

A Brief History of Public Involvement in the Establishment of Protections for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands

DRAFT



James Watt, courtesy of NOAA

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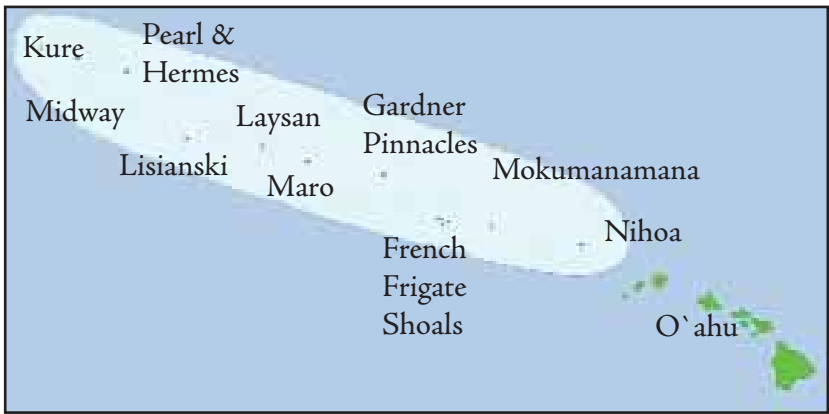


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Contents

PART 1	
The Journey Begins	1
PART 2	
Timeline of Public Input and Participation	4

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands



COVER: The world's entire population of highly endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals consists of approximately 1,300 individuals, found primarily in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

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PART 1

The Journey Begins

“The NWHI play an important role spiritually to our people. These islands and waters are the pathway that the spirits of our ancestors take in their afterlife. After the spirit separates from the body after death, they travel in the ocean in a north-west direction past the islet of Lehua on route to po (creation). These islands, which are remembered as ancestral homelands, provide stopping points in which our ancestors' spirits reside for periods of time. Opening this area up to the general public and commercial fishing will disrupt the sanctity of this area.”

—*Kekuewa Kikiloi (Native Hawaiian Representative to the NWHI Reserve Council) and Kamuela Enos, Comments on proposed plans by the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the NWHI, 2004.*

"We heard loud and clear from the public that they feel that the NWHI is a special place worthy of the highest levels of protection. ... As one of the last pristine wilderness locations on earth, it is only right to consider the long-term preservation of this area and strive to have one place that is free from extraction."

—*Peter Young, Director, Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, upon the signing of stringent NWHI state refuge rules by Governor Linda Lingle, September 29, 2005*

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) are the most isolated archipelago on earth. Stretching over 1200 miles northwest of Kaua'i, these fragile atolls and shoals encompass tremendous biodiversity, including some of the world's oldest living coral colonies. Of great significance in Native Hawaiian culture and history, ancient `oli and mele (chants and songs) tell of the fire goddess Pele and her family traversing the NWHI. According to Native Hawaiian scholars, these remote islands carry a special distinction as ancestral homelands, "places so sacred that they sometimes took on deified characteristics — the ability to float, *Kuaihelani*, or disappear and re-appear, and even move at will, *Kanehunamoku*."²

In 1909, long after Native Hawaiians first recognized the special importance of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, President Teddy Roosevelt issued an Executive Order providing federal protection for the vast, remote archipelago. Almost a century later, President William Clinton announced a national initiative to protect the nation's coral reefs. The White House reached out to the people of Hawai'i and sought their input on how best to protect and manage

(1) Request for additional information. This timeline is a work in progress. We have compiled this information from records available to us. We understand that there are perhaps thousands of additional written comments submitted on the NWHI that we do not have in our files. In addition, we are certain to have missed or overlooked potentially important events. Please send input regarding comments or events that we may have missed or suggested corrections to stephf@environmentaldefense.org

(2) Kekuewa Kikiloi (Native Hawaiian Representative to the NWHI Reserve Council) and Kamuela Enos, Comments on proposed plans by the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the NWHI, 2004.

Abundance and diversity are commonplace among the reefs at French Frigate Shoals in the NWHI.



James Watt, courtesy of NOAA

the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Since that time, the Native Hawaiian community and the general public in Hawai'i have made clear to federal, state, and county officials their overwhelming, consistent, and deep support for the

strongest possible protections for this special place. A wide range of Native Hawaiian community representatives, fishers and cultural practitioners have shaped the extensive public processes to secure strong protections by testifying at more than 30 public hearings, attending over 100 public meetings, supporting resolutions, providing input in numerous consultations, and serving on the Reserve Advisory Council. In recent years, there have been culturally based voyages to the NWHI, events and activities focused on reclaiming the Native Hawaiian right of access and tradition in the Kūpuna Islands.

The people of Hawai'i — led by the Native Hawaiian community, with strong support from fishers, divers, scientists and others — have consistently called for a ban on commercial activities in the NWHI.

In addition, members of the general public, fishers, scientists, divers, environmentalists and others have enthusiastically joined with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners in the efforts to provide the strongest level of protection for this special place. In 2004, over 400 of the world's leading marine scientists from over 250 of the world's most prominent institutions in 68 countries echoed local calls for stringent NWHI protections. During the past five years, over 112,000 letters, faxes and emails have been sent by members of the public to federal and state officials supporting the strongest possible protections for the NWHI.

State of Hawai'i Responds to Public Input

In 2005, Peter Young, the director of Hawai'i's Department of Land and Natural Resources, instructed his agency to design rules for managing state waters in accordance with public input received over several years of hearings.

"The public input on these proposed rules has been overwhelming," said Young, who announced the closure of all NWHI state waters to fishing except for Native Hawaiian traditional use. The new rules strictly limit access, allowing only educational, scientific, non-extractive conservation management and Native Hawaiian uses. The rules, which created the state's largest marine refuge, also require an opportunity for public comment on each permit application. Governor Lingle called the new rules "the most significant marine conservation initiative in the history of Hawai'i," and urged federal authorities to extend the strict protections to include federal waters.

The people of Hawai'i, led by the Native Hawaiian community, have consistently advocated a ban on commercial activities in the NWHI.

Malama I Ka Moana: A Hawaiian-led Process Launches the Debate

In 2000, the White House announced that it was seeking public input into the design of management measures for the NWHI. In July 2000, KAHEA and Environmental Defense launched a community consultation on the NWHI.

