MEMORANDUM FOR: Patricia A. Montanio  
NOAA NEPA Coordinator
FROM: Daniel J. Basta  
Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
SUBJECT: Finding of No Significant Impact for the Environmental Assessment on the issuance of one Research and one Conservation and Management permit in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) -- DECISION MEMORANDUM

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) prepared an environmental assessment (dated October 2014) to evaluate the impacts of conducting vessel operations in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The environmental assessment, entitled, “Environmental Assessment, Florida State University and University of Alaska-Fairbanks, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, Seaward Marine Center, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands” was prepared to provide detailed descriptions on vessel, autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) and multi-beam operations conducted by the Florida State University in partnership with the Texas A&M University onboard the R/V Sikuliaq operated by the University of Alaska-Fairbanks for the purpose of supporting separately permitted research activities in the PMNM. The AUV to be deployed in this project is the AUV Sentry.

The proposed research and conservation and management activities would be conducted in the PMNM and would require one PMNM research permit and one PMNM conservation and management permit issued pursuant to Monument regulations at 50 CFR Part 404. The permits would be issued by NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of Hawai‘i, as Co-Trustee management agencies for the PMNM. NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has drafted the environmental assessment as a basis for this finding of no significant impact for its issuance of one research permit and one conservation and management permit for the activity (proposed action).

Based on the environmental assessment, I have determined that no significant environmental impacts will result from the proposed action. I request your concurrence in this determination by signing below. Please return this memorandum for our files.

TRONVIG.KRISTEN.A.136586012

1. I concur. ____________________________ Date
   for Patricia A. Montanio
2. I do not concur. ____________________________ Date

Attachments