many of the major environmental issues facing us we already know more than we need to know about marine debris and plastic to address it, but to have any impact, significant changes in the way we all live will need to take place. When people think of the NWHI, images like these are what generally come to mind – abundant coral reefs, pristine beaches, and thriving wildlife. These are certainly accurate but do not represent the complete picture. So on the most remote and uninhabited archipelago on earth, habitats and animals are not immune from the reach of a modern society, addicted to the use of highly durable yet designed to be disposable products. With increasing frequency these are the images we see in Papahānaumokuākea. Large nets and other floating debris that are disposed at sea, washed into the ocean, or lost at sea ride in on the currents, get caught on coral, and ultimately abrade and smother the living reef. These debris spoil otherwise pristine beaches, become hazards for wildlife, and in some cases are hazardous materials themselves. The majority of these floating debris are made from plastic. Nets are made from polyethylene line, and other fishing gear is mostly plastic (line, traps, floats). Plastic materials are cheap, strong, resist decay in marine environments, float, and are widely available. Unfortunately these characteristics are also the ones that make these materials so problematic when they are disposed of, or lost. Plastics can take hundreds of years to break down. When plastics do break down, through exposure to UV light, they do not disappear, but simply break down into smaller and smaller pieces, micro plastics. So, where does the debris come from and how does it get to our remote islands and reefs? Trash from shore and derelict fishing gear drift in ocean currents that make great circles around the North Pacific. In several areas of the world's oceans these currents form gigantic eddies, or zones where surface currents, and the materials they carry, converge, as shown here. One of the convergence zones, or gyres, is located just North and East of Hawai'i. Its scientific name is the North Pacific Sub-Tropical High, but it has achieved popular fame as the Eastern Pacific Garbage Patch. This second animation shows how trash (shown as orange dots) entering the sea from land is distributed by surface currents and ultimately concentrated in the Convergence Zone and two prevailing gyres, one in the Eastern and one in the Western North Pacific. These oceanic gyres are not only areas of accumulated trash, they are also areas of very high productivity, since they aggregate not only floating materials, but ocean nutrients, phytoplankton and zooplankton. This compounds the impact of debris by concentrating it in an area where many birds, like the albatross, and other marine creatures forage for food. This aggregation of both pollution and nutrients in the same place create a very complex management dilemma. The global picture for marine debris movement looks like this over a ten year period. The model uses trajectories of almost 15,000 drifting buoys launched since 1979, assuming an initial homogeneous density of debris, and showing how fast "garbage patches" can form. You have likely seen several recent articles describing the potential

debris headed our way from the March Japan Tsunami which is predicted to compound our overwhelming problem. From this tragic event, millions of tons of debris were washed out to sea, including entire houses, cars, containers, and other materials. NOAA and several other agencies, Universities, and organizations are collecting data on the debris and trying to determine how to address the likely distribution. This model, created by Drs. Nikolai Maximenko and Jan Hefner from UH's International Pacific Research Center shows the estimated path of tsunami debris based on historical trajectories over the course of 16 years. You can see how the debris will eventually aggregate in the Eastern Pacific gyre. Finally, here is another projection of the tsunami debris field that shows more detail on how it spirals in smaller eddies and disperses. The image does not represent actual debris but rather trajectories. This model (SCUD – Surface CUrrents from Diagnostic) uses realistic data and launch of model particles and included data from satellites and direct observations to estimate surface currents. About a month ago (September 2011) a Russian sail training ship, the STS Pallada, sailing North and West of Midway Atoll spotted the debris making its way across the ocean, validating and informing the model shown. They spotted floating refrigerators, TVs, and other home appliances making their way towards the NWHI and the West Coast of the U.S. Later on their voyage they spotted wash basins, and even a small 16' fishing vessel which they brought aboard and pictured here. You can see the location of the spotted debris relative to Midway Atoll on the map. Let's look at some of the impacts of marine debris. The first is entanglement. Nearly every year a few seals are disentangled by field staff in the NWHI. Given that there is such low human presence (only about 130 people/year across the entire Monument) finding any entangled animals only begs the question of how many more perish unseen. Ingestion. You have all seen the images above and are familiar with the tragic tale of "Shed Bird" the young Laysan Albatross and plastic debris. "Shed Bird" died, but is one bird whose life was not in vain since these images have inspired many to take action and responsibility for their own actions. Shed Bird died from the ingestion of all the plastic debris pictured at right, including lighters, caps, and plastic toys, which were carefully removed from the dead bird's punctured stomach. Albatross, and other seabirds pick up plastic debris while foraging for food; flying fish attach their eggs to floating materials and increasingly the floating substrate is not natural, but plastic. The adult albatross then feed these plastics, along with high calorie oil, to their chicks. Chicks are not always able to purge these plastics and sometimes die from their effects, such as puncturing their stomach lining. Habitat Destruction. In open ocean, these aggregated nets pose serious navigation hazards to ships. In shallow waters, these conglomerations are pushed and pulled by wave energy and abrade, "bulldoze" and ultimately smother fragile coral reefs that remain. NOAA estimates that approximately 57 tons of marine debris are carried by currents into the NWHI each year. That's the equivalent weight of about 38 compact cars, or 27 full-sized vehicles. Aesthetics. A fourth impact from marine debris is aesthetic disturbance of our shorelines. This visual disturbance is compounded when the materials are dangerous, such as medical waste washing up on U.S. East coast beaches. We don't have such estimates in Hawai'i – not yet at least. It is one thing to see a heavily used beach covered in trash, certainly an appalling site, but it is quite another to see an unpopulated shoreline, several hundred miles from human civilization covered in debris. Remote areas such as the NWHI are the "canaries in the coal mine" to bring attention to the fact that no areas are immune from human impact. Hazardous Materials. Although many casually disposed materials have small amounts of hazardous materials in them, such as cigarette filters and lighters and batteries – some are much more dangerous than that. Barrels of poorly labeled, or unlabeled hazardous materials have washed ashore. For the past 25 years the Ocean Conservancy