Led by kūpuna (respected elders), 65 people from five islands — including Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and community members, commercial and recreational fishermen, divers, scientists, and environmentalists — met for two days and developed *Malama I ka Moana*, a plan to protect this special place. Kūpuna led the meeting and described traditional fishing practices including kapu (restrictions) and malama ko`a (feeding and caring for fish to attract them). They urged full closure to commercial fishing, based on their experience with the NWHI.

A Native Hawaiian commercial fisherman from Maui presented a proposed protection plan for the NWHI. A local coral reef expert, diver and environmentalist presented a draft statement of protection principles. After substantial debate and discussion, the group used these documents as the basis for a consensus-based *Malama I ka Moana* plan for the NWHI. After garnering massive public support through a series of federal hearings, the plan became the backbone of the NWHI Executive Order issued in 2000, establishing the 84-million-acre NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

NWHI hui

The NWHI hui emerged from the public participation process as a broad network of kūpuna (some with ties to the NWHI for over half a century), cultural practitioners, fishers, scientists, divers, and local citizens associated with `Ilio`ulaokalani Coalition, Environmental Defense, KAHEA, and Sierra Club — focusing on the protection of our kūpuna islands, the NWHI. Working together for the past five years, the hui has been dedicated to broadening and ensuring transparency of the public process. This has been accomplished by analyzing documents, briefing decision makers, developing educational materials, fostering national partners and ensuring public participation at every opportunity.

Through the hui's ongoing outreach and educational efforts, the public has maintained a high level of involvement in protecting the NWHI. The hui has been able to provide information on the NWHI to a wide range of people, enabling citizens to voice their opinions through appearances at public hearings and by sending letters, faxes and emails to federal and state decision-makers. It is testimony to the great importance of the NWHI to Hawai`i's people that public interest has remained high throughout the process, which has spanned over 30 hearings and scoping sessions and more than 100 public meetings. As the sanctuary designation process unfolds and progress is made towards the establishment of a fully protected Refuge in federal waters, continued public support and input remains of the utmost importance.

In the NWHI, large predators such as sharks make up 54 percent of all shallow water fish biomass. By contrast, in the heavily fished shallow waters of the Main Hawaiian Islands, large predators represent only 3 percent of the fish biomass.



James Watt, courtesy of NOAA

Timeline of Public Input and Participation

Ancient rock shrines line the spine of fish-hook shaped Mokumanamana Island.



Andy Collins/NOAA

Early Native Hawaiian Protection and Land claims

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands are of great significance in Native Hawaiian culture and history. Ancient 'oli and mele (chants and songs) tell of the fire goddess Pele and her family traversing the NWHI and stopping there on their way to the Main Hawaiian Islands. Throughout history, Native Hawaiians have been deeply involved in reclaiming and protecting the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. In 1822, Queen Ka'ahumanu formally annexed Nihoa to the Kingdom of Hawai'i and along with numerous other members of the royal family sailed to Nihoa. King Kamehameha IV dispatched a ship to sail up the chain of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and authorized all lands to be included in the Kingdom. He sailed to Nihoa in 1857 and, again, reaffirmed that the islands were part of the Kingdom territory. In 1885, Queen Liliu'okalani and an entourage made the voyage to Nihoa.

Repatriation of iwi

November 1997 — Members of *Hui Malama I Na Kūpuna O Hawai'i Nei* sail to Nihoa to repatriate and re-inter the iwi (bones) of nine ancestors who had been taken to Bishop Museum by archeologist Kenneth Emory in 1923. This voyage recognizes the cultural importance of Nihoa and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands as a vital part of the Island chain. Two Hawaiians who take part in this voyage later serve on the Reserve Advisory Council of the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

Lack of public input on Wespac plans for commercial fishing in the NWHI

January 1998 — The federally-funded Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Wespac) holds poorly publicized "public meetings" in Kaua'i and O'ahu to seek input on fishing plans for the Mau Zone of the NWHI. Only two members of the public attend each brief meeting. The pattern of poor public attendance at Wespac "public meetings" on the NWHI is the generally norm and is repeated throughout the following years.

Wreck of the Paradise Queen at Kure. The bodies of two monk seals were spotted among piles of nets surrounding the decaying wheel house on the beach.



Shipwrecks of commercial fishing vessels at Kure, Pearl and Hermes — monk seal deaths

October, 1998 — One of six federally-permitted NWHI lobster vessels, Paradise Queen II, (an uninsured longline boat), shipwrecks on the reefs at Kure Atoll, discharging 4,000 - 5,000 gallons of diesel into the water. Two years later, a research team finds the bodies of two monk seals among piles of nets surrounding the decaying wheel house on the beach. The researchers also discover coral damage from abandoned lobster traps and lead weights.

June, 2000 — The 85 foot longliner, Swordsman II, shipwrecks at Pearl and Hermes Reef, one of the main monk seal pupping sites. Over 2200 gallons of fuel is spilled. Note: longlining has

"There seems to be a great concern by some about vessel groundings [in the NWHI]. .. and other than unsightliness, these groundings cause minimal insignificant environmental damage. ... In fact, if they're left on the reef, they develop a historical value."

— Tom Webster,
Wespac member,
testifying at federal
NWHI hearing, 2000

been banned from the NWHI for close to a decade. Wespac member Tom Webster would later testify at a federal hearing in Honolulu on the NWHI:

"There seems to be a great concern by some about vessel groundings [in the NWHI]. .. and other than unsightliness, [they] cause minimal insignificant environmental damage. ... In fact, if they're left on the reef, they develop a historical value."

Kupuna, fishers, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, scientists produce community management plan for NWHI

July 2000 — Kūpuna lead a two day community meeting on O`ahu, sponsored by KAHEA and Environmental Defense. Sixty-five people from five islands meet to determine protection needs for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Isaac Harp, a Native Hawaiian bottomfish fisherman from Maui presents a proposed protection plan for the NWHI. Dave Raney, a diver and environmentalist presents a draft statement of protection principles. After substantial debate, the group uses these documents as the basis for a consensus-based plan for the NWHI titled, Malama I ka Moana. This plan later — after garnering massive public support through a series of federal hearings — becomes the backbone of the NWHI Executive Order issued in 2000, establishing the 84-million-acre NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

July/August 2000 — The White House requests public input and proposals for management and protection of the NWHI through series of federal "visioning" meetings held throughout the islands. More than 430 people attend the meetings and 1,100 submit written comments. A vast majority indicates a desire for strong protection of the NWHI. One third of the comments specify support for the Malama I Ka Moana community plan.

Community concern expressed about plans to place proposed NWHI Reserve under jurisdiction of Department of Commerce

October 2000 — 5,556 people send letters and faxes to Hawai'i's congressional delegation and the Clinton White House encouraging support for the declaration of the proposed NWHI Reserve as a national monument, housed under the Department of Interior. Concerns are raised about apparent plans to place the Reserve under the Department of Commerce which also oversees Wespac.

October 2000 — Native Hawaiian groups, backed by conservation organizations representing over two million members, write to the chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality urging creation of permanent protections, including no-take reserves around each of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. They also express support for national monument status and concern that designation of NWHI under National Marine Sanctuary Program will not provide adequate protections. Organizations include `Ilio`ulokalani Coalition, KAHEA, Environmental Defense, Kohanaiki `Ohana, Cousteau Society, Center for Marine Conservation, Marine Conservation Biology Institute, National Audubon Society's Living Oceans Program, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceanwatch, Pacific Whale Foundation, and World Wildlife Fund.

Wespac Launches Disinformation Campaign about Proposed Reserve

Wespac fabricates (and presents to federal and state officials and the news media) claims about the "great negative socio-economic impacts" of the proposed NWHI protection measures. Wespac succeeds in obtaining a congressional amendment to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act instructing the president to place the proposed NWHI Reserve under the Department of Commerce and stipulating that additional public comment must be obtained prior to the designation of any permanently closed areas in NWHI. The amendment also calls for a Reserve Advisory Council and the initiation of a designation process for National Marine Sanctuary (NMS). Senate staff call the amendment a "mini-Antiquities Act" designed to create a new kind of sanctuary that is "as strong as a national monument." They claim that the proposed NWHI sanctuary will be "like no other," despite the weak track record of the NMS program throughout the country, as evidenced by the spectacularly weak Humpback Whale NMS in Hawai'i. They make note of the fact that language stipulates that the president initiate, but not necessarily complete, a designation process, which includes the possibility of a "no sanctuary" option.

November 2000 — NWHI hui members, including Native Hawaiian fishers, travel to Washington, D.C., to educate lawmakers and agency representatives about the positive environmental, social and economic impacts of the closures for the NWHI, underscoring the fact that the proposed closed areas are too small and should be enlarged. They bring news about the outpouring of public support for strong protections and present evidence of Wespac's campaign to overstate the economic costs of the proposed NWHI Reserve.

November 2000 — The Hawai'i Congressional delegation and then-Governor Cayetano receive faxes from 5,781 people, urging strong protections for the region and call for the creation of a national monument under the Department of Interior, expressing concerns about potential placement of the proposed protected area under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce.

NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Established

December 2000 — Hui members return to Washington, D.C. at the invitation of the White House to participate in the signing ceremony for the NWHI Executive Order. Native Hawaiian subsistence fisher Tammy Harp, wife of Isaac Harp (bottomfish fisher and author of the draft NWHI protection plan) has the honor of making opening remarks and introducing the President at the signing ceremony. Native Hawaiian kūpuna and fisherman, Louis "Uncle Buzzy" Agard joins Secretary of Commerce, Norman Minetta, Peter Benchley, National Geographic Society President John Fahey and Tammy Harp on stage for this historic ceremony marking the creation of the largest protected area in U.S. history.

Executive Order 13178 is signed by Bill Clinton, establishing the 84-million-acre Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve. Developed by the White House after consulting with the Departments of Commerce and Interior, the State of Hawai'i and Wespac and receiving public comment, the E.O. identifies "long term conservation and protection" of the ecosystem and species "in their natural character" as the principal purpose and primary management principle of the Reserve. The EO provides important protections for federal waters, based on a clearly defined precautionary approach, sharply limits fishing, and ensures that Native Hawaiian cultural rights and access are protected. It establishes a Reserve Advisory Council, and specifies contents of a Reserve Operations Plan. The E.O. states that a process of sanctuary designation may be initiated and that, should a sanctuary be established, it must "supplement or complement" the protection measures established by the E.O. It also stipulates that the Reserve will supplement and complement the existing Department of Interior Wildlife Refuge protections.

Permanently Closed Protected Areas Established

December 2000 — Public hearings on the proposed permanent closure of protected areas are held on five main Hawaiian Islands and in Washington, D.C. Over 250 people attend hearings held throughout the islands and an overwhelming majority testifies in support of strong protections. Approximately 8,400 written comments are submitted to officials, with less than 1% saying that the proposed closures are too restrictive. Many state that the closures are far too limited and stress the need for strong enforcement measures.

January 2001 — Executive Order 13196 is issued for the purpose of making the Reserve Protection Area closures permanent. More than half of the small number of those testifying in opposition to the closures at the Honolulu hearing are Wespac staff, members and associates, including the executive director, a former chair and a former high-ranking NOAA official, who had retired less than twelve months prior to the hearing. The former NOAA attorney, who had served as Wespac's counsel, flew to Honolulu to testify at the federal hearing designed by the White House and NOAA to seek local input. The size of some of the (small) closed areas proposed in the first executive order is further reduced at the request of Wespac and the state Department of Land and Natural Resources.

The NWHI Reserve Council established and provides safeguards to guarantee public involvement

February 16, 2001 — The NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (RAC) meets for the first time. In contrast to Wespac rules, the RAC charter incorporates strong conflict of interest language; members may be removed for violating conservation and fishing regula-

The majority of highly endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals depend upon the undisturbed beaches of the NWHI for their breeding grounds.



Jim Maragos/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

tions. Voting members include three representatives of the Native Hawaiian community (including one kupuna), three representatives of the conservation community, three non-federal governmental marine researchers, a commercial fisherman, recreational fisherman, an ocean related tourism representative, an educational representative, one

citizen-at-large and one member representing the state of Hawai'i. Federal government representatives are non-voting. NOAA fails to brief the RAC adequately on the details of the NWHI executive orders that established the Council and provide the basis for RAC action. As a result, Environmental Defense is invited by Council members to present a briefing on the Executive Orders and the remarkable mandate of conservation and Native Hawaiian cultural recognition underpinning the new NWHI Reserve.

The RAC, with NWHI hui members and sympathizers at the table, develops into a strong proponent for the protection of the NWHI through an open and public process. The Council sets up Working Groups which are open to participation by members of the public and include a Cultural Working Group, drawn from the Native Hawaiian community and tasked with describing the cultural importance and history of the NWHI, identifying threats to cultural resources and developing protection measures. The Cultural Working Group proposes the strongest possible protections for the NWHI and contributes to two consultations within the Hawaiian community. Other significant Working Groups are formed to provide recommendations to the RAC regarding the Reserve Operations Plan, regulations, enforcement, fishing issues, research, and education. Newly appointed RAC members, mindful of the crucial role of public input, insist on the Working Group format — allowing full participation by members of the public — instead of a "Subcommittee" format proposed by NOAA staff which allows input solely by RAC members, blocking participation by members of the public.