has coordinated the International Coastal Cleanup, and the data participants have collected sheds light on some of the primary pollutant items, and even animals found entangled. Cigarette and cigarette filters top the list with nearly 53 million individual pieces collected. Food wrapper containers, caps, lids, cups, plastic bottles and bags follow on the list. These data, collected from mostly populated areas paint a stark picture of our society yet provide the necessary catalyst for change. This report can be downloaded from the Ocean Conservancy's web site. So, what are we doing to address the issue? In the NWHI our biggest effort to address this massive problem has been removal of nets, to minimize entanglement hazard to threatened and endangered wildlife, and prevent further destruction of habitat. In the Main Hawaiian Islands we conduct education and outreach about marine debris. In the policy arena we have supported legislation that brings more resources to the issue, or promotes behavior change. Tsunami debris related actions. Multi-partner/agency working group, including NOAA, has been meeting with EPA lead for the group; Current effort is focused on tracking and data collection; Observation data are being solicited from mariners, shipping operators, fishing industry, Coast Guard, Military, etc.! New observation protocols are being integrated into existing shoreline surveys to determine if new debris is tsunami debris; Protocols have been integrated into NOAA Fisheries observer program to collect data on sightings; With USFWS, new protocols are being used in NWHI at Tern and Midway for shoreline surveys; Requesting over flights by USCG and/or NOAA long-range aircraft. Removal. Removing marine debris from the remote NWHI is costly, dangerous, expensive and logistically complex. It also requires over 3 months of training. And that's when we look for debris that have already caused damage. In the Patch, finding and removing floating objects (even where they aggregate) has proven nearly impossible – like finding needles in haystacks, as these haystacks move continuously, affected by many oceanographic factors and weather. Since 1996, a large multiagency partnership removed 1.3 million pounds of debris from targeted reefs; that's about the weight of 6500 average refrigerators. The U.S. Coast Guard complemented this effort by removing another 120,000 lbs over four years. Through a large public/private partnership, Hawai'i Nets 2 Energy, most of the debris brought back from the NWHI did not go to landfill but was recycled. Our sister program, the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS along with NOAA NMFS and the State of Hawaii run the Hawaiian Islands Disentanglement Network to rescue humpback whales and other marine animals caught in marine debris. Since 2002, 16 humpback whales have been disentangled and 6,700 feet of line removed. Some of the nets and line are dragged all the way to Hawai'i from Alaska. Marine debris is a central theme in many of our exhibits, print products and lesson plans, including at our Mokupāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo, Hawai'i. It is a tangible environmental impact that students of all ages can relate to and even do something about. As a result of participating in our Navigating Change education program focused on environmental stewardship and responsibility, many students and schools have cleaned up beaches, their campuses, and implemented recycling efforts to reduce their impact. Our Teacher's Guide to Navigating Change is a complete five part curriculum for grades 4 and 5 that has lessons on marine debris, traditional navigation, food webs, and other materials about our natural environment here in Hawai'i and how students can be better citizens of the planet. The guide is aligned to the State DOE standards. The most popular activity we use to illustrate the direct impact of plastics in our oceans is a dissection of an albatross bolus. Just prior to fledging, healthy albatross chicks that have not consumed too much debris purge all the indigestible material fed to them by their parents over the 5 ½ months on the nest as a bolus. Some birds are not able to get rid of the bolus and may die from plastics in their stomach or dehydration. Natural