Wespac Launches Lobbying Campaign for Repeal of NWHI Executive Orders

February/March 2001 — Wespac ghostwrites letters falsely claiming that the NWHI Reserve causes "great negative socioeconomic impacts" for the state of Hawai'i, and that the EOs "could destroy virtually all other existing and potential fisheries in federal waters surrounding Hawai'i." They successfully urge state Republican leaders, including Linda Lingle, then head of Hawai'i's Republican Party and now governor, to use their letter to lobby the Secretary of Commerce, calling for the annulment of the EOs to allow for increased commercial fishing. The letters and Wespac's lobbying campaign remain hidden from the public for several months until leaked by sympathetic officials concerned about the derailing of the public process and the propriety of federal funds being utilized for lobbying efforts.

A NOAA mapping vessel touches bottom and "kisses" a NWHI reef while attempting to verify a depth map provided by a permitted bottomfisher. No survey of damage is reported to the public.

June 2001 — The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) administrator visits Hawai'i and instructs local NGOs to meet him at Wespac office to discuss NWHI. The NWHI hui rejects the Wespac office as inappropriate for a civil society meeting, and changes the meeting site to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Environmental Defense presents evidence of Wespac's manipulation of economic data and an analysis of their misleading claims, and urges NOAA to reject efforts to repeal the NWHI executive orders. The Bush administration holds the orders "under review" but does not repeal them.

RAC recommends strong NWHI management measures (enforcement, access permits), recognition of Native Hawaiian Cultural Heritage

June 2001 — The NWHI Reserve Advisory Council submits 49 pages of detailed comments to NOS on the agency's weak Draft Reserve Operations Plan, including detailed statements on the importance of the NWHI to Native Hawaiian culture and history developed by the RAC Cultural Working Group, the need for immediate and stringent enforcement measures, access permits and routine surveillance of the area.

August 2001 — Edward Timmone, a federally permitted bottomfisher presents a series of maps to the RAC and proposes that his maps form the basis for the newly established closed Reserve areas. According to Timmone, the maps have been generated by a computer program he developed to combine GPS data with depth-finder data. Timmone proposes that his maps — showing the smallest possible closure areas — become the basis for determining the 25 fathom and 100 fathom closed area designations. The vessel Midway, on a NOAA georeferencing (mapping) survey of the NWHI, attempts to verify the Timmone 25 fathom depth charts but instead, touches bottom and "kisses" a reef. Later, it turns out that the Timmone maps had been altered to obscure certain favorite shallow-water fishing sites. The maps do not consistently reflect actual depth readings. No report is made to the public regarding any survey of damage to the site as a result of the accident with NOAA mapping vessel.

August 2001 — Hui notifies the public about Wespac attempts lobby for the annulment or weakening of the NWHI EOs and warns about NOAA's weak stance regarding NWHI protections. More than 17,000 people send faxes to the secretary of Commerce, underscoring support for the NWHI Executive Orders. "Hands Off the E.O.s" and "support strong protections" are the messages.

Head of Hawai'i Republican Party cites public input and calls for federal support for Executive Orders

September 2001 — Environmental Defense arranges for Linda Lingle, head of Hawai'i Republican Party, soon to be elected governor of Hawai'i, to meet with Native Hawaiian fishers, a seafood processing industry representative, cultural practitioners, scientists and environmentalists urge withdrawal of her March letter to the secretary of commerce containing Wespac's ghostwritten lobbying statement and calling for annulment of EOs. In October, after two meetings, Lingle writes to the commerce secretary, and, in a show of extraordinary political courage and commitment to an open and public process, withdraws her call to reverse the EOs. Based on new information, she urges strong support for EOs and the Reserve Council. She cites the significant public support for the protection measures and the design of the Reserve by "Hawai'i's fishermen, cultural practitioners and ordinary citizens" as reasons for her support for NWHI protections.

November 2001 — Concerned by six months of silence from the National Oceans Service (NOS) regarding the Reserve Operations Plan, and the lack of enforcement for Reserve provisions, hui members and non-governmental organizations representing over 1.5 million people write to the Secretary of Commerce expressing concern about NOAA's delay in releasing the Draft Operations Plan. KAHEA, Environmental Defense, Hawai'i Fishing and Boating Association, Sierra Club, Earthjustice, Oceana, American Oceans Campaign, Marine Conservation Biology Institute, Surfrider Foundation, Natural Resources Defense Council, The Ocean Conservancy, and National Environmental Trust sign the letter.

Many — including the Congressional Representative whose district includes the NWHI — question whether the proposed Sanctuary will provide appropriate protections for these islands. To date, measures proposed by the sanctuary program have been weaker than those proposed by the State of Hawai'i.

Department of Land and Natural Resources proposes to establish "Fishery Management Area" in NWHI state waters, surrounded by protected Reserve waters

February 2002 — The State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) — which has never exercised its jurisdiction in the NWHI — holds its first round of public hearings on a proposed Fishery Management Plan for state waters in the NWHI. The DLNR proposes to set up a permitting system to allow fishing in shallow reefs and lagoons surrounded by protected or closed federal waters of the NWHI Reserve and does little to protect essential habitat of the Hawaiian monk seal. The NWHI hui sounds the alarm and the public responds immediately by rejecting the proposed regulations at well-attended hearings throughout the islands. In addition to overwhelming oral testimony at every hearing in favor of strong protection, hundreds of people send letters, emails and faxes rejecting the state's plan. DLNR responds by withdrawing the fishery plan and agrees to replace it with a plan for a protected Refuge for state waters.

NOS releases weak Reserve Operations Plan

March 2002 — NOS releases an error-riddled Draft Reserve Operations Plan that fails to provide the most basic protections for the NWHI. The plan does not appear to meet the requirements of the EOs, contains no regulations necessary for enforcement, and rejects most of the 49 pages of RAC input, including enforcement, permitting, and access measures. It also ignores descriptions of the Native Hawaiian cultural importance of the NWHI instead, focusing on the history of U.S. military, Coast Guard, and European trader use. It removes an earlier statement about the need to protect endangered Hawaiian monk seals. After a presentation by Environmental Defense detailing the flaws in the Reserve Operations Plan, the RAC approves a resolution requesting NOAA to re-write the plan so that it provides for lasting protection for the NWHI in accordance with the EOs and recognizes the cultural and historical importance of the NWHI to the Native Hawaiian community.

April 2002 — Over 4,700 people write to NOS urging rejection of the proposed Reserve Operations Plan and insisting that it be redrafted to meet the needs of the resource and the protection measures established by the Executive Order.

May 2002 — Over 4,570 people write to Wespac in opposition to its plans to harvest deep-sea coral and coral reef fish in the NWHI. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) later responds by rejecting Wespac's coral harvesting plans for the NWHI, declaring that they conflict with the NWHI Executive Orders. Despite this, Wespac — as recently as December 2005 — continues to propose coral harvesting and reef fishing for the NWHI.

Sanctuary Designation Process Begins

The National Marine Sanctuary Program initiates a sanctuary designation process (still ongoing) to determine if the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve should be designated as one of 13 National Marine Sanctuaries, and if so, what protection measures will be adopted to protect the Kūpuna Islands. The designation process requires the development of an Environmental Impact Statement. Although the Executive Orders stipulate that any sanctuary, should one be established, must "complement and supplement" — that is, add to or expand — existing protections, NOAA officials indicate that they are likely to actually reduce some of the existing protections and, in order to do so, may attempt to repeal the EOs. The National Marine Sanctuary Program was first introduced to Hawai'i with the establishment of the controversial and largely ineffectual Humpback Whale Sanctuary. In addition, there has been a five year history of Sanctuary Program management of the NWHI Reserve, featuring a lack of enforcement and surveillance as well as the lack of a requirement for the inspection of vessels — including NOAA's own vessels — for alien species contamination prior to departing for the NWHI. Many — including the Congressional Representative whose district includes the NWHI — question whether the proposed Sanctuary option will provide appropriate protections for these islands. To date, measures proposed by the sanctuary program have been weaker than those proposed by the State of Hawai'i. NOAA has also been remarkably impervious to public input.

May 2002 — The Sanctuary designation process formally begins with scoping hearings sponsored by NOAA on four islands. Over 1,000 people attend these meetings and share their concerns and ideas about how the NWHI should be protected. The outcome has never been fully reported to the public. Hui members attended every meeting and carefully recorded the results, which indicate overwhelming support for closing the area to commercial fishing and for preventing any further degradation of the area. The hui has records of written testimony submitted to NOAA by over 11,100 people. NOAA initially presents the Reserve Council with a peculiar list of issues that it claims represents the public input obtained during the scoping process. An Environmental Defense analysis, however, shows that NOAA's "issues list" fails to record 21 major categories of concerns raised in written testimony, including apprehension about Wespac and NOAA management, the overfishing and crash of the NWHI lobster fishery, the impacts of bottomfishing and coral harvesting, the need to enforce the EOs, the need for an access permitting system, and the need to monitor NOS. After criticism by the RAC and the public about the whitewashing of the public comment process, NOAA withdraws its "issues list", cancels its announced plans to have the RAC scrutinize the results of public input and prioritize the issues so that they may be built into the proposed sanctuary management plan. NOS never does provide a full report on the results of public scoping process.

June 2002 — Hui members travel to Washington, DC., and call on NOAA to reject Wespac plans to harvest reef fish, which violate the EOs.

May 2003 — Scientists echo public call for conservation-oriented management measures. Over 100 scientists met in Honolulu, at the invitation of NOAA, to identify data and research priorities for the management of the NWHI. The scientists identify vessel traffic as a major threat to the ecosystem with substantial risk of shipwrecks and the potential for the introduction of invasive species. They identify the tracking and analysis of all vessel traffic in the Reserve as a crucial conservation and management need for the NWHI. They also state that the "lack of knowledge of number, type, and impacts of vessels transiting, visiting, and working in NWHI" poses a significant problem and propose a "surveillance system to provide data on ship numbers, traffic patterns, and ship board or ship based activities" and "a unified permitting system to provide data on research and use activities, personnel numbers, cargo, and limit negative impacts of ship board and resource use operations, especially discharges, anchorages, and ecosystem disruption", echoing earlier calls by the public and the RAC.

Wespac launches fishery management plans proposing violations of Executive Orders, expansion of fishing, opening of lobster fishery, initiation of coral harvesting in NWHI Reserve

June 2003 — Over 1500 people send letters, faxes and emails to Secretary of Commerce insisting that Wespac's proposed fishery management plan for the NWHI reflect the law.

RAC again proposes strong Reserve Operations Plan

June 2003 — The Reserve Advisory Council submits a strong Reserve Operations Plan draft to NOAA National Oceans Service.

NOAA Purge of RAC and Secret Meetings

August 2003 — Half of the RAC was appointed to serve three-year terms. The other half, including two-thirds of the RAC leadership (vice chair and secretary), serve two-year terms, which have now expired. NOAA cancels the August RAC meeting, which is required to be open to the public, and replaces it with two private conference calls to which only members of the RAC with unexpired terms are invited. No minutes are provided to the public. NOAA then purges key RAC leaders and NWHI hui members by refusing to renew their two year terms, removing the "civilian" (non-agency) leadership structure of the RAC (vice chair and secretary) as well as a Conservation Alternate and others whose terms had expired. The RAC Conservation Member and Alternate who were removed represented a constituency of 7,000 Hawai'i residents and over a million members nationwide. They had been outspoken in their insistence that any

Members of the public are not allowed to attend the secret RAC meeting and no minutes are provided to the public.

proposed Sanctuary must not weaken existing protections and must follow EO requirements that any Sanctuary must complement or supplement the Reserve.

More Secret Meetings

August 2003 — After canceling the August RAC meeting, the Sanctuary Program quietly initiates a planned series of 21 invitation-only "fisheries discussion" meetings which had apparently been discussed on the private RAC phone calls. No public notice is provided regarding the meetings. However, emails are sent to a handful of federal and state agency representatives, including Wespac, Wespac-permitted fishers, the National Marine Fisheries Service and five non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The emails state that the meetings, run by NOAA consultants, Sustainable Resources Group, International (SRG), are "open to the public" but "the discussions are not designed to be opportunities for soliciting input from the general public." The five invited NGO representatives do not include NWHI hui founding members, Environmental Defense or KAHEA. Most have never been involved in NWHI protection work. At the first meeting, despite NOAA's recent rejection of coral harvesting and a "coral reef ecosystem fishery" for the NWHI (citing conflicts with the NWHI executive orders), NOS Sanctuary staff present Wespac plans for harvesting coral, operating a NWHI "coral reef ecosystem fishery" and a lobster fishery as "current zoning objectives" for the proposed NWHI sanctuary. Environmental Defense videotapes the first two meetings. At the insistence of a consultant, who is later fired, NOAA allows the videotaping and allows SRG to open up the meetings for greater transparency and input.