items in the bolus include squid beaks and pumice, but in the last 30 or so years, more and more of the material found in the bolus is plastic. I realize that the marine debris dilemma (and the problem of plastics overall) is overwhelming. This issue is so vast and complex that it is well beyond the scope of government to fix. But there are things we can do to reduce our contribution to the problem. We have to. It is everyone's problem, and only through thoughtful individual action can we turn the tide on debris. Government can pass legislation, such as the International Maritime Organization's MARPOL Annex V that bans dumping of plastics at sea, and severely restricts discharges of other garbage from ships, or the U.S. Marine Debris Research, Prevention and Reduction Act. But these measures will not solve the problem, as there is not enough time or money to endlessly clean up the mess. Only individual changes in behavior at a massive scale will solve it. So, a few things we can do: Plastic is toxic and dangerous to us individually and as a society at so many levels. Do what you can to reduce your use – bring your own bags when you shop, do not buy items with excessive packaging, try to avoid one-time, disposable products. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary also passed a resolution on prohibiting single-use plastic bags. **Schug**: Just wanted to underscore the point that was made about the need for more research funding to monitor marine debris and study its impact. **Gaffney**: There is also discussion in the fishing industry about how to better utilize vessels that already transiting the ocean to help solve this problem. There is also discussion on building purpose built vessels to start taking care of the problem as well. I think that there is more that can be done in this regard. There are numerous “buy back” vessels that are uniquely set-up to carry weight. People are interested in buying these vessels, but there isn't any incentive to go collect. Fishermen also need to be brought into the discussion with the agencies because they may come up with unique solutions. There are other options, but we need to start thinking out of the box. It's time to get more people involved than just the agencies. **Agard**: This should be shown to young people and in our discovery centers. **Schug**: Just to reiterate what Rick said. In our Marine Debris Action Plan all the strategies are listed. **Collins**: Scott Godwin is our lead on the Marine Debris Action Plan. **Schug**: If the RAC is interested in what Monterey Bay has done on the single-use plastic bag ban, I can help with that. **Paul**: Let's work on the resolution today.

#### VIII. TOPIC E: WEBSITE UPDATES (SWATLAND)

**Swatland**: Just wanted to reinforce that this is all of our website. If you can think of something that should be on there that isn't, please let us know. We went through it page by page, but there is a lot of information on there. We encourage input from RAC members. Also, a big shout-out to Ann Bell who has been instrumental in helping us review the website.

#### IX. TOPIC F: MONK SEAL PEIS AND CRITICAL HABITAT (WALTERS/HIGGINS)

**Walters**: Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Actions, Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS): Intro and background; proposed actions and alternatives, impacts summary; public engagement and comments; Next steps and schedule. We're going to talk about Hawaiian monk seals, the serious problems they face as an endangered species, and some of the actions NMFS is proposing to do to deal with these problems, and how you, the public, can be involved and provide comments and suggestions in what we are proposing through the process of developing an EIS. Hawaiian Monk Seal Regional Trends: Northwestern Hawaiian Islands ~1,000 seals and declining. Note steep drop in NWHI and gentle increase in MHI. Hawaiian monk seal sightings in the MHI. PEIS – Proposed Recovery Actions: Is not currently proposing: “fish down” actions or other “ecological interventions” in the NWHI. Concerns about:

unintended ecological consequences. Not currently proposing: building facility in the NWHI. Not proposing new federal regulations on: fishing and public access. Not proposing new federal restricted areas or closures. PEIS = Management and recovery of Hawaiian monk seals, not regulations to manage people. Purpose: promote the long-term viability of the Hawaiian monk seals in the wild; allow for reclassification from endangered to threatened status. Need: to help slow the decline in Hawaiian monk seal populations and supplement the population in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. NWHI: poor juvenile survival; good adult survival. MHI: good survival for all ages. Current and proposed recovery actions: NEPA Trigger = ESA-MMPA Permit (current permit expires in 2014). This PEIS includes actions we have been doing and want to continue doing plus new and/or enhanced actions we are proposing to add to our work to better support monk seal recovery. We will present the current and proposed actions broken out into 4 general categories. For each category we will present our current and proposed new actions. The first category is “populations monitoring”. Population monitoring: in current permit: mark individuals; surveys and census; sampling for genetic analysis. Proposed additional – for new permit unmanned aerial vehicles. Option to apply for remote camera monitoring permits. Seal behavioral modification: program to “keep wild seals wild”. Prevent and mitigate “human-seal interactions” - impacts on seals and people - through enhanced wildlife management. Current: translocate seals away from human-seal interaction areas; displace seals off roads, boat ramps, etc. Proposed additional: develop better science-based tools for preventing and modifying undesirable behavior (interactions with humans or fishing gear, etc.). Research chemical alteration of aggressive male behavior. Health and disease: mitigate infectious disease and environment health risks. Current: health and disease studies: de-worming research; translocate seals away from high-risk areas. Proposed additional: vaccination research and possible use; treat with antibiotics in the field; de-worming to improve juvenile survival. Translocation is a tool for recovery. There are several different types of translocation – all are meant to improve seal survival. Some types also help reduce potential problems for fishermen and other ocean users. Temporary relocation of female seal pups to MHI for no more than 3 years per seal. Purpose is to increase seals in NWHI by helping more female seals survive to reproductive age. Using high survival in MHI for young seals and good survival in NWHI for older seals. The NWHI pups we would translocate would probably die anyway if we did not move them. Proposed Temporary Translocation from NWHI to MHI some key points: temporary relocation of female seal pups 0 – 3 yrs; purpose – increase female seal survival in NWHI; weaned pups handle translocation very well; tracking and re-capturing seals is feasible – proven record; release sites will be carefully selected; at most, 60 transplanted seals, 20 per year – each batch returned after 3 years; start with small number (<10) - only increase if process is successful; expecting impacts will be negligible to minor; behavior modification and community programs will support impact mitigation and must occur as a condition for any translocation action. Seals do not have babies until they reach 4 years old at the earliest – we will capture and return all the translocated seals well before they reach reproductive age – they will not be able to have any pups in the MHI. We will be able to track and capture all the pups we move. We have a very good system of tracking seals in the MHI. When we want to capture a seal, we start monitoring reports well in advance, learn its patterns, haul-out preferences, etc. At most, we would have 60 transplanted seals at any given time, 20 per year. Behavior modification program will support impact mitigation. Alternatives: NEPA requires us to consider several alternatives. Impacts analysis: the exact definitions of these impact levels are defined for each type of resource or environmental factor being analyzed. Implementation, mitigation, and adaptive management: Detailed plans for:

phase-in, monitoring, and shut down for the 2-stage translocation; vaccination process; behavioral modification program; unanticipated discovery of cultural properties. Coordination with partners, stakeholders and communities: coordination with agency partners; outreach and collaboration with fishermen and others; Native Hawaiian and community-based programs; incorporating community feedback into all actions; marine mammal response network. PMNM impacts: In general: almost all proposed actions have already been conducted within the Monument; overall “footprint” and level of impact would not change significantly relative to actions that have already been reviewed and permitted. However: scale of some actions would increase, change e.g., de-worming, NWHI translocations; a few proposed actions are truly “new,” e.g., 2-stage translocations and vaccination program. Public and partner engagement: HMS recovery team: engaged in PEIS for several years, submitted letters of support, etc. Stakeholders: 16+ Meetings - tour operators, fishers, coastal property owners, SAC, RAC, etc. Agencies: 15+ Meetings - County govt agencies, Mayors, State and Federal agencies, etc. Town Halls: 14 on 6 islands, Public Hearings: 7 on 5 islands, Comments Received: comment period closed on Oct 17; stakeholders and general public: some supportive of preferred alternative (Alt 4), but many concerns, mostly regarding 2-stage translocation; agencies: generally supportive of Alt 3 and/or Alt 4, good, substantive comments; review and analysis in process: comment analysis report expected for release by end of 2011. Next steps and schedule: prepare and release comments analysis report – end of 2011; follow up outreach with key stakeholders and agencies – ongoing - State Legislators, agency partners, fishers, etc; initiate “early consultation” on ESA Section 7 compliance – Nov 2011; finalize and submit ESA-MMPA permit application – Spring 2012; NHPA Sec 106 compliance process – Spring 2012. Develop Preliminary Final PEIS – Feb 2012; Continue recovery program – management and research – ongoing MHI – response, fishery interactions, outreach, new research and monitoring initiatives, etc. PMNM – focused field camps for summer 2012, ecosystem workshop with MMC and others, etc.; continue coordination with MMB and PMNM permitting – ongoing; revise and release Final PEIS, ROD, and ESA-MMPS Permit – by Feb 2013; implement permitted activities – Summer 2013. Visit the project website: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/eis/hawaiianmonkseal.htm>

**Schug**(question): It seems to me that you were being overly conservative in your ranking of the affects, particularly with respect to the alternatives that did the most to preserve the seals.

**Walters**: We are going go back and look at this impact table again. **Hunter**(question): What’s the update on the female seals that are now in San Antonio? **Walters**: They are still there; one may have died from West Nile Virus. They are all mostly blind; something about being kept in captivity affects their eyesight. There is some research being done on them, but it is quite limited. Those seals were held in captivity for a long time and that is when we have issues with eye problems. These translocated seals would not be held in captivity for more than a few days. We have done these kinds of translocations on a small scale and haven’t had any problems.

**Thompson**(question): Could you explain the use of chemicals on the seals? **Walters**: We are looking at possible chemical use to make problematic seals less aggressive.

**Higgins**: Proposed Critical Habitat for the Hawaiian Monk Seal. Petition Response Process. What is the current designation? What is Critical Habitat? Term Defined by the Endangered Species Act : Areas within the current range; with features essential to “conservation” (defined as survival & recovery); require special management or protection. How is Critical Habitat Protected? Creates a second obligation for Federal agencies to consult under section 7: Federal Agencies must insure that actions which they carry out, fund or authorize are not likely to

destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. Federal section 7 consultations: question 1: how would the Federal Action impact the species? “Jeopardy Standard” Question 2: how would the Federal Action impact the Essential Features of the listed species’ critical habitat? “Habitat Standard” Physical and Biological Features aka the “Essential Features” Examples: space for growth; food; water; air; shelter; breeding and nursery habitats; habitat protected from disturbance and habitat representative of historic distribution. Foraging information gained: Before 1988: eating reef fish; feeding on coral reefs close to haul-out beaches; feeding in relatively shallow areas. Since 1988: eating a wide variety of prey species; foraging at deeper atoll slopes and neighboring banks; preferred foraging on sand terraces and talus slopes; foraging from 0 – 500 m. Essential Features for Hawaiian Monk Seals: areas for pupping and nursing; sheltered aquatic areas near pupping & nursing sites; areas for feeding (0 to 500 m); low levels of human disturbance; adequate prey quantity and quality; areas used for hauling out, resting, or molting. Defining the Boundaries: Northwestern Hawaiian Islands - includes all islands, islets and spits, and marine areas out to 500 m depth around previously identified areas and including Sand Island (not Midway Harbor). Main Hawaiian Islands - terrestrial habitat 5 m inland of the shoreline and marine habitat out to a depth of 500 m. Areas Not included: hardened shorelines, fishponds, seawalls, breakwaters, ramparts, harbors and landings, certain bays (with poor features), active lava, sheer cliffs. Large areas identified by name. Public Comments Welcome LABEL COMMENTS WITH RIN 0648-BA81. Internet Comments: <http://www.regulations.gov> Mail Comments: Regulatory Branch Chief, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional Office, 1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Ste. 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814, Attn: Hawaiian Monk Seal Critical Habitat, Additional Info: [www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_critical\\_habitat.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_critical_habitat.html)