“We are here to reclaim that Nihoa, Mokumanamana and the islands beyond were part of our pae'aina — the island chain ... this is part of our one hanau — our birth sands.”

—*Kamana'o Crabbe*

“This is a protocol issue because the islands are, in Hawaiian creation theory, the preceding people, like older ancestors. The relationship is that of a younger sibling to an older sibling.”

—*Halealoha Ayau, former RAC member*



Hokule'a's First Voyage to NWHI

September 2003 — Ten Hawaiians sail on the Hokule'a (Polynesian Voyaging Society's canoe) to reclaim and reestablish connection with the mana (energy) of Nihoa. On this voyage, legends of Pele and her family originating in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands are recalled.

Ku I Ka Pono march

Close to 10,000 people gather in Waikiki in a massive display of Native Hawaiian unity in support of Native Hawaiian rights and entitlements and the protection of natural and cultural resources. In response to a call by `Ilio`ulaokalani Coalition for the Ku I Ka Pono march for Hawaiian justice, most of the

Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine, President of 'Ilio'ulaokalani Coalition, and one of the key organizers of the Ku I Ka Pono marches, addresses a crowd of 10,000, wearing the trademark red 'Ilio T-shirt. The streets of Waikiki were shut down because of the crowds.
Photo: S. Fried



demonstrators wear red shirts, symbolizing Native Hawaiian blood and aweoweo, a school of small, red fish that is seen as predicting a significant change. The streets of Waikiki are closed to traffic by the sea of red-clad protesters. Governor Lingle addresses the crowd and joins the march.

NOAA Research Consultants Advise Against Commercial Fishing in NWHI

October 2003 — SRG, International, contracted by NOAA to gather and review all available data on fishing in the NWHI completes 18 meetings

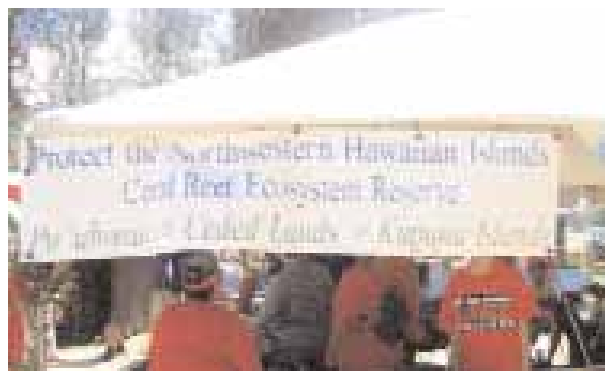
with a range of interest groups over a period of four months. They met with over 50 people including fishermen, scientists, Native Hawaiian kupuna and cultural practitioners, gathering information on traditional knowledge of currents and larval recruitment from the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, fishing practices, and cultural practices. Kupuna emphasize that commercial fishing is not appropriate for the NWHI. SRG holds meetings designed to seek scientific and constituent input on lobster, bottomfish, reef fish, pelagic, subsistence fishing and deep sea coral harvesting. Their results lead them to recommend against any consideration of commercial fishing operations in the NWHI. NOS staff immediately attempt to bury the SRG report and prevent SRG from presenting its findings to the RAC. The NWHI hui arranges for an SRG briefing for RAC members and widely publicizes the report, circulating it to local and national officials.

November, 2003 — The Association of Civic Clubs — a confederation of 47 Hawaiian Civic Clubs — passes a resolution at its annual meeting, held in Kaua'i, calling for the strongest possible protections for the NWHI and for ensuring that none of the EO provisions are weakened. Civic clubs are the oldest community-based Hawaiian organization in Hawai'i, formed in 1918 by Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

March 2004 — *E Mau Ke 'ea-NWHI*, a film addressing fishing in the NWHI and the public process to protect these Islands is produced by 'Ilio'ulaokalani Coalition on 'Olelo Public Broadcasting. The half hour program featuring Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine, Native Hawaiian fisherman Isaac Harp and scientist Stephanie Fried from Environmental Defense, covers a range of topics.

Hokule'a's second voyage: Entire NWHI archipelago

May 2004 — In a historic voyage, the Hokule'a traverses all of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands carrying a crew of 13 people. This Navigating Change effort retraces the path of ancient voyages using traditional navigational techniques, and stops at each island for ceremony and chants to reestablish connection with the NWHI. The voyage is widely covered by local daily newspapers.



NOAA releases flawed NWHI Reserve Operations Plan RAC, public call for changes.

May 2004 — Despite detailed input by the Reserve Advisory Council, NOAA insists on releasing a deeply flawed Reserve

Despite detailed input by the Reserve Advisory Council, NOAA insists on releasing a deeply flawed Reserve Operations Plan which does not fulfill the conservation requirements of the NWHI Executive Orders. Over 25,800 people send letters of protest to NOAA, urging the re-writing of the plan.

NWHI banner at Ku I Ka Pono march.
Photo: S. Fried

Governor Linda Lingle, with Lt. Governor James "Duke" Aiona at her side, addresses the crowd assembled for the 2003 Ku I Ka Pono march for Hawaiian rights. Photo: S. Fried



Operations Plan. Over 25,800 people submit comments to NOAA highlighting the fact that new proposed Reserve Operations Plan (ROP) does not meet the EO requirements and fails to provide for sufficient enforcement, surveillance and permitting measures to ensure conservation. The public urges that the ROP be amended, as outlined in RAC comments, calling attention to NOS refusal to issue regulations. and the public also urges the publication of Federal Register notices regarding fishing caps, closed-area boundaries, penalties for Reserve violations and the initiation of a mandatory access permit system.

Research, fishing and cruise ship traffic are identified as significant threats to the ecosystem, with the potential for the introduction of alien species to the remote and fragile region.