#### X. TOPIC G: MONUMENT ALLIANCE DEVELOPMENT (SWATLAND)

**Swatland:** Quick background. Just prior to the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting ONMS received approval to establish the non-consensus Monument Alliance (MA), the interim Alliance until we can get the FACA compliant Monument Alliance established. The commerce lawyers had some additional input into the operating guidelines. Guidelines under review by the MMB subcommittee which will meet again hopefully later this month. Basically, ONMS is cleared to implement the non-consensus Alliance, but waiting for FWS and State who have not received authorization to do that yet. The functions and purposes that the RAC developed at the July meeting have also been incorporated into the MA operating guidelines. After the subcommittee meeting later this month, hope to have them finalized and present them to the MMB for approval at the January meeting. Then hopefully FWS and State have approval we can go out and start recruiting members. That’s the update on the interim Monument Alliance.

#### REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (PAUL)

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Linda Paul to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

#### XI. TOPIC H: HI HUMPBACK WHALES NMS, MGT. PLAN REVIEW UPDATE (CHOW)

**Chow:** The Sanctuary is partnering with several different agencies and organizations to begin investigating the feasibility of conducting a dedicated sampling and analysis of humpback whales in the entire North Pacific to address the following objectives: obtain a more current estimate of abundance; improve the accuracy of the estimate by addressing past sampling limitations; provide a better understanding of feeding area stock structure and abundances;

provide information on trends in abundance. The Management Plan Review (MPR) is an opportunity to: determine the future direction and scope of the sanctuary; address current and emerging issues; consider additional protection for marine and cultural resources of national significance. Last management plan review completed in 2002. During that time the Sanctuary's management plan was updated and a process was identified to evaluate and assess the possible inclusion of additional resources. Current MPR will evaluate existing management plan and address congressional mandate to consider additional resources for possible inclusion. The NMSA has a statutory requirement that requires the management plans be periodically reviewed. Proposed vision: the sanctuary is proposing that it expand its scope and direction to protect and conserve other living marine resources, in addition to humpback whales and submerged cultural heritage resources within the sanctuary. Sanctuary MPR timeline: action plan development; working groups; 9 working groups ~101 individuals have attended one or more meetings; 55 meetings ~1001 volunteer hours. Working group report sections: need for action; desired outcome; recommendations; process; appendices. Working groups are subunits of the sanctuary advisory council. The council is an advisory body to sanctuary management. The opinions and findings of this document do not necessarily reflect the position of the sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or the State of Hawai'i. Ecosystem Protections Working Group (EPWG) examined definition of ecosystem based management. Members considered 3 management alternatives. Supplemental knowledge: contacted 35 technical experts plus reviewed public input. The EPWG considered several definitions of EBM, drawing on published literature and existing natural resource management plans. Two dimensions: sustainable human uses and ocean habitats and species; ecosystem approach. Native Hawaiian working group: traditional, cultural perspectives unique to each island integrated into mgt. perspectives. [www.hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/management/working\\_groups.html](http://www.hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/management/working_groups.html) Management plan review: recommendations have been submitted to SAC executive committee (officers and working group chairs). Will be brought before the full SAC during January 2012 meeting. **Paul**(question): Where are you with adding more species? **Chow**: It is likely that it will be one of the alternatives that we will consider. **Paul**: You have in your packet a draft letter of support. Take a quick look at it and we can vote to send this letter.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Laura Thompson to approve the letter supporting Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whales National Marine Sanctuary and its management plan review (MPR) process. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

## XII. TOPIC I: MPA FAC (GAFFNEY)

**Gaffney:** The MPA Federal Advisory Committee: background - mandated by Executive Order 13158: consists of thirty appointed members and non-voting ex officio members, diverse membership, current structure: two Subcommittees and one Working Group, committee members are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce, and serve four-year, non-renewable terms, represent a broad stakeholder community, including scientists, academia, commercial fishermen, anglers, divers, state and tribal resource managers, the energy and tourism industries, and environmentalists, among others. Recent accomplishments: committee recommendations on the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) Process (September 2011); committee recommendations on cultural heritage resources in the national system (November 2010); committee recommendations on climate change in the oceans (April 2010); developing an evaluation framework for the National System of MPAs (September 2009 and December 2008);