442 Scientists from 68 countries, Jean-Michel Cousteau call for NWHI protections

July 2004 — AAAt the Tenth Annual International Coral Reef Symposium (June 28 - July 2, 2004) held in Okinawa, Japan, by the International Society for Reef Studies (ISRS), 442 of the world's leading coral reef scientists from over 250 research institutes, universities, museums and governmental agencies sign a statement calling for immediate and stringent protection for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Citing the uniqueness of the NWHI as one of the planet's last remaining large-scale relatively intact coral reef ecosystems, scientists call for international, federal and state agencies to take all actions necessary to protect the ecological integrity and natural character of the NWHI. Measures include the enforcement of existing conservation measures and a precautionary approach to decision- making. Jean-Michel Cousteau writes a letter calling upon federal and state authorities to ensure the strongest possible protections, recognizing Native Hawaiian rights and calling for no commercial fishing in the NWHI. Jean-Michel Cousteau writes a letter calling upon federal and state authorities to ensure the strongest possible protections, recognizing Native Hawaiian rights and calling for no commercial fishing in the NWHI.

DLNR Responds to Public Input made during 2002 Hearings and Proposes Refuge for State NWHI Waters

July/August 2004 — After resounding rejection at state hearings of a proposed DLNR "Fishery Management Area" for state waters of the NWHI in 2002, and after more analysis of economic data, and new scientific findings, DLNR initiates a new round of five public hearings on four islands regarding a fresh proposal for a protective Refuge for state waters in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The NWHI hui alerts the public about the hearings and more than 100 people attend. Native Hawaiian community representatives lead public comment by calling for no commercial activities in NWHI, strict limits on public access, no recreational fishing, and respect for Native Hawaiian traditional practices and subsistence rights. Native Hawaiian graduate students from University of Hawai'i Center for Hawaiian Studies, Kekuewa Kikilo (also a RAC member) and Kamuela Enos, articulate a cultural perspective in a white paper circulated throughout the islands prior to the hearings:

"Our position: Access to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands by the general public should be limited. Any State Refuge plan should NOT allow commercial activities or exploitation of resources within the boundaries of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands."

These sentiments are echoed by vast majority testifying at hearings across the state, including fishers, scientists, University of Hawai'i professors, writers, a Hokule'a crew member, representatives of the tourism industry, environmental groups, employees of the Waikiki Aquarium, Sea Life Park and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Only four individuals testify at hearings in support of commercial fishing. No other support for any sort of commercial activity is voiced at any of the hearings. Over 24,000 people submit written comments, echoing Native Hawaiian position

Native Hawaiian community representatives lead public comment by calling for no commercial activities in NWHI, strict limits on public access, no commercial or recreational fishing, and respect for Native Hawaiian traditional practices.

At five public hearings held throughout the islands and attended by over 100 people, only four individuals testified in support of commercial activities in the NWHI.

Ku I Ka Pono:
Close to 18,000
people march
through the streets
of Waikiki carrying
signs reading
"Protect Mauna
Kea, Pohakuloa,
the Northwestern
Hawaiian Islands."
Photo: Ka Leo Staff
Photographer Tony
Blazejack



and call for strongest possible protections.

August 2004 — A Native Hawaiian consultation workshop, facilitated by Kia`i Kai Project and coordinated by NOAA, is held at Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai`i. The workshop, attended by 29 kupuna, cultural practitioners, fishers and other Native Hawaiian community leaders, is designed to seek input on culturally appropriate activities

for the NWHI. Recommendations: prohibit commercial activities, including the selling of resources or profit-driven activities; prohibit recreational fishing; allow Native Hawaiian traditional cultural practices; and create a Konohiki Council comprised of representatives from federal and state agencies, universities, cultural practitioners, kupuna, resource managers to oversee and review cultural appropriateness of all access to NWHI. Half of the Konohiki Council members are to be Native Hawaiian. The importance of enforcement is stressed by attendees.

September 2004 — Ku I Ka Pono march for Native Hawaiian rights. Close to 18,000 people shut down the main Waikiki thoroughfare in a march in support of Native Hawaiian rights. Most of the marchers wear red T-shirts from the `Ilio`ulaokalani Coalition featuring calls for protection of ancestral remains and the culturally important sites of Mauna Kea, Pohakuloa and the NWHI. Protesters carry signs reading "Protect Mauna Kea, Pohakuloa, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands."

Kitty Simonds
scowls at mem-
bers of the public
testifying at a
January 2005
Wespac hearing,
in this series of
pictures pub-
lished in the
Honolulu Weekly.



January 2005 — Wespac launches radio and print advertisement campaign falsely claiming threats to Native Hawaiian fishing rights in NWHI and urges attendance at "public meetings" on fishing in NWHI. Wespac does not,

however, file notice in the Federal Register about the meetings, despite claims to have done so. The meetings are advertised by radio only a few days prior to their occurrence. Over 100 people show up at the O`ahu meeting on fishing in NWHI, yet only 18 testify: three in support of Wespac's proposed fishing plans and 15 against plans for commercial extraction.

A total of approximately 60 testify throughout the islands, with the overwhelming majority supporting strong protections and opposing extraction in NWHI, except for Native Hawaiian traditional use. Native Hawaiian fishers clarify that commercial fishing in NWHI is not a traditional Hawaiian cultural practice.

Noted cultural historians Kepa and Onaona Maly, who spent thirty years conducting interviews of Native Hawaiian kupuna (elder) fishers throughout the islands for a range of state, federal and private historic preservation programs, submit testimony to Wespac summarizing their decades of research with kupuna on fishing practices and over 2000 pages of documentation. Kepa earlier served as a consultant to NOS and presented mana'o (opinions) of the kupuna interviewed over decades.

"A) Subsistence fishing should be allowed and will continue. Kupuna felt strongly that the use of ocean resources in the Na Moku `Aha [NWHI] is not only a part of their cultural identity, but it is also their responsibility, their kuleana. In their view, subsistence use includes the idea that you take only what you need but you also give back.

B) Future commercial use of the waters and resources of Na Moku `Aha should not be allowed. It is not culturally appropriate, nor economically or ecologically sustainable."

Protect our ancestral remains and Mauna Kea, Pohakuloa, the NWHI and Aīi trust lands. Photo: Elele, Ku I Ka Pono 2005 Blog.



May 2005 —The Board of Land and Natural Resources unanimously recommends creation of a strong state refuge, banning fishing throughout all state NWHI waters except for Native Hawaiian traditional use, strictly limiting access to state waters of NWHI solely for the purposes of science, education, Native Hawaiian traditional use, and non-extractive conservation and management. Testimony by Native Hawaiian fishers, cultural practitioners, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Fred Hemmings, a Republican state legislator representing the NWHI, divers, environmentalists all support the new state rules.