linking ocean observing systems to the national system (December 2008). Charge - integrating the National System of MPAs with the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Initiative: what role should the national system of MPAs play within the broader CMSP initiative?; how can we ensure that conservation is addressed within regional CMSP plans?; how can NOAA and DOI build on the spatial data and decision support tools used to develop the national system to inform CMSP ? Charge - healthy and resilient MPA communities and land/sea interactions: how can the national system help sustain healthy coastal communities?; how can the national system help support community-based MPAs?; how should the national system address important marine-related resources that are not currently considered “marine environment”? Charge - guiding the development of the cultural heritage track of the national system: how can NOAA and DOI best support the participation of cultural heritage MPAs within the national system?; what factors should NOAA and DOI consider in developing the gap analyses for cultural heritage resources? **Paul**(question): How about participation on the MPA FAC by the military? **Gaffney**: The military does not sit on the MPA FAC.

**MOTION**: A motion was made by Louis “Buzzy” Agard to adopt the RAC Education Resolution. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**MOTION**: A motion was made by Kem Lowry to approve a letter in support of Big Ocean. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**MOTION**: A motion was made by Linda Paul to draft a letter supporting a Discovery Center on Kauai. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**MOTION**: A motion was made by Kem Lowry to approve the intent and primary points of the Resolution Supporting a Ban on Single Use Plastic Bags and requests staff to edit the resolution and circulate the final version via email for approval by the RAC by the end of November. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

### XIII. TOPIC J: CHARTER FOR THE ALLIANCE WORKING GROUP (SCHUG/COLLINS)

**Collins**: Alliance Charter sections: introduction, committee’s official designation, establishment and authority, objectives and roles, agency, support, estimated annual operating costs and staff, designated federal officer, members and officers, appointments, administration, operation, duration, termination, recordkeeping, filing date and other terms of this charter. RAC Alliance Charter Working Group (WG) progress to date: working group has met twice since the beginning of the year; completed edits on the following Charter sections: administration and operation, objectives and bylaws, email WG discussion that developed language for conflict of interest; sections to discuss: members and officers (drafted from Alliance matrix reviewed by RAC), appointments, draft complete document is circulated, yet needs one more meeting for comment.

### XIV. TOPIC K: FRIENDS OF PAPA HĀNAUMOKUĀKEA MNM (KUOHA)

**Kuoha**: Keoni Kuoha, Native Hawaiian Program Specialist PMNM: Background: Friends group started as a class at UH Hilo that was looking at cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural marine biology. Some of the Friends members have been hooked into PMNM because of that experience. They want to continue their relationship with PMNM. Their purpose: to support the work of PMNM, to bring those lessons that we draw from our relationship up there to the main

Hawaiian islands, to provide educational and outreach opportunities here on the main islands and to provide professional development to their members. **Lowry**(question): How does a group sanction themselves as Friends of Papahānaumokuākea? **Bell**: There would be a cooperative agreement or MOU and they would operate under by-laws and a certain structure. **Kuoha**: My impression is that they are focused on supporting the science and research in PMNM and expanding those perspectives and enabling people to gain the experience required to be qualified to be up there and do research. **Hunter**(question): Are they a 501c3? **Kuoha**: They are still working on it. **Wilhelm**: A next potential step could be to agendize this for the next MMB meeting. **Harp**: Maybe they could use Friends of NWHI. **Gaffney**: I think that you are right that the issue is the name. They are using Friends which implies a formal relationship but this group is a hybrid. **Bell**: I think that is wise. Speaking from somebody that has worked with Friends groups for years and it is almost 10% of my job. My sense is that we embrace it, but not sure if it is through the more formal process. **Gaffney**: My thought is to come back with a new name that is culturally based. **Wilhelm**: I'm hearing that maybe the Friends group could come and meet with the RAC or an interagency group and then take it to the MMB and then agendize it at the next RAC meeting. **Harp**(question): Do you know how often the groups meet? **Wilhelm**: I'm not sure how often they meet. I know they have a mini retreat twice a year. **Wilhelm**: Let's commit to have this group sit down with the folks from DOI.

XV. PUBLIC COMMENT – No one from the public volunteered to comment.

#### XVI. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL RAC ACTIONS RELATED TO THE DAY'S AGENDA

**Wilhelm**: For the next agenda: the deferred Maritime Heritage presentation, the Kauai Visitor Center letter of support, any updates on the Friends group from DOI and an update on the solicitation of new RAC members. **Paul**: An extended discussion on the Draft Alliance Charter.