Oversight of the state permitting process is urged. The DLNR chair indicates in a formal statement that the public's strong support was a critical factor in convincing the state to propose this visionary model of protection for state waters. New rules go to the governor's office for her approval.

May 2005 — U. S. Representative Ed Case cites overwhelming public input and special needs of NWHI, and proposes NWHI Refuge Act for federal waters, similar to visionary protections established by the state for state waters. He also calls for protection of natural resources and cultural heritage as exclusive basis for all decisions by federal agencies; limits on all human activities "to those entirely consistent with preservation and protection in the true nature of a fully protected refuge"; prohibition on commercial use; and access by permit only. The Refuge Act calls for a new office within NOS — Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and Refuges. Any vessel over 25 feet long must be certified by an inspector as free of alien species; carry VMS; carry federal observer; and post a \$1 million vessel grounding bond. The Act would prohibit: selling of any Refuge resource, touching living coral; exploring for oil, gas, or minerals; dredging, altering seabeds; building structures; and discarding plastic and other refuse. It would also prohibit interfering with enforcement, resisting, opposing, impeding, intimidating, harassing, bribing, interfering with any search or inspection; submitting false information; violating any regulation or permit associated with this act. The Act would include a buy-out for current NWHI fishers.

Shipwreck of the Casitas, NOAA-Contracted Vessel; fuel spill, alien species threat

July, 2005 — A 145-foot vessel, the Casitas, contracted by NOAA for marine debris removal, slams into reefs at Pearl and Hermes. A sheen is observed on the water. There are unconfirmed reports that the vessel was operating in the middle of the night with a broken depthfinder when it hit the reef. The 23 people on board survive and exit the vessel, disembarking on an extremely fragile protected area, one known to be especially vulnerable to alien species introductions. Because of the emergency, alien species prevention protocols are not observed. In order to prevent shipwrecks, the RAC Enforcement Working Group had proposed mandatory automatic Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) for all NWHI-bound vessels, providing notification to enforcement and monitoring agencies, as well as the ship's captain, whenever a vessel approached closed or protected areas, banks, reefs, or land. Perhaps



such a VMS/notification system could have prevented the shipwreck of the NOAA-contracted Casitas in 2005.

Shipwreck of the Casitas, a \$5 million mistake, threatening the NWHI ecosystem. Could this have been prevented?

Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i County Councils, Maui Mayor Call for NWHI Protections

July-October, 2005 — County Councils of Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island pass resolutions urging state and federal authorities to strongly protect the NWHI, to prohibit all extractive uses except for traditional and customary Native Hawaiian uses, to strictly restrict access and to establish a permanent and strongly protected refuge in federal waters. Maui's Republican mayor calls for passage of federal Refuge Act, providing strong protections for NWHI and banning commercial and recreational fishing in the NWHI. Republican state legislator representing NWHI calls for full closure and protection of state and federal waters.

Sinking of the Casitas and 15 Tons of Marine Debris

August, 2005 — Four weeks after the Casitas wrecks at Pearl and Hermes the vessel is pulled off the reef and sunk, apparently in protected Reserve waters, along with 15 tons of marine debris still on board the vessel. The cost of the operation is estimated at \$5 million, more than the annual operating budget of the entire NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

Governor Signs Stringent Refuge Rules

September, 2005 — The governor of Hawai'i cites overwhelming public input and signs strongly protective refuge rules for NWHI, creating the largest marine conservation area in the history of the State of Hawai'i, banning commercial and recreational extraction, recognizing traditional Native Hawaiian uses and sharply limiting access. (Access is only allowed for science, education, Native Hawaiian cultural practices, non-extractive access for management and conservation). All permit applications for the NWHI are subject to public comment. The governor and director of DLNR call for the same stringent protections to be applied to federal waters of the NWHI. They propose support for a World Heritage Designation for the NWHI. The news is publicized around the country — from Florida to California — and the world. Articles appear in the Washington Post, CNN, the Los Angeles Times, ABC News, Newsday and other papers.

NOAA rejects Wespac's fishery plans for proposed NWHI Sanctuary

October, 2005 — The NWHI hui organizes a video conference for Native Hawaiian fishers, cultural practitioners and local environmentalists and NOAA Administrator, Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher. During the meeting, Vice Admiral Lautenbacher makes a stunning and very welcome announcement that NOAA has decided to reject Wespac's fishery management plans for the proposed NWHI sanctuary. This appears to be the first time in the history of the sanctuary program that such a decision has been made. NOAA provides detailed documentation of the reasons why Wespac's bottomfish, lobster, coral harvesting, and coral reef fish plans are incompatible with the goals and objectives of the proposed sanctuary.

Fishing groups call for an Inspector General investigation of Wespac

November, 2005 — The Oahu Game Fish Club and the Waianae Boat Fishing Club file a formal complaint against Wespac, providing documentation of a consistent pattern of improper and dishonest conduct, including a programmatic failure to meet legal mandates and the questionable use of federal funds to support a campaign to undermine the NWHI Executive Orders, the efforts of the Reserve Council, and the sanctuary designation process. The groups call for an Inspector General investigation of the Fishery Management Council.

December, 2005 — Wespac holds a series of "public hearings" just prior to Christmas on proposed "Fishery Ecosystem Plans" which appear to include proposals for coral harvesting and the opening of lobster and reef fish fisheries in the NWHI, despite NOAA's rejection of these plans. The stated goal of the hearings is to seek public comment on the "ecosystem plans", however the 1,200 pages of plan documents are not presented to the public until two working days prior to the start of hearings, ensuring that little meaningful public comment can be made. NWHI hui cites this series of hearings as further reason for an Inspector General investigation of Wespac.

Governor Lingle responds to overwhelming public input and creates the largest marine conservation area in the history of the State of Hawai'i. Commercial and recreational fishing are banned, traditional Native Hawaiian uses are recognized, access is sharply limited and permit applications are subject to public comment. The Governor calls for the same stringent protections to be applied to federal waters.

Governor, Jean-Michel Cousteau, federal and state officials visit Midway Atoll

December, 2005 — Governor Linda Lingle leads a delegation to Midway Atoll, accompanied by Jean-Michel Cousteau, Jim Connaughton, Chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, Coast Guard Admiral Wurster, State Senator Fred Hemmings, Peter Young, Chair of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and several others from the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Commerce's National Marine Sanctuary Program and the Department of Land and Natural Resources.



James Watt, courtesy of NOAA

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ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

finding the ways that work

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